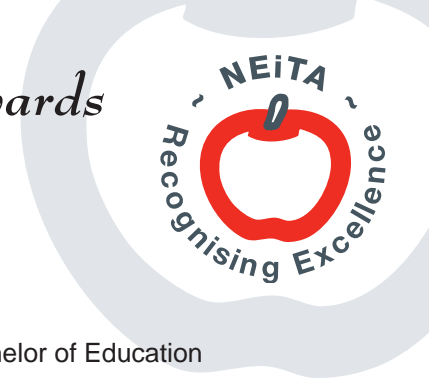


NEiTA 2009 ASG Inspirational Teaching Awards

State and Territory Award Recipient



Gordon Combes

Diploma of Children's Services, Bachelor of Music (Hons), Bachelor of Education
Reynella East Preschool, Reynella East, South Australia.

Now teaching at **Chandlers Hill Kindergarten**, Happy Valley, South Australia

Nominated by: Reynella East Preschool parents

Position: Child Parent Centre (Reynella East Preschool), Director (Chandlers Hill Kindergarten) • Category: Early Childhood • Level taught: Kindergarten • Years teaching: 10 years • Years at this school: 4 years • School type: Government • Town/Suburb: Reynella East • State: South Australia • Postcode: 5161

Why teaching?

I was inspired to enter the teaching profession by my passion for learning, and the idea that I could share that passion with children. I especially enjoy helping children build strong foundations in their earlier years and provide them with the necessary skills to set them up for lifelong learning. I love the challenge of creating stimulating environments that cater to all children's needs.

I constantly strive to build strong relationships with families and community members and include them in the children's education, through various functions, celebrations and 'learning together' programs. I enjoy sharing and inspiring others through my enthusiasm for teaching and often participate in mentoring programs as well as volunteering my time and skills to help develop the Early Childhood degree programme at Flinders University.

Engaging preschoolers and parents for the education journey ahead

Gordon Combes has an infectious enthusiasm and passion for teaching his three and four-year-old preschoolers. As a teacher at Reynella East Preschool, Gordon fostered a stimulating and enjoyable environment in his classroom. He created a learning space that had structure, but within that structure he provided limitless learning opportunities for the children. Gordon engaged with his preschoolers by getting to know each one personally. He also used his considerable musical and theatrical skills with piano playing, dressing up and singing being regular events in his classroom.

Each day, Gordon prepared the preschool, both inside and out, with a range of stimulating learning activities. He designed these activities to enable his preschoolers to experience personal success in their educational endeavours. Theme based learning was often employed in Gordon's classes. For example, when the children were studying an Oceanic theme, Gordon decorated the classroom to look like an amazing undersea world. The theme was then further enhanced with an excursion to the Maritime Museum, and on a boat cruise.

At the end of each term, Gordon held a graduation ceremony for his students. Each child was called up in turn and presented with a folder chronicling their work over the term. The achievements of the children were celebrated in front of their parents and peers. This ceremony built their self-confidence and helped to make them feel a sense of readiness when they entered primary school.

As well as nurturing his preschoolers, Gordon encouraged their parents to participate, to become involved, and to continue learning. He established the Growing Together Program in which groups of parents visited the preschool and shared their ideas, skills and knowledge to help in their children's development and learning. Parents were encouraged to improve their skills in areas such as literacy and information and communication technology so that they, in turn, could assist in their child's education.

Gordon Combes inspires his preschoolers and their parents. He leads by example and shares his love of learning with his pupils. Gordon creates school ready children and gives them the best possible start on their educational journeys.

Gordon was nominated while teaching at Reynella East Preschool. He is now director at Chandlers Hill Kindergarten, Happy Valley.

Contact details:

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