Welcome to the February 2022 edition of *The River School* newsletter. Our *Year of Gratitude* has begun on a high note with big smiles, excited children, happy parents and a lovely connecting of community with our outside Morning Circle. Here’s to an inspiring, united and inclusive year.

**New Staff**

We extend a warm welcome to the new staff who have joined The River School community this year — Jane Jensen (tuckshop coordinator), Amelia Jacobson (tuckshop assistant), Ian Williams (Music teacher replacing Jacinta), Jacki Craggs (Wattles Yr. 4 teacher), Mike Prior (bus driver replacing Jon), Lexie Abel (Yr. 1 part-time learning assistant, job sharing with Brenda), Laura Baroebe (Prep part-time learning assistant, job sharing with Molly) and Manisha Yomaoka (Japanese learning assistant). In Term 2 Jeremy Dunlop will join our team to teach small group guitar.

**Parent Class Meetings**

Due to the Qld Government recommendations reducing the number of visitors on site, our class parent meetings will be held in the second half of this term. Please contact your teacher via email or the office, to arrange a time if you would like to make contact before the parent meeting. Being a short term, parents may prefer to have their individual parent/teacher meeting at the end of term instead of a whole class meeting. Your teachers will be in touch with you, as the term progresses.

**Camps**

Our Red Cedars (Yrs. 5/6) and Wattles (Yr. 4) will hold their class camps during Term 1. Red Cedars will participate in an amazing sailing adventure designed to foster positive communication, supportive teamwork, careful decision making and shared leadership. The organising group ‘Blue Peter’ will be holding an information session for parents and students (2:00pm) prior to camp on — Friday 4th March, 2.30pm.

Wattle students will visit Noosa North Shore for their camp to experience a range of outdoor activities with a focus on team building and team challenges. The parent meeting to discuss the camp in more detail is on Wednesday 2nd March at 3pm.

**P&F AGM and Café Night**

Our first café night of the year will be held on Friday 4th March, starting at 5pm. This evening will combine the P&F AGM with an open mic for parents and students and delicious food. More information on the format of the evening will be sent to families soon. Please contact the office if you would like to perform or are interested in nominating for one of the P&F executive committee positions: President, Vice President, Secretary or Treasurer.

In gratitude,

Ann Donoghoe
(Principal)
*The River School — Connection through Community*
RESTA reptile visit to the ECC students Wi’ra on Tuesday 8th February
Along with our composting, soft plastic collection and general recycling we now have collection bins in the school Foyer/Library for:

*Batteries (not rechargeable)
*Used pens and texts
*Bread tags, milk/juice lids and blister packs (panadol etc)
*Empty glue sticks and white out containers

These items will be either dropped to the Officeworks store in Maroochydore or posted to Banish.

If you would like to find out more about items how to responsibly recycle from home some useful links are:

https://www.terracycle.com/en-AU/
https://www.biome.com.au/content/242-recycle-at-biome

School focus

Virtues & River School Code

Week 1 - Service & Kindness:
I will look for ways to be helpful & be kind to all living beings. I will think kind thoughts, speak kind words & choose kind actions.

Week 2 - Responsibility & Play Safely:
I will strive to be responsible in my actions by being dependable, keeping promises and honouring commitments.
I will show responsibility when playing. I will be safe, I will follow the rules and I will be aware of my surroundings and friends.
FOOD POLICY

It is well known that food plays an important role in health, including physical, emotional and mental health. A condition of enrolment at The River School is that our food policies are adhered to within the school grounds and on any school excursion or camp. We ask that parents respect the following food policies for their child’s school lunches, snacks and school events.

**Sentient Vegetarian:** No meat, poultry, seafood or eggs. Additionally, we ask that you avoid onions, garlic and mushrooms as these foods do not align with our understanding of the positive workings of the human nervous system.

**Unhealthy foods:** We ask parents to avoid ‘foods’ that are high in sugar or contain preservatives, additives and food colourings. Junk food specifically has no place at the River School, and lollies and sweets will be removed from lunchboxes. Foods that have high sugar content or are full of preservatives can adversely affect a child’s ability to concentrate and learn, and to be in control of their actions and behaviour.

**Minimal food packaging:** We encourage parents to use minimal packaging in their child’s lunchbox and we also encourage children to take all packaging home.

**Nuts:** The inclusion of nuts in your child’s lunch, while a healthy option, may be potentially dangerous for a child with a peanut allergy. **No peanuts** are to be brought on to the school grounds. Please check the ingredients in processed foods. All other nuts are fine.

**Some Lunch Suggestions:** crackers & cheese, fresh cut fruit, dried fruit, cut fresh vegetables, dips & crackers, nuts (not peanuts), salads, pasta, yoghurt, sandwiches, wraps, seaweed, corn or soya chips (please avoid flavoured, potato chips).
Understanding Sentient Diet

Along with a vegetarian diet, we also follow a “sentient” diet at The River School. This means that we avoid eggs, onions, garlic and mushrooms. The sentient diet is also embraced by Buddhists, Hindus, Taoists, and many yoga and meditation practitioners, such as Transcendental Meditation and Shivananda. This diet is especially beneficial for anyone wanting to practice introspection or enjoy a quiet mind.

The yoga diet is based on the concept of three principles: static, mutative and sentient. Static energy is sleepy, dull and heavy. Mutative is fiery and stimulating. Sentient energy is peaceful, focused and clear, and brings a sense of relief.

At The River School we don’t encourage mutative foods such as caffeine based drinks, high sugar foods and chocolate. These foods stimulate a rapid increase in energy quickly followed by a rapid decrease.

Static foods are meat and fish, onions and garlic and mushrooms. Along with the ethical, health and compassionate reasons not to eat animals, they are also detrimental to a clear mind and calm thinking.

Onion and garlic are irritating to the body. Because of this, our body tries to expel them quickly causing a strong odour in our breath and also hands and feet as the body expels the toxins. The process of expulsion causes agitation in the lower energy centres of the body from a yogic perspective and stimulates anger, irritability and distraction. Some people can recognise this naturally. But for many people the best way is to do an experiment and not eat onions and garlic for some time. You will probably feel the affect when you resume eating them. This will be especially true if you are also practicing meditation, deep relaxation or yoga.

Mushrooms are not vegetables, but fungus. They grow on rotting and decaying matter. Many species of mushrooms are poisonous, others are hallucinogenic. From a yogic perspective, all mushrooms have a static affect on the mind.

Eggs, even unfertilised, have a very strong static effect and are detrimental to spiritual practices.

It is our experience that the sentient diet at the River School helps contribute to a sentient environment at the school, and a positive, peaceful and joyful experience for our students and staff. Thank you for
At The River School we know that building healthy relationships lies at the heart of successfully resolving conflict. We believe that problems are opportunities for learning and so our approach to problem solving must be educative.

Applying a Restorative approach at our School means we create a Restorative Community that is based on positive relationships and a depth of wellbeing that is dependent on students, parents, school staff and management continually building, maintaining and when necessary, repairing relationships.

All behaviour is a form of communication. In a school community there will be a range of reasons why people enter into varying degrees of conflict. Generally speaking, most negative behaviours at the River School are of a minor nature and are usually resolved successfully through a process known as restorative chat. The chat uses dialogue that supports students to take responsibility for their behaviour and to be accountable to fix up any harm that has occurred. Importantly, it offers a fair process that gives everyone a voice and real input into problem solving. It gives students the opportunity to become aware of the affect their behaviour has had, and to take responsibility for their actions. Taking responsibility involves taking steps to make things right – to heal the hurts.

This empowering practice shifts the traditional concept of punishment to that of repairing harm. It builds empathy, develops emotional awareness, promotes active listening, encourages accountability and provides hope to those involved that repair is possible. People need to belong, to feel a sense of connection. Restorative chat is a supportive pathway to reconnect. Practised consistently, restorative conversations equip people with fundamental relationship skills and contribute to healthy communities.

At The River School we use restorative chats in the classroom and playground to help children to become competent problem solvers.

If you want to achieve results, build relationships: in order to build relationships, improve the conversations. ©fierceinc.com
**Road Safety**

Just another timely reminder that **NO** vehicles are to drive through the school between 8:15 am and 3:30pm. This helps to ensure the safety of all of our students, staff and animals.

Please remember to park in the designated car park adjacent to the ECC (lilac) building.

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**BUS INFORMATION**

Please contact the office directly on 5494 3559 or admin@riverschool.com.au if you would like your child to utilise the school bus service.

If you have any questions please contact us on the above contacts or drop into the office for a chat.

In the morning the first two buses (Mike & Travis's first runs), will drop the students at the bottom veranda. They will gather here with the drop off children from 8:15am - 8:30am.

At 8:30 the students will proceed up to the classrooms.

If you are dropping your child/ren at school please note that there is **no** supervision prior to 8:15am and no students are to be in classrooms.

The second run of buses arrive after 8:30am and will drop the children off at the top area near the classrooms.

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**1. We sit in our allocated seat (no changing).**

**2. We put our seatbelt on as soon as we sit down.**

Then we keep our seatbelt buckled until the bus comes to a complete stop, only removing it at our stop.

**3. We sit in our seats correctly, with legs forwards and seatbelts over our shoulder and lap.**

**4. We keep all parts of our bodies and all of belongings inside the bus, at all times.**

**5. We do not eat or drink on the bus.**

**6. We only use friendly language on the bus, this is when we are talking and singing.**

**7. We leave any electronics we might have, in our bags.**

This includes ipads and ipods.

**8. We look after our bus by not drawing on it or creating holes in the seats.**

If you find these please let your driver know so that they can be fixed.

**9. We help the bus driver keep us safe by always listening to their instructions and keeping the noise to a minimum so that they can concentrate on driving.**
School Vision

The River School is a world leader in Neohumanist Education contributing to a future of compassion, joy, justice and universalism.

School Mission Statement

Our Mission is to:

Nurture each child’s highest physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual potential.

Encourage a deep Neohumanist understanding of the interconnectedness of all things, embracing humanity, animals, plants and the entire universe.

Model love and cooperation throughout the school so that children develop a compassionate heart with a clear moral compass and the skills and confidence to put their love into action.

Create a supportive learning community encouraging diversity, unity and service to all.