

Five minutes with ... Sarah Brierley, of Hervey Bay State High School

THE thought of possibilities encouraged Sarah Brierley, the Head of Department for Information Technology and Business Education at Hervey Bay State High School, to begin using information and communication technology (ICT) in her teaching activities. In a previous position, Sarah taught students within an integrated computer laptop program. There, she saw how new technologies could continually advance her teaching strategies and her students' learning outcomes.

Besides her present head-of-department position, Sarah has the additional responsibility of Learning Place Mentor for the Wide Bay South education district. Like other Learning Place Mentors, Sarah is on call to help teachers in her education district make ICT integral to learning by using the varied online education and communication resources available through The Learning Place.

Why use ICT?

ICT is part of our world and it is here to stay, so we need to have a firm grasp of ICT and share our knowledge with students and fellow teachers. Technology is available in so many forms that if you stop for one minute and think about the technology you have al-

ready used today, you would be surprised. Using ICT in the classroom is an exciting concept. By integrating ICT across what we do in the classroom, we can open new doors for our students.

How are you using ICT for teaching and learning?

For my Legal Studies class, I created a virtual classroom on The Learning Place, which has proved to be a powerful resource for my students, particularly when I include online revision activities. This Term, my Multimedia class and I are creating a class project. It's an interactive campus map, which will be presented to Years 6 and 7 students during Term 4. My students continually surprise me with their ideas on how they want to present their work. They are making a great effort in building their multimedia digital portfolio.

Benefits to students?

By using such resources as the communication tools on The Learning Place, my students are bringing the world literally to their fingertips. Having students communicate online with an expert who is half-way across the world is a powerful learning tool. I also think using ICT has made learning cool and more fun for students. This was proved to me

when a group of my former students willingly left an athletics carnival to take part in an online chat about marine life.

Any obstacles overcome?

My biggest obstacle is time. I need more hours in the day so I can discover new technologies, learn about them and plan to use them in my classroom.

Time is also an obstacle for my work as a Learning Place Mentor, particularly when I am organising online projects for staff and students. For example, an online project like Under the Sea runs for two weeks but takes many more weeks to get up and running. However, the time and effort I spend on the different things I do is definitely worth it when I see the final result and the outcomes for students.

Any lessons learned?

I have learned to be patient. I have also learned (I hope) not to take on too much at any one time. When I became Learning Place Mentor in 2003, I had not looked at The Learning Place before. When I did, I was amazed. There was so much available and it was all there waiting for me and my students. I did not know what I wanted to do first!



Head of Department and Learning Place Mentor,
Sarah Brierley

What's next on the horizon for you?

I am now working with teachers in my school about the ICT available to them, with the aim of improving access to new technologies among staff and students. I am also looking forward to continuing as a Learning Place Mentor. For my own classes, I would like to investigate ways of introducing robotics into our school. I would also like to create courses on The Learning Place for my Legal Studies students.

Advice to other teachers?

Get out of your comfort zone. Jump in and have a go! Take a look at the ICT you already have access to, such as the ICT devices in your school, The Learning Place and the Curriculum Exchange. Decide on what you want to try out in your classroom.

Hot links

www.education.qld.gov.au/learningplace
The Learning Place

www.education.qld.gov.au/tal/curriculum_exchange
The Curriculum Exchange

Regional Technology Managers appointed to support schools

AS part of the drive to enhance ICT support for schools, 10 Regional Technology Managers are now working within regions throughout the state.

One manager has been appointed to each region. Each manager oversees all technology matters specific to one region.

One of their key responsibilities is to represent the ICT activities and issues of schools in their regions.

Another is to coordinate technical support throughout their regions and to work with the department to investigate ways of improving such support.

Importantly, each Regional Technology Manager is responsible for encouraging schools to get involved with, and meet their requirements under, the Smart Classrooms strategy.

The Regional Technology Managers are:

- Darling Downs–South West Queensland Region: **Cos Marendy**
- Far North Queensland Region: **Julian Warnock**
- Fitzroy–Central West Queensland Region: **Peter Bates**
- Greater Brisbane Region: **Kath Dann**
- Mackay–Whitsunday Region: **Kath Dunlea**
- Moreton Region: **Phil Buchanan**
- North Queensland Region: **Mark Weste**
- South Coast Region: **Dave O'Hagan**
- Sunshine Coast Region: **Sel Kerans**
- Wide Bay–Burnett Region: **Janet Cochrane**.

Principals should feel free to contact the Regional Technology Manager appointed to their region, for advice about ICT in their schools.

Hot links

www.education.qld.gov.au/smartclassrooms/strategy/si_rtm.html
Regional Technology Managers' contact details

Interested in gaining ICT industry experience?

THE call for applications in the Smart Classrooms Teacher Industry Placements Trial is now on. Applications close at 5pm on October 14, 2005.

Through the trial, up to seven state school teachers will be taken out of the classroom to immerse themselves in the ICT industry by participating in a four-week placement with industry organisations next year.

These organisations include, but are not limited to, ICT companies, research and development organisations, multimedia companies and information technology consultancies. This means the placements would be invaluable to teachers of all learning areas, from computing and mathematics to history and the arts, School Technologies Branch director Dean Sedgman said.

During their placements, the selected teachers will develop contemporary ICT industry experience by working alongside experts in the field. On return to the classroom, they will inject their experiences into students' education and, ultimately, the Queensland education system.

Mr Sedgman said teachers who were using new technologies for teaching and learning and have not worked in the ICT industry would find the placements invaluable.

"In many instances, teachers move from university to the classroom and then back to university with very little opportunity to gain workplace experience outside of the education system," he said. "The Teacher Industry Placements Trial will give teachers an opportunity to gain experience outside of the education system that will support teaching and learning through ICT."

The selected teachers will experience new technologies first-hand, work on the leading edge of research, and further enhance their teamwork and collaboration skills.

During their placements, the teachers will be regarded as employees of the partner ICT organisations. They will perform duties appropriate to their experience and abilities. They will also keep a daily journal to record their experiences and develop a final report, which will be shared with other teachers.



State school teachers are invited to apply for work placements in the ICT industry.

"The aim of the placements is for the selected teachers to gain practical experience and the partner ICT organisations to obtain a better insight into the way ICT can be used for teaching and learning," Mr Sedgman said.

Teachers need to apply for a placement on the official application form, available from the website below.

Mr Sedgman said the judging panel would highly regard applications from teachers who were enthusiastic about using ICT for teaching and learning.

Hot links

www.education.qld.gov.au/smartclassrooms/strategy/tsdev_iptrial.html
Teacher Industry Placements Trial website

Go online, to dive Under the Sea

IN her role as Learning Place Mentor, Sarah Brierley is organising this year's Under the Sea online event.

Running now and until Friday September 9, Under the Sea 2005 is connecting students with aquatic experts and raising teachers' awareness about the possibilities of using online communication tools in the classroom.

It's not too late to register. To find out more, visit: www.education.qld.gov.au/learningplace

Smart Classrooms links

www.education.qld.gov.au/smartclassrooms
Smart Classrooms website

www.education.qld.gov.au/smartclassrooms/ictleaders
The ICT Leaders' Gateway

www.education.qld.gov.au/smartclassrooms/teachers
The Teachers' ICT Gateway

www.education.qld.gov.au/tal/curriculum_exchange/ict
ICT Curriculum Integration Advice at the Curriculum Exchange

Smart Classrooms hotline: 1300 650 015