



Riverlands Montessori School

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ANNUAL REPORT

2015

Riverlands Montessori School is located in the Swan Valley with quiet surroundings, native gardens and a delightful atmosphere away from the bustle of the city. Our school community is positive and vibrant with experienced teaching staff and programs that promote involvement in the wider community. Children are encouraged to develop at their own pace in a creative environment incorporating Montessori Philosophy.

Riverlands' first home in 1991 was in historical "Cornwall House", Middle Swan. In July 1998, the school relocated to Whiteman Park for 5 years. In 2004, the dream of a permanent home was realized when the 6 acre property in Arthur Street, near Whiteman Park, was purchased.

We have a Playgroup, three Children's Houses (3-6 year olds), two Lower Primary classes (6-9 year olds) and one Upper Primary class (9-12 year olds). There is a Board of Governance and an active Parents and Friends Association.

Mission

Riverlands Montessori School's purpose is to provide an educational program in which foundations are laid for positive attitudes towards learning and life. It is a non-denominational school based on a commitment to social understanding and care of the environment. The school aims to educate the whole child within a Montessori environment, to develop in children the ability to accept responsibility for their own learning through choice, and to:

- ❖ encourage children to proceed at their own pace
- ❖ socialise children to prepare them for life
- ❖ nurture the intellect of the child in analytical, creative and emotional terms
- ❖ assist children to fulfil their potential and contribute positively towards society.

Goals

- ❖ To foster a positive school atmosphere, characterised by enthusiasm and a happy work environment.
- ❖ To develop a balanced, comprehensive and innovative curriculum that provides for individual learning, promotes educational excellence and is responsive to students' needs.
- ❖ To encourage a positive relationship between students, staff and the home so that children feel confident and excited about coming to school.
- ❖ To nurture a strong community spirit and involvement in the life of the school.
- ❖ To work towards improving the school's facilities and environment to enhance the image of the school.
- ❖ To increase the resources available to implement the curriculum.
- ❖ To maintain a high profile in the local community to encourage future enrolments.
- ❖ To build a collaborative team of staff who promote the ethos and philosophy of the school.
- ❖ To encourage and support staff to update their qualifications and to further their educational knowledge and skills.
- ❖ To provide effective communication within the school and seek feedback on the school's performance from its community.
- ❖ To promote public confidence in Montessori education.

Report from the Board

The year, 2015 has been a busy and varied year with lots of wonderful activities enjoyed by the Riverlands Community. A Board Review was carried out to look at the processes followed and ask members for suggestions. It is always good to be challenged and seek more efficient and effective strategies for the governance of a school to undertake. This year a new member, Brian Hunt joined the Board. The expertise and depth of experience of all our Board Members demonstrates our desire to provide the best practice in the governance of Riverlands School. In March several members attended the one day conference 'Briefing the Board' to access many workshops all relating to the governance, education trends, government funding and meeting other school board members. There is exchange of ideas and programs and a sharing of information that we bring back to Riverlands each year.

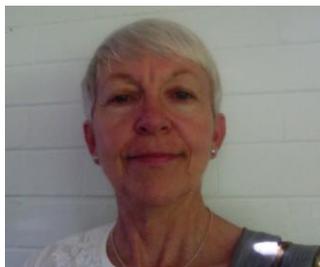
We established a Building Sub-Committee to examine and plan the next stage of building for the school. This will involve applying for grants to help fund the new classrooms, purpose built library and other facilities. It is planned that building will commence in 2017.

I would like to thank the Board Members for their continued support, enthusiasm and commitment to Riverlands School. It has been a pleasure to work with this dedicated team.

The Board particularly wishes to thank the Principal Ineke Oliver and the Business Manager Robyn Hart for their commitment and work in the school. We also register our thanks to all the staff for their contributions to the wonderful school we have. Thank you to the wonderful office staff who are always welcoming and tirelessly assist everyone in the school.

I would like to register the Riverlands Board's thanks for the work and support of the school community, the efforts of the Parents & Friends Association especially in organizing the fabulous Medieval Fair.

The school grounds are such a welcoming visual aspect of Riverlands, the amount of work involved is greatly appreciated by our whole school community.



Quona Litchfield
Chairperson

Principal's Report

When the time comes for us to consider what to do as a whole school event for the following year, we reflect on past years and our craft or art exhibitions, science fair, dance performances and events such as the Wizard of Oz. This year's whole school event was 'An Evening with Shakespeare'.

Riverlands has always enjoyed a positive, vibrant parent community. This year the P & F held the first Medieval Fair for both the school and the area. It was a mammoth task for those involved in the organisation and was very successful, many a good time was had by all who attended.

There are five Graduates this year, all girls, of whom we are very proud and honoured to have them as ambassadors for our school as they go on to high school.

We do have some staff changes this year – Brad, our PE teacher, has moved to a full time position in another school; Janet, one of our Lower Primary teachers is taking up a Principal's position elsewhere; Karen, one of our Childrens House teachers is looking for something a little closer to home (she has been driving over an hour each way to come to our school) and Kate will be concentrating on her studies to become a Montessori teacher. Each one of them has become part of the fabric that makes up Riverlands and has left their imprint and will be missed.

This year Robyn joined us as Business Manager and has fitted in as if she always belonged here. She has joined the administration team with Marina and Tamara who continue to be the 'face' of Riverlands in our office and provide unending support and guidance to everyone in the school.

We predict that as the number of houses grows in our region, so will our enrolments. Playgroup has almost filled each session this year, a credit to the staff there and the parents who support them. We continue to have marketing high on our agenda and this year with our new 'App' and Facebook pages we are exploring all avenues.

It has been a busy yet very fulfilling year and I thank everyone in the school for your support both for me personally, and for all of us

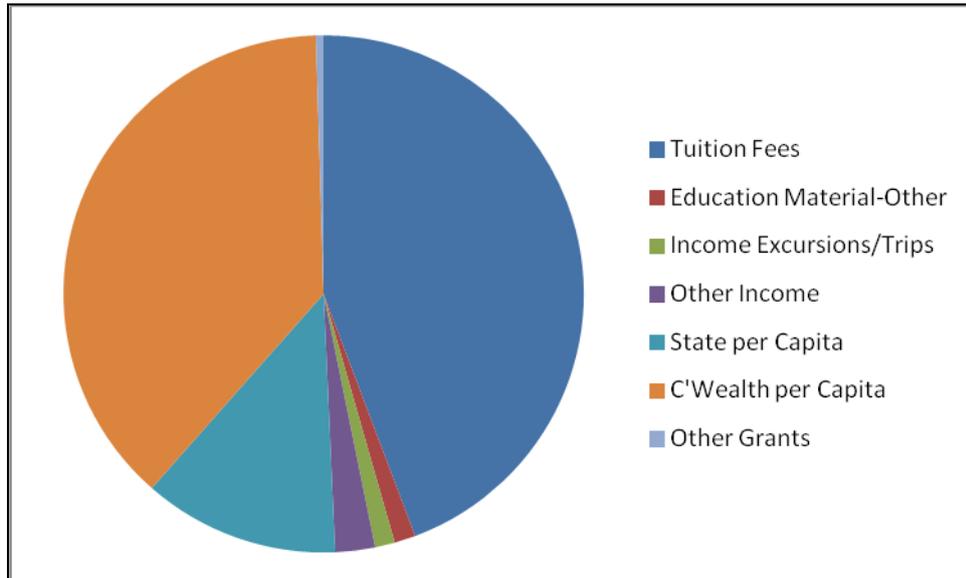


*Ineke Oliver
Principal*

Financial Information

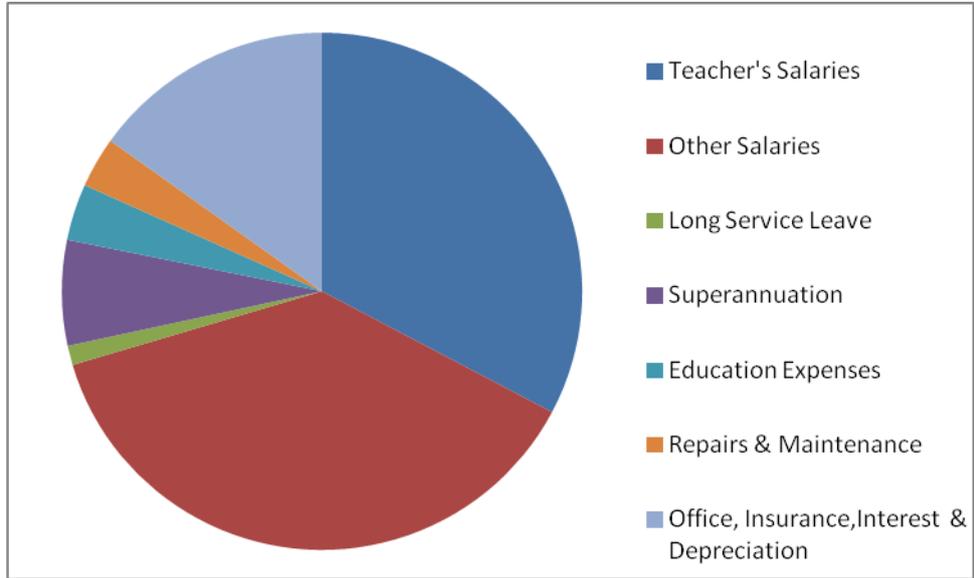
The School Board is closely involved in the annual budgeting process and reviews the School's performance compared to the budget on a monthly basis for the long term financial planning of the school.

Income



Tuition Fees	\$ 776,280
Educational Material Others	\$ 23,120
Income Excursions/Trips	\$ 21,587
Other Income	\$ 43,321
State per Capita Grant	\$ 213,694
C'wealth per Capita Grant	\$ 666,890
Other Grants	\$ 8,455

Expenditure



Teacher's Salaries	\$ 643,953
Other Salaries	\$ 740,707
Long Service Leave	\$ 23,829
Superannuation	\$ 129,543
Education Expenses	\$ 69,414
Repair & Maintenance	\$ 62,224
Office, Insurance, Interest & Depreciation	\$ 297,134



*Robyn Hart
Business Manager*

2015 School Events

- ☞ After School Sports
- ☞ Anzac Day Service
- ☞ Art Classes
- ☞ Board/Staff Breakfast
- ☞ Boomers Charity Day
- ☞ Camp for Lower Primary – 2 days
- ☞ Camp for Upper Primary – 5 days
- ☞ City to Surf Riverlands Team
- ☞ Class Parent Events
- ☞ Corroborees
- ☞ ‘Evening with Shakespeare’ whole school production
- ☞ Excursions for all classes each term
- ☞ Family Movie Nights
- ☞ Family Sleepover on campus
- ☞ Graduation Dinner
- ☞ Grandparents & Friends Morning Tea
- ☞ GRIP Leadership Conference
- ☞ Guitar Lessons
- ☞ Harmony Day Celebrations
- ☞ Indonesian Lessons for all full-time students
- ☞ International Peace Day Recognition
- ☞ Interschool Sports
- ☞ Market Day
- ☞ Music Quiz Night
- ☞ Newsletters
- ☞ Open Classrooms
- ☞ P & F Summer Lecture Series
- ☞ Parent Information Sessions
- ☞ Parent Observations
- ☞ Parent Child Sessions
- ☞ Parent Teacher Interviews
- ☞ Piano Lessons
- ☞ Physical Education Specialist sessions
- ☞ Pyjama Day
- ☞ Remembrance Day Service
- ☞ School Tours
- ☞ Silent Journey
- ☞ Sundowners each term for all families
- ☞ Treetops Montessori School interschool visit
- ☞ Upper Primary Extreme Sports
- ☞ Yearbook

Staff Information

Qualification	Percentage of classroom teachers and school leaders who hold this qualification
Bachelor Degree	100%
Honours/Post Graduate Degree	17%
Diploma	85%

Staff Attendance:

The attendance rate of the staff in 2015 was in excess of 85% with minimal sick and other leave.

Staff Professional Learning:

The total funds expended on staff professional learning in 2014 - \$14,500. All staff participated in relevant professional development sessions during the year. The sessions were provided from a variety of sources including AISWA, Montessori Australia Foundation, Sonic Learning, Dyslexia-Speld Foundation, Kids Matter, Autism Association and Universities.

Staff Satisfaction:

Riverlands staff are committed to the school and to Montessori education. Social events are held during the year and are well attended.



Riverlands Montessori School
Staff - 2015



Back Row (L-R): Debra Beach, Karen Holden-Rankine, Tamara Scott, Farida Duncan, Jessica Plummer, Marta Costa Schreyvogel, Marie Chapman, Tess Gomes.
Middle Row (L-R): Kate Oliver, Wynona Campbell, Graham McMillan, Leah Hampton, Ian Chapman, Kym Murphy, Janet Laing, Brian Murphy.
Front Row (L-R): Brianna Rose, Marina Begovich, Leigh Franz, Ineke Oliver (Principal), Robyn Hart, Jodie Cook, Ashlea Day.
Absent: Brad Favas.

Education Program

The Montessori National Curriculum is accredited by the Australian Curriculum Reporting and Assessment Authority (ACARA) as an alternative to the Australian Curriculum for Phase One (English, Mathematics, Science and History). Whilst not all subject areas of the Australian Curriculum have yet been endorsed, we have continued to deliver the Montessori Curriculum as it is mapped against the WA Curriculum Framework for those subjects not yet in the Australian Curriculum.

The school is part of the Montessori Australia Foundation's Quality Assurance Program. This means the school undergoes a rigorous examination of its teaching practices, equipment, physical and psycho-social environments together with the professional development and expertise of the teaching staff in accordance with Montessori philosophical aspects.

Classes are arranged in 3 year age spans, according to Dr. Montessori's scientific observations of the different developmental stages of children:

- Children House (3 to 6 year olds)
- Lower Primary (6 to 9 year olds)
- Upper Primary (9 to 12 year olds)

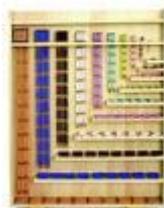
These groupings not only meet the needs of the children but also create a sense of community. The older child learns through teaching the younger. The younger child is inspired to do more advanced work by having the older children in the environment.

Each child's education program is individualised and carefully monitored and recorded. All children are assessed informally and formally in each phase of their education and we follow all mandated forms of assessment as directed by the government.

Throughout 2014 the teaching staff participated in workshops where student work samples were moderated in accordance with Australian Curriculum standards. The nexus between the Australian Curriculum, the Montessori National Curriculum and the Early Years Framework were also examined in-depth during workshops throughout the year with the whole teaching staff.

The Early Years Learning Framework has been examined in detail and implemented by the early childhood teaching staff and the National Quality Standards have also been included when deliberating about the school's programs.

The Upper Primary children again participated in the creative writing program, Born Storytellers. Their books were launched at the Perth Writers' Festival at the University of Western Australia and again were lauded by well-known authors and critics as being of a very high standard.



Key Student Outcomes

Student Attendance:

The average number of student enrolments in 2015 was 120 with 93% attendance.

National Assessment Program for Numeracy and Literacy:

We are obliged to participate in this national assessment but do not believe these results are a true reflection of children's academic achievements on their own. All assessment results, from a variety of sources, need to be taken into consideration when determining children's academic progress, NAPLAN is but one minor part of this assessment.

	Year 3 (14 students) Above State Standard	Year 5 (14 students) Above National Standard
Reading	85%	85%
Writing	45%	50%
Spelling	60%	60%
Grammar & Punctuation	78%	78%
Numeracy	65%	65%

No results are shown for Year 7 as there were less than 5 children and the results would contravene Privacy Laws. Due to the above results cannot and should not be considered as valid data due to the low number of students in each cohort and should not be seen as a true reflection of our school program. As we have a small cohort of children, we examine the results on an individual basis.

Reporting to Parents:

Written formal reports are provided to children and parents each semester.

Parent Teacher interviews are held at the end of terms 1 and 3 at which time teachers discuss the children's current progress and program for the future.

Sessions are held twice annually when children bring their parents to school to show them their work, both practically and by work samples.

Parents & Friends Association

Riverlands Parents and Friends exists to support the school through fundraising and community building activities and events. As my first year as President of the P and F, it has been a great privilege to work with a group of people so passionate about building a wonderful sense of community. It has been fantastic to see and experience the interaction with the wider community and the development of some wonderful programmes.

To directly influence your child's schooling journey is both a privilege but also a necessity. It has been said that a parent who becomes involved in the school community gives their child a positive view of education and schooling.

The Naturescape playground in the children's houses has been the main focus our fundraising this year and it was kicked off with our first afternoon High Tea, it was a fantastic event that involved some local business showing their vintage products and services.

2015 also saw the Riverlands Medieval Fair. It was wonderful to see so many people supporting this event, and many from the wider community. The event saw a range of entertainment and also many businesses from parents and the community. It was great to see the students of Riverlands become so involved and warming to see students interacting with the wider community, from Morris dancing to selling handmade items.

We have had many successful events this year, all of which could not have been possible without the contribution of Parent's, teachers and students. From our annual Movie night to our Disco night, the P and F have been able to make significant contributions to Riverlands' schooling environment.

We are proud to say that the air-conditioning of the Riverdome has been fully paid and we were able to make a contribution of approximately \$5000 to the first two stages of the Naturescape playground. We will be working towards fulfilling the next stages early next year and moving on to the next project, fitting out the Riverdome kitchen.

The work and dedication of the P and F executive, Deb Morley- Vice president, Bryn Stopp-Treasurer, Guiliana Licastro- Secretary, Jessica Plummer- Fundraising Co-ordinator, must be congratulated. I am very grateful for their continued support and advice throughout the year. Many thanks also must go to the Class Reps who also provide appreciated support for the P and F activities, and of course our school Principal Ineke, who has provided much guidance and vision for the P and F.



*Cassandra Bull
President*

Memberships

School Memberships:

- ❖ Montessori Australia Foundation
- ❖ Association of Business Administrators
- ❖ AISWA – Association of Independent Schools of WA
- ❖ Autism Association of WA
- ❖ Asthma Foundation
- ❖ Dyslexia-Speld Foundation
- ❖ WA Association for Mental Health

Principal Memberships:

- ❖ Swan Chamber of Commerce
- ❖ Early Years in Education Society
- ❖ Early Childhood Australia
- ❖ Australian College of Education
- ❖ Independent Primary School Heads of Australia Ltd.
- ❖ WA Primary Principals Association

School Community Satisfaction

Parents:

In 2015 the parent community demonstrated their satisfaction with the school through their participation in school events and responding to feedback on various school events and programs.

There continues to be an increased number of retained enrolments in the primary classes. More particularly, between the Children's Houses and Lower Primary.

Students:

This year the primary students participated in a survey seeking their feedback on how they feel about the school, including their level of safety and consideration and attention from staff. The results were a high level of satisfaction across the ages in all aspects.

Each formal report provides a place for children to comment on their learning experiences in the previous semester. These comments are written only by the children and where necessary, directly transcribed by the teachers. The comments are almost always positive and relate to both academic and social experiences.

We continue to get positive feedback from our parents that the children are always eager to return to the school after holidays. This is something of which we are proud, it proves we are providing an educational program that they feel they can enjoy and are keen to continue, we aim to foster this love of learning.

Behaviour management is not an issue at our school. Whilst children move through developmental stages where they test boundaries from time to time, they are managed in a caring supportive environment. The Virtues program and the Bounce Back social and emotional learning program is implemented throughout the school and complements the Montessori philosophy and ethos.

Teachers:

One of our teachers attended a Study Tour in Scotland sponsored by both the School and AISWA. One of our teacher assistants volunteered in a remote childcare centre providing a Montessori program, sponsored by the Montessori Childrens Foundation.

Regular staff meetings, the open-door policy of the Principal and the continued high level of professionalism by all contribute to the overall satisfaction of all staff in the school.

Teaching staff (and administration staff) all enjoy a high level of respect from both the parent and students in the school community. The Board of management also expresses its high level of satisfaction with the staff.

