

# NEiTA 2009 ASG National Teaching Awards

## National Award Recipient



## Paul Fuller

Bachelor of Laws, Diploma of Education  
**Orange Grove Primary School**, Orange Grove, Western Australia  
[now at Landsdale Primary School, Landsdale]  
Nominated by: School parent  
National Award Category: Community Engagement

*Position: Level 3 teacher • Category: Primary • Level taught: Years 4 and 5 • Years teaching: 7 years • Years at this school: 5 years • School type: Government • Town/Suburb: Orange Grove • State: Western Australia • Postcode: 6109*

### *How do you inspire your students?*

I inspire students by harnessing their natural enthusiasm for technology to improve outcomes in the areas of literacy, numeracy and science. Technology is not simply a 'gimmick' to increase engagement. When used properly, digital tools enable students to learn more effectively and to develop competencies that are essential for the 21st century. For example, our class podcast enables the students to become active citizens, using their newfound global voice to help achieve valuable social, environment and cultural goals. The result is a community of learners working together to produce outstanding work that is showcased to the world.

### **Young students benefitting from the latest in technological education**

Year 4 and 5 classrooms may not be the place you would expect to find cutting edge educational technology. However, in Paul Fuller's classroom, you can experience the future of education in a primary school setting. Paul is a teacher who is passionate about using technology to prepare his students for the 21st century.

A wide range of modern technologies and tools are employed in Paul's teaching methods. These include digital cameras, iPods, laptops and interactive whiteboards. Paul uses teaching software such as Mathletics and Spellodrome to engage students, and improve their competencies in mathematics and literacy.

Recently Paul enlisted parent and community support to implement a one-to-one laptop program at the school. This program, a first for any Western Australian public school, has equipped every year 4-7 student with their own personal laptop. This program has had a positive effect on engagement, behaviour, academic achievement and attendance. In a recent survey, 100 per cent of students said they enjoy school more now that they have a computer, and 96 per cent believed they learnt more effectively using a computer.

The flagship project for Paul and his students is Podkids Australia, the most successful school based podcast in the country. The Podkids Australia podcast provides an authentic worldwide audience for the students' writing and has subscribers in more than 50 countries. In the podcast, Paul's students have interviewed the Western Australian Premier, leading authors, federal ministers and famous sportspeople. The students' work has been downloaded more than 60,000 times.

Paul's achievements in harnessing new technologies to inspire his students have been internationally recognised. Politicians, educators and administrators from Australia and overseas have flocked to the school to observe Paul's innovative teaching practices. Representatives from Apple Computers have even visited the small public school and, in 2006, Paul was awarded the status of Apple Distinguished Educator.

Paul has been a finalist in the Premier's Teacher of the Year Award and the winner of the Innovative Online Teaching Award. In 2007, his Podkids Australia program won the Learning Experience category at the Canning Excellence Awards.

Orange Grove's wider community also benefits from Paul's enthusiasm for educational innovation. He holds regular parent and community workshops for anyone wishing to develop further technological skills, as well as mentoring other teachers in how they can use the latest technologies.

Paul believes in empowering his students and his community to develop their own voices in the world of 21st century communication - voices that can achieve remarkable social, environmental, and educational outcomes.

Paul is now teaching at Landsdale Primary School, Landsdale.

#### **Contact details:**

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