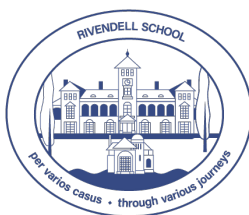


Rivendell School

Annual Report



2017



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Introduction

The Annual Report for **2017** 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.

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Principal/R

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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.

In 2017, our school undertook self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework V1. 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 2017, ongoing discussions were held with both staff and our community around the 2015 – 2017 School Plan and the progress of our 2017 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 have a clear picture of our achievements over this 3 year period, and reflect on the directions for the 2018 –2020 school planning cycle. 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 **Learning Culture** and **Curriculum and Learning**. As a staff we believe we now meet the criteria for excellence in both these areas.

For **Learning Culture**: "In schools that excel, school culture demonstrates the building of educational aspiration and ongoing performance improvement across its community. Students take responsibility for their ongoing learning."

This is clearly evident in the success of the Learning Centre at Rivendell which has grown to offer 5 curriculum areas in 2018. The high expectations of teachers and professional delivery of curriculum, the increased attendance and engagement of students and the joy of young people who are now finding learning available and rewarding is evident.

It is also evident in the growth of our Student Representative Council and the increased attendance and engagement of the representatives. They have been very active in all aspects of the school life and have been joint decision makers with the school executive at appropriate times. As a result of the SRC and their work in the community, we now have well established community partners who also take pride in the successes at Rivendell.

For **Curriculum and Learning**: "In schools that excel an integrated approach to quality teaching, curriculum planning and delivery and assessment, promotes learning excellence and responsiveness in meeting the learning needs of all students."

This is clearly evidenced at Rivendell School with the success of the delivery of the curriculum in a complex multidisciplinary setting, across stages 4 – 6, in 3 different Learning Centres on 3 sites, and for stage 6 in partnership with Sydney Distance Education High School. We have embraced project based learning and have developed a STEAM focus as a whole school. We have strategically planned and delivered whole school excursions with a clear link and strong focus on Learning Centre programs.

In the domain of **Teaching**, the school focused on the elements of **Effective Classroom Practice** and **Collaborative Practice**. As a staff we believe we now meet the criteria for excellence in both these areas.

For **Effective Classroom Practice** "In schools that excel, all teachers are committed to identifying, understanding and implementing the most effective teaching methods, with a high priority given to evidence based strategies." This is clearly evidenced at Rivendell School with the success of the Learning Centre curriculum, the clearly articulated and demonstrated processes for assessment and the quality of implementation of individualised programs, across all stages.

For **Collaborative Practice** "In schools that excel, there are explicit systems for collaboration and feedback to sustain quality teaching practice." This is clearly evidenced at Rivendell School with the development of new technologies, eg Google Classroom, to support the range of needs of students whose attendance can be irregular or inconsistent due to therapy commitments, integration or illness. Students are able to access learning, and feedback on their learning, at any time. Collaboration across faculty teams and strategy groups shows a team approach to the successful running of whole school activities, excursions and STEAM days.

In the domain of **Leading**, the school focused on the areas of **School Resources** and **Management Practices and Processes**. As a staff we believe we now meet the criteria for excellence in both these areas.

For **School Resources** "In schools that excel resources are strategically used to achieve improved student outcomes." This is clearly evidenced at Rivendell School within the leadership team as they are supported to seek promotion and higher duties within the department. LMBR has provided the opportunity to upskill the leadership team with budgeting

processes and strategic financial planning, as well as the school planning and reporting cycle. Physical resources at Rivendell have been upgraded, eg tennis court, basketball courts and gym, and are well shared with our community and used for inter school competitions.

For ***Management Practices and Processes*** "In schools that excel management systems, structures and processes underpin ongoing school improvement and the professional effectiveness of all school members." This is clearly evidenced at Rivendell School with weekly executive meetings informing daily, weekly, termly and annual events. This informs the local and wider community and provides important structure to our school year. Communication processes with our families have strengthened, for, as well as our weekly emails, the new website hosts a schoolblog which is updated regularly.

Our self-assessment process will assist the school to refine our school plan, leading to further improvements in the delivery of education to our students.

For more information about the School Excellence Framework:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/school-excellence-and-accountability/sef-evidence-guide>

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

Throughout 2017 the staff within the Learning Centre continued to deliver highly engaging lessons. These lessons were based on the NESA syllabus documents and ensured that any shortcomings within the students' skills in each curriculum area were addressed. When students transitioned from Rivendell into their mainstream setting they reported they felt much more comfortable completing their school work. Teachers attended professional development sessions in each of the curriculum areas to ensure that the lessons and teaching methodology met, or exceeded best practice. Additionally professional learning helped ensure that the Learning Centre helped cater to the learning requirements of students who are gifted and talented, have a learning disability, are from a non-English speaking background, identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or are on the Autism Spectrum. The staff within the Learning Centre also continued to utilise Formative Assessment in each lesson to ensure that lessons can be modified if required to cater for the student. In each subject area, students completed a diverse range of tasks to help increase engagement and enthusiasm for learning. The success of this can be seen with over 90% of students completing a formal assessment task, where many of them had seen this previously as a significant trigger in their learning.

In addition to this 2017 saw an increased focus on the transition pathways of our students into other areas of study and work. Two staff members attended six sessions delivered by the North Sydney Institute TAFE. These days helped to identify TAFE courses that would be beneficial for the students. It also helped with networking to secure placement for students.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
100% of the Stage 4 and 70% of the Stage 5 curriculum is developed and delivered by Rivendell School	Staff PL/Release – \$2,387.00	Achieved
30% increase (16% in 2014) in students engaging in leaderships programs	Resources for market stall – \$88.00 Excursions/Incursions – \$2,969.00 Gym equipment – \$8,416.00	Exceeded

Next Steps

See 2018 –2020 school plan

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

Program Supervisors gathered information around the use of, information collected for and details around the Personalised Learning Plans used for students within their particular programs. IEPs from other schools were shared at the ED/BD Assistant Principal Network meeting. Program supervisors met in term 2 to plan a working timeline for the review and redirection of PLPs. All documentation now to be called IEPs. PLPs are for student who are Aboriginal or who are in Out of Home Care. A decision was made to delay the work on the PLP/IEP process until it is known if Synergy will be our platform or Sentral. At the end of 2017 a decision was made to continue using Sentral in 2018, and move to Synergy in 2019. Training around the use of Synergy will occur ready for 2019.

Staff capacity and competency to use technology has developed and classrooms employ a range of innovative approaches to embed technology into engaging learning experiences. Non teaching staff have built their capacity to manage data, the technology demands of their role and the changes occurring through LMBR and LSLD. Innovative technology was utilised during story weavers event – resident digital artist, resident sound engineer. Mobile Device Management (MDM) system has been established and all Learning Centre iPads are set up through this system. All other iPads are set up for use with new IP protocol. All computers within the school have been reimaged with Windows 10 image. Staff have been trained in how to pair iPads with keyboards in the Learning Centre. The school audible subscription has been established and purchases are ongoing.

All teaching staff completed the Performance and Development process.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
100% of staff will apply their Performance and Development Plan (teachers) or their Professional Development Plan (SASS) to improve their practice.	Staff Professional Learning \$23,745.00	All teaching staff completed their Performance and Development Plan. Non teaching staff completed the PDP training and developed a draft PDP for 2017. 90% of staff accessed off site Professional Learning. 100% of staff attended Professional Learning onsite, for both mandatory and in house topics. (for more information see Professional Learning)
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.	Sentral \$3,500	The PLP process continued without change to the format, however review meetings to monitor progress, forward plan and discuss changes, increased in frequency and were attended by 80% of families. Families see these meetings as a valuable collaboration. The PLP process will be a main strategic direction in the next 3 year cycle.

Next Steps

See 2018–2020 school plan

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

2017 saw a marked increase in the connections within the school and outside community. Weekly communication continued with 100% of families valuing the regular feedback.

In 2017, the new Rivendell School website was officially launched at the Rivendell Parent Information evening in Term 1. The website has significantly enhanced the way that the school connects with the broader community. Google analytics has been added to track website traffic and this indicated 100 unique users clicking through the site in the first week alone.

All members of the technology team were trained in the use of Wordpress, who then provided training for all staff within individual programs across the school. All programs regularly utilise the school website to publish items that showcase their work. The Walker program does this in the form of their weekly newsletter.

STEAM was successfully launched with survey results reporting high satisfaction levels. STEAM Days were held each term, including visits from science and technology professionals and an excursion to Sydney Sea Life Aquarium.

The Storyweavers project continued in 2017 and was an overwhelming success. There were over 150 community members in attendance at the reveal evening and feedback from the community was very positive. Formal written feedback was gathered and 100% of responses received reflected positively on the event.

Rivendell's strong community partnerships were further enhanced in 2017. The strong connection between Rivendell and the Aboriginal Education Team was enhanced by whole staff participation in Module 2 and 3 Cultural Training. Two staff members attended the Aboriginal Cultural Education Course to further Rivendell's commitment to the development of a Reconciliation Action Plan.

In 2017 Rivendell School reconnected with Rotary and developed these connections throughout the year. This resulted in Rotary attending numerous key school events including Storyweavers and Presentation Day. Connections have also been established between Rotary and our school SRC which has led to Rotary providing funding for key school resources.

Community access via excursions continued as a key feature of the Rivendell program with staff and students engaging with the learning provided at outings to Kimbriki Resource Recover Centre, Youth Block, The Big Day In, Bradfield Vivid Workshops, The Titanic Exhibition, Stage 6 Careers Expo and Bella at the MCA.

In 2017, Rivendell hosted an interschool music day amongst our community of schools which was a great success. Our students also engaged in an ongoing basketball competition between these schools both at Rivendell and at another school.

Sydney Distance Education High School remains an integral part of our school community, particularly for senior students. Rivendell students are encouraged to work with teachers on site in Woolloomooloo and SDEHS often visit Rivendell, their support is invaluable.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
Increase from 27% to 90% the parent response rate affirming the school's strategic directions in relation to opportunities for collaboration and engagement.	Parent information and community evenings – \$747.00 Storyweavers community event– \$3,547.00	In 2017, there was visible, active participation of the parent and broader community within the school. There was an increase in parent attendance of our Storyweavers event to 75% and an overall community attendance of numbers exceeding 150 people. The Rivendell and Walker presentation

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
Increase from 27% to 90% the parent response rate affirming the school's strategic directions in relation to opportunities for collaboration and engagement.		<p>days were attending by 80% of the parent community, indicating a marked increase in parental willingness to engage with their community.</p> <p>Communication within our community remains strong with 100% of our families receiving weekly progress reports from Rivendell, this has been further enhanced by the new website. Parent feedback about the website has been very positive.</p>
30% increase in staff, parents and the community using the Rivendell website to access information and resources.	Website Design and maintenance \$12,050	<p>The new Rivendell website is 100% complete and was officially launched at the Parent Information Evening in Term 1. Google Analytics showed that there were 100 unique users in the first week.</p> <p>All staff have been provided with access to Wordpress training and 85% of programs are utilising the website to communicate with the wider community at least fortnightly.</p>

Next Steps

See 2018–2020 school plan

Key Initiatives	Resources (annual)	Impact achieved this year
Aboriginal background loading	Salaries \$1,416.00	Employment of staff work to support Aboriginal students
English language proficiency	n/a	n/a
Socio-economic background	Distance Education enrolments \$2,982.00	Students access Distance Education to support education.
Support for beginning teachers	\$220 PL	Staff on Maternity Leave – funds to be utilised during 2018/2019

Student information

Student enrolment profile

Students	Enrolments			
	2014	2015	2016	2017
Boys	32	28	27	22
Girls	31	26	32	27

In 2017, seven Rivendell students were eligible for their Record of School Achievement (RoSA). 12 year 10 students returned to their home schools or other settings to complete their year 10 in 2017.

Higher School Certificate (HSC)

A total of fifteen students sat Higher School Certificate examinations at Rivendell school in 2018. Of these students a total of 6 students left school to continue higher education study or enter the workforce, and a total of 9 students continued HSC Pathways study in 2018.

Workforce information

Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal	1
Deputy Principal(s)	0
Assistant Principal(s)	6
Head Teacher(s)	0
Classroom Teacher(s)	11.01
Teacher of Reading Recovery	0
Learning & Support Teacher(s)	0
Teacher Librarian	0.4
Teacher of ESL	0
School Counsellor	2
School Administration & Support Staff	12.82
Other Positions	1.38

*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.

Head Teacher Student Wellbeing Initiatives

State Office position providing High Schools with support to Year 9 students on suicide prevention.

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 2017 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.

Professional Learning included:

Code of Conduct, Child Protection Update 2017, emergency fire and evacuation training, emergency e-care, a review of the student support system and Professional Standards for Teachers and professional learning around curriculum planning with faculty teams.

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

Individual staff and teams attended offsite Professional Learning including: Autism training, ATSI training, Aspect ASD, Transgender information session, TVET coordinator training, Leading wellbeing by managing mindset, Leadership Coaching, Wellbeing services expose, Autism & Asperger PL, Cheri Conference, Smarter Stronger Training, Happiness Conference, Generation Next, Educating with Neuroscience, Save Your Sanity, Engaging Students with Disability, Secondary English Conference, Asia Pacific Autism Conference, as well as professional learning around classroom management and pedagogy, mental health, wellbeing and creative therapies.

Two teachers achieved accreditation at proficient in 2017. There are two teachers seeking accreditation, with four teachers maintaining at proficient.

Financial information (for schools fully deployed to SAP/SALM)

Financial summary

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017.

	2017 Actual (\$)
Opening Balance	862,830
Revenue	3,777,156
Appropriation	3,680,997
Sale of Goods and Services	0
Grants and Contributions	84,660
Gain and Loss	0
Other Revenue	0
Investment Income	11,499
Expenses	-3,489,059
Recurrent Expenses	-3,489,059
Employee Related	-3,216,231
Operating Expenses	-272,828
Capital Expenses	0
Employee Related	0
Operating Expenses	0
SURPLUS / DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR	288,097
Balance Carried Forward	1,150,928

This summary covers funds for operating costs,

building and major maintenance.

Rivendell Schools holds and processed funds on behalf of the Families First organisation.

Financial summary equity funding

The equity funding data is the main component of the 'Appropriation' section of the financial summary above.

	2017 Actual (\$)
Base Total	489,037
Base Per Capita	22,493
Base Location	0
Other Base	466,544
Equity Total	4,398
Equity Aboriginal	1,416
Equity Socio economic	2,982
Equity Language	0
Equity Disability	0
Targeted Total	2,326,023
Other Total	664,717
Grand Total	3,484,175

Figures presented in this report may be subject to rounding so may not reconcile exactly with the bottom line totals, which are calculated without any rounding.

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

In 2017, Rivendell School staff continued to foster positive relationships with families. Weekly communication emails were sent across all programs and Information Evenings were held each semester. These evenings provided parents with information about the school plan, post-school pathways, program information and this year featured the unveiling of our new website. Our annual Storyweavers event continued to grow in size and feedback from the parent community about the event was very positive.

The end of year survey results indicated that Rivendell School was rated well above the NSW Government Secondary Norm for two way communication with parents. The mean score of Rivendell parents feeling

welcome in the school was 9.3 out of 10 and the mean score of them feeling informed about their child's progress was 9.6 compared to the state secondary average of 6.6.

Parents also rated Rivendell highly in terms of the school supporting learning, positive behaviour and inclusivity, scoring each of these elements 8.3/10, 8.6/10 and 9.1/10 respectively.

The feedback from our parents about communication has been positive, with 100% of parents indicating that they talked to a teacher at least two times per week in 2017.

Student satisfaction

The end of year survey results indicated that Rivendell students rated their teacher-student relations highly with the mean of students rating their teachers 8.3/10 in terms of being responsive to their needs and encouraging of independence with a democratic approach. Students also rated the learning climate and staff expectations of success highly, with mean scores of 7.4 for each of these elements.

Staff satisfaction

The feedback from staff across all area of school activities has been positive. Staff suggestions about curriculum, particular in relation to the Learning Centre and the future delivery of science and further embedding of technology have informed planning for the next school plan.

100% of staff members were a part of at least one school committee with most being a member of at least two, this included School Executive, teaching and SAS staff. The feedback about these committees was mostly positive, with most staff valuing and contributing to the committee group structure but with some indicating it could be simplified.

Staff provided positive feedback about our excursions program that continued to be a key feature of the teaching and learning at Rivendell school in 2017.

Staff surveys of school wide professional development indicated positive feedback. A sample of the data collected from across 2017, indicated that 65% of staff rated staff development day activities as outstanding.

As a whole, Rivendell staff indicated that 2017 was a successful year.

Policy requirements

Aboriginal education

Two staff from the Aboriginal Education team completed professional learning at the Eora College on the 2nd and 3rd of March. This professional learning was a great opportunity to develop an understanding of Aboriginal culture and implement the resources into the school community. An example of this was through the Close the Gap Morning tea, held on the 4th of April.

The morning tea utilised interagency collaboration of the Rivendell School ATSI team, staff from School Link, The Aboriginal Education Team, Getting Back on Time, Rivendell CAMHS and Concord Hospital who worked together to organise the day. On the day of the event students from the SRC helped to host and hand out information pamphlets. Additionally the English and History curriculum teams embedded closing the gap information into their programs during term 1.

On the 24 of March staff attended the 8Ways of learning. This professional learning has helped staff to implement meaningful teaching for all students, but especially for students from Aboriginal backgrounds.

From the 19th of March to 22nd of June and 21st August to 22nd August one member of the ATSI team attended the Stronger Smarter leadership training at the National Centre of Indigenous Excellence. The importance of this program was to embed high expectation relationships within staff and students. The program provided many outstanding resources and strategies that are being utilised within the Homeroom and Learning Centre.

On the 13th of September the school once again hosted an interagency event called the Great Book Swap. The aim of this event was to raise awareness and to close the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous literacy levels. Staff donated books and staff and students brought along books to be swapped at the stall. An impressive total of \$112 was made during this event. This event was a fantastic opportunity for the English and History teams to display student's art work completed in their Book Fair and Changing Rights and Freedoms Units.

Multicultural and anti-racism education

Our school continues to engage in Professional Learning to deepen our understanding and engagement with Aboriginal Culture. We are becoming more familiar with the 8 Ways of Learning which benefits our entire cohort of students. We also constructed our own Welcome to Country so that it has more meaning and relevance for our community. Students in the Learning Centre completed a unit of work looking at Identity, which helped to highlight the strengths in diversity.

Other school programs

Technology

This year we started managing our iPads with a remote Management System called ZuluDesk which means they are easier to use and keep updated. The iPads are increasingly being used in the Learning Centre as a learning resource and the response from the students has been very positive.

We have connected Wifi in the Walker and Gna Ka Lun programs which are located in hospital wards so these students have the same access to technology as the

rest of the school.

Google Classroom has been used to connect students with their work in the Learning Centre and technology has been integrated as a beneficial tool in the learning process. 3D printers have been purchased with endless opportunities for their application in the classroom, from creating prototypes of exercise equipment in PDHPE, to replicating ancient artifacts in HSIE.

New iPads, laptops and desktop computers have been purchased in the annual T4L rollout and as part of setting up the new Paterson classroom.

Transitional/Vocational Education

This year the school formed a Transition Planning group to develop and implement programs and strategies aimed at further supporting students with their transition goals. One of the achievements for this group in 2017 was to create an updated data base for Transition and Vocational Education. This data base provides staff access to contacts for a number of support agencies that have expertise in transition and wellbeing related fields.

Students continued to engage with TVET and Taster courses giving them first hand experience about the opportunities TAFE campuses can offer.

Students took part in a number of focus sessions at school aimed at increasing their knowledge and skills in the following areas – resume writing and interview skills, effective study skills, reducing exam anxiety, relaxation, planning and time management.

The school continued a subscription to JobJump which provided all students and families an opportunity to investigate future pathways and plan for targeted strategies on how to best prepare for their chosen career fields. Staff from outside agencies Youthblock and the Law Society ran regular information sessions at school for Stage 6 students. The topics for these information sessions included friendships, family and social relationships, respecting self, criminal law, and employment law.

Students participated in a number of excursions as part of Transition and cross curricular programs. Some of the excursions attended were Big Day In (Wellbeing) at Sydney Distance Education High School(SDEHS), Big Day In (Technology) at University of Technology Sydney, Creative Careers at Bradfield College, Western Sydney Careers Expo at Sydney Showground, and Careers Expo at SDEHS.

Staff continued developing their knowledge and skills in Transition and Vocational Education by participating in a wide variety of professional learning including Transition and Career Advisors meetings, Careers Expo and Wellbeing Services Expo.

Creative Arts

2017 was an exciting year of Visual Arts, Photography and Design at Rivendell School! The inaugural

Storyweavers event ran for its second year, cuminating in a highly successful event and art exhibition showcasing student talent, and connecting our school and students with the broader community. Students exhibited artworks in a range of media including: ceramics, printmaking, sculpture, painting, drawing, film and digital. As part of the program, students worked with professional writers from the Sydney Story Factory creating a publication of written work, with music producer Michael Moebus to create original compositions, soundpieces, spoken word recordings; and with digital artist Howard to create sculptural pieces and printmaking exhibited a film.

Rivendell students engage in the Visual Arts throughout the year through their coursework, therapy, skills based workshops and embedded within core KLA's. Senior students often study art as an elective subject through their mainstream school or through SDEHS. In weekly workshops students have the opportunity to learn specific skills based on student interests. In 2017 these workshops included: studio photography, film and digital editing, ceramics, printmaking and painting. Rivendell School employs an art therapist and a music therapist, who work with students on self-expression and therapy through creative means. Teaching staff regularly embed the arts across curriculum to increase student engagement, build skills, confidence and resilience in our students. Students regularly participate in creative activities in their homeroom classes including tie-dye, candle making, paper making, lip balm, sewing and mosaic which the students have gone on to successfully sell at the SRC market stall, connecting with local community, gaining skills, building confidence and raising money for the school.

Rivendell School is proud of our connections with the local indigenous community and students explored the themes of place and identity through the Visual Arts. In 2017, Rivendell School was excited to embed the Arts within our schools STEaM days and students attended lectures and creative workshops run by prominent figures including Scientist Dr Karl Kruszelnicki, Sydney Sea Life Ocean Youth facilitator Kasey Turner, and Psychological Architect Jan Golembiewski

Sport

2017 was another big year of sport at Rivendell School with our students participating in a wide range of outdoor recreation and sporting activities. Rivendell students developed their Australian Football League (AFL) skills whilst participating in a term long AFL skills program organised by the Sydney Swans.

Students displayed their basketball talents whilst competing in the Interschool Basketball competition that ran each term between Woniara School and Centennial Park School. We were delighted to see such positive attitudes towards participation and team work. Rivendell students are now often found on the basketball court any chance they get. 2018 will see Rivendell students sporting a new uniform on the court with students designing a uniform and purchasing with funds generously donated by Rotary.

Rivendell School students had the privilege of Cricket NSW running a 6 week clinic on Wednesday afternoons. The clinic involved students learning and developing skills such as catching, throwing, batting and fielding. It was such a success that we are planning on running another clinic by Cricket NSW this year.

The Premier Sports Challenge was also a success with all students gaining a participation award for their efforts during PE on a Wednesday afternoon.

Undoubtedly the most exciting thing last year for the PDHPE team was the development of the new school gym where students have access to brand new fitness equipment that will hopefully inspire students to be more active, more often. We are very excited about this!

Fishing has become a popular activity for our students and we are often fishing by the water's edge around Rivendell School. This excitement for fishing increased with a couple of fishing excursions to Balmain where the "Get Hooked" program led activities focussing on fishing skills such as casting a line and baiting a hook. The program also presented a lesson on sustainable fishing.

It was a great year of sport and outdoor recreation for Rivendell School and we are confident that 2018 will bring many more exciting developments.

Music

Music Therapy at Rivendell continued to grow and expand during 2017. The students who participated in music therapy willingly agreed to join in and experiment with new approaches and ideas in self expression. Song writing and lyric writing became almost a weekly occurrence as students shared their thoughts and experiences through song. Their ability to improvise music also progressed as their trust in music and in each other grew. Music therapy also ventured outside of the music room in 2017. As part of Story Weavers, a small ensemble played music whilst the guests were arriving and being offered canapés and drinks. In term 4, the inaugural 'Day of Music' was held and Centennial Park School, Randwick also attended. This was a day of music making and all who attended appeared to enjoy the day. After the drum circle of nearly 40 people, three elective workshops were offered to the students including Garage Band, Singing and Songwriting. The music making was concluded with a short concert/sharing in the hall. After the concert a tasty lunch in the Sulman building was enjoyed by all participants.

Workshops

In 2017, students at Rivendell School attended weekly workshops on Friday afternoons. These workshops were inclusive of the Walker program and this year, four Walker students participated in workshops with the wider student body. In 2017, the variety of workshops on offer expanded considerably. Students were given an opportunity to engage in a choice of fourteen workshops as well as the option of senior study group for students who required extra time for their study

commitments. The workshops that students engaged in this year were, Learn to DJ and Make Radio, Gardening, Drama, Music, Gym, Combined Multimedia, Mad Science, Photography, Fishing, Debating, Cooking, Craft, Tai Chi and Basketball. The weekly workshops provide students with an opportunity to learn a new skill or explore a particular interest area whilst developing their social skills with peers from outside of their regular program.