

Showcase Award Winners

In 2005 Camp Hill Infants won the Qld Showcase Award for Excellence in the Early Years with its approach to literacy learning.

The program has produced excellent results for boys and girls since 2002, demonstrated in the Year 2 Diagnostic Net results.

It has been the subject of several research studies undertaken with Griffith University including Researching Caped Crusaders and Boys Flying High in Early Literacy at Camp Hill Infants State School.

Caped Crusaders Make Learning Fun

At Camp Hill Infants State School a new breed of Super Hero can be found. Wearing a red velvet cape, Star Writers run through the playground with utmost confidence in their ability. These caped crusaders are the subject of a Griffith University boys' literacy study.

The school is developing innovative teaching strategies that have seen boys' reading, writing and mathematical skills dramatically improve.

Strategies include giving boys a 'Super Writer' cape to wear for a day to encourage and motivate them and give them public recognition and special treatment for achieving milestones.

Camp Hill Infants School Principal Bev Fickiger attributed the success of the school's program, which had seen the school's literacy and numeracy results consistently above the state average for both boys and girls, to a number of factors.

Mrs Fickiger said Camp Hill Infants is a unique learning environment that caters for students from Preschool to Year 2. Young boys are able to follow their natural interests without the influence of older boys.

The school has a play-based curriculum with a focus on making learning fun and an early intervention program to support children in their literacy and numeracy development. Parental involvement is encouraged throughout the school.

Mrs Fickiger, who is undertaking her PhD at Griffith on the writing experiences of culturally diverse children, said she wanted to know why boys at the school were doing so well and asked Education Associate Professor Brendan Bartlett to research the program.

'This study will assist us to recognise the pedagogical approaches that are successful, reinforce them within the school and share this knowledge with educators nationally,' Mrs Fickiger said.

Associate Professor Brendan Bartlett said boys' literacy was an important educational issue as statistics consistently showed boys lagged behind girls in reading, writing and numeracy skills.

He said the theories about why young boys lagged behind their female classmates were a combination of nature and nurture.

'Girls neuro-physiology is more advanced at this age so their brains are working quicker than boys,' he said.

Associate Professor Bartlett said literacy programs had to appeal to both sexes to be effective.

'The Camp Hill project is exciting and action oriented - there's the recognition that boys are boys and do things differently,' he said.