AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE, 2009

The University of Southern Queensland and Flagstone Creek State School: Innovative School Community Learning in a Digital World

Flagstone Creek State School is a small, rural primary school with only 32 students. The school, together with the University of Southern Queensland, transformed student learning and engagement from mundane curricula to exciting, student driven investigations. The project triggered the children’s realisation that they didn’t know very much about their local community and this lead to a variety of research projects that were integrated across the subject areas.

In mixed-age groups of eight, the students wrote their own research questions, planned how they would collect their data and decided how they would share their findings with the public. While discovering knowledge about the local community, the students forged strong partnerships with community members. They shared their learning through web pages, podcasts, slide shows and videos. The project has been successful in many ways – engaging students and renewing teaching programmes to align with modern technologies. It has led the way for small school pedagogical reform, particularly in the area of project-based cross curricular study, and it has led the way with community and education sector connection.