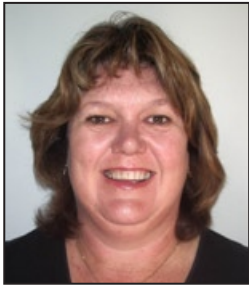


2007 National Excellence In Teaching Awards

State and Territory Teaching Excellence Award Recipient



Michelle Green

Diploma of Teaching (Primary), Bachelor of Education (ECE)
Fremantle Language Development Centre, Willagee, Western Australia
Nominated by: Centre parent

Position: Speech and Language Teacher • Level taught: Special Education • School type: Government • Town: Willagee • Category: Early Childhood • State: WA

Early intervention strategies help students with language impairments

At Fremantle Language Development Centre, Michelle Green has worked for more than four years with children who have severe expressive and receptive language delay. She brings sensitivity, care, and patience to her classroom tailoring individual learning plans for each student and ensuring her education plans are stimulating, meaningful, and appropriate for each child. She collaborates with specialist staff, such as the speech pathologist, sensory motor and language support teachers, and the school psychologist to integrate student development.

Michelle has introduced a play program into her classroom where the specific skills of play such as eye contact, taking turns, and play language are fostered. Her program has helped her students to interact with other children from the mainstream community, and the sentence length of her students' speech patterns has greatly improved under her tutorage.

The Language Development Centre provides early intervention strategies with the aim of moving language-impaired students back into their mainstream school settings where they can enjoy effective communication and further build their literacy skills, ultimately performing at the same level as their mainstream peers.

Insight

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

A: One who is patient, organised and flexible. Also, someone with the ability to be open-minded, an active listener, a problem solver, a creative planner, a global thinker, who can empathise with and respect the children and adults they work with.

Q: How do you maintain your enthusiasm for teaching?

A: My program is forever changing as I tailor it to meet each child's individual needs. Also, seeing the light shine when a child discovers something new and wonderful.

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

A: A deeper knowledge and understanding of emotional literacy, and the counselling skills necessary to deliver heartbreaking news to parents of children with severe difficulties.

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

A: The increasing expectation to take on the responsibility of educator, mentor, nurturer and counsellor, as well as educating parents to support their child's education so they reach their potential.

Q: What is your greatest challenge as a teacher?

A: To really get to the children, determine what they're capable of achieving and accept that you have done your best, considering the time constraints placed on teachers.

Q: How has teaching changed over the years?

A: Teachers appear to be under-valued in society and teachers' roles have become more demanding due to requests for statistical data and an emphasis on benchmarks and school ratings.

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

A: Actively listen to children and tap into their interests and potential in order to inspire them.

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

A: Recognise the importance of male role models in the early years by rewarding excellence with a salary comparable with other four-year university degrees, consequently encouraging more males into teaching.

Q: What keeps you awake at night?

A: Wondering how I am going to meet the specific individual needs of my students within the limited time and resources at my disposal.

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

A: Although the children I teach have severely limited expressive language skills – they can communicate through their body language – they would probably describe me as happy, caring and kind.

Contact Details:

Principal: Mary Bishop
Phone: (08) 9314 1677

Teacher: Michelle Green
Phone: (08) 9339 6882 or 0412 938 757
Email: green35@bigpond.net.au

For further information, please contact:

Janet Thomas, Public Relations, ASG on behalf of the NEiTA Foundation.
Telephone: (03) 9276 7758 Mobile: 0402 837 758 Email: publicrelations@asg.com.au

The NEiTA Foundation is administered by the Australian Scholarships Group Friendly Society Limited
ABN 21 087 648 879 Head Office: 23-35 Hanover Street Oakleigh Victoria 3166
Telephone: (03) 9276 7777 Facsimile: (03) 9563 2780 Website: www.asg.com.au or www.neita.com

Proudly supported by



Australian
Scholarships
Group

SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S EDUCATION