

2007 National Excellence In Teaching Awards

State and Territory Teaching Excellence Award Recipient



Kylie Booker

Bachelor of Education, Graduate Certificate Gifted Education, currently completing Masters in Gifted Education
Immanuel College, Novar Gardens, South Australia

Nominated By: School parent

Position: Gifted & Talented Education - Middle School • Level taught: Special Education • School type: Independent • Town: Novar Gardens • Category: Secondary • State: SA

Internationally recognised as an educator and facilitator of gifted education

Kylie Booker believes there is a difference between nurturing the gifts of all students and providing an appropriate education for gifted students. As a teacher of gifted students, she aims to provide experiences that match the children's different ways and rates of learning. She employs problem-based learning techniques, which make learning goals achievable for students with diverse abilities.

Under Kylie's tutorage, Immanuel College students won the State Title in the World of Trivia and also competed as the youngest team in the Science and Engineering Challenge to win competition day in South Australia and earn a position at the National titles. Her students have also topped the University of New South Wales competitions in both Science and Maths. In 2006, one of her youngest students won the top prize in the state at the Young Writer's Awards. Most recently one of her gifted students gained a perfect score in the Rio Tinto Science competition, the only student to achieve this in South Australia.

Kylie and her students recently won an environmental award on World Environment Day, and Kylie has been awarded the Australian Teachers Science and Engineering Award for teaching excellence. Her programs for gifted children are employed in schools as far as Singapore, Taipei and the United Kingdom. Her gifted program has been recognised by the Asia Pacific Gifted Association and recently her students were selected to represent Australia to attend the Gifted Creativity Camp held in Taiwan.

Insight

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

A: A good teacher has a sense of purpose with expectations of success for all students. Most importantly they enjoy their work and teaching their students.

Q: How do you maintain your enthusiasm for teaching?

A: For every new student, there is a new challenge. Opening students' minds and preparing them to educate themselves throughout their lives keeps me enthusiastic.

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

A: I would have liked to engage in more training on the nature of learning, the needs of students, and the skills to develop more differentiated curriculums.

Q: What is the most difficult aspect of teaching?

A: Time and balance associated with fulfilling personal expectations and meeting student needs. Teachers have increasingly demanding administrative roles, which impacts on the delivery of learning and eventual outcomes.

Q: What is your greatest challenge as a teacher?

A: Meeting the increasingly diverse social, emotional and academic needs of all students, and instilling social resilience in all my students.

Q: How has teaching changed over the years?

A: The impact of technology and increased administrative demands, and generation Y students learning quite differently. Teaching is no longer just about content, but rather teaching students how to learn and think.

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

A: To identify individual student's needs and respond with appropriate learning environments that nurture, support and facilitate positive learning outcomes, regardless of their intellectual ability.

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

A: Raise the profile of gifted education and the importance of supporting these children both academically and socially, and campaign to raise the profile of the teaching profession.

Q: What keeps you awake at night?

A: Developing solutions to maintain my roles and deadlines on a personal and work level. Being a teacher means not only having one child of my own, but also many others to consider.

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

A: Passionate, caring and creative.

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