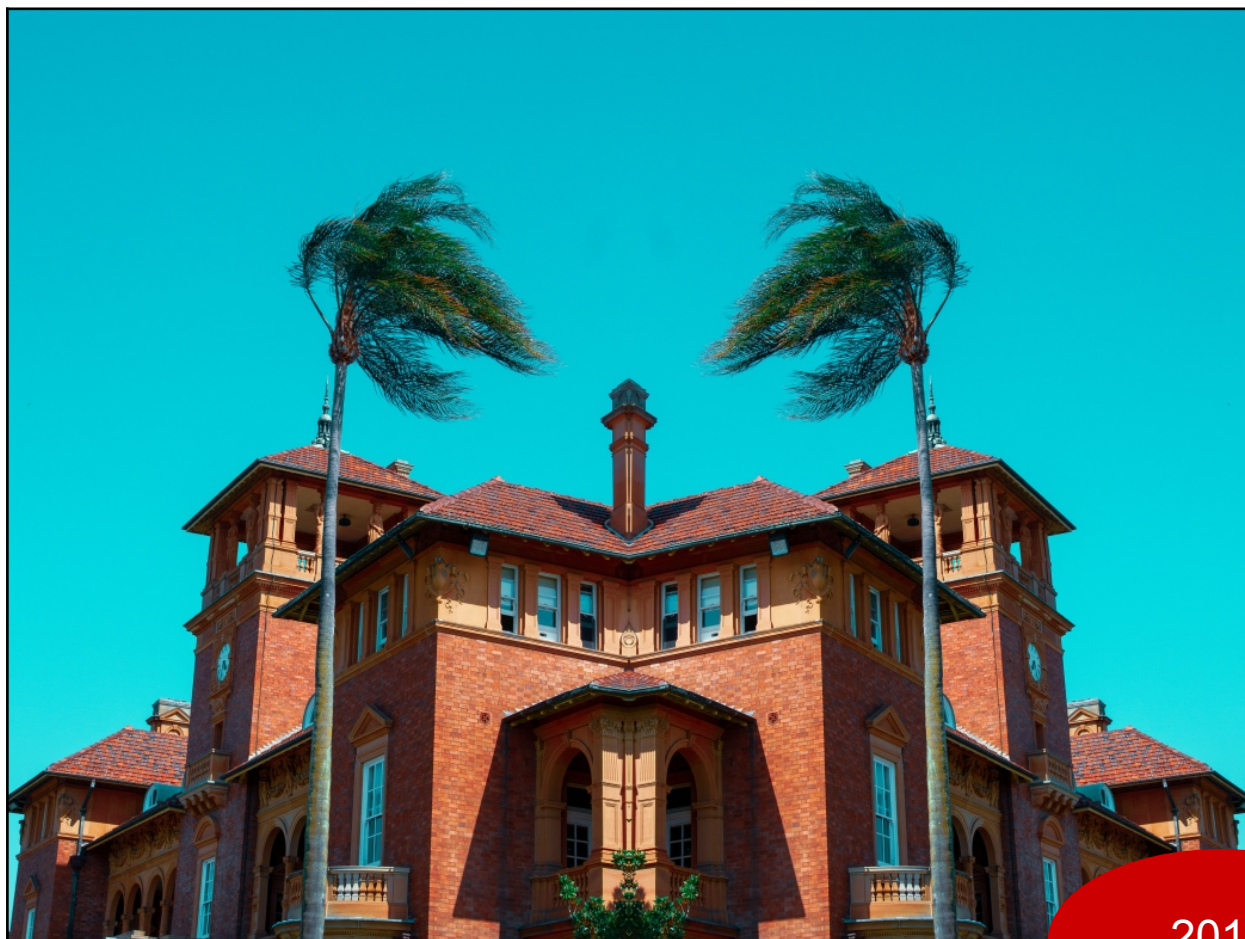


Rivendell School

Annual Report



2018



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Introduction

The Annual Report for **2018** 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

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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; cooperation and participation in quality teaching and learning which is underpinned by the quality teaching framework.

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 and support 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 caters for students in Stages 4 and 5. The Sulman program is a stage 6 program.

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, Individualised Education and Wellbeing Programs, 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.

In 2018, 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 2018, staff and community members engaged in discussions around Rivendell School's progress towards our 2018 milestones. These discussions took place during professional learning sessions, on Staff Development Days, in executive meetings, during parent information evenings, and in strategy group and program meetings. Staff assessed 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 identify our achievements over the last year and identify the significant progress we have made in the areas of **Learning**, **Teaching** and **Leading**.

In the domain of **Learning**, Rivendell School has continued to excel in the areas of **Learning Culture** and **Wellbeing**. This is evident in the ongoing success of the Learning Centre which delivered curriculum across 6 subjects in 2018: English, Mathematics, Science, PDHPE, History and Geography. Teachers adhere to high standards in the Learning Centre and deliver the curriculum in a professional way, resulting in student engagement and achievement of learning outcomes.

The expansion of the Student Representative Council is further evidence of Rivendell School excelling in the domain of **Learning**. The SRC not only provides a key opportunity for all students to 'have regular opportunities to meet with an identified staff member' but is also a vital link between Rivendell and the broader community.

In regards to the elements of **Curriculum and Assessment**, Rivendell School is sustaining and growing. Rivendell School is a complex multidisciplinary setting that provides high quality curriculum for students in Stages 4–6 through 3 different Learning Centres and in partnership with Sydney Distance Education High School. As a school, we enhance our delivery of the curriculum through a variety of school wide excursions and incursions that maintain strong links with activities from the Learning Centre.

In the domain of **Teaching**, Rivendell School has focused on the elements of Effective Classroom Practice, Professional Standards and Learning and Development. For each of these elements we are sustaining and growing.

For Effective Classroom Practice, there is clear evidence of school wide approach to the sharing of curriculum knowledge, feedback and positive classroom management. The development and delivery of the Learning Centre curriculum is a highly collaborative process at Rivendell School. As a result of this collaboration, students engage in high quality learning experiences across key learning areas.

For the elements of Professional Standards and Learning and Development, it is clear that Rivendell School has a 'whole school approach to developing professional practice' and that 'staff collaborate to improve teaching and learning in their classrooms'. The school organises professional learning and development in a way that maximises individual strengths and fosters an environment where the achievement of professional goals is highly valued.

In the domain of **Leading**, there is evidence that Rivendell School continues to excel in the area of School Planning, Implementation and Reporting. For the element of Educational Leadership, we are sustaining and growing.

Rivendell School is known for 'its active support of (improvement in) other schools'. This is evidenced through the strong relationships that Rivendell maintains with other school settings in order to collaboratively support students with complex needs to achieve their goals. The school regularly monitors the impact of its plan in a systematic way through the regular collaboration of the executive and the whole staff in the form of strategy groups.

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 are confident, resilient, future focused learners.

Purpose

To provide students with a positive educational pathway in a teaching and 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 Strategic Direction 1 Group focuses on providing students with a positive educational pathway enabling them to develop academically, socially and in leadership capabilities. In doing so this will contribute to student's planning and preparation for life beyond Rivendell.

In 2018 the Rivendell School Student Representative Council (SRC) continued to improve upon previous years' achievements, and developed innovative student-driven projects. The SRC met each week on Thursday for an hour, with student representatives from every school program. There was an increase in student representatives from the Walker program attending meetings and participating in SRC run activities. One representative from the Walker program attended almost each term, which meant that the SRC body was made up of representatives from every Rivendell School program (excluding GKL).

In 2018, an SRC Google Classroom was created. Meeting minutes, student surveys, important links and assembly slides were uploaded to the classroom, which allowed SRC members to contribute to meetings, collaborate on fundraising projects and work on assembly presentations even if they are absent from school or unable to attend at meeting. A digital platform was especially useful in connecting students from the Walker program to SRC initiatives.

The SRC again held a fundraising market stall at Concord Hospital. Held in Term 2, students sold handmade products to raise money for the school, whilst also gaining confidence and connecting with members from the local community. Toward the end of the year the SRC launched the Bottles 4 Bottles fundraising initiative, through which the Rivendell community were invited to bring in their plastic bottles which were eligible for a Return and Earn refund. The campaign raised \$200, and the funds will go toward purchasing a reusable drink bottle for every student in the school.

In Term 1, the Rivendell School SRC participated in its first off-site excursion to the Generation Next Student Wellbeing and Leadership Program. Seven SRC students attended the program, which was held at the Belvoir St Theatre. The program was an interactive conference aimed at empowering young people to become leaders and advocates for mental wellbeing within their peer groups, families, schools and the wider community.

In Term 4, Rivendell School was involved in the formation of the first interschool SRC meeting, which involved face-to-face collaboration between SRC groups from Rivendell School, Woniora Road School and Centennial Park School. The meeting was held at Woniora Road School, and allowed student leaders to meet like-minded peers and brainstorm future cross-school projects. The meeting strengthened connections between the three schools, and has paved the way for termly interschool SRC meetings in 2019. This event is possibly the first of its kind for Schools for Specific Purposes.

During 2018, as part of our regular practice and in consultation with the school community, staff reviewed Teaching and Learning processes focusing on student success, transition and positive learning environments. Staff joined curriculum groups and cooperatively planned The Learning Centre programs for stages 4 and 5. This year saw staff and students increasing their access to curriculum content and other resources via Google Classroom and other electronic platforms. This enabled students to participate in Learning Centre lessons from a variety of environments. The purchase of additional Yarning mats expanded the use of varied outdoor learning environments. Students contributed their ideas for the expanding Library resources with use of the library and regular borrowing encouraged across the school. Art and Music Therapy sessions continued for all students wanting to participate. A Gym program across the school was established where students have access to small group sessions aimed at improving overall fitness. In addition, the PDHPE sports program included many sports not previously undertaken by students.

Project Based Learning programs continued to operate in programs and in the Learning Centre. Staff participated in a number of professional learning opportunities covering curriculum and mental health topics. Students participated in a number of excursions aimed to complement content taught in key learning areas. Individual Education Program (IEP) meetings involving students, parents, carers and Rivendell staff occurred regularly. In 2018, staff undertook a review of the current IEP process within the school, and this will be a continuing focus for 2019.

You will find further information in the Transition and Vocational Education report section.

Parent nights occurred every semester, highlighting School, Learning and Transition programs.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures		
Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
50% of students will report an increase in positive peer support. 100% of students will have a collaboratively developed individual education plan. 100% of stage 4 and 5 curriculum will be developed by Rivendell faculty teams and delivered in the Rivendell Learning Centre, and for stage 6 to be delivered by an external curriculum provider. 100% of students will have access to leadership opportunities within and beyond the school.	Staff Release – \$2,000.00 Parent Forums – \$140 Excursions/Incursions – \$505 Library Resources – \$2950 Online Resources – \$1000 Learning Centre Resources – \$700	All milestones achieved. Progress recorded via meeting minutes for Strategic Direction 1. Milestones for 2019 flagged for discussion at beginning of term 1. All milestones met – Planning Day held 12 December – Students surveyed and results considered during future planning. To expand survey options in 2019 to include staff and parents.

Next Steps

See 2018 –2020 school plan

Strategic Direction 2

Staff are curriculum focused, forward thinking and connected to all school programs.

Purpose

To support staff in their delivery of quality teaching and learning across all school programs, engagement in strategic professional learning and innovation in curriculum delivery. This will support a culture of reflective practice, enabling successful student outcomes.

Overall summary of progress

Throughout the year staff were involved in numerous Professional Learning (PL) opportunities from a broad spectrum of providers. This PL was closely linked with staff PDP plans and the school plan. In addition staff from Rivendell conducted training for Police & community groups, DoE & Independent schools and Allied Health services. Executive members of staff participated in EDBD executive network meetings & Principal meetings and delivered recommendations to the Secretary of Education.

Staff engaged in meaningful professional learning at Rivendell School throughout the year in a variety of contexts including Staff Development Days and during professional learning afternoons. The content of these sessions varied widely and gave staff the opportunity to engage in PL delivered by health professionals including consultant psychiatrists and a music therapist.

Staff engaged in twilight professional learning sessions that focused on upskilling staff in the use of technology, specifically G Suite, virtual reality in the classroom, iPad Apps, Microsoft 365 and coding using Scratch.

SLSOs had the opportunity to visit other schools to see various responsibilities and opportunities available to SLSOs. The response from these visits was overwhelmingly positive and this initiative will continue into 2019.

During Term 3 a decision was made that Rivendell School would continue with the use of the Sentral System rather than rolling over to the EBS4 system. This was due to the greater capacity of Sentral to meet the school's requirements such as generating reports and IEPs.

Curriculum groups worked collaboratively throughout the year to develop and deliver teaching and learning programs for Stage 4 and 5 across the curriculum areas of English, Mathematics, PDHPE, History, Geography and Science.

All 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 to improve their practice. 100% of the Stage 4 and 5 curriculum will be developed and delivered by Rivendell staff. 100% of Rivendell curriculum will be planned following a 2 year cycle. 100% of staff engage in targeted professional learning.	Staff Professional Learning – \$16881	All teaching and non teaching staff completed their Performance and Development plan to improve practice in 2018. Curriculum planning days were held in order to facilitate the development and delivery of the Stage 4 and 5 curriculum. 100% of staff accessed professional learning, both offsite and onsite (for more information see professional learning).

Next Steps

See 2018 –2020 school plan

Strategic Direction 3

Community partnerships are progressive, collaborative and transition focused.

Purpose

To nurture community partnerships that support students in the achievement of their goals at Rivendell and as they transition to future educational and vocational settings. To ensure all stakeholders work collaboratively in order to support students in their achievement of positive outcomes. To develop and sustain community partnerships that are innovative and progressive in the way they enhance the school community.

Overall summary of progress

2018 continued to see an increase in connections, both within the school and with the outside community. Weekly communication continued with 100% of families valuing the regular feedback. The 'latest news' section of the school website is updated by most programs on a fortnightly basis which gives an insight into the daily life of the school that the wider community can access. The Storyweavers project continued in 2018 and we managed to consolidate our success of past years. There continued to be 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. In 2018 Rivendell School continued our connection with The Rotary Club of Concord which resulted in Rotary attending numerous key school events including Storyweavers and Presentation Day. Rotary have been enormously generous in donating funds to secure key pieces of school equipment. 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 Recovery Centre, Hyde Park Barracks, The Invictus Games, Taronga Zoo, The Big Day In and the Stage 6 Careers Expo. The environmental artist, Marina Debris visited Rivendell and created sculptures with the students from recycled materials. These sculptures were displayed as part of Storyweavers. Our students also engaged in an ongoing basketball competition between Centennial Park and Woniara Road schools both at Rivendell and off site. 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 teachers often visit Rivendell, their support is invaluable. We conducted 3 parent information evenings in 2018 to discuss cyber safety with our Police Youth Liaison Officer, curriculum at Rivendell School with our teachers, and post-school options such as TAFE. A new connection for us in 2018 was working with the Inner West Neighbour Aid group who are providing unique and valuable work experience opportunities for our students in the local area.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
100% increase in school website updates from baseline data taken in 2018. Double the number of community partners. 100% of students will have a transition plan (IEP).	Storyweavers Resources – \$1,200 Storyweavers Contractors – \$10,000 Parent Evenings and Morning Teas – \$310 Excursions – \$190 Invictus Games – \$1200 Recycling Incursion – \$700	Storyweavers was very successful. Over 100 people attended. Presentation Day was also very well run. The purchase on new sound equipment and a new projector assisted greatly.

Next Steps

See 2018 –2020 school plan

Key Initiatives	Resources (annual)	Impact achieved this year
Aboriginal background loading	\$0 funds overspent in 2017	n/a
English language proficiency	n/a	n/a
Socio-economic background	Distance Education enrolments \$3150	Students access Distance Education to support education.
Support for beginning teachers	\$2583 – Professional Learning	Staff on Maternity Leave – funds to be utilised during 2019/2020

Student information

Student enrolment profile

Students	Enrolments			
	2015	2016	2017	2018
Boys	28	27	22	25
Girls	26	32	27	37

Throughout the year Rivendell facilitated the delivery of Year 10 work to 30 students. Nine students were discharged from their therapeutic program and returned back to a mainstream setting to complete their Year 10 studies.

There were 19 students who completed their Year 10 studies while attending Rivendell School. 15 of those students received grades through their census school, four of those students received grades from Rivendell.

Of those 19 students who completed Year 10, four students exited mainstream schooling at the end of Year 10 and received the Record of School Achievement. Three of those students are attending TAFE & one is working.

Higher School Certificate (HSC)

A total of ten students sat Higher School Certificate examinations at Rivendell School in 2018. Of these students a total of six students left school to continue higher education study or enter the workforce, and a total of four students continued HSC Pathways study in 2019.

Workforce information

Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal(s)	1
Assistant Principal(s)	7
Classroom Teacher(s)	12.6
Teacher Librarian	0.6
School Counsellor	2
School Administration and Support Staff	14.82
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, Canterbury and Chipping Norton 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

The Head Teacher Student Wellbeing Initiatives (HTSWI) is a new initiative state based position. The core business of the HTSWI position is to work on a Mental Health pilot program. The HTSWI works closely with the Black Dog Institute to support the implementation of the Youth Aware of Mental Health (YAM) program across Government High Schools. YAM will be progressively delivered in sites across NSW as part of the LifeSpan whole of community, evidence-based approach to suicide prevention and the National Suicide Prevention Trial. In 2019 these sites will be Illawarra/Shoalhaven (Terms 1 and 2), Central Coast (Terms 2 and 3), Murrumbidgee (Terms 3 and 4) and the North Coast (Term 4 and Term 1 2020).

Teacher qualifications

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

Teacher qualifications

Qualifications	% of staff
Undergraduate degree or diploma	30
Postgraduate degree	70

Professional learning and teacher accreditation

In 2018 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 2018 – 2020 school plan.

Professional Learning included:

Code of Conduct, Child Protection Update 2018, 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: The Accidental Counsellor, Mental Health First Aid, Autism Training – Tony Atwood & Sue Larkey, Adobe in Design, Improving Outcomes for Aboriginal Students, Interview Skills, Premium First Aid, SEPLA Conference, Through the Looking Glass, Crossroads, A Practical Approach to the Performance and Development Framework, Youth Mental Health First Aid, Lifting Achievement Yr 7–12, Inspire Innovate, Transformative Journey, Managing Student & Staff Wellbeing, Mental Health in Schools Conference, TedX, TVET Careers, Coding in Stage 4, Unpacking the New PDHPE Syllabus, Managing Difficult Situations in Schools, Save Your Sanity, Supporting Student Sustainability, Women in Education, Effective Decisions for Successful School Leaders, Redbank School Conference, Introduction to Leadership Coaching, Managing Challenging Interactions, Aboriginal Education K–12 Conference, Orienteering Coaching, Basketball Coaching Accreditation, Understanding Intergenerational Disadvantage, PSA Mental Health Conference, Peaceful Kids, Kayaking Accreditation, Healthy Ways, Healthy Communities and Youth Empowerment.

14 teachers achieved accreditation at proficient in 2018. There were no teachers seeking accreditation, with 10 teachers maintaining at proficient.

Financial information

Financial summary

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2018.

	2018 Actual (\$)
Opening Balance	1,150,928
Revenue	4,776,548
Appropriation	4,755,898
Sale of Goods and Services	0
Grants and Contributions	9,384
Gain and Loss	0
Other Revenue	0
Investment Income	11,266
Expenses	-3,751,625
Recurrent Expenses	-3,751,625
Employee Related	-3,566,454
Operating Expenses	-185,171
Capital Expenses	0
Employee Related	0
Operating Expenses	0
SURPLUS / DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR	1,024,924
Balance Carried Forward	2,175,851

This summary includes funds for operating costs, building and major maintenance.

Rivendell School holds and processes funds on behalf of the Resourcing Parents organisation.

Balance Carried Forward includes a funding allocation for Professional Learning and Resource Allocation to support students, this will be utilised in 2019.

Financial summary equity funding

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

	2018 Actual (\$)
Base Total	640,706
Base Per Capita	28,460
Base Location	0
Other Base	612,246
Equity Total	4,267
Equity Aboriginal	705
Equity Socio economic	3,162
Equity Language	400
Equity Disability	0
Targeted Total	2,609,260
Other Total	681,327
Grand Total	3,935,560

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

In 2018, Rivendell School staff continued to foster positive relationships with families. Weekly communication emails were sent to families from 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 a specific session on cyber-safety. Our annual Storyweavers event was again successful and feedback from our community about the event was very positive.

Staff satisfaction

The feedback from staff across all school programs has been positive. Staff suggestions about consolidating the systems initiated over the past year have informed planning for the new year. 100% of staff members were a part of groups to ensure continued progress towards the milestones of our School's strategic directions. This included School Executive, teaching and SAS staff. The structure of these groups was simplified in 2018 and

this has been well received by staff. Staff provided positive feedback about the Learning Centre that continued to be a key feature of the teaching and learning at Rivendell school in 2018.

Parent Satisfaction

The end of year survey results indicated that parents of Rivendell School were very happy with two way communication with teachers. The feedback from our parents about Rivendell meeting the needs of the students is very positive.

Student satisfaction

The end of year survey results indicated that Rivendell students were very involved in school activities such as the running of the Student Representative Council (SRC). The SRC was also seen as having a strong voice in the school community that has a real impact on the direction of the school. One quote from the student survey when asked for any comments about the Rivendell School program, said "it's a great school, I wouldn't be where I am now without it".

Policy requirements

Aboriginal education

In 2018, 6 Staff members attended 4 different Aboriginal Education Professional Learning courses. The courses attended were 'Healthy Culture, Healthy Country,' a two day programme; 'Improving Educational Outcomes for Aboriginal Students;' the 'Aboriginal Education Conference' held at the Sydney Opera House, Bennelong Point; and the 'Aboriginal Education 7-12 conference' held at the Teacher's Federation building, Sydney.

Aboriginal perspectives, culture and history were taught throughout the year in a variety of curricular and cross-curricular lessons. Some of these lessons were: the study of poetry by female Aboriginal authors, the study of the film 'The Sapphires' via SDEHS, a research project into the local area's Aboriginal history, Dadirri meditations inspired by the Aboriginal peoples of the Daly River region in the Northern Territory, and the creation of a unique Walker Unit Learning Centre 'Acknowledgement of Country' based on the local area research. The 'Great Book Swap' has become an annual event hosted by the Rivendell SRC with funds being raised to support the Indigenous Literacy Foundation. Our Aboriginal Education initiatives were shared by staff and students on the Rivendell School website throughout the year.

The below Acknowledgement of Country was developed by Rivendell students following their research into the history of the school's local area.

"I would like to respectfully acknowledge the Wangal people who were one of the first Aboriginal people to encounter British settlers. The Wangal Clan lived in this place we now call Concord, and where Hen and Chicken Bay was an important Wangal Clan meeting place. The Wangal Clan is one of 29 clans of the Eora

Nation. I would like to pay my respects to the Elders, both past, such as Bennelong, and present Elders and Aboriginal people of this land where we meet today.

Multicultural and anti-racism education

Our school continues to engage in Professional Learning to deepen our understanding and engagement with Aboriginal Culture. We have a diverse staff who are strongly committed to creating a harmonious workplace and learning environment.

Other school programs

Transition and Vocational Education

The initiative of a whole school Transition Program was realised with the appointment of a Transition Support Teacher early in 2018. Throughout 2018, the main goal was to initiate a clear, meaningful and directed Transition Program that extended over Stages 5 and 6 and that catered for the needs of all students enrolled at Rivendell School. The Transition Team met each term for a Planning Day to organise and implement strategies to ensure this goal was being achieved. The role of Transition Support Teacher was pivotal in supporting educational and clinical staff in their endeavour to create opportunities for students to ensure long-term success. Working collaboratively with various staff members as well as external agencies, the Transition Support teacher was able to ensure that individual students could access the necessary supports and confidently explore the options available to them. Through the implementation of Individual Transition Plans, students were able to identify realistic and achievable goals and created connections to a quality career and transition pathways beyond Rivendell School.

In 2018, a number of community-based partnerships were established. A whole school Work Experience Program was set up in partnership with the Inner West Neighbour Aid, where students were able to join the Garden Aid Project. A number of students also engaged in individual work experience opportunities and worked with staff to prepare a resume and apply for casual employment. Stage 6 students participated in a four week School to Employments Pathways (STEP) program run onsite by NOVA Employment to help prepare them for employment and life beyond schooling. Individual students completing Stage 6 were also referred to community organisations such as NOVA Employment, Mission Australia and YEP Agency to ensure continued access to structured support after leaving Rivendell School.

Students were provided with various opportunities to explore and engage with tertiary education settings. They attended courses through the Youth Engagement Strategy, TVET and TAFE open days. School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships were also explored and implemented in modes of study where appropriate. Students also participated in a number of excursions to further their knowledge and experience of transition

opportunities. These included the Western Sydney Careers Expo at the Sydney Show Ground, Big Day In (Wellbeing) and Careers Expo at Sydney Distance Education High School, Big Day In (Technology) at University of Technology and tours and information days at various other settings.

The school maintained a subscription to JobJump in 2018, which aimed to provide students, families and staff a platform through which they could explore individualised future pathways. Students were also able to access support from various external agencies including Youthblock, the Law Society and UAC which all ran information sessions throughout 2018.

Staff also continued to participate in professional learning that furthered their knowledge and skills in the area of Transition and Vocational Education. This included information sessions at other settings by providers of education and employment, participation in Transition and Career Advisor meetings in the local area and at the end of 2018, the Transition Support Teacher undertook the Departments Transition Advisor Training.

Creative Arts

The Creative Arts are an integral part of education and therapy at Rivendell School. Art provides a unique vehicle of self-expression, allowing students to grow in confidence, explore cultural heritage, and view their world from different perspectives. At Rivendell, students engage in art through 1:1 lessons, group art and music therapy. Senior study is delivered through Sydney Distance High School, during program and workshop times and whole school art programs. In 2018, students developed new skills and created artworks a range of mediums including: drawing and painting, sculpture, printmaking, textiles, photography and digital arts.

Storyweavers is an annual art exhibition and event held by Rivendell School and in 2018 the theme *My World* framed the artwork and writing created for the exhibition. Students worked in collaboration with resident artist and writers including Bilal Hafda and Tammy Burnstock from the Sydney Story Factory, sound engineer Michael Moebus and digital artist Howard Matthew. Run by the Rivendell SRC, the event brought students together with their local community and provided an opportunity to showcase their collaborative and individual works, allowing students to tell their stories and foster a positive sense of self.

As part of the Storyweavers project, students were fortunate to work with renowned environmental artist Marina Debris. Students collected litter from the Rivendell foreshore which they used as material to create marine animals, highlighting the devastating impact waste has on our local environment. These sculptures were displayed in the Watergate at the Rivendell Storyweavers event. Students created a series of short films that explored ideas of place and belonging with digital artist Howard Matthews. Student music and poetry created a backdrop of soundscapes connecting the audience with the world of individual students at Rivendell School. Storyweavers *My World* can be seen as Rivendell School's most successful

event to date when measured by positive feedback and increased attendance from parents, families and the local community.

Music

Making music at Rivendell has continued to increase in momentum as new students arrived and more seasoned students progressed in their music skills and ability to process their emotions through making music. Over the last 12 months, the students from Sulman and Paterson have developed new skills in playing music together, in improvising and also in writing their own music. Each week they ventured into the world of music and each week there was wonderment at "how did we sound so good?"

The Music Program also firmly established the opportunity for individual sessions throughout the school day on a Thursday. Students learnt how to gauge whether they would benefit from an individual session or whether they would attend a group music session. This understanding of what they needed in and from music has become well established over 2018.

With the progress in skills and connection with music, a confidence in how and what the students played also developed. This resulted in some students participating in group performances at key events during the school year including Story Weavers and Presentation Day. These opportunities to perform showcased the abilities of the players, but also served to represent the part of the student body who found performing challenging.

Workshops

In 2018, students at Rivendell School attended weekly workshops on Friday afternoons. These workshops were inclusive of the Walker program and this year, nine Walker students participated in workshops with the wider student body. In 2018, the variety of workshops on offer expanded considerably. Students were given an opportunity to engage in a choice of 27 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, Fishing, Art, Ten Pin Bowling, Photography, Board Games, Textiles, Cards, Trivia, Video Gaming, Debating, Soccer, Knitting, Work Ready, Yoga/Meditation, Book Club, Tennis, Photoshop, Languages, 3D Printing, Hockey, Boxercise, Guerrilla Poetry, Gym, Drawing, Christmas Craft, Study Group and Senior Study Group. 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.

Sport

2018 saw Rivendell School sport go from strength to strength. Our students participated in a wide range of both indoor and outdoor recreation and sporting activities.

Rivendell students strengthened community ties on a

number of sporting fronts this year. They developed their Australian Football League (AFL) skills whilst participating in a term long AFL skills program organised by the Sydney Swans and 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.

This year was our most successful year yet in our interschool basketball challenge with our first ever tournament victory. Sporting some slick new basketball uniforms designed by students in the previous year, Rivendell students engaged with students from Woniora School and Centennial Park School developing sportsmanship and camaraderie.

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

The PDHPE Gym program has rapidly become part of the Rivendell culture with students accessing the gym via group training sessions, personalised programs and supervised casual use. The gym continues to be improved with the purchase of additional equipment to meet the growing needs of our students.

Students also had the option to participate in Hockey workshops which tapped into a completely new skill set. It also provided them with another opportunity to develop teamwork skills and strategies.

In working with the health program, the initial stages of a kayaking program have commenced with the purchase of seven new kayaks. This program's purpose lends itself to both DET and Health outcomes for our students. The kayaking sessions are scheduled to be run in the warmer terms and will, no doubt, become a fun fixture of the Rivendell sports program.

Rivendell was successful in securing a grant from the sporting schools foundation. This grant will serve to enhance our growing bank of equipment as well as provide students with external sporting body workshops in an effort to continue to strengthen community links.

Rivendell have adapted a worldwide initiative to get young people moving by introducing a 'daily mile' walk before commencing their academic program. This has been most successful and well received by students and staff who start their day with a clearer mindset and a spring in their step.

Overall, Rivendell has seen a huge rise in participation in particular with students who have had limited access and exposure to sporting endeavours and physical activities. We are delighted to see our school culture embrace a more active lifestyle. This is in the hope that students will continue to seek out opportunities to be more active both outside of school and into adulthood.

Technology

The implementation of Technology continued to grow throughout 2018. Throughout the year staff were

trained in Google Docs & Microsoft Office. These mediums were utilised by staff around the school.

At the end of the year a survey was conducted to see what technological needs were required. These computers will be purchased and provided to the relevant staff in 2019.

Two staff members participated in technology training to implement the mandatory technology stage 4 syllabus, as a result of this the school has 30 sets of Little Bird Electronic kits that will be coded with students in the school during 2019.

A digital microscope was purchased for use of Senior students studying Biology and also for students in the learning centre. This microscope has the capacity for students to see the magnification displayed on the interactive whiteboard. This microscope was supplemented with a set of 20 microscopes that students used individually to explore objects of interest.

Throughout the year students participated in 3D printing workshops. Students enjoyed these opportunities to design and print items. Filament was purchased for the workshops next year so that students can design and print food moulds.

A set of Wacom tablets were purchased for the school to enable students to complete workshops in CAD & Digital design. Next year workshops will be conducted to teach students how to utilise programs such as Photoshop and Illustrator.