

# into riverside

January 27, 2017

Dear Families & Friends,

Welcome to the 2017 School Year at Riverside Adventist Christian School.

We are so excited that you are back with us in this new school year at Riverside knowing that there are untold adventures ahead. With our families growing closer together as a community and some new faces to welcome, we pray that you will enjoy the journey that this school year takes us on.

We have new ideas, the same amazing teachers, key changes to some of our programs and a strong learning focus in mind for 2017.

After receiving a glowing report from our head office in 2016, we are ready to get on with the business of making learning at Riverside more enjoyable, and continuing to build a culture of Christian grace, excellence and empowerment. We believe that God is our strength and look forward to seeing what His almighty hand will do to shape, comfort and direct all of us.

The staff again began their working year on a special Staff Retreat, at Magnetic Island, where we established goals, highlighted areas for development, rededicated ourselves to Christian education and bonded as a united team. Although there were perilous dangers lurking on the golf course for those unaware of their own limitation, we all arrived back in one piece (mostly), and ready to serve your family through educating the precious children you will place in our care throughout the year.

Your child's skills and personal growth are so important to all of us, so please remain connected to Riverside throughout 2017. There will be challenges, successes, fun and celebrations. Let's work together wherever we can to prepare, support, stimulate and nurture young minds for whose learning this school exists. We will need to trust one another, assume the best in all circumstances and speak well of each other in the hearing of our students.

Please know that your family is regularly prayed for and that the School Advisory and Board of Management are keenly supportive of the growth and improvement of our school. My office is always open for anyone to share their joys or concerns. Hopefully, you will find Riverside to be safer, better, more intuitive and more effective at what we do in 2017.

Riverside Way Day – The staff have been reminding students of the “Riverside Way”, a kind of mantra or set of home rules and values that maintain and improve the culture and safety of our school. Teachers have worked with their students in each room this first week on highlighting

the true character of Christian learning and the measures they can take to ensure a predictable and supportive culture in and out of the classrooms.

Newsletters – Riverside produces a detailed newsletter each fortnight, usually in the even numbered weeks – starting in Week 2 each term. These are emailed to the email address we have on file for your family. Please, take the time (less than 15 minutes really!) to read through each newsletter and keep informed about what is happening in the present as well as all that is coming. Teachers take the time to take photos and report on events and it is really rewarding for our secretary and staff to see parents responding to and acknowledging what they have read about in their Riverside News.

ELC – Our Early Learning Centre is operating daily and there are spaces available. Please tell your friends about our centre as the program we operate is just so perfect for growing young minds. The way our ELC students from 2016 have again so comfortably settled into our Prep class this week demonstrated to me just what a successful program Miss Reini is running. As word spreads about the facilities and excellent Kindergarten program for 4 year olds, we hope to fill the centre through the year – which is just 20 students, another advantage our small centre has over the competition.

RACS 2017 Calendar – Last year, at Presentation Night, we distributed the 2017 Riverside Calendar, a double-sided A3 calendar you can hang on the fridge at home. It has all the key dates your family needs for the school year ahead, including holidays and special events. If you haven't received your copy yet, please pop into the office and pick one up!

Communication – I encourage all parents to keep us 'in the loop' with your child's development. That could mean medical information, incidental changes in their lives or anything that might impact upon their learning. Carpark whispers about inevitable teacher (and principal) errors will do as much good as would staffroom sulking over student behaviours. Please treat our staff as approachable. They are very willing to help. When confusion or dissatisfaction arises, step one is always speaking to a teacher. Only when such an approach has proven repeatedly unfruitful is it wise to ask for further information from my office. Most minor issues rarely become major or insurmountable when we are open and willing to listen to each other. If you have any suggestions for helping us to communicate better with families, please talk to me anytime.

Parent Information Night – Dinner Provided! – Next Monday evening, January 30<sup>th</sup>, we will hold an Information Night here at Riverside. It will begin at 6:00pm with a delicious free meal together in the Library and should conclude by 7:35pm at the latest. If you are keen to know what your child will be learning about, how homework works and key ideas for ensuring your child's progress is optimized, please come along on Monday evening. We will introduce the staff, show some inspiring video clips about the future directions we aspire to, and hopefully, learn a little about one another in the process. Come one Mums and Dads - FREE FOOD!

Uniform – The office has plenty of uniform in stock presently. Sports Uniform should be worn on Wednesdays and Fridays. The Riverside Formal Uniform needs to be worn in full on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Uniform Reminders – The teachers were so impressed with the daily quality of the students' uniforms in 2016. The word 'uniform' is clearly suggesting sameness or uniformity. The purpose of establishing and policing the uniform policy is to create an 'even playing field' for all families, rather than leaving the pressure of competition and creativity on you. We intend to ensure all students are treated respectfully and equally in maintaining our uniform policy this year. Please

have your child's hat clearly labelled inside or under the brim and replace discoloured items. Sports shoes need to be mostly white – especially the tops. We intend to resend the guide photographic guide for uniform soon to make it easy for families replacing old shoes. Long hair, for safety, needs to be tied up with blue, black or white hair-ties – boys and girls. Socks are to be ankle length and should cover the bone of the ankle without reaching more than a five or six centimetres above the shoe. This year, if your child comes in incorrect uniform 3 times without a note, a notification will be sent home from the teacher to remind you of our policy and uniform expectations. This makes for a happier, safer and better Riverside.

Swimming Program – Having rescued drowning children as a teacher from the surf about 15 years ago, it is my strong belief that every Australian student should be taught to swim in primary school. Swimming classes start in Week 2 of this term, this coming Wednesday. Please ensure that your child has the appropriate goggles, towel, clothing, thongs and swimming gear. We understand your child may have a fear of water but if we allow them to avoid swimming lessons, these fears will only be prolonged and enlarged. Some parents choose to accompany us to the centre to ensure their child is safe and happy during the first weeks. Please discuss this further with your child's teacher if you have any questions.

Tuckshop – We will continue to have Pizza order day on Tuesday (from Dominos). Families can order up to 3 pieces of pizza so they will need other food to supplement this. The 3 choices are vegetarian, cheese and pineapple or cheese. Orders need to be clearly written on a paper bag or similar with money safely inside the bag. Please contact the office if you are interested in contributing in any way to the operation of tuckshop as some parents, who were always generous in sharing their time for the Home & School operated tuckshop, have taken their children away to high school and we need to find a volunteer or three for 2017.

Volunteering – We not only need help in managing the tuckshop, we also have need of parent help in cutting up the fruit for the students and reading with groups in some classrooms. Let your child's teacher know if you are available to help in any way this year.

Bullying & Discipline – Our discipline system worked so well last year again, with less than half of the timeouts of the previous school year. Bullying, from verbal, to psychological, to physical bullying, is never acceptable and will not be left for students to resolve. Inevitably, students will make mistakes or cross boundaries this year, but we have systems and processes in place already that will help students to own their behaviour and learn from warnings and consequences that their behaviour is not appropriate or respectful. Parents will receive written notification if their child receives a 'timeout' at school, requiring a signature on the return slip. Accountability is essential if we plan for our students to grow and mature through primary school.

Lateness – Of course, we would love to have every student on time each day but, in the real world, there are sometimes going to be things that necessitate late arrivals or early departures. It would greatly assist us if, where possible, students come to school with a note explaining the reason for arriving late or leaving early. The process is that when your child arrives later than 8:50am, they need first to visit the office for a late slip before walking to class. Teachers will not let a child walk into the class without a late slip, so that our records of absences remain accurate.

Homework – There will more details shared at Parent Information Night about homework. As your child gets older they will need to begin preparing for the increased demands of secondary school learning and one of the major factors is organising themselves to complete homework assignments. All primary homework should take from 20 to 60 minutes per weeknight – four

nights per week - depending on year level. Some teachers require students to complete unfinished homework in class on Fridays.

School Times – The finishing times of each school day have changed this year. Please note the changes as it will affect drop off and pick up routines for some families.

Earliest Drop Off – 8:20 am  
 Line Up For Class – 8:48 am  
 School Start – 8:50 am  
 Lunch – 11:00 – 11:45 am  
 Recess – 1:35 – 2:00 pm  
 School Ends – 3:05 pm  
 Duty End – 3:35 pm

No student has the permission of the school to be on the school grounds outside of these hours. Without supervision children are not safe and their care is not a small matter to our staff. We appreciate your adherence to the above times - unless a special circumstance arises. Written, parental permission is essential if special supervision is needed and students on the school grounds outside of these hours will be seated outside the front of the administration office.

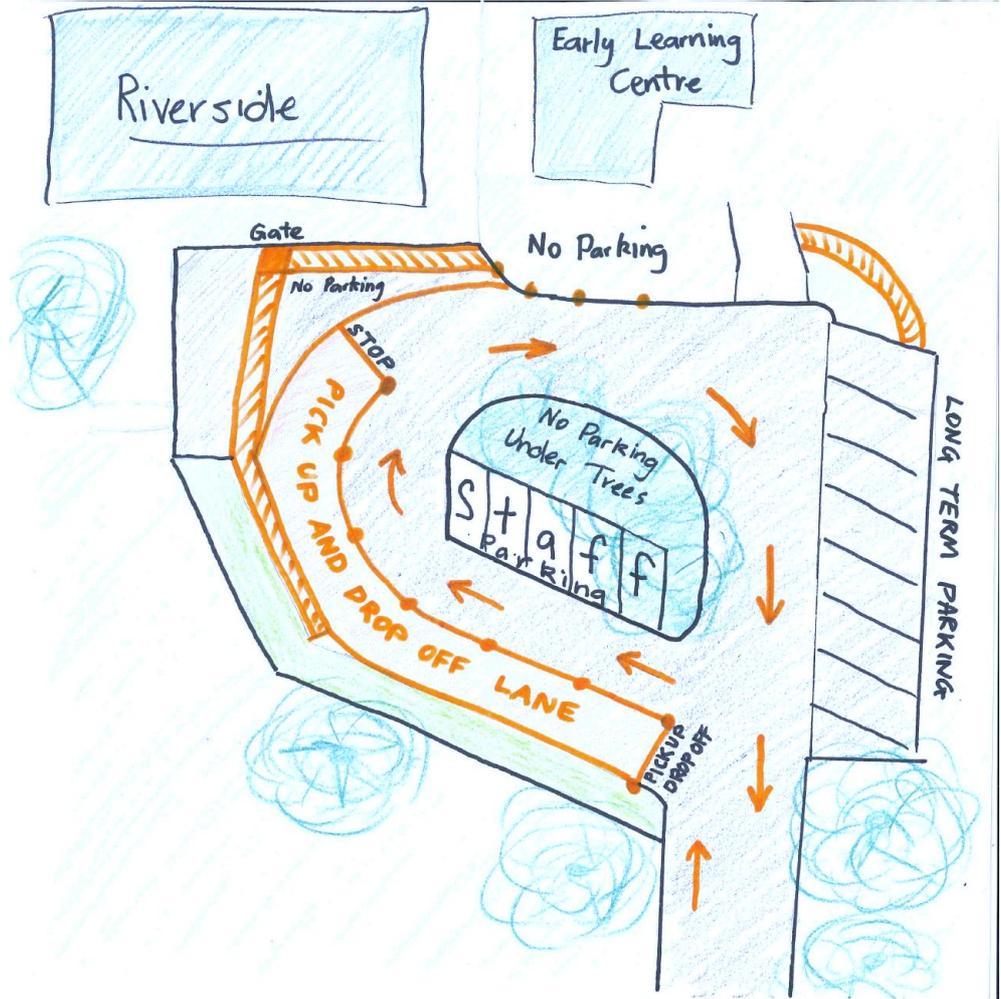
Lunch/Fruit Policy – As a part of the school's fruit policy, fresh fruit is provided to students at recess each day. The fruits vary according to seasons. This means that you will only pack food for the main lunch break. We will speak more about this at Parent Information Night, but the "Lunch List 1,2,3" is an excellent guide for ensuring your child has energy, without the high blood-sugar spikes some processed foods can produce. Asking students to learn well and increase their performance while filling their tummies with sugar and low G.I food is like trying to win a teach a baby to walk on sharp stones or slippery floors.

Music/Guitar Lessons – Riverside offers private music tuition on Fridays (individual or group guitar lessons). We have a new guitar teacher this year, Mr Kaye, who offers affordable lessons in classical guitar. There will be further details in next week's Riverside newsletter.

Pick-up and Drop-off Changes – For safety reasons, we have clear requirements for the way students are dropped off and picked up each day. There are yellow lines marked in the Riverside "roundabout" and the following map and dot points should explain to you how it works. The main goal is to stop students from occupying the same space as moving cars, so there are clear boundaries now, for students and for the way parents need to park. You have 2 options.

- **Pick-up/Drop-off Lane (KISSnDROP)**– To pick up your child without leaving your vehicle, please use the left lane which follows beside the hedge. Once your vehicle is in the first three in line (after the 'STOP' mark) the duty teacher will send your child or children out to your vehicle. Please don't leave your vehicle in this area. You must stay in your car and wait until you can move to the front. Once your child is in their seatbelt, move off slowly when it is safe to do so.

- **Park and Enter School (Personal Delivery)** – If you wish to come into the school in the afternoon for any reason, or you want to personally walk your child out to the carpark, please park in the new carparks over on the other side of the roundabout, facing away from the school, and walk along the front of the ELC to the gate, following the new yellow pathway near the school. Students will not be permitted to walk across to that parking area without an adult. Where possible, avoid parking in the middle of the roundabout (under trees), please.



A True Legend and Friend of Riverside – Mrs Betty Hughes - It is with deep sadness that I pass on to the Riverside family the news that Mrs Betty Hughes, who has been a “Riverside Mum” for Dante since he joined us in Prep, lost her battle with cancer on January 1, 2017. We as a staff and school family are devastated and promise our prayers and support to Dante, and to Betty’s children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Betty contributed to special programs here and was the main transport for Dante throughout his schooling. She will be sorely missed, but having witnessed her faith in God, her caring love and her dependence on prayer, I believe we will meet again when Jesus returns.

Thank you for all you do and will do for Riverside in 2017. About 2000 years ago, Jesus Christ stated a truism for all the ages, that it is more blessed to give, than to receive. I know the staff will be blessed in serving you and I pray that your family too will be blessed in giving back as you are able. I’m planning a year where I’m not too busy to do the important things, which means doing less of what matters less and more of what matters more. If you see me out of balance – remind me! I will appreciate being prompted.

Christian Regards,

Ian Humphries

Principal

Riverside Adventist Christian School

Nurture For Today | Learning For Tomorrow | Character For Eternity