



World Teachers' Day QLD

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Teachers make a **difference**

The rewards of teaching extend beyond the classroom

Primary Middle Leader and Year 6 teacher Lisa-Marie Preston's unofficial start to teaching began in her childhood bedroom with a blackboard painted on the wall. Teaching teddies and younger cousins sparked a love for education, which she also traces back to her early experiences with her own teachers.

In Year 1, her teacher Miss Morgan entrusted her with responsibilities in the classroom (such as helping to mark the roll), fostering a sense of purpose. This calling was further ignited by the passion of her Year 5 teacher, Miss Allen, and her high school History and English teacher, Mr Fraser.

"They had a passion for education and getting the best out of their students," she said. "I wanted to be able to be that person for the students in my classes."

Of course, many education professionals are shaped by their experiences and the mentors who guide them. They understand that each day is an opportunity to make a difference, and the rewards of teaching extend beyond the classroom.

"One of my proudest achievements is the 'Work & Welcome' fundraiser for Multicultural Australia," Lisa-Marie said.

"It was inspired by one of our English units which focused on the novel, *Boy Overboard* by Morris Gleitzman, about a family who journey by boat from Afghanistan in the hope of seeking asylum in Australia.

"The 'Work & Welcome' program focuses on providing work experience opportunities for refugees in the local community.

The intention is to support our community outside the college walls, and for the students to give back through service – plus it also helps them understand that the world is much bigger than Highfields.

"My teaching partners have been instrumental in the success of the initiative, from organising and running our major fundraising event, to offering valuable ideas and feedback. The generosity of our students and college community has further contributed to its success.

"Hosting an Iraqi refugee as a school officer was a full-circle moment, demonstrating how our efforts truly make a difference."

The joy of making a difference, no matter how big or small, is certainly what drives many teachers. Whether it's changing the course of a lesson with a thoughtful question or seeing a student transform, the impact is profound.

"Making a difference can range from something as simple as changing a challenging day into a more positive one for a student, to providing intervention where a student is better able to understand a topic," she said.

"My greatest joy is seeing a student's perception of themselves evolving and this inspires them to feel like they can make a difference too."

Lisa-Marie Preston

Mary MacKillop Catholic College – Highfields QLD