

How Britannica Empowers Inclusive Learning at Riccarton High School

Riccarton High School is one of the most diverse schools in New Zealand, boasting 72 nationalities across its cohort of 1020 students.

"I think it makes for a very special school" says Library Manager, Sally Brown.

The school's library embodies the school's spirit of inclusivity and collaboration: it's a shared space which is the result of a unique partnership between the school and the local council. The joint-use library caters to members of the public as well as Riccarton's students, combining community and education.

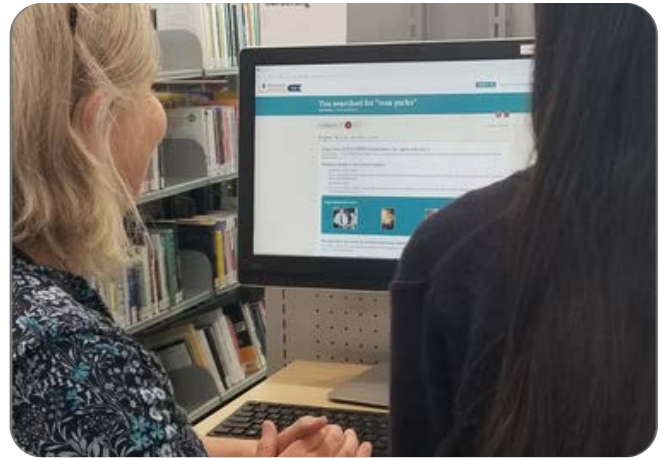
Tailoring Learning Experiences

Meeting the diverse needs of Riccarton's student body is a top priority for Sally, particularly in offering differentiated content and providing support for English Language Learners.

"One of the reasons I really like Britannica School over some of the other databases for inquiry teaching is because of the reading levels.

"We are a high ESL (English as a Second Language) school and having content that's available across reading levels is such a winner. It's a game-changer, and it means that I can use Britannica with a broader range of students."

"I also love the tools that come up immediately inside each article. They mean that that students can translate content, or they can listen to it – as not everybody wants to read. Having those options for our students is really important".



Empowering Inquiry-Based Learning

Sally integrates inquiry-based learning as a fundamental part of her work with students.

"I use Britannica as my one-stop shop for my inquiry sessions, because I can ensure students access credible information".

She continues, "I tell them that unlike using Google and Wikipedia, Britannica is a place that they can find information they can trust."

While Sally emphasises the importance of using Britannica School for credible information, she acknowledges that students will inevitably use popular search engines like Google. Therefore, Britannica School also serves as a valuable tool for building digital literacy among Riccarton's students.

"Once you get into Britannica School, it looks just like Google, which is great for helping students to master online search strategies with techniques like keyword searching", Sally explains.



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By emphasising Britannica's reliability and guiding students in effective online searches, Sally helps equip them with critical thinking skills essential for navigating today's digital information landscape.

Championing Britannica's Role in Every Classroom

As Sally reflects on the impact of Britannica at Riccarton High, her genuine enthusiasm shines through. It's not just about the library - it's about bringing accessible and reliable information into every classroom, supporting the diverse learning needs of the school's students.

Sally encourages other schools to adopt Britannica without hesitation, highlighting its ease of integration into everyday instruction.

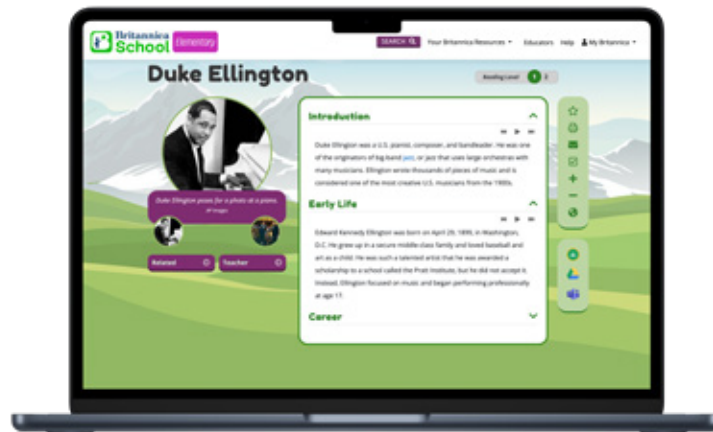
Simple strategies, she says, like popping into classrooms with quick demonstrations, or highlighting Britannica's accessibility in staff meetings and newsletters can effectively promote its use outside of the library.

"Teachers will actually be so excited" she says, recognising the potential for Britannica to enhance learning experiences across the school.

Sally looks forward to more teachers seeing the benefits of tools like Britannica, excited by the potential to reach all students with accessible and inclusive learning content.



Sally Brown is Library Manager at Riccarton High School and also serves as the Aoraki rep on the National Executive for the School Library Association of New Zealand Aotearoa (SLANZA), actively championing initiatives that promotes reading and learning in schools across New Zealand.



Key Takeaways

- With 72 nationalities among its students, Riccarton High is one of the most multi-cultural schools in New Zealand. Britannica's adaptable content supports differentiated learning, catering to English Language Learners and diverse learning needs.
- Britannica School goes beyond information, fostering essential digital literacy skills. Through its user-friendly platform and curated content, students develop proficiency in navigating online resources.
- Britannica School integrates into classroom instruction, enriching learning experiences school-wide. Sally champions its adoption, emphasising its accessibility and reliability for all students.



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