

What Works. The Work Program

Improving outcomes for Indigenous students

The What Works team

Christine Reid

Christine is Joint National Coordinator of the What Works program, liaising with teachers, schools and systems to develop improved outcomes for Indigenous students. This is part of her role as the Executive Director of National Curriculum Services (NCS), a national educational consultancy which developed and has managed the What Works program for almost a decade. A former secondary school teacher, Christine has worked on a range of national projects involving producing quality resources for teacher and student use, implementing teacher professional learning programs for school improvement, working with teachers to develop quality teaching and learning strategies and evaluating national programs.



Sandra Brogden

Sandra is a Noongar woman from the south west of Western Australia. Through her father she also has strong family connections in the Kimberley region. She is currently the Director of Projects with National Curriculum Services and shares the national coordination of What



Works with Christine Reid. Prior to this, she was employed as the Regional Officer in the Catholic Education Office in the Kimberley for nine years. In this role she supported Catholic schools in remote, isolated and town settings and managed the personnel and programs in those schools. Sandra also spent four years in the Perth Catholic Education Office as Coordinator of the Aboriginal Student Support Team, this role requiring her to work across Western Australia supporting schools with their efforts in Aboriginal Education. In addition, Sandra has worked in Victoria for the Department of Education as a Koorie Cross-Sectoral Coordinator and a lecturer in the Koorie Institute at Deakin University, Geelong, and taught at North Kalgoorlie Primary School and Mt Margaret Mission in the Eastern Goldfields of Western Australia.

Katherine Schoo

Katherine is Executive Director of the Australian Curriculum Studies Association (ACSA). ACSA are partners in the What Works project and have members drawn from all states and territories. Their membership comprises people from all parts of the education spectrum who have an interest in curriculum. Over this last contract they have specifically managed and provided advice in regard to the tertiary education component of the What Work project. National Curriculum Services is appreciative of the support provided by ACSA, its Executive Director and members over the life of the contract. Such partnerships add value to the project in an educational and awareness sense.



John Adams

John has been a teacher since 1980, and is currently a Band 7 Principal working part-time for Education Queensland in the FNQ Region. He has had a wide variety of leadership roles, both within and outside of Education Qld. His experiences include teaching and school leadership roles on Cape York Peninsula, working in the Human Resource Development Program for AusAID in Lao PDR, as a Ministerial Adviser specialising in Cape York and Torres Strait issues, implementing the Government Champion and Negotiation Table processes in Cape York Indigenous communities, and has also worked as a community development consultant on whole-of-government issues with several Cape York Indigenous communities.

Geoff Ainsworth

For the first twenty years of his working life, Geoff was a secondary teacher in Victoria, and later a teacher of Diploma in Education students. He then became a consultant to a variety of governmental and other education agencies, before being a member of the original What Works team. In that role, he was one of its primary authors and became responsible for the What Works website, many of the What Works case studies and a variety of other publications. Geoff's focus on improving outcomes for Australia's Indigenous students is based on his insistence that doing so is a necessary part of the reconciliation required before this nation can be proud and entire.



Ray Bale

Dr Ray Bale, based in central New South Wales, has had a career as a teacher and administrator in all three education sectors — primary, secondary and tertiary. He has had extensive experience in teaching Aboriginal students, and in leading schools with high numbers of Aboriginal students in metropolitan, rural and remote Australia. He has been a What Works consultant for six years beginning with several years as the coordinating officer for the highly successful What Works Western project in Western New South Wales. Since then he has worked with schools in New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Queensland, Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory to embed the practices of What Works and to assist teachers in achieving their educational goals for Aboriginal students. He was also involved at the very start in the What Works school–community partnership program. His philosophy: 'Everything we do in schools must be directed to

our fundamental purpose – improving educational outcomes by realising students' potential.'



Norman Brahim

Norman identifies with the Bunaba people from Fitzroy Valley in the Kimberley of Western Australia and has grown up out of country in Port Hedland in the Pilbara region of Western Australia. He has worked in Aboriginal education for over twenty years in many different roles and contexts. Norman has worked in schools as a classroom teacher and principal and in more recent years as an educational bureaucrat as a project officer and consultant. Norman has taught and worked in urban, rural and remote schools and is now located in Perth, Western Australia. Norman is committed to working to improve outcomes for Aboriginal students and works in a range of projects and programs for different education and community development organisations.



Geoff Brown

Geoff commenced employment with the Victorian Education Department in 1965 and completed 37 years of service before retiring in 2001 and commencing part-time work as an accredited school reviewer. To this role Geoff brings an extensive background in education, and particularly primary school education, arising from being head teacher of several small schools, class teacher, Regional Officer, University Lecturer and finally principal of a school of approximately 300 students for the last 14 years of his teaching career. His particular areas of expertise include statistics and data analysis, building a performance and development culture, developing the home/school partnership, implementing effective literacy and numeracy programs and attaining targeted outcomes, enhancing learning across all domains and enhancing student and staff wellbeing and welfare.

Ross Clark

Ross has academic qualifications in education and psychology and has worked in all sectors of education from early childhood to technical and further education. He was Regional

Executive Director for Far North Queensland in the Department of Education, Arts and Training until he resigned to become a Director of PacificPlus Consulting with his partner Dr Lesley Clark. Ross has extensive experience in the delivery of education and training to rural and remote communities and to Queensland's large Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations. Among other initiatives, Far Northern schools under Ross's leadership have been early adopters of innovative practices in organisational structure producing the striking examples of Western Cape College on Cape York and Tagai State College in the Torres Strait.



Peter Cole

Peter is a former teacher and senior executive of the Victorian Department of Education and has extensive management and strategic leadership experience within the education sector. Between 1988 and 1995 he held senior executive positions with the Victorian Education Department, including Assistant General Manager Curriculum Programs, Manager District Provision, Manager Curriculum Development, Manager Technology Projects, and Manager Training and Development. In 1992 he was the principal advisor to the Chief Executive of the Victorian Education Department. In 1995, Peter established PTR Consulting Pty Ltd and has operated as an education consultant since that time. He is an accredited and experienced school effectiveness reviewer and an accredited coach, being involved in coaching experienced principals since 2004.

Mayrah Dreise

Mayrah is a proud Gamilaraay/Yeeralaraay woman with over fifteen years' experience in teaching and working with schools, including professional development roles with the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy teams, as an Indigenous researcher, arts educator and project officer for the Queensland Studies Authority and as a Community Education Counsellor. Mayrah is currently a lecturer with the Oodgeroo Unit at QUT, with a focus on teaching and research in Indigenous studies and knowledge, and the recruitment of Indigenous students to higher education. Mayrah's work, titled Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives in Schools, is currently being implemented in Queensland State schools as a part of a broader Reconciliation strategy. In her role as a What Works consultant, Mayrah focuses primarily on Catholic schools, particularly boarding schools, however she has a keen interest in supporting all schools from South West Queensland.



Sherrell Dyer

Sherrell is a descendant of the Kaurna — Adelaide Plains and Nurrunga — Yorke Peninsula Aboriginal groups in South Australia. She is the eldest of four children and spent much of her early years living around extended family before moving to Adelaide to complete her schooling. Her family has been involved in Aboriginal affairs for a number of years, and this is where her passion for Aboriginal education began. Sherrell completed a Diploma in Teaching,

majoring in Aboriginal Studies and Junior Primary Teaching at the South Australian College of Advanced Education, Underdale. She began teaching in the Riverland on the River Murray at Renmark Junior Primary School in 1988 before later being employed in leadership positions with the South Australian Department of Education and Children's Services, with a focus on Aboriginal education. Sherrell has presented at a variety of conferences and published papers related to Aboriginal education. She has now lived in the Riverland for twenty-two years and has a family of her own. She believes that she is a positive role model for the whole community, but more specifically for Aboriginal students and their parents, teachers, and community organisations.

Maria Egan

In addition to her What Works connection, Associate Professor Maria Egan is the Head of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Development at the University of Notre Dame's School of Medicine, Sydney. She has extensive experience in education at a variety of levels, including working in refugee camps and third world countries. From 2001–2005 she worked at the university's Broome Campus and was responsible for the delivery of educational programs across the Kimberley. Her doctoral study was carried out in the Northern Territory exploring the factors that impact on the retention of Aboriginal students from remote communities in post-compulsory education. In her current role she is responsible for the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students into medicine and to ensure that all non-Aboriginal students are competent and confident in addressing the health needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



Brad Goodlet

Brad's background includes living and working in rural and remote locations (including remote Aboriginal communities) in the Kimberley, Pilbara and Wheatbelt as well as the Perth metropolitan area. He spent 12 years as a school principal where his focus was on working with school communities to think holistically, promote cohesion and form partnerships to get things done. Wherever his work has taken him, Brad's focus has been on building effective relationships and leading groups to develop innovative solutions to often complex issues. He holds a Masters Degree with Honours in Education - Leadership and Management (UWA) and is currently enrolled in a Graduate Certificate in Community Relations in the Mining Sector at the University of Queensland. A focus area of these studies is Indigenous people and the issues associated with their involvement in the resources industry and broader remote community contexts.

Diane Grigg

Di has worked in a wide variety of roles, including as a classroom teacher, a teacher of students with special needs, a teacher-librarian, a Pre-school director, an Aboriginal Education teacher and a member of site and district leadership teams. For most of the past twenty years she has worked in Indigenous Education as a District Aboriginal Education Resource teacher, project officer and team manager with South Australia's Department of Education and Children's Services. In this role she has designed and facilitated a wide variety of professional development opportunities for schools and the wider community. She has also presented at national

and international education forums and contributed to the writing of numerous curriculum documents including the Department's landmark publication *Aboriginal Perspectives Across the Curriculum*. For the past four years, she has been an active *What Works* consultant, enthusiastically sharing the program and its materials with educators in South Australia and elsewhere.



Cindy Hales

Cindy, based in Cairns, is currently the Creative Arts Partnerships Director with Queensland's Department of Education and Training in Far North Queensland. She trained as a Secondary Visual Arts teacher and has held teaching and leadership roles in schools in Queensland, including service in Cape York Aboriginal community schools. As a passionate advocate for the need for well-prepared and high quality teachers in remote Indigenous communities, Cindy has spent much of the past three years on finding and supporting people to work in often challenging places in the Far North. This remains a major part of her work. But she also co-leads the REACH Regional Arts Strategy in Far North Queensland that encompasses innovative and strategic initiatives in Arts education and training experiences especially for Indigenous students and communities. Cindy became involved with *What Works* as a result of seeing its potential for teachers, both new and continuing, whose work was primarily with Indigenous students. She has proved herself equally skilful in working with new graduates and experienced teachers.



Paul Hughes

Professor Paul Hughes AM, FACE, is a well known Indigenous educator and, now, a proud Elder who has been involved in *What Works* from its beginning. His distinguished career includes having been a primary school teacher, an Education Officer with the DAA, Director of Aboriginal Studies and Teacher Education at the University of South Australia, Chair of the National Aboriginal Education Committee, Director of Aboriginal Education for the South Australian Department of Education, Director of the Yunggoorendi First Nations Centre at Flinders University, and, most recently before his retirement, Dean and Head of School of the Indigenous College of Education and Research at the University of South Australia. Paul has been an important source of advice and direction for *What Works* in addition to his work with schools and other

interested parties.

Frances Jamieson

Frances



Jamieson has joined the What Works team after many years of teaching experience. She has taught in a wide variety of school settings from rural to inner-city locations, with a focus on the teaching of literacy and literacy intervention programs. Her interest in Indigenous education began many years ago. Most recently, she has been very involved with the implementation of the National Accelerated Literacy Program in Kimberley schools, in addition to the production of teaching resources for this project. Frances has made this program and its approach to literacy development a topic for advanced academic study, strengthening the already strong capacities of the What Works program in the central area of literacy.

Marisa Kelly

Marisa has worked in primary, secondary and tertiary settings throughout Western Australia including thirteen years in the Kimberley region, both as a classroom teacher and a literacy consultant. Now based in Perth, Marisa has worked as a What Works consultant for the past six years servicing schools across the state, whilst maintaining a teaching role in schools. Marisa is currently working part-time at the Western Australian

Catholic Education Office, providing input in a system wide initiative designed to support schools and teachers to be the best they can be. Alongside of this, Marisa maintains active What Works support for schools, particularly focusing on the development of school–community partnership agreements with a number of rural and remote school communities.



Kim Lawes

After



spending ten years researching and teaching at the University of New England, Kim followed her interests and transferred to the New South Wales Department of Education, where she began her career as a secondary English teacher in 1998. As a classroom and executive teacher, she has had significant experience working in schools with high numbers of Indigenous students in rural and remote New South Wales, including Goodooga, Collarenebri and Moree. She was English coordinator for the Northern Borders Senior Access Program, a cluster of five schools with high numbers of Indigenous students, and there developed a range of teaching programs for teachers of mixed ability classrooms. 2009 is her first year as a consultant for the What Works program, and she brings to this position a solid background and very recent practical experience in working with Aboriginal students and their parents and carers.

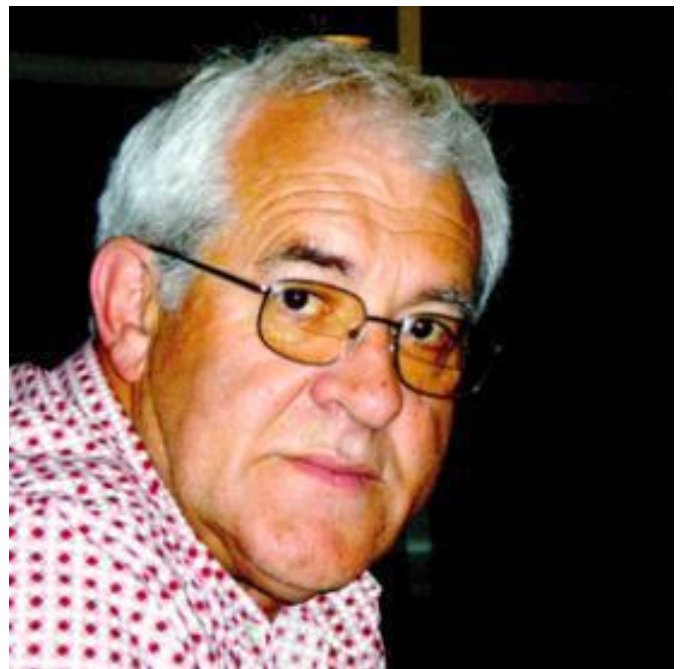
David McRae

David was one of the instigators of the What Works program and the chief author of its materials. He began his career as a secondary teacher in varied settings, later becoming a tertiary teacher, union official, and Ministerial adviser. For many years he has worked as a private consultant to governments in Australia and abroad on a wide range of educational issues. He has a longstanding interest in and concern for the school education of young Indigenous Australians. This came to a

head through his work on the IESIP Strategic Results Program. What Works grew out of that experience.

Doug Melville

Doug began his working life as a police officer but



subsequently trained as a science and biology teacher teaching in both primary and secondary schools in a wide range of settings. His interests took him towards developing, implementing and teaching alternative upper school programs for lower achieving students. Later in his career he moved into administration completing 35 years of service to the Department of Education and Training in Western Australia as Manager, Strategic Policy and Planning, Aboriginal Education. He has maintained his interest in education, and in the education of Indigenous students more particularly, through consultancy for the What Works program, primarily in schools in Western Australia.

Lee Robertson

Lee began her teaching career in 1978 as a primary teacher in Melbourne's western suburbs, and then in rural Victoria. In 1985 she began work at Milingimbi School in Arnhemland, remaining until 1992. This period offered opportunities to engage in and understand Indigenous culture, educational issues and community development at the grass roots, and challenged her understandings of the role of a teacher in remote community education. Lee was adopted into a local family and participated in learning about hunting, kinship and ceremonies. Subsequently, she was involved in teacher education. In 2005, she took up a management position at Gunbalanya School in Western Arnhemland and then, in Darwin, worked with Student Services. The education given to her by her Indigenous family still informs Lee's practice and nurtures her ongoing commitment to improve educational outcomes for Indigenous students in the Territory. This is her driving passion.

Camille Nielsen

Camille is a primary-trained teacher who has worked in primary, secondary and tertiary settings within State, Catholic and Independent sectors since 1986. Throughout this time she has worked alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to offer the best opportunities for Indigenous students and their communities. She has a diverse range of experiences which include a variety of roles in remote Aboriginal community schools throughout the Northern Territory and the Kimberley region of Western Australia, classroom and ESL teaching in primary schools in Brisbane and secondary schools in Darwin, managing Indigenous Education projects and programs in regions and regional centres across Queensland, and tutoring and supporting education students at Batchelor College, Northern Territory, and Queensland University of Technology. Her work as a What Works consultant tends to involve schools in the south-east corner of Queensland from Rockhampton south.



Mike Rowland

Mike Rowland, FACE, started his teaching life as a business studies teacher in rural Victoria. He was a long-term member of the Faculty of Education, La Trobe University, a curriculum consultant in the Victorian Education Department and, for many years, Executive Director of both the Victorian Commercial Teachers Association and National Curriculum Services. In this last role he managed and worked on a number of major national projects for the Australian Government and the various incarnations of the national Department of Education. Mike has had a long and continuous association with What Works. He was a member of the original research team, was closely associated with the development of materials, and the implementation of conferences and other professional learning. In more recent years he has provided consultancy support for a number of What Works initiatives in the Loddon Mallee Region of the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.



Leigh Schelks

Leigh has a deep and proven commitment to making a difference in educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. He has had has 30 years of experience working in Indigenous Education as a teacher, principal and, for the last ten years, working with schools designing and facilitating professional development programs — supporting and sustaining growth and development in the workforce of Far North Queensland. The focal points of these programs include: cross cultural awareness, ESL, behaviour management and relevant teaching strategies and community partnership programs. Leigh is committed to the What Works program and believes it can deliver strong positive actions at the school–community interface.

John Sloan



John commenced employment with the Victorian Education Department in 1972, where he held positions in both teaching and in leadership before moving on to administration. He is currently working as the Sandhurst regional network leader in the Loddon Mallee region and has been heavily involved in identifying new and emerging leaders, supporting their growth and development, re-energising current leaders, building the capacity of principals, contributing to improved teacher practice and implementing system initiatives. John has taught programs on pedagogy, organised young leaders groups, conducted anti-bullying programs and developed programs for students with challenging behaviours. He is skilled at driving school improvement, building commitment and creating educational vision.