

Riverstone Public School

A vibrant and caring learning community



Information Booklet for new parents

2009



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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Riverstone Public School. We believe in your child's strengths and provide a learning environment that values the individual and caters for individual needs on academic, personal and social levels.

At Riverstone Public School we strive to do our best in a happy and caring environment by encouraging our students to:

- be adaptable, tolerant and co-operative;
- be polite, thoughtful and respectful of others;
- develop a positive self image;
- be independent thinkers;
- develop leadership skills;
- be responsible decision makers;
- respect their own and other people's property;
- learn all they can and see learning as a life-long experience;
- develop self discipline through positive reinforcement;
- strive to succeed; and to
- have a positive perception of themselves as learners.

Our very professional staff and parent community work together to provide a stimulating and safe learning environment.

The Role of Teachers and the School's Expectation of the Parent Community

At Riverstone Public School we have the following expectations of the parent community:

- Maintain frequent communication with your child's class teacher. If you have concerns or questions talk to the one person who works with your child everyday. They will welcome your interest.
- Keep the school informed of changes to contact details, eg phone, address etc.
- Attend parent/teacher interviews.
- Respond to school surveys - the information you give us is utilised to further improve our school and better meet your expectations.
- If you have time, be a parent helper in classrooms, sport or canteen - we can never have enough heads or hands to help our children achieve to the best of their abilities.
- Support the Parents and Citizens Association ("P&C").
- Participate in the school's self-evaluation process.
- Work with the school to best meet the needs of the children.

- Take the time to clarify with the school any issues that may cause you concern. There are always two sides to every story.
- Finally, all that we do will enable you to say with pride... "My child attends Riverstone Public School".

The Role of Our Teachers

At Riverstone Public School it is expected that the teacher:

- meets the individual needs of students and assists each student to maximise his/her learning outcomes;
- sets clear goals and plans in a systematic way to foster student development;
- is aware of his/her ethical and legal responsibilities to students, their families, the community and colleagues;
- always exercises a duty of care and takes account of the well being of students;
- bases authority on mutual respect and uses his/her position in relation to students wisely and with compassion;
- provides an appropriate role model for students;
- provides a stimulating learning environment and makes school a place students enjoy;
- works collaboratively with parents and other teachers; and
- will reflect on his/her own practices, maintain a commitment to career long professional learning, and contribute to the professional learning of others.

ABSENCES

A note is required when a child returns after being absent. It should state the date(s) and indicate the reason. Please telephone if your child has measles, chicken pox or any illness that will require a long period at home. It is the Principal's legal responsibility to approve the absence. If your child is late to school or needs to go home early please call at the Office to collect a Late Note or Early Release Form before either taking your child to class or collecting them. If you plan a family holiday in term time, please advise the school in writing.

ACCIDENTS/INJURIES

In case of an accident your child will be taken care of by members of staff. You or your emergency contact person will be notified if medical attention is necessary. Please ensure that the school always has a current telephone number for an emergency contact.

Parents are always contacted if a child sustains a head injury.

ASSEMBLIES

Assemblies are held at different times and include stage and whole school assemblies. Information about days and times is provided in the school newsletter.

BUS BEHAVIOUR

Good behaviour on buses is essential. Children who misbehave may have their bus pass suspended. In the interests of safety, children must remain seated during the journey.

BUS SERVICES

Hawkesbury Valley Bus Service and Busways provide bus services for our children. Buses drop children off in the morning at Regent Street. If you need a bus pass application please call into the Office to pick one up. The individual bus companies will notify you if you are eligible for a bus pass.

CANTEEN

The canteen provides reasonably priced foods for recess and lunch five days a week. A canteen menu detailing foods and their prices is distributed to all children at the beginning of each school year. Lunch orders should be printed clearly on a bag with the child's name and class shown. Orders are to be placed in the Canteen lunch order slot by the children or parents in the morning. Lunches are collected from the Canteen by lunch monitors each day.

CARNIVALS

In Term 1 the Swimming Carnival is held and the Cross Country Carnival is held in Term 2. Both carnivals involve children in Years 2-6 (Year 2 only if they have turned 8 years of age). The Athletics Carnival is held during Term 3 for children in Years K-6 (the youngest children have races and novelty events). Children in Years 2-6 have the opportunity to become school representatives at District, Region and State levels. Children are placed in one of four house groups: Dharug, Langton, O'Connell, Richards (see House Groups). The emphasis is placed on participation as well as doing your best.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR TELEPHONE NUMBER

It is most important that you notify the Office as soon as you change your address, or if your home or work telephone contact number changes. The school must also have the telephone number of someone who can be contacted in the case of emergency.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Each year the school sends home, via the newsletter, the cost of voluntary contributions for the year. These funds are used towards the purchase of consumables such as paint, glue, paper etc.. Voluntary contributions have been set at \$20 per child or \$40 per family per year. Although the contributions are voluntary, we strongly urge their payment as all monies help to keep the school supplied with essential resources for student use.

COUNSELLOR

The school has the services of two qualified School Counsellors who are at the school for three days per week. With parental approval the school refers children to Counsellors for assessment and/or further referral. Where necessary, interviews for parents can be arranged through the Principal. A priority list operates, and in some cases parents are referred to outside agencies.

CURRICULUM

The six key learning areas of the Primary Curriculum are:

- English
- Mathematics
- Human Society and its Environment (HSIE)
- Science and Technology (S&T)
- Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE) and
- Creative Arts

EDUCATION WEEK

Education Week is held during Semester One of each year. During the week parents and friends have the opportunity to participate in and enjoy special school events. This is a highlight of the year and we look forward to sharing this time with many parents and friends of Riverstone Public School.

ENROLMENT

All enrolments are processed at the Office where you will be asked to complete an Enrolment Form for each child to be enrolled. If your child is transferring to Riverstone Public School from another government school you will need a Transfer Certificate from the child's previous school.

Kindergarten and Preschool children will need to show proof of age documents (Birth Certificate, Registration Card, Hospital Card). A current Certificate of Immunisation is also required from your local doctor - we are not able to accept the blue Health Book.

Placement of students into any of the support classes at Riverstone Public School occurs through the Regional Placement Panel.

EXCURSIONS

These are a valuable part of the school's learning program and occur whenever teaching and learning is best achieved outside the classroom and to complement the formal classroom lessons. Visiting performers are also invited to the school for the children to attend their performances. Overnight camps are also held for students in Years 3-6.

A permission note for each excursion is sent to parents specifying travel, departure and return times, cost, materials to be brought and other necessary details. School uniform is to be worn unless otherwise indicated. Without the return of the permission note, a child is not able to attend the excursion.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE - STUDENT ASSISTANCE SCHEME

Families who require financial assistance to enable their children to participate in school events or supply materials requested by the school may apply for Student Assistance Scheme funding. All applications are confidential. Application forms are available from the Office.

GIFTED AND TALENTED

At Riverstone Public School we recognise that many children have special abilities. The extension of children with special abilities is a shared responsibility of home and school. At school level, all teachers are expected to develop the full potential of the children in their classes through the provision of stimulating and challenging teaching/learning programs. Additional opportunities are provided including participation in Gifted and Talented Programs organised by the Blacktown Learning Community, attendance at field camps, participation in University of New South Wales Australian Primary Schools Competitions, sport and the creative arts.

Gifted students are those with the potential to exhibit superior performance across a range of different areas of endeavour.

Talented students are those with the potential to exhibit superior performances in one area of endeavour.

HATS

Hats are vital to protect children all year from the sun while they are in the playground, during outdoor activities, such as excursions, and at sport. Hats are mandatory if participating in PSSA sport. Hats are available from the Uniform Shop. During the hot summer months it is also recommended that children wear sunscreen for added protection.

HIGH SCHOOL

Students proceed to various high schools after completing their primary school education. Riverstone High School is our local feeder high school.

HOLIDAY DATES

You will be advised of holiday dates, via the newsletter, at the beginning of each year.

HOMWORK

Homework assists children in the development of self-discipline, and responsible learning attitudes and behaviours away from the school environment. It is a successful experience when children are positively encouraged and acknowledged for their efforts.

Homework activities develop in complexity and quantity as children progress through their school years. It may be utilised to consolidate, extend and enrich classwork. Parents/caregivers who would like additional homework for their children may be advised by the teacher as to what commercially developed resources may be of assistance.

The quantity of homework is not the single measure of the effectiveness of the school. It is the sum total of all the school does and the outcomes achieved by students that is a measure of a school's quality.

It is helpful if you are able to provide a quiet atmosphere in which homework can be done, away from some of the more obvious distractions.

HOUSE SYSTEM

The four sports houses divided alphabetically by surnames, and their colours are: Dharug – black (A-D), Langton – red (E-K), O'Connell – green (L-R), and Richards – blue (S-Z).

The house system is used for sporting contests such as swimming and athletics carnivals. Children are allocated their House in Kindergarten. House placement may alter as required to ensure equity in numbers.

IMMUNISATION

All children starting Kindergarten are required to provide a Certificate of Immunisation. Children who are not immunised may be asked to stay at home should there be an outbreak of infectious diseases. We ask that parents inform the school if their child is not immunised so that this precaution may be taken.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

If your child has an infectious disease please keep them home from school until advised by your family doctor that it is safe for them to return to school. There is a chart at the back of this Information Booklet outlining some common infectious diseases and how long children must be kept at home.

INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION, TECHNOLOGY

ICT is an integrated part of learning across all KLAs. We have a fully equipped modern computer laboratory complete with projector screen and projector, and 16 of the latest IBM computers. Each classroom houses three computers that are all networked and have access to the internet, email and printers. We have a variety of digital cameras, video cameras and scanners to support ICT. We use Interwrite in classrooms which is an interactive teaching and learning tool.

INFORMATION SHEET

Parents are sent a Family Information Sheet at the beginning of each year. It provides the school with an update of information relating to your child, including contact telephone numbers and important medical information. It is vital that this is completed fully and returned promptly to the class teacher. Please notify the school of any changes after this form has been returned to the school.

INTERVIEWS

Parents are invited to attend an interview in Week 9 of Term 1 and Term 3 each year. At the interview your child's performance, application, behaviour and general development can be discussed and other information shared. The emphasis at the time of interview is on the ways family and school can work together to further the learning and development of the child. Interviews can be arranged at other times, but please make an appointment.

LATE PICK UP CHILDREN

Sometimes you may be unavoidably delayed and unable to be at school by 2.55 pm. Please ring the Office and let us know. Your child will be asked to wait at the Office, from where they can then be collected. Please let a staff member know when you arrive to collect your child. Children are always supervised during this time.

LIBRARY

Children attend weekly lessons in library information skills and literature. Books may also be borrowed from the Library for up to two weeks. All children must have a strong plastic or draw-string fabric library bag. Please place your child's name on the bag.

Parents are asked to supervise the care of books taken home. Library books that are damaged or lost will need to be replaced by parents. An invoice detailing the title of the book and its purchase price will be sent home. Following payment the book(s) will be replaced by the school.

Our Library is a valued school resource and there is a clear expectation that its resources are well looked after so that they may be accessed in years to come.

LOST PROPERTY

Please print your child's name and class clearly on all their property, including clothing. Check that the name is still there after washing. Lost property is kept in the Office. Uniform items that are not claimed by the end of each month are automatically donated to the Uniform Shop.

The school discourages children from bringing valuable personal items to school, eg iPods, MP3s, mobile phones. The school will not take responsibility for the loss or damage of such items if brought to school by children.

MEDICATION

If your child requires medication during school hours, specific procedures must be followed. Please contact the school for further information.

NEWSLETTER

Fortnightly newsletters are sent home on either Tuesday or Wednesday and contain important information. Please note that the school uses a colour system to manage communication between the school and the home:

- Newsletter – mauve
- P&C information – green
- VERY IMPORTANT/RESPONSE REQUIRED - blue

NON-SMOKING ENVIRONMENT

It is the policy of the Department of Education and Training that smoking is not allowed inside the school grounds and buildings. Staff, parents and visitors are asked to comply with this policy.

PARENT HELP

There are many opportunities for parents to assist at school. Many parents assist with various tasks associated with classroom learning. If you are able to offer your help in any way at all, please mention this to the class teacher.

PARENT ORGANISATION

The Riverstone Public School P&C is an integral part of the school. The P&C meet each month and the meeting dates and times are advertised in the newsletter. New members and visitors are always welcome.

PRESCHOOL

Riverstone Preschool is an 80 placement centre, operating as Monday and Tuesday 8.55 am–2.55 pm, and Wednesday 8.55 am-11.25 am (2 classes); or Wednesday 12.25 am-2.55 pm and Thursday and Friday 8.55 am-2.55 pm (2 classes). The Preschool provides a safe learning environment with appropriate educational programs to develop each child's physical, emotional, intellectual and social well being. Students must turn 4 years of age by 1 August in the year they attend. Information regarding enrolment is available at the office.

READING RECOVERY

This program supports Year 1 children who are in need of special support in reading. It involves intensive one to one instruction with a specialist teacher five days a week for 30 minutes per day. Children must attend school every day and read each night while on the program. The children's parents are contacted for their approval and are asked to attend a meeting at which details of the program are outlined. The school funds this additional support.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious Education ("Scripture") is taught by visiting teachers appointed by various religious groups using a syllabus that they supply. At the moment the classes are Anglican, Catholic and Jehovah's Witness. Children are placed in scripture classes according to the information supplied on the Enrolment Form. Non-scripture is also an option.

Children are encouraged to attend Scripture classes, however, a member of staff supervises those who do not attend in a classroom. The school requires that parents who no longer wish their children to attend Scripture provide notification in written or verbal form to the class teacher.

REPORTS

A written report is sent home to parents at the end of Term 2 and Term 4 each year. It gives information about your child's performance, application and development.

The report is designed to complement other information conveyed to parents by the school regarding students' progress and achievements.

SCHOOL PHOTOS

School photos are taken annually. They are supplied on a pre-paid basis. Information regarding 'Photo Day' will be issued via the school newsletter.

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

School Administration staff carry out secretarial duties, accounts and computer work. They administer first aid to sick and injured children, assist in the preparation of lesson materials, and oversee the maintenance and storage of equipment. The General Assistant is involved with maintenance, the care of grounds and the movement of heavy equipment and materials. These people are an important part of the school and assist the teaching staff to meet the needs of our children.

SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT DAYS

Three school development days are available to schools each year:

- one, on the first day of each school year, is allocated to assist schools in organisational, administrative, induction and staff development matters to ensure a smooth start to the school year; and
- two, on dates determined annually by the Director-General, are allocated to enable each school to focus professional learning on key Departmental and school priorities.

SICKNESS AT SCHOOL

Occasionally children become sick at school. They are placed in Sick Bay and observed. If it becomes obvious that they need the care of a parent, a call is made to home or work. The same applies in the case of an injury, unless immediate medical attention has to be sought.

Parents are asked to keep children at home if they show signs of real sickness in the morning. Work is not sent home to children who are away sick; it is far better for them to concentrate on getting well.

SPORT

Students are expected to participate in two hours of physical activity per week. The two hours includes the weekly sport program on Fridays, physical education lessons linked to the PDHPE syllabus, and fitness programs such as 'Young & Fit'.

The students in Years 3-6 have the opportunity to participate in PSSA competitions which is an interschool competition between primary schools. A variety of summer and winter sports are available depending on student interest. These may include: T-ball, softball, cricket, soccer, netball and rugby league.

STUDENTS' REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

The Students' Representative Council ("SRC") is made up of elected class representatives from K-6 and meets regularly to consider matters of interest and make recommendations to the Principal and P&C. The SRC also carries out fundraising and votes for the Student of the Month awards. SRC members also have to opportunity to attend leadership events, eg at Longneck Lagoon.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The extensive scope of the school's program includes the provision of educational programs for students with mild (one class) and moderate (three classes) intellectual disabilities. Students in K-2 are catered for through the Early School Support Program. The Support Unit is led by a full time Assistant Principal and staffed by highly experienced and dedicated special education teachers and teacher's aides.

Structural provisions in the forms of ramps, railings and disabled toilets are in place for students with physical disabilities.

The school ensures appropriate personnel support by accessing additional teacher's aide special allocations from District and Commonwealth funds.

TEXTS AND MATERIALS

At the conclusion of each year the school will provide families with a 'Shopping List' for the following year. Every effort is made to keep costs to a minimum. The school provides some materials for the commencement of the year, however, texts and other materials are to be provided by parents/caregivers.

TIMES

School commences at 8.55 am and ends at 2.55 pm. It is very important for children to be at school on time. If children are not present at the commencement of class lessons, they often have difficulty settling into the day's work.

Students who arrive at school after their class has entered the classroom must go to the Office to collect a Late Note. This will be entered into the class roll as a "partial absence".

UNIFORMS

Parents are asked to ensure that their children come each day in the appropriate uniform. Uniforms may be purchased from the Uniform Shop and a price list is available at the Office.

GIRLS

Summer

Check Dress
White Collared Shirt
Check Culottes
Maroon Surf Hat or Baseball Cap
Maroon Jacket
White Socks
Black Shoes

Winter

Check Dress with Navy Ribbed Tights
White Collared Shirt
Navy Pants
Maroon Surf Hat or Baseball Cap
Maroon Jacket
White Socks
Black Shoes

BOYS

White Collared Shirt
Navy Shorts (not football shorts)
Maroon Surf Hat or Baseball Cap
Maroon Jacket
White Socks
Black Shoes

Boys

White Collared Shirt
Navy Trousers
Maroon Surf Hat or Baseball Cap
Maroon Jacket
White Socks
Black Shoes

For sport the children wear a sports uniform and sports shoes. School representative sports teams will be notified of their uniform.