

'Life is what you make it – get involved.' This year it's 'Improve yourself, better than before'.

- Other posters feature:
 - Show courtesy, respect and care for others
 - Achieve to the best of your abilities
- Special Riccarton Way badges were suggested and designed by the School Council. These badges are given out sparingly, not necessarily to the kids who would normally be picked as natural leaders of a group, such as class captains or sports captains. Instead, they seek role models, people who really espouse the 'Way', who live the values, who exhibit the attitudes and skills needed to succeed in life. In fact, the first two badges were given to volunteer youth workers from the Spreydon Baptist Church who contribute tirelessly and continuously to the school - selfless practical Christian workers who live their values instead of preach them.
- Every prefect gets a Riccarton Way badge, and is expected to live up to the standards it represents.
- Student leaders pick up on the annual theme and get students involved in various applications – it helps if it comes from them, too.
- The expectations apply to the staff as well as the children. For instance, the professional development emphasis for the year on Reflective Practice is about the theme, 'Improve yourself, better than before'. Seven senior students were invited to address the whole staff at a Teacher Only Day at the beginning of the year on 'what will help us learn'. Then they answered questions – heaps of them.
- There are two standards documents:
 - the 'Step Up'(Yr 9) and 'Moving On' (Yr 10) programmes emphasise the Riccarton Way ethos by promoting and reinforcing

ing good work attitudes and habits;

- the Yellow Ribbon programme has been introduced in the school to reinforce the Riccarton Way 'care, courtesy and respect' message. The 'it's okay to seek help' message has had the anti-bullying 'it's okay to tell' message added to help any student who feels isolated or threatened.
- Gary acknowledges the staff for applications of Riccarton Way behaviour – with cakes of chocolate! This helps keep the Riccarton Way ethos in front of the staff as well.

Observations and Results to Date:

- Year 9 students arrive as raw material, just like any other disparate group of new students from a large catchment area of great cultural diversity. However, because it is becoming 'the way we do things round here', staff often hear senior students helping to bring new students into line.
- All staff reinforce the Riccarton Way but the Phys Ed department is especially good at reinforcing it.
- The school already had a good culture, but this enhances and improves it.
- The Riccarton Way will always be

a work in progress, given human nature. However, Gary and Phil believe you must keep a set of values in front of students and promote them in a positive way in our schools, given the increasing diversity of our student populations. They believe the Riccarton Way has and does make a difference in the school and there are many great role models for the ethos among Riccarton High School students.

In years to come, if I were an employer in Christchurch, I'd be looking for Riccarton High graduates – unlike most people, they're being taught to focus on great values, to build great attitude. And as all employers know, the most critical element to look for in an employee is a great attitude. Skills are great, knowledge is very valuable, but attitude overrides everything. Great work, Riccarton High.

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