



**In Focus Newsletter
of**



THE RIVERS
SECONDARY COLLEGE

**TERM 1
2019**

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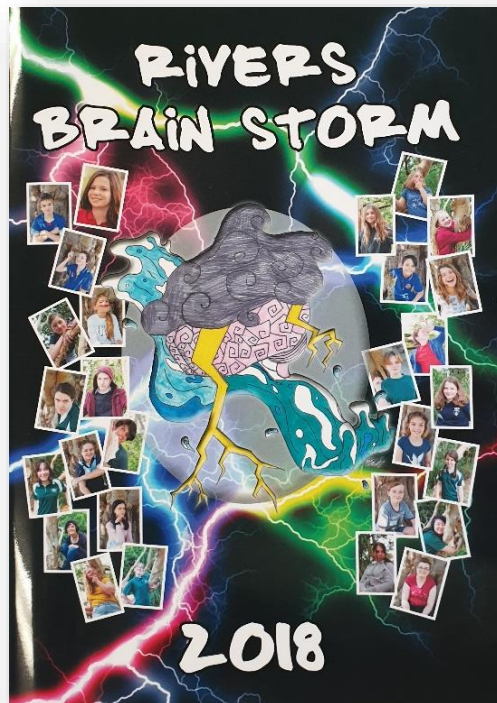
1 LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

1.1 Literacy/numeracy projects

Rivers Writing project

The Rivers Secondary College continues to maintain the focus on literacy with a particular focus on writing. In 2018 we introduced The Rivers Writing Project, involving students from our three campuses, along with our partner primary schools. It is coordinated by Mrs Polly Jude, English teacher at Kadina High Campus and supported by writers from the Byron Writers' Festival.

In 2018 they published their work in Rivers Brain Storm magazine. This contained the students' stories and was illustrated by both primary and secondary students.



The 2019 Rivers Writing Project is well underway, with keen, talented writers already heavily engaged in developing their 2019 writing efforts. We have a firm belief that projects that are aimed at an audience significantly beyond the classroom has the ability to enhance the quality of work that students are able to generate.

This year we have primary school writers from 8 primary schools (years 5-6) and writers from all 3 campuses of The Rivers Secondary College (year 7-12). Illustrators come from all 3 campuses and 6 Primary schools (years 5-12). Students completed an application form and provided a sample of their work before being accepted into the project. We look forward once again to viewing the students' work and continue to support and encourage all of our students in developing their ability as young writers.

Kadina High Campus literacy/numeracy programs

Analysis of NAPLAN results and a focus on learning

An analysis of NAPLAN trend data at Kadina High Campus indicates that overall the campus has the ability to lift student performance from Year 7 to Year 9.

To improve in both reading and writing Kadina High Campus has decided to focus on the area of comprehension in 2019. The campus believes teaching students to be good comprehenders involves providing them with explicit instruction in comprehension strategies and explicit instruction in the interrelated nature of the strategies.

This is supported by studies, which indicate, “Once we get children to comprehend and respond in short jottings to record their thinking, we can then work on the muscles for writing well in authentic genres of writing about reading.” Angello in Fountas and Pinnell, 2006.

The campus is focusing on the explicit and visible teaching of the super six comprehension strategies and embedding these into teaching practice. The “Super Six” comprehension strategies are:

- Making Connections
- Predicting
- Questioning
- Monitoring
- Visualising
- Summarising

The belief is as students become better able to understand and call upon a repertoire of strategies for comprehending a range of texts, they will also become better able to write creative, well-structured and sequenced texts for imaginative, informative and persuasive purposes.

The introduction of the Literacy and Numeracy Progressions and the Text complexity document is the focus for this year. Literacy and numeracy are important because they form the basis of our learning and the teaching of both literacy and numeracy is the responsibility of all teachers.

As part of the initiative, the campus has employed an SLSO to targeted support for Indigenous students. The SLSO provides support to targeted Aboriginal students to improve their literacy and/or numeracy achievements and assists students to develop skills and understandings that enable them to independently participate in class activities.

Lismore High Campus literacy/numeracy project

The Lismore High Campus Literacy and Numeracy Team in 2019 is working to develop consistently-delivered, school-wide literacy strategies for our classrooms. Following a study of the research around transition and best practice literacy strategies, as well as a survey of our teachers, we decided to focus on the delivery of vocabulary lists at the commencement of each learning program.

All faculties have been supplied with enlarged, laminated word lists, and our teachers are also being provided with strategies and resources to support them in the delivery of the terminology.

Vocabulary acquisition is vital to accessing content and understanding, and by ensuring that every faculty is using both verbal and written activities around key terms, and has the terminology displayed in all classrooms, we are providing all our students with the best opportunity to engage with their learning.

Richmond River High Campus literacy programs

The QuickSmart literacy program began in Term 3 2018 with 16 students eager to develop their comprehension skills. These students have just completed the program with 100% of students recommending that their peers participate in the program, as it has developed their confidence and provided them with key strategies that they could transfer back into the classroom. Post test results indicate student growth in both speech and accuracy of individual word recognition and comprehension. Term 2 2019 will see the start of a new cohort of students beginning on their learning journey.



The Richmond River High Campus English faculty is delivering a range of teaching and learning activities with a focus on engagement and high expectations. The new stage 6 HSC English curriculum is in its first year and the inaugural Year 12 multi-modal presentations have been outstanding, including student submissions in video, time-lapse and stop-motion format. Year 12 Extension English students have participated in the Byron Writers Festival workshop at Ewingsdale Hall after engaging in their viva-voce (living voice) presentation with local spoken word poets and experienced HSC markers. Junior students are making their learning visible through the combined KLA podcast, completed by year 9 students and incorporating both Science and English. To support their novel study program, year 10 students have been participating in ethics workshops with Dr Nathan Kesteven as part of a faculty focus on community engagement.



Coming up: Bell Shakespeare performance, Australian Poetry Slam workshop and performance, Extension 2 visiting expert session 2.

1.2 Study skills and a focus on learning to learn

WIN Program – Lismore High Campus

Working Intelligently is a program that was introduced in 2018 at the Lismore High Campus of TRSC with the aim of assisting all students to develop effective study skills and enhance individual learning through metacognitive processes.

This program is delivered to all students from years 7 to 12. In 2019 WIN is a timetabled lesson for years 11 and 12, 2 periods per fortnightly cycle. In the junior school WIN is implemented across the following KLA's English, Mathematics and Science with Project based learning also teaching relevant aspects of WIN.

LHC uses the online resource of The Study Skills Handbook, which consists of units designed to specifically assist students to develop sound and individual approaches to study, examinations and assignment tasks. Other resources utilised include teacher developed lessons that are shared across the school. Students also develop specific strategies for literacy, numeracy and visible learning through the use of graphic organisers.

Study period - Kadina High Campus

Kadina High Campus is focused on supporting our students to become life-long learners. To support this we have introduced timetabled study periods for senior students. The purpose of the study period is to offer students support in their transition across to senior school and beyond. When in attendance at the study period students can expect assistance with their organisation and upcoming assessment tasks, as well as developing skills that will benefit them well into their post-school education. Students will engage in activities assisting them to develop their metacognitive skills as this is vital for students to thrive and develop a growth mindset.

Study Skills Program - Richmond River High Campus

At Richmond River High Campus Stage 4 classes are participating in our Study skills program once a fortnight for Year 7 and once per week for Year 8. The overriding goal of the Stage 4 Study skills program is to support academic rigour within students whilst also having a holistic approach to wellbeing and studying. The program consists of four key stages: capacity to learn, capacity to understand assessment tasks and content covered in class, capacity to apply knowledge and capacity to think innovatively and problem solve. Students are taught strategies to enhance their wellbeing so they can focus on academic and interpersonal success.

Stage 5 students are using the Online Study Skills Handbook. This site provides a comprehensive and interactive online experience for students to develop the study skills needed for success in high school. This program allows students to engage with the online program independently and covers units such as; working better at home, working better at school, improving how you study, and improving your skills and technology units.

Parents and Carers are also encouraged to access RRHC's subscription to the online Study Skills Handbook, for handy tips and access to resources targeted to their Student's individual needs. The whole school password login has been emailed to parents and carers, and is available from the RRHC front office.

2 LEADING

2.1 College initiatives

In 2018 we introduced The Rivers Secondary College leadership academy. As part of this, the following structures, processes and programs have been established.

- 6 representatives (2 from each stage) from each campus meet each term to share their leadership initiatives and look for leadership opportunities across the college. In the first meeting in 2019 they decided to focus on the following three areas:
 - Social wellbeing, investigating the possibility of a joint college social.
 - Physical wellbeing, looking for extra sporting activities for students both across the college and within campuses.
 - Communication, aiming to develop a college student magazine



The dates for term 2 to 4 are:

- 31/05/19
- 23/08/19
- 15/11/19

The meetings are held periods 4 and 5 (11:00 – 1pm) so that the students can travel via the Rivers bus.

- Widjabal Wiyabal Dreaming Program. This was held in 2018 and is planned to occur every two years. It involves aspiring Aboriginal student leaders engaging in a structured leadership development program.
- Student leader generative dialogue program. In 2019 we have begun supporting many of our student leaders in the implementation of plans that they are developing within their campuses. It involves developing a guiding question around their goals and meeting with them every 28 days to discuss their progress and assist them in focusing on their future directions.

2.2 Collegiate Leadership Networks

In week 8 the Deputy Principal Collegiate Network had their second meeting of the year. The team consists of Tracy McGrath (Kadina High Campus), Trent Graham (Lismore High Campus), Kirt Swanbury (Lismore High Campus), Belinda Marr (Richmond River High Campus), Luke Woodward (Richmond River High Campus) and Greg Smith (mentor). A collective area that they will be working on is roles and responsibilities. It is anticipated that existing roles and responsibilities will be reviewed and updated with the aim of improving and clarifying key roles and responsibilities both within campuses and across the college.

Our Creative and Performing Arts Collegiate met in week 8 term 1. Ian Davies, Kadina High Campus principal, is the mentor of this group. Plans and focus areas for 2019 include:

MADDNESS stands for Music, Art, Drama and Dance and is a performance night for our HSC students. Each year the college provides opportunities via MADDness for the outstanding students in these areas to highlight the talent across the college.

The college continues to provide opportunities for gifted students across the college to excel. Such opportunities include, in Music, students access the Local High School Showcase at the Bluesfest and via the Entertainment VET program, students have participated for seven years in the Bluesfest Grommets busking competition. The students are responsible for the stage and lighting during the competition. In 2019 photography students will become involved in supporting the competition.

In Visual Arts, students across the college can participate in workshops presented at The Dobell School, and The National Art School holiday program and workshops.

Students in Year 11 across the college have opportunities to participate in Sydney Excursions for Art Express.

In Drama, a college excursion at the beginning of each year allows students to participate in The Sydney Excursion to Onstage.

In Dance, students access dance competitions and eisteddfods. Workshops including talented Aboriginal students participating in Bangarra Dance workshops are also offered.

As 2020 approaches, the college will investigate how to implement The Rivers choir and big bands as part of the ongoing commitment to provide opportunities for students with talents in the area of Creative and Performing Arts.

2.3 Generative dialogue project

We continue our regular generative dialogue meetings in a range of formats. Generative dialogue occurs as part of executive meetings, as off-site meetings with colleagues beyond the college and at times as meetings involving academic staff such as Associate Professor David Townsend. It is a non-judgmental process that assists our colleagues to clarify their thinking, at times coming up with a new focus or understanding of what they are trying to achieve. It is a collaborative process involving committed listeners and a committed inquiry process. It is based on trust and strong relational foundations.

3 WELLBEING

3.1 Physical wellbeing

We continue to focus on physical wellbeing across the college. In 2019 we have expanded our gala day program and introduced The Rivers Secondary College Sports Academy model.

A number of college gala days have been held in term 1. The results of the football gala day was:

Open Girls - RR 9 v L 0

15s girls - L 4 v RR 2; L 5 v K 0; K 1 v RR 0

Opens boys - K 4 v L 1; RR 4 v K 1; RR 3 v L 0

15s boys - RR 6 v L 1; RR 1 v K 0

Points - 3 for win 1 for draw 0 for loss. 1 bonus point per team that each school sent.

Richmond River 15 (5 wins, 2 losses) + 4 (4 teams) = 19

Lismore 9 (3 wins, 4 losses) + 4 (4 teams) = 13

Kadina 6 (2 wins, 4 losses) + 3 (3 teams) = 9- L 5 v K 1

There were approximately 150 students at the gala day. Canteen staff were impressed with the manners of all students and the organisers were impressed with the tidy state the grounds were left in. We appreciate all of the effort put in by both coaches and students.

The Rivers open girls' side and open boys' side have been selected. They will train Tuesday and Friday mornings respectively at the SCU football centre before school for 4 weeks with one of their academy coaches as part of our academy style program.

In term 2 and 3 Year 7 students will commence involvement in Wednesday sport as a sports development program. This will start with Richmond River High Campus and then the other two campuses in term 3. We will also continue with extra coaching being provided to our targeted senior college sports teams.



In 2019 we are very fortunate to have our Rivers Sports Academy coaching supported through a ClubsGrant from Lismore Workers Club, of which we are very appreciative.

3.2 Intellectual wellbeing

The Defiant project is coordinated through an organisation called Beyond Empathy.

On Monday 1st April campus representatives met with the Defiant team consisting of Ben Karsay (Project Coordinator), Sarah Bolt (Dance and Movement artist) and Kirk Page (Dance and Movement artist). Programs that are being considered include:

Photographic and street art/collage workshops.

- Positive feedback from New Choices group.
- Oz Tag cup presentation stage backdrop as key focus piece.
- Sponsors' logos on the backdrop?
- Working across 3 campuses.
- Major public art displayed at sites like the bus stop. Paste-ups and stencil art.
- Permanent place for the art.

Dance and movement workshops

- Kirk Page and Sarah Bolt facilitating.
- Work on a story-line within the dance written by the students themselves with artist guidance.
- One location on Fridays 11-pm tbc.
- Performance opportunities.



4 ASSESSING

4.1 Assessment for learning project

Staff members from each of our campuses continue to have the opportunity to increase their knowledge and skills related to formative assessment (assessment for learning). Programs have been happening both within two of our campuses and also across the college.



Kadina High Campus – all of the English faculty have begun the Assessment for Learning program. Lismore High Campus began their formative assessment program in 2018, with all executive, along with a number of aspiring leaders beginning the training during the term 4 executive retreat. Richmond River High Project started in 2018, linked to their strategic direction team.

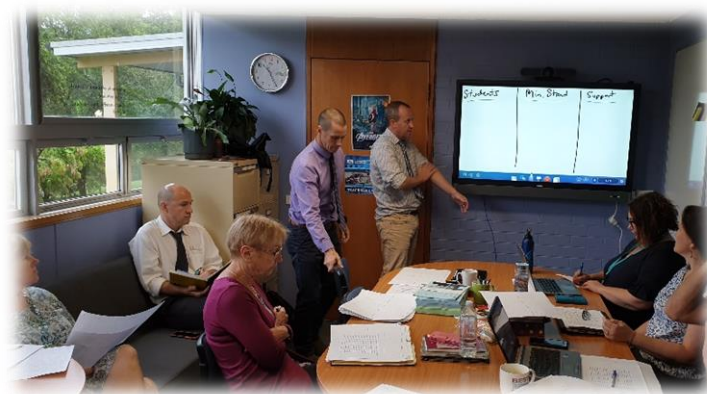
4.2 Stage 6 Assessment

In 2019 we introduced The Rivers Secondary College stage 6 Assessment guidelines. There is now common policy and procedures across the three campuses, with additional campus specific and shared curriculum information being added to the documents.

5 KNOWING OUR STUDENTS

5.1 Identifying student needs

Our college is focused on ensuring that every student is known, valued and cared for. Term 1 has seen several campus activities that specifically focus on getting to know our students better. Campuses are developing strategies to increase staff knowledge of student needs.



6 IMPROVING COLLEGE PROCESSES

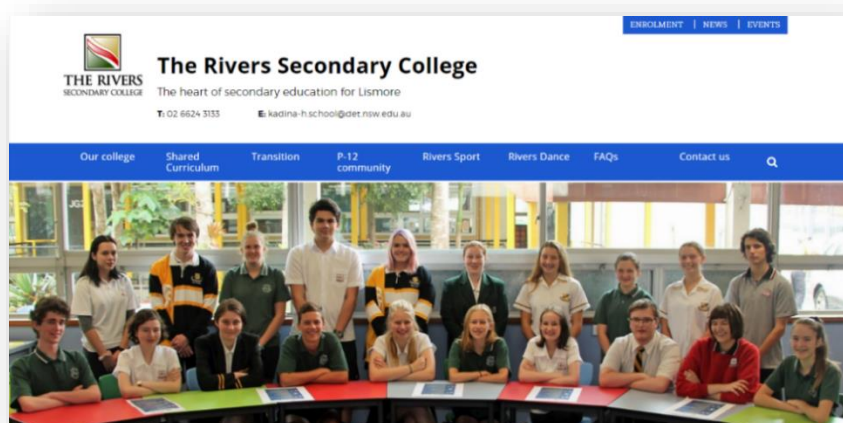
In 2019, we are focusing on improving communication about college activities. Four of our current communication projects include:

6.1 College website

We are continuing to refine our college website. The address is <https://therivers.schools.nsw.gov.au/>

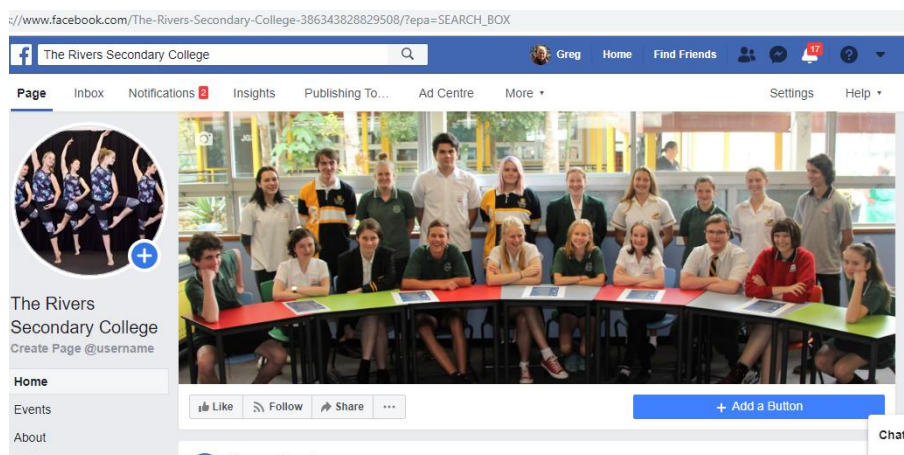
The website contains information about:

- Shared Curriculum
- Transition
- P-12 Community
- Rivers Sport
- Rivers Dance
- FAQs
- Upcoming events



6.2 College Facebook

We have recently introduced The Rivers Secondary College Facebook page. We are looking forward to using social media further to provide information about recent and upcoming events and initiatives.



6.3 In focus newsletter

This is our first edition of the In Focus newsletter of The Rivers Secondary College. It aims to:

- Keep our college community up to date with our key focus areas linked to the college strategic plan.
- Provide an engaging format to communicate the excellent opportunities and innovations occurring across the college

The magazine will be published towards the end of each term.



6.4 The Rivers Secondary College Prospectus

This was released in term 1 2019 and aims to inform our community about:

- Opportunities available across The Rivers Secondary College
- Unique areas of excellence and innovation at our three campuses.



6.5 College Roadshow



In week 8, 10 members of staff and around 20 students from The Rivers Secondary College formed our first College Roadshow. They presented to Year 5 students at 6 different hub locations, where larger primary schools hosted the event and other primary schools travelled to the hub to participate. Year 5 students participated in gas car challenges, rocket launching, science experiments, mathematical problem solving, drumming, drama, visual arts and writing. This was all supported by staff and students from our three campuses and coordinated by Kirt Swanbury and Chris Williams from Lismore High Campus. It provided year 5 students with engaging activities as an introduction

into the programs that are on offer across The Rivers Secondary College.



7 COLLEGE HAPPENINGS

On Monday 29th April The Rivers Secondary College Campuses conducted their Term 2 School Development Day. The morning sessions were delivered at their campuses. Following the morning sessions, staff traveled to Southern Cross University Whitebrook Theatre and joined their Rivers P-6 primary colleagues for lunch, followed by a keynote to finish the day.



Our Rivers P-12 Learning Community are very appreciative of the support provided by Southern Cross University in hosting the professional learning events at their Lismore Campus. We would also like to acknowledge the work of the Mark Scotton, Kirsty Howton, Kristin den Exter, Marilyn Chaseling, Terry Wells, Chika Anyanwu, Brendan Waters, Andrew Piper, Cheryl Graham, John Stewart, Deb Baker and the Lismore High Campus hospitality staff and students, Wyrallah Road Public School P&C and all of the wonderful presenters during the day.

Our campuses once again commemorated ANZAC Day both within the campus and in our community. There was a very good representation of students and staff.



Upcoming event:

A college induction afternoon will be held at the Lismore Rural North Department of Education Offices at 610 Ballina Road Goonellabah, from 4pm to 5pm on Wednesday 12th June 2019. The event will have two sections:

- The first half of the event will be some general information about The Rivers Secondary College. It will be aimed at staff who have recently begun working in college, as well as education staff external to the college who would like to learn a little more about it.
- The second half of the presentation, will focus more on college operational aspects, such as the use of our SharePoint platform, college processes and policies, along with time for Q&A.

To register your interest, please complete the attached form:

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=muagBYpBwUecJZOHJhv5ke2gtX8Y2PF LjZfM_O7k40ZUQ01KMUFVW0REV0tJS1NUOE9XVkmZQTZKTS4u

Our supporters:



Lismore Workers Club



Sydney University



Lords Taverners



Liverpool International Football Academy



Beyond Empathy



Schools Plus Fair Education



North Coast TAFE



Byron Bay Bluesfest



Byron Writers Festival



headspace



The Broncos



Rivers P-12



Advanced Life Photography