# A regional school with national acclaim

**By Hazel Doran**

Amid a string of national and state-wide award nominations and multiple wins (including the top school prize at last year's Australian Education Awards), it's safe to say Bunbury Primary School had a good 2022.

When you take a closer look at the holistic approach to learning embraced by the school that combines pastoral care with innovative and data-driven teaching methods, as well as the strong community spirit that teachers and leaders at the school strive to foster, it's not hard to see why this public school has received so many accolades.

**Proven strategies for success**

Bunbury PS has around 450 students from Kindergarten to Year 6. To ensure every student gets the best learning experience, staff rely on technology, focused upskilling of teachers and data-driven education techniques.

The school incorporates Kagan Cooperative Learning structures to keep collaboration and engagement at the core of its learning environment, and Positive Behaviour Support approaches for student well-being and behaviour management.

For assessment and feedback, Bunbury PS utilises Brightpath, WA-made software that records assessment results and outputs formative and summative information for staff. This can then help form a basis for in-depth student feedback and comparison.

**Teachers learning together**

Bunbury PS actively nurtures professional development for staff, providing multiple opportunities for upskilling in ICT to improve educational outcomes for students.

In 2018, Bunbury PS became a teacher development school in digital technologies as part of the WA Department of Education (DoE) DigiTech program, sharing curriculum expertise and exemplary teaching and learning practices.

Bunbury PS also opens its professional development programs to teachers outside their school.

**Living books in the wild**

In an inspiring harmony of digital technology, outdoor learning and community spirit, Bunbury PS has created an outdoor e-library, consisting of QR codes posted around the grounds that link to e-books on various topics.

An interactive map revealing the titles and locations of the e-books is available online, inviting students, as well as the wider Bunbury community, to explore.

Reflecting the ever-changing structure of the natural world, the design of this innovative e-library allows the e-books to be updated and changed, while the QR codes remain the same.

**Australian School of the Year**

SSTUWA members and Bunbury PS Principal Shane Doherty and Associate Principal Franca Dillon attended the Australian Education Awards ceremony in Sydney last August, with the school having been nominated for two awards: Best Use of Technology in a School (the only primary school in this category) and Primary School of the Year (Government), which they won.

Following their win, Bunbury PS came out on top to win the highest honour of the night for a school: Australian School of the Year.

The school's community-nurture, student support, academic achievement and innovative approaches to teaching and leading using digital technologies were identified as leading factors towards the nod.

The school was also a finalist for the 2022 WA Education Awards in the Excellence in Teaching and Learning (Primary) category.

Congratulations to all of our members at Bunbury PS for this well-deserved recognition for your hard work and dedication to education.



Authorised by Sally Dennis, General Secretary, The State School Teachers' Union of W.A.
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