

# 2016 ASG National Excellence in Teaching Awards

## State and Territory Award Recipient

### Matthew Holdway

Theodore Primary School  
Theodore, Australian Capital Territory

In his role as principal, Matthew has established a number of new programs, which have significantly improved student learning outcomes at Theodore Primary School. This includes providing appropriate professional learning and mentoring for teachers to ensure a 'whole of school' approach to literacy teaching, which resulted in the school's NAPLAN results in 2014 showing one of the biggest improvement rates in the country in Reading for Years 3 to 5.

Matt is also conscious of Theodore Primary School's key role in a low socio-economic area, and is acutely aware of the disadvantaged background of some students, and their consequent disengagement. Matthew has taken direct action to increase engagement and literacy levels of these students via the Mini Lit 'Meeting Initial Needs in Literacy' program, which has seen 30 students reach the reading level expected of their year.

The effect of adversity and trauma on a child's learning and behaviour are also key focuses for Matthew and the school, which participated in a TRUST pilot project with psychologists from the Australia National University. The project provided strategies, mentoring and coaching for teachers to assist students who have experienced trauma and adversity to re-engage with the school.

Matthew also works hard to engage and build trusting relationships with students from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds and, when promoting engagement, leads by example by visiting each classroom as least once a day and encouraging feedback from students, parents and carers.

Position	Other responsibilities	Category	Subjects/level taught	Years teaching
Principal		Primary		16
	School type	Nominated by	Town/suburb	State and postcode
5	Public	Parents and Citizens Association	Theodore	ACT, 2905

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#### Contact details:

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