



Riverland Special School 2016 Annual Report to the School Community



Government
of South Australia

Department for Education
and Child Development

Riverland Special School Number: 962

Partnership: Berri & Barmera

Name of School Principal:

Mrs. Carolyn Trifonoff

Name of Governing Council Chair:

Mr Alan Kuchel

Date of Endorsement:

School Context and Highlights

The Riverland Special School is situated in Berri, in the Riverland in South Australia. The school is approximately 240 kms from Adelaide and 160 kms from Mildura in Victoria. The school was built on the current site in 2013

The school is the only Special School in the Riverland and Upper Mallee and is one of the special education options for young people from the Berri- Barmera, Renmark-Paringa and Loxton-Waikerie Council areas.

To attend the Riverland Special School, a student must have a verified intellectual disability and have been through a Special Options placement process.

As an R-12+ site, students range in age from 5 to 20. As well as an intellectual disability, a significant number of the student population have other verified impairments including hearing, visual, physical and autism spectrum disorder.

In 2016 there were 67 students at the school with a range of intellectual and sensory impairments in 8 classes.

25 students also have Autism Spectrum Disorders

6 students also have physical disabilities

2 students have severe vision and auditory impairments

2 students also have severe multiple disabilities

Our purpose: "To provide excellence in special education for students with intellectual disabilities."

Our Vision: "That all students have suitable and successful post school pathways."

Our Motto: "Celebrating ability "

Our Values: "Respect, Responsibility, Service, Success"

Highlights of 2016 include:

Mr Andrew's Retirement Farewell as we celebrated his achievements and 27 years as teacher and Principal of the Riverland Special School.

We farewelled our 7 Graduating students as they moved onto new chapters in their lives

The successful trial of the ABLES assessment programme

Excellent SACE results for the third year in a row.

The Senior School Prom

Twilight Craft Fair 2016 raised \$10,000 for the school

Duke of Edinburgh Award Winners

School Rock Band, School Choir and School Dance Drama Group

Jock Henry's Art Visit and Art Show at Renmark Paringa Council Chambers.

Special Guides



Governing Council Report

2016 Annual Report from Alan Kuchel
School Council Chairman.

This being the first year of being involved with this school council, I have enjoyed my time serving on the council. Firstly, I would like to say thank you to all council members for their time and effort they put in, a special mention to Shann Hausler our secretary for all her hard work. The staff have been a pleasure to work with, special mention to Mrs. Trifonoff, and her always being available to talk about anything.

I feel the school had a very good year, with a couple hiccups during the year, but any problems were worked through and sorted out. The school camps went off smoothly and the students, who went on them enjoyed themselves while away. Special thankyou to all the staff who took such good care of the students on these camps. School Sports day was well attended by families supporting children in their events and competition. This was held with great sportsmanship and enthusiasm by all competitors.

I have to say a very big thank you to all who were involved in setting up, organizing, planning and helping out with the 2016 Craft Fair. Your work and time is greatly appreciated by all.

Unfortunately, I was not available for presentation day, due to having a pre-arranged appointment in Adelaide. I will make sure I will keep the last week of school free this year and keep it clear, so I will be able to attend. Congratulations to those students who graduated last year, and welcome to the new students who have arrived for the new year.

Regards

Alan Kuchel

Improvement Planning and Outcomes

In our 2015/16 Site Improvement Plan, staff identified 3 areas for improvement. These are

1. Assessment and Data Collection
2. Attendance
3. Communication and Language

In 2016, we joined other Special Schools in trialling the Ability Based Learning and Education Support (ABLES) programme, which has been specifically designed for students with intellectual disabilities.

The ABLES programme uses online tools to enable the teacher to assess, monitor and respond to each children's abilities. The teacher can then more accurately identify and set learning goals for the students. T

Currently the areas assessed are English, Speaking and Listening; English, Reading and Writing; Personal and Social Capability:Self: Personal and Social Capability:Social; Personal and Social Capability:Self Emotion.

Teacher feedback has been very positive and the Profile Reports showing progress and comparisons from June to November were included in Student End of Year Reports. Staff also use other strategies, assessment resources and data collection processes included on the Site Improvement Plan, to track student achievement.

Assessment and Data Collection will continue to be on our Site Improvement Plan in 2017.

Communication and Language, as a significant aspect of Literacy will also continue to be on Site Improvement Plan 2017.

The main goal is to ensure ALL students have an effective and appropriate form of communication.

The introduction of Intensive Interaction has resulted in significant improvements in the communication and relationships of our students with severe disabilities and communication impairments.

In 2017 Intensive Interaction will become part of the curriculum for identified students, while PODD, PECS, Proloquo2go and other assistive technologies and strategies will assist intentional communicators with speech or communication impairments.

All students will continue to have specific communication goals, related to Language and Literacy.

Student attendance has been one of the most challenging areas for improvement. We have identified a number of issues which relate to attendance for students at RSS (as listed on the Site Improvement Plan). We are working with families to improve student attendance while taking into account issues like chronic illness, susceptibility of fragile students to infection, transport, family difficulties and particularly in 2016, NDIS appointments offsite.

Key areas worked upon: were to decrease the number of unexplained (U) absences; to have more information about Family (F) coded absences; to work with families to improve the attendance of chronic non attenders; to improve all processes of attendance data collection.

School Performance Comment

At Riverland Special School, we focus on ability rather than disability and celebrate the progress and amazing abilities and talents of our students every day. This progress may take many forms but it is all about learning.

As each child and young person has different strengths and needs, our curriculum, which is based on the Australian Curriculum, the Early Years Framework and the RSS Curriculum Framework, is highly differentiated.

- All students have a personal Negotiated Education Plan, which is based on individual and specific goals for each student. Goals are reviewed and new goals set as earlier goals are accomplished.
- These goals may be academic, developmental, behavioural or based on essential life skills, depending on the age and ability of the student. A formal NEP meeting is held at least once a year for each student.
- Once students turn 16 they and their families take part in Now & Next meetings, which involve Transition Planning from school to post school options. These meetings involve Disability Employment Groups, local DECD Disability Coordinators, Disability SA personnel and any other relevant service providers who may assist in the transition to life after school. A brief written report on goal progress is provided to families mid year, with a more comprehensive, overall report at the end of the year.
- Our Junior classes access the Early Years Framework and participate in a Play and Nature -Play Based curriculum.
- Many of these children are successfully achieving important developmental skills, including listening, speaking, sitting, eating, toilet training etc.
- The Arts, Sport and Recreation and Personal Development all play a significant role in both curriculum and well being and enable our young people to learn skills, gain self confidence and self esteem and provide options for recreation and interests for the future.

In 2016

- For the third year in a row, RSS had 100% completion rate for our Senior SACE students
- After graduation 2 are working independently, 2 are working in supported employment, 1 has successfully completed a school based apprenticeship and .2 are engaged in Day Options programmes.
- Our successful Dance Theatre Ensemble, In-Fusion, have participated twice in the Focus on Ability Short Film Festival. In 2016, the students were invited to attend a FOA Film screening in Adelaide as winners of the Nova Choice Award in 2015 (Keep Dancing https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W_qYMvjdfAI)
- Our School Rock Band has performed at the Riverland Field Days, Craft Fair, Presentation Day and at two combined schools concert.
- An Art Show at the Renmark Council Chambers, celebrated a year of our students' visual artwork, including paintings created by classes after the school secured Country Arts funding for a workshop by a visiting artist (Henry Jock Walker)
- Our Duke of Edinburgh Award programme had another successful year with 13 students involved. 1 student completed the Gold Award and 2 completed Bronze Award.
- Congratulations to all our students who have achieved so much in 2016.

Attendance

Year level	2014	2015	2016
Primary Other	88.4%	83.5%	81.7%
Secondary Other	94.6%	91.7%	90.8%
Total	89.7%	88.3%	87.3%

Data Source: Site Performance Reporting System, Semester 1 Attendance.

Note: A blank cell indicates there were no students enrolled.

Attendance Comment

In 2015-2016, attendance was listed on our Site Improvement Plan. We have identified a number of issues, which affect the attendance of students with disabilities attending a regional school. These include susceptibility to illnesses, medical and therapeutic appointments (NDIS) & transport issues. We work hard to maintain strong positive relationships with families of students at risk to and follow up all absences as part of the 'on site, in sight' strategy. T

Behaviour Management Comment

Most Behaviour Management issues are related to student communication or sensory issues. We use Restorative Justice practices to allow the students to express their feelings and have input in to possible consequences. We endeavour to teach the students to take responsibility for their actions
The school is committed to only using Non-Restrictive practices and proactive strategies to defuse or de-escalate student behavioural issues. Bullying is uncommon and suspensions and exclusions are only considered when all other channels have been exhausted.

Client Opinion Summary

No parent surveys were returned in 2016, however parent feedback during NEPs has been positive, particularly from the parents of new students to the school. One parent, whose child had transferred from mainstream, thanked us for our assistance and understanding during an NEP, saying "Thank you, you guys get it. You understand. At the other school they just didn't get it!"

Our Facebook page has continued to be a successful way to share information with parents and the community and foster positive relationships. Our reviews have been good with a 4.8 Star rating.

Examples of 2016 feedback:

"This is an amazing school sending my daughter here was the best decision I ever made! The students and teachers are all such beautiful people"

"Had a fantastic night at Riverland Special School. I had never been before and I was pleasantly surprised by the quality of the event and the fantastic community spirit that permeated the whole evening. Awesome." (Twilight Craft Fair)

TfEL student surveys have been used previously to gather information on how our students see their learning. Results were qualitative rather than quantitative and as the sample was across the R-12+ range, answers reflected both age and understanding.

It became evident that survey questions need to be carefully worded, asked and recorded, to reflect student voice.

A later, school-devised survey of a sample of Senior students, showed that the students were able to express their opinions and ideas about their learning quite successfully and openly.

8 students reflected on their goals, the teachers they worked with, the class dynamics and how they felt about their own learning. (Examples below)

Statement: The teacher knows me and often connects to things I am interested in.

Yes - 6 (1 "Definitely") Unsure -2 (1 - "He just teaches us what to learn, but not connected to what I am interested in")

Statement: In the class we generally get on well.

Yes - 7 Unsure - 1 "It's hard to be the only girl. The teacher tries to make it work"

Statement: I feel good about myself as a learner.

Yes - 8

Statement: I set goals to aim for.

Yes - 4 Unsure - 2 No - 1



Intended Destination

Leave Reason	School	
	Number	%
Employment	0	NA
Interstate/Overseas	0	NA
Other	0	NA
Seeking Employment	5	33.3%
Tertiary/TAFE/Training	0	NA
Transfer to Non-Govt School	0	NA
Transfer to SA Govt School	2	13.3%
Unknown	8	53.3%
Unknown (TG - Not Found)	0	NA

Data Source: Education Department School Administration System (EDSAS) Data extract Term 4 2016.

DECD Relevant History Screening

All teaching staff, School Services Officers, our Pastoral Care Worker and our Aboriginal Education Worker have Relevant History Screening, either through the Teachers Registration Board or through the Department of Communities and Social Inclusion.

All relieving staff, volunteers, external health and therapy providers and all service providers must present current DCSI RHS clearances

Copies of all certificates or clearances are kept on file, with both digital and hard copies.

DECD guidelines are strictly followed at all times.

Teacher Qualifications and Workforce Composition

All teachers at this school are qualified and registered with the SA Teachers Registration Board.

Qualification Level	Number of Qualifications
Bachelor Degrees or Diplomas	31
Post Graduate Qualifications	4

Data Source: DECD HR Management Reporting System, extracted Term 4 2016.

Please note: Staff who have more than 1 qualification will be counted more than once in the above qualification table. Therefore the total number of staff by qualification type may be more than the total number of teaching staff.

Workforce Composition including Indigenous staff

	Teaching Staff		Non-Teaching Staff	
	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous
Full-Time Equivalents	0.0	11.8	0.2	16.4
Persons	0	14	1	20

Data Source: DECD HR Management Reporting System, extracted Term 4 2016.

Financial Statement

Funding Source	Amount
Grants: State	2,530,231.51
Grants: Commonwealth	9,186
Parent Contributions	30,026.87
Fund Raising	16,985.70
Other	1,402.23

Data Source: Data Source: Education Department School Administration System (EDSAS).

2016 School Annual Report: Tier 2 Funding Report*

*Tier 2 funding provides additional resources to support students who are unlikely to obtain the desired outcomes without further support.

Tier 2 Funding Section	Tier 2 Category (where applicable to the site)	Briefly describe how the 2016 funding was used to improve the relevant Standard of Educational Achievement (SEA) outcomes	Outcomes achieved or progress towards these outcomes
Targeted Funding for Individual Students	Improved Behaviour Management and Engagement	SSO hours to assist in behaviour and achievement of individual goals	Improvement in targeted goal
	Improved Outcomes for Students with an Additional Language or Dialect	N/A	
	Improved Outcomes for Students with Disabilities	SSO hours to assist in behaviour and achievement of individual goals	Improvement in targeted goals
Targeted Funding for Groups of Students	Improved Outcomes for - Rural & Isolated Students - Aboriginal Students - Numeracy and Literacy First Language Maintenance & Development Students taking Alternative Pathways Students with Learning Difficulties Grant	Any funding assists in purchase of sso hours or teacher salaries to improve learning programmes for students at school.	Support for students to achieve personal goals
	Australian Curriculum	Teacher Professional development in curriculum areas and methodologies relevant for children with Intellectual disabilities	Teacher proficiency and skill levels improved.
Other Discretionary Funding	Aboriginal Languages Programs Initiatives	N/A	
	Better Schools Funding	Better Schools Funding was used to continue the Move to Learn Programme, run on site by a professional Occupational Therapist. This programme has become self sustaining as staff members are running the programme in 2017	Improvement in coordination and signs of improvement in cognitive aspects
	Specialist School Reporting (as required)	N/A	
	Improved Outcomes for Gifted Students	N/A	
	Primary School Counsellor (if applicable)		