

2016 ASG National Excellence in Teaching Awards

State and Territory Award Recipient

Deanne Close

The Heights School
Modbury Heights, South Australia

During her time as a classroom teacher, Deanne was committed to helping students with special needs, but it was when her daughter was diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) that Deanne's passion for assisting students with ASD was really ignited.

Deanne now heads The Height P-12 School's Autism Intervention Program (AIP), working to make reasonable adjustments to standard school programs to ensure students with ASD can still access the curriculum, and be given the same opportunities as their peers.

Deanne's expertise means she inspires trust in ASD students, fuels their confidence, and inspires their engagement in life both inside and outside of school. Deanne focuses on constant communication with parents and external agencies to accommodate strategies to calm a child down, or discover their special interests, and believes that getting to know each child individually and finding their triggers is vital to putting in place appropriate interventions.

Due to their prior schooling experiences, many students with ASD see school as a place of sensory overload, anxiety and bullying. The AIP challenges these pre-existing notions and helps reinforce school as a positive place. Deanne's success as leader of the AIP program is evident – many previously home-schooled students have transitioned back to full time schooling in a mainstream setting, and students who would turn to violence are now expressing their needs verbally, among many other achievements.

Position	Other responsibilities	Category	Subjects/level taught	Years teaching
Inclusion & Intervention Leader/ Autism Intervention Program Leader		Primary		20
Years at this school/centre	School type	Nominated by	Town/suburb	State and postcode
3	Public	Parent	Modbury Heights	SA, 5092

Contact details:

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