

2007 National Excellence In Teaching Awards

State and Territory Teaching Excellence Award Recipient



Christine Alderton

Diploma in Teaching, Bridging Course (Primary) for Bachelor of Education
Bigga Public School, Bigga, New South Wales
Nominated by: School Parent Association

Position: Primary Teacher • Level taught: General Primary • School type: Government • Town: Bigga • Category: Primary • State: NSW

Technology-boosted learning

Christine Alderton has brought many innovative technology-driven techniques into her classroom at Bigga Public School. She effectively employs peer tutoring and cooperative learning through her use of these new technologies, including interactive whiteboards, schoolpads, digital cameras, and powerpoint demonstrations. Christine has introduced Edward De Bono's *Six Hats* thinking process and *Brain Gym* programs to encourage lateral thinking among the students. Recently, a credit and a distinction were awarded to two of Christine's students in the University of NSW Computer Tests, which measured student confidence and aptitude in using the latest computer technologies.

When Christine came to Bigga Public School, there was no Language Other Than English (LOTE) program running in the school. Indonesian via VoicePoint technology was introduced, and has held the interest of the children while increasing their knowledge and appreciation of other people and their cultures.

As well as introducing new technologies, Christine has helped to boost the nutritional, environmental and sporting emphasis at the school. She has expanded a tree propagation and planting program, and students have successfully competed at district, regional, and state level in swimming, athletics, football, and cricket. Through Christine's encouragement, the Country Women's Association has become a school partner, encouraging children with international projects, providing speakers, and awarding prizes and scholarships.

Insight

Q: *In your opinion, what makes a good teacher?*

A: I believe a good teacher listens carefully, challenges children appropriately and creatively, nurtures the whole person, and encourages fulfillment of potential and the pursuit of excellence.

Q: *How do you maintain your enthusiasm for teaching?*

A: I enjoy children and their refreshing approach to life and learning. I want to do my best for them so it is always a challenge.

Q: *In hindsight, what do you wish your training provided you with more of?*

A: It would have been helpful to have training in practical matters such as student engagement, school management, disciplining children and parental interaction.

Q: *What is the most difficult aspect of teaching today?*

A: I find that covering all aspects of the curriculum within one year with the available resources and daily time constraints most difficult.

Q: *What is your greatest challenge as a teacher?*

A: My greatest challenge is to prepare my students adequately for a fast moving, competitive, technologically advanced future.

Q: *How has teaching changed over the years?*

A: The advancement of technology and its teaching across the key learning areas and the increased presence of parents in the classroom are major changes in teaching.

Q: *What is the single most important thing you, as a teacher, can do to connect with individual students?*

A: Care. To care means listening, communicating, encouraging, and trying to help. This leads to connections being made and maintained.

Q: *If you were the Minister for Education, Science and Training for a week, what would you try to change?*

A: I would try to shift the responsibility for data retrieval from individual schools to central databases, avoiding continual unnecessary interruptions to teaching.

Q: *What keeps you awake at night?*

A: Mainly it's worrying about finding time to complete administrative tasks and sometimes when I'm exhausted it's about presenting topics creatively.

Q: *If your students could describe you in three words, what would they say?*

A: Caring, honest and fun.

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