



SCHOOL CONTEXT STATEMENT

Updated: Feb 2017

School number: 0962

School name: Riverland Special School

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.

In 2013, a new school was built at 50a Burgess Dve, next to Glossop High School Senior Campus and opened in January 2014.

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

The school is the only Special School in the Riverland and Upper Mallee and comprises young people from the Berri-Barmera, Renmark-Paringa and Loxton-Waikerie Council areas. As an R-12+ site, students range in age from 5 to 21.

In 2017, there are 66 students in 8 classes at the school. All students have a range of intellectual and sensory impairments. 28 students have Autism Spectrum Disorders.

At Riverland Special School we believe :

- children and young people are at the centre of everything we do.
- all children and young people can learn.
- all children and young people have abilities, skills and talents and part of our role is to identify and develop these talents.
- we all have the right to be safe.
- our school is part of a 'team around the child'
- wellbeing is essential for successful learning.
- in celebrating ability

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 Values: *Respect, Responsibility, Service, Success*

Our Motto: *"celebrating ability"*



1. General information

- School Principal: Carolyn Trifonoff
- Year of opening: 1962 New site: 2014
- Postal Address: 50a Burgess Drive Berri 5343
- Location Address: 50a Burgess Drive Berri 5343
- DECD Region: Murray & Mallee
- Telephone number: 08 85821258
- Fax Number: 08 85823215
- School website address: www.riverlansp.sa.edu.au
- School e-mail address: dl.0962_info@schools.sa.edu.au
- Child Parent Centre attached: No
- Out of School Hours Care (OSHC): No
- February FTE student enrolment: 66
- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) student enrolment: 13

SCHOOL ENROLMENTS					
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Primary	19	24	33	30	40
Secondary	45	40	37.4	37	26
Total	64	64	70.4	67	66
Total School Card: July					38 (Feb)
Male FTE					41
Female FTE					25
Aboriginal FTE Enrolment					14

Staff numbers (as at February census)

Teaching Staff

- Principal 1
- Co-Ordinator 0.9
- Teachers 10.4

Non Teaching Staff

- SSO 509.25 Hrs
 - AEW 9.0 Hrs
 - GSE 7.5 Hrs
 - PCW 18Hrs
- **Public transport access:**
 - ❖ RSS is 2.7 kms from the Berri Post Office and there is no specific public transport to the school.
 - ❖ The *Department for Education and Child Development*, provides transport assistance, including bus/ taxi transport or car reimbursement for students at the school.

2. Students (and their welfare)

- **General characteristics**
 - ❖ All students have an intellectual disability. Some may also have a physical or sensory disability
 - ❖ Some students may have Severe Multiple Disabilities.
 - ❖ 28 students have Autism Spectrum Disorders.
- **Student well-being programs**
 - ❖ Special Guides
 - ❖ Class Breakfast programmes
 - ❖ Christian Option Programme : *Follow Jesus*
- **Student support offered**
 - ❖ Pastoral Care Worker
 - ❖ Wellbeing Team
 - ❖ Each classroom has additional SSO staff to support student learning and personal developmental needs.

- **Student government**
 - ❖ Prefects
 - ❖ House Captains,
 - ❖ Student Representative Council (SRC)

- **Special programmes include**
 - ❖ *The Duke of Edinburgh's Award* Programme
 - ❖ *Special Guides* Unit
 - ❖ *In-Fusion* (Dance Theatre Student Ensemble)
 - ❖ School Rock Band
 - ❖ Core Skills programme
 - ❖ *Move to Learn* Programme
 - ❖ Christian Option Programme

3. Key School Policies

- **Site Improvement Plan and other key statements or policies:**
 - ❖ Site Improvement Plan 2017-2018
 - ❖ Annual Report
 - ❖ Bully Policy
 - ❖ Parental Complaint Policy

4. Curriculum

- ❖ The School's curriculum framework is specifically designed to support students with intellectual disabilities and is based on the Australian Curriculum and the Early Years Framework.
- ❖ Senior Students work towards achieving their South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE)

- **Student assessment procedures and reporting**
 - ❖ Student reporting occurs twice a year:
 - ❖ Each student has a Negotiated Education Plan and receives a formal report at the end of each school year.
 - ❖ NEP meetings are held at least once a year, usually at the end of Term 1 and all parents receive a copy of the NEP, which includes the student's individual goals.
 - ❖ These goals, or new ones if completed, are reported on at the end of the year.

- ❖ In 2016, the Ability Based Learning and Education Support (ABLES) programme was introduced. This has become an integral part of the school's assessment, data collection and reporting.
 - ❖ Senior students are assessed as part of their SACE programme.
- **Joint programmes:**
 - ❖ *Now and Next* – Future pathways for senior student transition (*Preparing for Post School Options*)
Now & Next Meetings include Disability Support Services and Disability Employment Services
 - ❖ *Community Recycling Programme with Riverland Respite & Recreation Services* and local Recycling businesses.

5. Sporting Activities

- ❖ Swimming
- ❖ Cross Country
- ❖ Basketball Competition
- ❖ The school has a Specialist Teacher in PE, Fitness and Outdoor Education.

6. Other Co-Curricular Activities

- ❖ Student Leadership Camp
- ❖ The Duke of Edinburgh Award Camps
- ❖ School Fashion Parade/Senior Prom (run on alternate years.)
- ❖ Twilight Craft Fair (Annual RSS Fundraiser)
- ❖ Class camps/sleepovers

7. Staff (and their welfare)

- **Staff profile**
 - ❖ Staff members range across all age and experience groups, including 3 teachers in their first 3 years and 3 with over 20 years experience.
- **Leadership structure**
 - ❖ The formal leadership structure consists of the Principal and a Level 2 Co-ordinator.
 - ❖ Informally, all staff have opportunities for leadership, in curriculum, well being and special programmes.

- ❖ Many staff members are available for outreach assistance, mentoring or advising staff from other schools in areas of Special Education
- ❖ 5 teachers have achieved Step 9.
- ❖ 2017 1 teacher working to achieve HAT (Highly Accomplished Teacher) status
- **Staff support systems**
 - ❖ The Principal and Co-Ordinator provide support and redirect staff to other agencies. (eg Employee Assistance Programme, Workcover, AEU etc) when necessary.
 - ❖ The Pastoral Care Worker is an integral part of the school's well being and support team.
- **Performance Management**
 - ❖ DECD's Performance and Development Policy is adhered to, with regular professional discussions between leadership and both teaching and ancillary staff.
 - ❖ Formal Performance Development meetings with the Principal and Leadership Team are held annually.

9. School Facilities

- **Buildings and grounds**
 - ❖ The new school, built at 50a Burgess Drive, Berri was completed in 2013.
 - ❖ Buildings and facilities include an Administration Block, 2 classroom blocks with 4 classrooms in each, separated by a covered Playway. There is also a COLA (Covered Outdoor Learning Area) and a bike track.
- **Heating and cooling**
 - ❖ Reverse cycle air conditioning in all classrooms
- **Specialist facilities and equipment**
 - ❖ Recycling Shed as part of a community Recycling project.
 - ❖ Multipurpose Hall
 - ❖ Library
 - ❖ Independent Living Skills area including kitchen, bathroom and work skills area
- **Student facilities**
 - ❖ All classrooms have kitchen facilities, including refrigerators, microwaves and stoves..
 - ❖ Play facilities include a wheel chair swing, playground equipment, sports equipment for use at break times and 2 & 3 wheeler bikes for use on the bike track.
 - ❖ A Nature Play Space is currently being planned and designed.

- **Staff facilities**
 - ❖ Administration building with reception, staffroom, staff preparation area and staff toilets.
 - ❖ Staffroom with kitchen facilities (microwave, stove, freezer, refrigerator)
 - ❖ Staff lockers and pigeonholes
- **Access for students and staff with disabilities**
 - ❖ All areas are accessible for people with physical disabilities.
- **Access to bus transport**
 - ❖ The school owns 3 buses, which are used for school excursions, camps, and events.

10. School Operations

- **Decision making structures**
 - ❖ The Governing Council comprises parents, a staff representative, a community representative and Principal. They meet twice/a term..
 - ❖ Within the limits of DECD regulations and policies, staff have multiple opportunities to participate through Involvement with the PAC, staff meetings, class team meetings, Early Years, Middle School and Senior School meetings and specialist project activities.
 - ❖ Meeting management is rotated through a volunteer process.
 - ❖ SSO meetings are also held regularly
- **Regular publications**
 - ❖ School Newsletter
- **Other communication**
 - ❖ The school has a Facebook page which is followed by many parents and community members.
- **School financial position**
 - ❖ The school is in a sound financial position.
 - ❖ Curriculum and classroom budgets are managed by leaders and teachers.
 - ❖ The annual Craft Fair is our major fundraiser and generates approx. \$10,000 per year

- **Special funding**
 - ❖ Country Areas fund which enables our students to participate in camps
 - ❖ Resource Allocation Adjustment Panel funding for students identified
 - ❖ Additional SSO Classroom Support

11. Local Community

- **General characteristics**
 - ❖ There is a strong interest in a wide range of sporting and recreational activities as well as a wide involvement in community affairs.
 - ❖ As our students come from towns and homes throughout the Riverland, there is wide diversity across the communities. Each town has its own particular as well as shared cultural influences and socio-economic variations within the community.
- **Parent and community involvement**
 - ❖ As RSS families come from throughout the Riverland and Upper Mallee, we do not see most parents and carers on a regular basis. Attendance at NEPs and meetings for students is excellent.
 - ❖ We have a small but active Governing Council and good community attendance at school functions and activities. (Twilight Craft Fair, Presentation Night, Fashion Parade, Prom etc)
- **Feeder or destination schools**
 - ❖ Students assessed as eligible for the Riverland Special School come from preschools and schools throughout the Riverland and Upper Mallee areas.
- **Other local care and educational facilities**
 - ❖ Glossop High School Senior Campus and Berri TAFE are adjacent to Riverland Special School.
 - ❖ Berri Primary School and an OSHC facility is situated approximately 2 kms from RSS.
 - ❖ Berri Preschool and Berri Regional Childcare Centre is approximately 1.2 kms from RSS
- **Commercial/industrial and shopping facilities**
 - ❖ Berri is regional centre for most Government departments, including Disability SA and Families SA.
 - ❖ School is situated adjacent to a large Shopping Centre.

- **Other local facilities**

- ❖ Most sporting (football, netball, hockey, soccer, cricket, softball/ baseball, tennis, lawnbowls) facilities are within close walking distance of the school.
- ❖ There is also a gymnastics hall, a ten pin bowling alley and a public swimming pool located in town.
- ❖ A community Recreation Centre is being built on land behind the Riverland Special School, which all local schools will be able to access.

- **Local Government body**

- ❖ Berri Barmera Council