

Rivendell School

Annual Report



2016



5654

Introduction

The Annual Report for **2016** is provided to the community of **Rivendell School** as an account of the school's operations and achievements throughout the year.

It provides a detailed account of the progress the school has made to provide high quality educational opportunities for all students, as set out in the school plan. It outlines the findings from self-assessment that reflect the impact of key school strategies for improved learning and the benefit to all students from the expenditure of resources, including equity funding.

Jennifer Shumack

Principal/R

School contact details

Rivendell School

Thomas Walker Est Hospital Rd

Concord West, 2138

www.rivendell-s.schools.nsw.edu.au

rivendell-s.School@det.nsw.edu.au

9743 1075

School background

School vision statement

The Rivendell School community prides itself on promoting shared and individual responsibility for positive and respectful relationships; safe behaviour; and cooperation and participation in quality learning.

We are committed to a shared vision that fosters an inclusive school culture and is evident in the ways in which we guide, inspire and challenge our diverse student population. Every student is given the opportunity to achieve their individual goals and develop personal resources for future success and wellbeing.

As a staff we are committed to critically reflecting on our practice, respecting student and community voice and exploring innovative teaching and learning.

School context

Rivendell School is part of a joint NSW Ministry of Health and Department of Education (DoE) facility. It is located within the historical Thomas Walker Estate at Concord West and shares the site with the Rivendell Child, Adolescent and Family Mental Health Service. Rivendell School provides the educational component for students admitted to the Yaralla and Lawson programs of the Rivendell Adolescent Mental Health Unit.

The school also has two DoE programs for students with an emotional disorder. The Paterson program is for students in Years 9 and 10. The Sulman program is for students in Years 11 and 12.

There are two learning centres staffed by Rivendell School on off-site campuses. One is within the Walker Adolescent High Severity Psychiatric Unit in the Concord Centre for Mental Health. The other learning centre is at Gna Ka Lun Acute Adolescent Mental Health Unit attached to Campbelltown Hospital.

The school provides a broad academic curriculum, targeted vocational programs, and the opportunity for students to participate in a range of extra curricula activities.

The school has a committed staff with a strong ethos of communication and collaboration with the wider school community.

Self-assessment and school achievement

Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework

This section of the Annual Report outlines the findings from self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework, school achievements and the next steps to be pursued.

This year, our school undertook self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework. The framework supports public schools throughout NSW in the pursuit of excellence by providing a clear description of high quality practice across the three domains of Learning, Teaching and Leading.

In 2016, ongoing discussions were held with both staff and our community around the 2015 – 2017 School Plan and the progress of our 2016 milestones. These discussions occurred in a variety of settings: during Professional Learning sessions; in staff and program meetings; on Staff Development Day; in executive meetings and on parent information evenings. Staff were invited to examine the School Plan and the progress of our Strategic Directions against the

expectation statements and the 14 elements in the School Excellence Framework. This self assessment enabled us to continue our forward planning to ensure our progress aligned with the expectations within the framework and assisted the school to refine the strategic priorities in our School Plan leading to further improvements in the delivery of education to our students.

Through this process, significant progress was evidenced in the areas of **Learning, Teaching and Leading**.

In the domain of **Learning**, Rivendell School has made notable progress in the areas of **Wellbeing** and **Curriculum and Learning**. Wellbeing is embedded in daily life at Rivendell. It is integral to the successful educational and therapeutic outcome of each student. The school has in place a comprehensive and inclusive framework to support the cognitive, emotional, social, physical and spiritual wellbeing of students. Rivendell has successfully achieved higher rates of attendance in both DoE programs, in relation to attendance, participation and engagement with all aspects of schooling: curriculum, extra curricular activities, access to therapy, social engagement and ultimately, transition to the next setting, which measurably improves individual outcomes for all students.

Working from a support, rather than management model, has increased student ownership of their wellbeing and through the school SRC the student body continue to actively contribute to the school and wider community. The SRC held their first market stall at Concord Hospital, raising a small amount of money for the development of a school market fund that will lead to further stalls in the coming year. The increasing sense of student ownership is very exciting, which has further increased student participation rates in the program. For the first time, music and art therapy were delivered to the DoE programs. Data has shown that this was highly valued by participating students and assisted in their wellbeing progress.

Curriculum provision has been enhanced at Rivendell school through the continued refinement of the Learning Centre for Stage 4–5 students and the provision of strategically linked extra curricular activities for student development. To engage our students, a wide variety of workshops were developed for students. Across the school year, nine different workshops were held. These included: sport, fishing, music, art and craft, zumba, yoga, photography, cooooking/baking, and radio. A study group was also formed to cater for senior students wishing to focus on their academic studies.

Parent Information nights were held across the year to empower parents and community members in further decision making meetings around student pathways. These evenings were perceived as valuable, with parents feeling more knowledgeable about the options for their young person.

In the domain of **Teaching**, the school focused on the elements of **Learning and Development** and **Data Skills and Use**. This year, the teaching staff Performance and Development Plans (PDP) were refined through a collaborative whole staff process. Staff moved towards establishing SMART goals which were aligned with the school's strategic directions. Teachers actively participated in targeted professional learning identified from their PDP goals, which they then shared with program teams. Regular, ongoing feedback from staff provides opportunity for strategic planning of whole staff professional learning targeted to staff development needs.

The Rivendell School Assessment handbook was developed through a whole school and community collaborative process. Together with formative assessment tools, staff monitor student learning progress and are able to identify and modify learning materials to meet the needs of students.

School excursions are an integral component of student learning. They provide an opportunity for students to participate in the community and provide real world experience. In the past, school excursions have been restricted at Rivendell school. With strong links to the curriculum, individual student goals and wellbeing plans, school excursions have become a regular occurrence and increased by 184% this year. This focus has increased student engagement and prepared students for their pathway to their next setting.

In the domain of **Leading**, the school focused on the areas of **Leadership and School Resources**. The implementation of the new planning model for schools provided increased opportunity for consultation with staff, parents and members of our school community to communicate the overarching strategic vision for the school. This included planning increased opportunities for parents and community members to engage in school-related activities.

For the first time, parents and the wider community were invited to Rivendell School during Education Week where our SRC provided a tour of the site and short visits to classrooms. The inaugural Storyweavers evening took place in the latter part of the year, providing a different lens to engage students with curriculum and an opportunity for the parent and school community to see student work from a different perspective. Formalised links with TAFE NSW and OTEN were established which provided stronger links to pathways for our students and an established relationship where staff could seek assistance quickly.

Strategic Direction 1

Students will be successful learners and leaders who are confident and future focused

Purpose

To provide a learning environment that has high expectations, prepares students for life beyond Rivendell and affords students opportunities to develop academically, socially, in leadership capabilities and in their areas of talent.

Overall summary of progress

The Learning Centre was established in 2015 and continued to be operational throughout 2016. This enabled the provision of Rivendell developed curriculum in the areas of Mathematics, HSIE, English and PDHPE to all stage 4 and 5 students by faculty teachers. Curriculum teams have worked collaboratively to program and deliver curriculum and assessments in line with Board of Studies and Educational Standards (BOSTES) requirements. Systems have been put in place for resource management in the Learning Centre and staff and students reported a high sense of achievement gained from the Learning Centre initiative. Students felt the opportunity to work in curriculum areas in a classroom, prepared them for the return to their mainstream school and staff felt a sense of connection to their faculty which can sometimes be difficult in a special setting. The draft assessment booklet for stages 4 and 5 was distributed to the community for consultation and comment. As a result, the Learning Centre now has defined assessment guidelines for 2017 and beyond.

The Student Representative Council (SRC) was established in order to provide extended opportunities for student leadership. 2016 saw a huge growth in participation in and activities undertaken by the SRC. They showed true leadership in a variety of ways. They have learnt skills which they will be able to take with them into future leadership roles. These skills include: consulting with both staff and students; participating in the process of a formal meeting with agenda and minutes; attending executive meetings; handling money and hosting and catering for events. They also reviewed the school merit system and developed the assets for the gold awards, which were presented for the first time at the end of year presentation ceremony. Their wellbeing, confidence and ability to participate in the community was tangible evidence of the success of the SRC in 2016.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	Funds Expended (Resources)
100% of the Stage 4 and 70% of the Stage 5 curriculum is developed and delivered by Rivendell School	Four faculty teams have planned, maintained, developed and reviewed programs and assessments for both semester 1 and semester 2. Programs have been delivered to stages 4 and 5 students in the Learning Centre. The Rivendell Assessment Handbook and Guidelines have been established for 2017. Student work and Rivendell assessment tasks are aligned with syllabus. The 2017 calendar is established as well as a Learning Centre academic timetable which supports students transitioning to mainstream schools.	teacher release \$2,000 KLA subscription fees \$3,800
30% increase (16% in 2014) in students engaging in leaderships programs	Student engagement has increased. (40%+) Students have an increased ownership of learning and sense of achievement. The size of the SRC increased and students were keen to participate in meetings, planning and events. The SRC confidently delivered assemblies throughout the year and met regularly with the Executive. The SRC was a driving force in initiatives throughout the school such as signage, workshops, extra-curricular activities and fundraising. A market stall is now held each term, raising money to support local charities and as a way to connect the SRC to their community. All students involved in the SRC demonstrated significant improvements in their self – confidence	teacher release \$500

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	Funds Expended (Resources)
30% increase (16% in 2014) in students engaging in leaderships programs	and social interaction. The SRC is now well established and integral to decision making at the school level.	

Next Steps

Two strategy groups have been established: Learning Centre and Transition. These will be supported by the Technology strategy group.

The SRC will broaden it's reach into the community, by connecting with the local RSL, local business organisations and Rotary.

SRC will continue to grow and support whole school activities and programs such as Storyweavers, market stalls, fund raising and community events such as parent information evenings.

Strategic Direction 2

Staff will be high performing, reflective and innovative

Purpose

To support staff and their commitment to deliver quality learning experiences, engage in reflective ongoing professional development and be innovative in the ways in which they use evidence based teaching strategies to engage students. This will support a culture of continuous improvement focused on excellence in teaching and leadership.

Overall summary of progress

The Performance and Development Framework continued in 2016. All staff (including SAS staff) worked towards achieving their professional goals as outlined in their Performance and Development Plans and participated in the peer observation process. There was a strong focus on Professional Learning, particularly around observation practices. Feedback on the observation practice was sought from staff and a range of comments were noted: useful for reflection; a good PL opportunity for both teacher and observer and reminds experienced teachers that there is a culture of ongoing improvement. It was noted that the PDP process was a complicated paper trail and a solution to this is being sought.

Professional Learning occurred both on and off site and staff were able to share their gained knowledge with their programs, their teams and with the whole staff. Staff were also encouraged to deliver Professional Learning as a part of their leadership growth and it was evident that these opportunities provided a valuable experience for both the presenter and the audience. The transition to LMBR and the associated new systems proceeded with extensive support from the LMBR team, and SAS and executive staff are working with an increasing level of confidence.

Programs continued to use the PLP and student review process as in 2015. The move towards a whole school consistent proforma will be a major focus in 2017.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	Funds Expended (Resources)
100% of staff will apply their Performance and Development Plan (teachers) or their Professional Development Plan (SASS) to improve their practice.	All staff including SAS staff participated in the process for developing and actioning a Performance and Development Plan. Observations were completed. Written feedback provided. Staff were given the opportunity to evaluate the school process, especially around observations and finetune for 2017. The survey from 2015 indicated a moderate satisfaction level for technology use at Rivendell. This was addressed in 2016. There has been significant purchase and replacement of the technological hardware and software for both students and staff, and in line with the implementation of LMBR. Capacity of staff to use technology has increased significantly. A recommendation to convene a technology committee and further release for technology support has been approved.	SDD \$4,000 Technology PL \$1,600 Technology upgrade \$15,000
Increase from 42% to 100% of parents and students engaging with the new PLP processes that reflects literacy and numeracy needs, individual learning goals and required adjustments.	Little impact was made with PLP changes in 2016. It will be a major focus in 2017. All staff completed the student reporting process in 2016 with greater confidence and with minimal issues. Semester 1 & Semester 2 report format has been established for 2017 and all relevant staff are confident in the report writing process.	Sentral \$1,500 Sentral PL \$350

Next Steps

Continue the PDP framework with teaching staff, ensuring Professional Goals are linked to the strategic directions in the 2017 school plan.

Mandatory training will occur for SAS staff in terms 2 and 3 for the PDP for non teaching staff in schools. PDPs for non teaching staff will be written in term 4 2017.

The PLP process and document will be reviewed by each program in order to move to a proforma across all programs.

Strategic Direction 3

To have a collaborative and connected community of learners

Purpose

To foster a school community that operates in a united manner with the central goal being the achievement of positive student learning outcomes. To ensure that there are meaningful partnerships with all stakeholders and that all community members have the opportunity to share their expertise.

Overall summary of progress

2016 saw a sustained increase in the connections and activities within and outside our community. Weekly communication with families continued, with 100% of families valuing the regular feedback and program information.

We believe that we have achieved sustainable partnerships with both health and family communities. The connections we have sought and built on over 2015 and 2016 have become accepted practice and are now part of our school culture. We are proud of this achievement.

Work on the school motto and logo resulted in new visual assets for the school and the website, and when complete and revealed in 2017, will meet the needs of our community in a 21st century way.

A strong connection has been established between Rivendell School and the Aboriginal Education Team, who delivered Professional Learning to staff and participated in our Cultural Journey day. This is ongoing in 2017.

Community access via excursions increased yet again, with students and staff valuing learning at such varied outings as Homebush Environment Centre for Geography excursion, National Poultry Show, Taronga Zoo – a whole school activity day, Sydney Writers Festival and the Careers expo for senior students, Powerhouse Museum, YouthBlock, Australian Museum in Science Week, SPARK at the Powerhouse Museum and a visit to the MCA to take part in the BELLA program.

Rivendell School acknowledges Sydney Distance Education High School, particularly for our senior students, as an integral and valuable part of our community. Students are encouraged to work with teachers on site in Woolloomoollo and teachers from SDEHS often visited Rivendell, as well as taught via phone and via computer. Their support is invaluable.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	Funds Expended (Resources)
Increase from 27% to 90% the parent response rate affirming the school's strategic directions in relation to opportunities for collaboration and engagement.	<p>In 2016 the parents and community were more visible within the school. After lengthy community consultation the school logo and motto were finalised and incorporated into all visual assets. The inaugural launch of the Storyweavers program was attended by 62% of our parent community. The open classrooms in Education Week were attended by 15% of parents. Parent information evenings were attended by 55% of our parents, an indication of our parents growing willingness to engage with their community. Communication within our community remains consistent, with 100% of our families receiving weekly progress reports and information from Rivendell School and reporting that this communication was useful.</p> <p>Connections made with the Aboriginal Education Team. Planning underway.</p>	<p>Logo \$1,200</p> <p>StoryWeavers \$9,000</p>
30% increase in staff, parents and the community using the Rivendell website to access information and resources.	The development of the website is 90% complete and will be launched in Term 1 2017.	\$7,500

Next Steps

Establish further relationships with our wider community, eg Rotary

Rivendell staff to be trained in Wordpress to ensure the availability of current content on the website and in the latest news.

STEAM days to be held each term. (Science Technology Engineering Art Mathematics), and an invitation to be extended to ED/BD settings to participate.

Storyweavers to be held in term 4 for the second year as a grand community event, featuring art, music, literature and exhibitions and photographic displays.

Key Initiatives	Impact achieved this year	Resources (annual)
Aboriginal background loading	School has begun a comprehensive cultural awareness journey with the support of the DoE Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander Education team	\$1,660
English language proficiency	All subjects for students in stage 6 and some subjects for students in stages 4 and 5 accessed from SDEHS	\$400
Socio-economic background	All subjects for students in stage 6 and some subjects for students in stages 4 and 5 accessed from SDEHS	\$3,352
Support for beginning teachers	Mentoring for beginning teacher by supervisor. Access to relevant PL.	

Student information

Student enrolment profile

Students	Enrolments			
	2013	2014	2015	2016
Boys	27	32	28	27
Girls	28	31	26	32

In 2016, 12 Rivendell students were eligible for their Record of School Achievement (RoSA). Five year 10 students returned to their home schools or other settings to complete their year 10 in 2016.

In 2016 a total of eleven students undertook Higher School Certificate (HSC) studies. They all sat HSC exams at Rivendell in October and November.

Three students completed their HSC and transitioned to further education or work positions in 2017.

The remaining 8 students will continue pathways study working towards the award of HSC.

Workforce information

Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal	1
Assistant Principal(s)	6
Classroom Teacher(s)	12.09
Teacher Librarian	0.4
School Counsellor	1
School Administration & Support Staff	13.12
Other Positions	1

*Full Time Equivalent

There are no staff who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Support Teacher Transition

A support teacher transition is based at Rivendell School. The role is to support schools to carry out individual transition planning for students to ensure a smoother transition from school to post school. It particularly supports students to link to post school services and inform families about how to access supports including the NDIS.

Assistant Principals Learning and Support

The Assistant Principals Learning and Support (APL&S) are based at Rivendell School and work across Strathfield, Fairfield and Liverpool Principal Networks. They provide professional support to Learning and Support Teachers including the development of adjusted educational programs for students with additional learning and support needs. APL&S also promote and support the development of Learning and Support Teams within schools and facilitate professional learning, including Online Training, for Learning and Support Teams and Learning and Support Teachers.

Senior Psychologist Education

The Senior Psychologist, Education, based at Rivendell School, leads a team of School Counsellors/School Psychologists who support schools to foster the learning and emotional development of young people. The Senior Psychologist, Education also supports School Counsellors/School Psychologists to assist teachers and parents identify a child's strengths and weaknesses.

Teacher qualifications

All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

Teacher qualifications

Qualifications	% of staff
Undergraduate degree or diploma	40
Postgraduate degree	60

Professional learning and teacher accreditation

In 2016 all staff participated in a wide range of weekly professional learning activities, which supported mandatory policies and guidelines and addressed the three strategic directions from the 2015 – 2017 school plan.

Semester 1 Professional Learning included:

Code of Conduct, Child Protection Update 2016, emergency fire and evacuation training, a review of the student support system and Professional Standards for Teachers and professional learning around curriculum planning with faculty teams. There was a focus on Teaching Practice and classroom observations in relation to the Performance and Development Framework, which was implemented for its first entire year. Project Based Learning was introduced to staff in two sessions. This initiative inspired various projects school wide, including Stephanie Alexander's kitchen garden and the SRC involvement in hosting a profitable market stall.

Semester 2 Professional Learning included: School Excellence Framework, teaching students who have experienced trauma and the accidental counsellor

training. A major focus was professional learning around Learning Management and Business Reform (LMBR) particularly for the office and executive staff.

We began our cultural journey with the support of the Aboriginal Education Team, who worked collaboratively with the executive to deliver module 1 of the cultural awareness training. Staff members attended the Aboriginal Education Conference at the Sydney Opera House and also the introduction to the 8 Ways of Learning at Taronga Zoo.

Individual staff and teams attended offsite Professional Learning including: Women in Educational Leadership and Generation Next, Inspire Innovate Conference, STEM training, as well as professional learning around classroom management and pedagogy, mental health, wellbeing and creative therapies.

One teacher achieved accreditation at proficient in 2016. There are 3 teachers seeking accreditation, with 5 teachers maintaining at proficient.

Financial information (for schools using both OASIS and SAP/SALM)

Financial information

The three financial summary tables cover 13 months (from 1 December 2015 to 31 December 2016).

The financial summary consists of school income broken down by funding source and is derived from the school Annual Financial Statement.

'This summary of financial information covers funds for operating costs to 14 October 2016 and does not involve expenditure in areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance'.is

- Rivendell School returned all trust money to the Department of Education prior to transitioning to SAP on 17 October 2016.
- Rivendell School holds and processes income and expenses Resourcing Parents (school and community sources).

Income	\$
Balance brought forward	1 290 625.07
Global funds	167 985.67
Tied funds	76 214.97
School & community sources	7 601.88
Interest	20 286.01
Trust receipts	233 083.18
Canteen	0.00
Total income	1 795 796.78
Expenditure	
Teaching & learning	
Key learning areas	43 137.60
Excursions	5 936.29
Extracurricular dissections	5 478.79
Library	774.92
Training & development	7 026.55
Tied funds	42 957.37
Short term relief	29 768.74
Administration & office	37 953.24
School-operated canteen	0.00
Utilities	3 581.77
Maintenance	17 885.13
Trust accounts	706 641.12
Capital programs	0.00
Total expenditure	901 141.52
Balance carried forward	894 655.26

Financial Summary table for the year ended 31 December 2016.

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 14 October 2016 to 31 December 2016.

The financial management of the school:

- Responsibility for the financial management of the school rests with the Principal.
- The day to day financial transactions are processed by the school administration manager using the SAP system.
- The finance committee develops and maintains the school budget. The committee meets on a regular basis to discuss financial matters. The members of the financial committee consist of the Principal, Assistant Principals and the School Administration Manager.

Any differences between the OASIS Balance carried forward and (2a) Appropriation amount is the result of other accounts and transactions being included in the (2a) Appropriation amount.

	2016 Actual (\$)
Opening Balance	0.00
Revenue	935 904.60
(2a) Appropriation	912 655.26
(2b) Sale of Goods and Services	20.00
(2c) Grants and Contributions	22 280.50
(2e) Gain and Loss	0.00
(2f) Other Revenue	0.00
(2d) Investment Income	948.84
Expenses	-73 074.17
Recurrent Expenses	-73 074.17
(3a) Employee Related	-27 842.56
(3b) Operating Expenses	-45 231.61
Capital Expenses	0.00
(3c) Employee Related	0.00
(3d) Operating Expenses	0.00
SURPLUS / DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR	862 830.43
Balance Carried Forward	862 830.43

There is no opening balance recorded in the SAP finance table. The opening balance for the school for this reporting period is recorded as the Balance Brought Forward in the OASIS table.

The OASIS Balance carried forward amount (ie, funds on date of migration) is included in the (2a) Appropriation amount in the SAP table.

Equity Funding

Financial summary table for the year ended 31 December 2016.

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 17 October 2016 to 31 December 2016

	2016 Actual (\$)
Base Total	467 684.64
Base Per Capita	7 358.81
Base Location	0.00
Other Base	460 325.83
Equity Total	5 412.09
Equity Aboriginal	1 660.19
Equity Socio economic	3 351.90
Equity Language	400.00
Equity Disability	0.00
Targeted Total	2 303 432.50
Other Total	654 599.66
Grand Total	3 431 128.90

A full copy of the school's financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the parent and/or community groups. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

Parent/Caregiver satisfaction

Throughout 2016, Rivendell School staff continued to work towards developing authentic partnerships with families. For the first time, we hosted open class rooms during Education Week with the opportunity for parents to tour the school under the guidance of the SRC. Information evenings continued to run each semester, providing parents with the progress of the school plan, pathway options post school, the risks and challenges of technology use, program information and general news. The inaugural Storyweaver reveal was also attended by an unprecedented number of parents and community members.

The end of year survey results indicated that parents are communicating with their young person's classroom teacher at least once a week, with email the preferred format. 57% of parents found this invaluable, with all parents surveyed finding it useful. Parents suggested that there was no need to adjust the communication platforms at Rivendell. Of those that attended the information evenings, 84% responded that it was above

average.

Overall, feedback from parents revealed satisfaction with the education provision at Rivendell School.

Staff satisfaction

Teaching and SAS staff work across each program at Rivendell School. 16 staff members completed the Survey Monkey Milestones Survey at the end of 2016, providing rich insights into the programs and support at Rivendell School. School Executive, teaching and SAS staff were all represented within the data.

All staff members were a part of at least one school committee during the year, with the most represented in the School Curriculum team (62.5%). Just under half of Rivendell School staff members (46.67%) supported the Learning Centre across the year. All indicated that the lessons were above average for content engagement and above average for assisting students in preparing for integration. The movement of students, absenteeism and large spread of learning needs was recognised as a challenge.

43.75% of staff observed music therapy and/or art therapy over the year. There was some discrepancy in the opinions of staff with the majority (76.15%) feeling there was above average support for students in therapy and 7.60% feeling it was below.

While 80% of staff were not involved in the SRC, 80% of staff felt that the SRC played an active role in the school decision making. Staff commented that the SRC was outstanding in 2016 and that it had assisted students to develop confidence and social skills.

Excursions increased by 184% at Rivendell School in 2016. 80% of staff planned, attended or supported an excursion through the year. Staff were positive about the excursions, and despite feeling that more emphasis should be made on leaving on time, overall felt that it had a positive impact on the students. It provides students with exposure "to different interests, career paths and gives them a broader perspective of the world outside school"

Overall, staff reported that 2016 was a successful year.

Policy requirements

Aboriginal education

Rivendell School commenced a school-wide cultural journey in early 2016. In collaboration with the Aboriginal Community Team, both students and staff participated in cultural training, culminating in a whole school Cultural Day where students experienced bush tucker, art, craft and Traditional Indigenous Games.

Our cultural development has been enhanced through the Learning Centre where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures is embedded as cross-curriculum priorities within the teaching and

program. This has been emphasised most predominantly in HSIE.

Three members of the staff team attended the Aboriginal Education Conference at the Sydney Opera House where connections were made with the local Elder, Auntie Faye, who has become a respected and frequent guest at Rivendell, heading up some of our Cultural Day celebrations.

All Rivendell programs have utilised CircleTime sessions to explore reconciliation and the indigenous experience. These discussions have been further enhanced and explored during whole school assemblies and incursions. During Reconciliation Week, Rivendell Students participated in The Longest Dreaming in History. Storyteller Russ Smith, a proud descendant of the Ngarrindgeri nation, ran a workshop for us in conjunction with the Museum of Arts and Applied Sciences (MAAS) and the Sydney Story Factory. Students explored the 'Always Was, Always Will Be' timeline; the timeline including events as varied as the story of the Brewarrina Fish Traps and the establishment of the Tent Embassy. We also welcomed Ryka Ali whose heritage stems from the Wuthathi tribe of Shellburne Bay, Cape York and the Torres Strait Islands, back to Rivendell School to explore the richness of Aboriginal history and culture.

The success and the importance of cultural awareness has led Rivendell School to the formation of a sustainable Cultural Team who will continue to build authentic partnerships with our Aboriginal community.

Multicultural and anti-racism education

Rivendell School has an Anti Racism Contact Officer (ARCO) which is a mediation, procedural, educational and monitoring role. If there is an instance of racism within the school, the first job of the ARCO is to mediate with the people involved. The aim is to reach an outcome that is in the spirit of the National Anti-Racism Strategy which was formulated by the Australian Human Rights Commission in 2012. If mediation does not work to resolve the issue, then departmental policies and procedures are followed until a suitable outcome is achieved. The ARCO is also able to provide limited training and resources to staff if it is felt that this is appropriate to the setting and situation.

Other school programs

Technology

Two staff members worked with a Sentral representative on how to set up the initial format for the reports. Throughout the year the report set up was refined so that all Rivendell School reports were issued through Sentral. All relevant staff are able to use Sentral to mark the roll and to complete the reporting process.

All executive, SAM and SAO attended the required LMBR training staff implemented requirements for the

smooth rollout of the system. This included the identification of relevant hardware and software, which was purchased and installed.

This also included a class set of iPads, which has contributed to greater task completion when using technology within the Learning Centre. To facilitate the smooth operation of the iPads a staff member was trained in the management of iPads. In 2017 this staff member will train other staff in the use of various applications to further enhance content delivery in the Learning Centre and in homeroom time.

Transition/Vocational Education

Throughout the year staff members participated in the Northern Sydney Institute and South West Sydney institute Career Advisor meetings. These meetings took place at various TAFE campuses. The sessions provided insight at how students can be supported in their transition to TAFE and also the variety of courses available to students. In addition to this TAFE representatives met with students and spoke with parents at Parent teacher information sessions to discuss TVET courses and post High School education.

Students engaged with TVET taster courses during the year attending classes in Hair and Beauty, Make up, computer programming, graphics, and barista skills. Students also completed TVET courses for stage 6 subjects at TAFE

Rivendell School subscribed to Job Jump, a website that assists students to identify future pathways. This website also provides strategies on how to prepare for career fields and the jobs that they have identified. Students also took part in the careers expo at Sydney Olympic Park.

Creative Arts

In 2016 students have engaged in a wide range of creative art projects. Many students study art as an elective subject either through their mainstream school or through SDEHS. Art therapy takes place throughout the school. Students have access to a variety of media and can express themselves in the way that is conducive to their therapy. The creative arts are also explored throughout the week in class time, as part of a whole school project and as a Friday workshop elective.

In weekly Friday workshops students have produced outstanding work in a range of media including: mosaic, candle making, weaving, food art, printmaking, painting, drawing, film making and photography. Within their programs, students explored painting, sculpture and clay. Students in the SRC created art products including cards, bookmarks, and magnets and wrapping paper to sell at the SRC market stall, building their self-confidence and engaging the local community.

Students also engage in art through school wide initiatives. In conjunction with Vivid festival, students made lanterns which were displayed for the public at Taranga zoo. They worked with our local Aboriginal

group to explore identity through the design of a message stick. 2016 was the first year for our inaugural Storyweaver project. Students worked with acclaimed Poet Mark Tredinnick music producer Michael Moebus, and artist Anne Bierzynski. This culminated in an evening launch where the Rivendell boat house was utilised as a gallery, showcasing spoken word poetry and art.

Sport

In 2016, Rivendell PDHPE Staff programmed and delivered stage four and five Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE) to students in years 7 – 10.

This curriculum was delivered in our Learning Centre over 2016, providing an engaging environment for our students as they continued to learn, grow and understand factors relating to their health and wellbeing. Students were encouraged to explore and develop a greater understanding of self and identity, relationships with peers and families, healthy lifestyles and making safe choices.

Through out this year students have displayed more independent and confident attributes in their abilities both in physical exercise, positive mindfulness and their classroom study habits. This has assisted students to make connections outside of school with local recreational clubs and Youth Centres.

The physical education (PE) component this year consisted of developing motor skills in sporting activities such as: hockey, athletics, soccer and the AFL workshop that included a representative from the Sydney Swans attending and assisting in delivering the content to our students.

All students across the school participated in the Premiers Sporting Challenge which motivated students to become more physically active and build a positive sportsmanship approach with their peers.

We continued to recognise and reward students each week with our sports award incentives, identifying students who showcased effort, enthusiasm and participation.

Music

A wide variety of activities occurred within the music workshops on Friday afternoons in 2016. The students were able to engage with high quality professional audio tools to recreate instrumental parts from various popular tracks. The students used instruments such as drum machines, guitars, iPads, synthesisers, pianos, drums, ukuleles and basses. Sometimes the students would come with very advanced music skills, though at other times they were willing to build on skills that were still developing. At times we were able to play songs as a group with everyone playing a different musical role, while on other occasions everyone played an identical rhythm and chord progression to create a wall of sound. In this way everyone was able to find their own individual level and contribute their unique talents.

Workshops

In 2016, students at Rivendell School attended weekly workshops on Friday afternoon. Rivendell workshops extend to the Walker program. This year, six Walker students participated in workshops with the wider Rivendell student body. In Term 1, fishing was introduced to the workshop options which also included sport, music, art, Zumba, yoga, photography, cooking and craft. Senior students were able to take advantage of a senior study group if they required extra time for study commitments. The weekly workshops provide an opportunity for students to both engage with an interest area and also practice social skills outside the comfort of their regular program.