

# Bororen State School



Welcome to Multi-age  
Information for Parents and Carers

# Multi-age Classrooms

## INTRODUCTION

Multi-age learning has been a feature of many small schools out of necessity for many years. The term 'multi-age' in its simplest form refers to a class comprised of children of different ages intentionally grouped for learning. Multi-age classrooms provide many desirable social and learning experiences as well as flexibility.

### **What we aim to achieve through Multi-age Classrooms:**

- ✓ To create a positive and supportive social context for learning.
- ✓ To develop and promote attitudes and skills in cooperation and shared responsibilities.
- ✓ To promote self-motivated learning and achievement.
- ✓ To promote the development of each child by catering for individual difference at a variety of levels.
- ✓ To develop creativity, risk taking, problem solving and thinking.
- ✓ To promote continued growth and development in children through the extended time period spent within the multi-age classroom structure.
- ✓ To promote the development of the skills required for lifelong learning.



# Classroom Organisation

## Flexibility

Flexibility is the key. Furniture and seating arrangements frequently change according to the learning experiences, activities and the children. A variety of learning spaces will be created within the classroom to accommodate different activities and grouping arrangements. For example interest centres, work stations and quiet work areas.

## Groups within the classroom

All students form a whole class unit. Grouping arrangements may vary in line with the learning experiences, the activity or task at the time and the children's needs. Grouping arrangements are not static. As students develop their skills in reading and writing, there will be many occasions when larger or smaller specific groups will be used for classroom activities. Curriculum and learning offerings will be differentiated, individualised and personalised as required. Some of the grouping may comprise of the following:

### Whole Class

The class may work together with the support of teacher aides or other teachers.

### Ability Groups

Small or larger groups for teacher directed instruction enables the teacher to cater for the different abilities of our children.

### Needs Groups

Small groups of children may work for short periods to receive additional support and instruction in particular areas of need.

### Mixed Groups

Small groups of children of mixed ages and abilities go on to explore different planned experiences and then report back to the class.

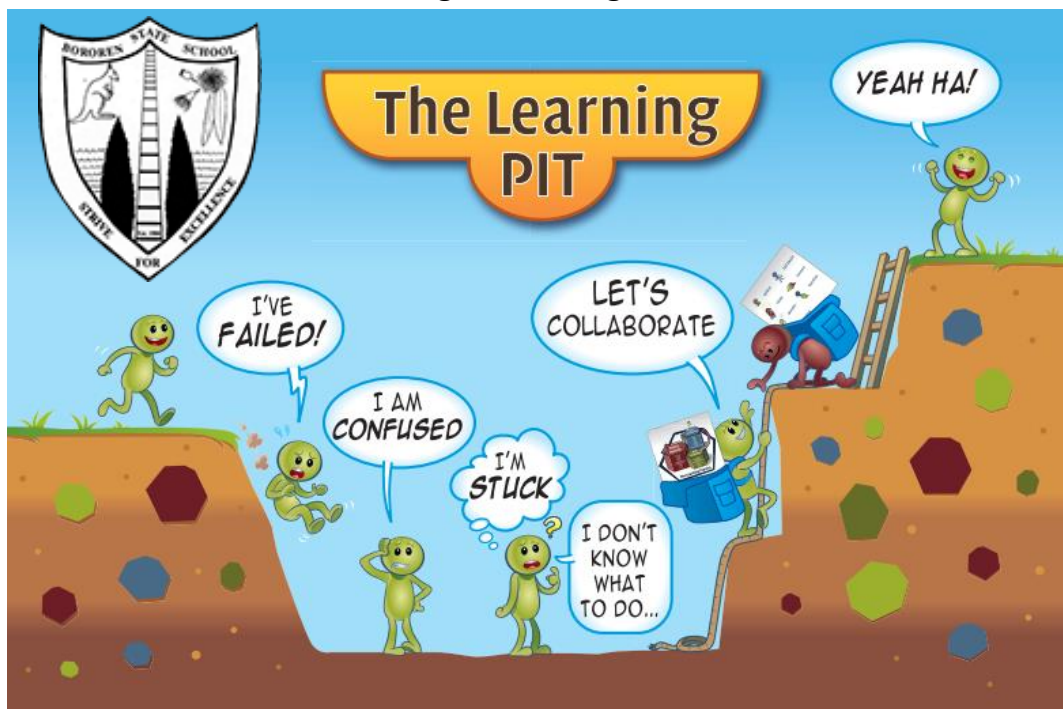
### Partner and Buddy Groups

Pairs of children from the same or different year level work together for a particular activity. For example reading, spelling and writing.

## The Teacher's role

The role of the teacher is flexible. A key role is that of facilitator of learning using a range of teaching strategies, including explicit instruction. The emphasis tends to be on questioning rather than telling, on 'finding out' and 'having a go' rather than being told and on active rather than passive listening. Mistakes are accepted as a natural part of learning and earnest effort will be encouraged and rewarded.

Students use 'visible learning' to understand that when they are learning they will find themselves in the 'learning pit'; and that whilst in "in the pit" it is okay to feel a range of emotions such as frustration, anger, fear and helplessness. Students learn that these feelings are a sign that they are learning something new and will quickly tell you that if something is easy that means they already know it therefore are not learning something new.



Teachers seek to provide students with:

- ✓ A positive and challenging environment
- ✓ Enthusiasm for teaching and learning
- ✓ Planned and purposeful learning experiences
- ✓ Assistance
- ✓ Encouragement, care and support
- ✓ Positive, responsible role models

Within classrooms you will find that most of the work directly relates to a current learning context or topic that involves real life and life like experiences.

There are naturally times when curriculum work will not specifically relate to the learning context, but will be organised according to the children's needs.

At Bororen state school we have an open door policy and teachers are happy to report on each child's progress, achievement and performance at any point in time. There will be opportunities for parents and carers to meet face to face with their child/ren's classroom teachers in Terms One and Three. At the end of each Semester written reports are sent home.

## The Learner's role

All children are individuals. They are uniquely different and need to be accepted and valued for the skills and personal qualities they bring to the classroom. Being the same age as someone else does not necessarily mean that abilities are the same. Each child has preferred learning styles and learn at different rates. All children need to develop both cooperative and independent work skills, depending on the situation. In our multitage classrooms the following skills and attitudes are valued and time is spend on their positive development.

### Skills:

- ✓ Cooperation
- ✓ Creativity
- ✓ Risk Taking
- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Independence
- ✓ Reflection
- ✓ Participation
- ✓ Thinking
- ✓ Responsibility for own actions
- ✓ Adopting of a variety of roles
- ✓ Making choices and decision making



### Attitudes:

- ✓ Self-confidence and self esteem
- ✓ Tolerance and acceptance of others
- ✓ Flexibility in work situations, activities and groupings

Children have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. Classroom expectations are collaboratively written, predominantly displayed and

regularly referred to. Children are expected to take responsibility for their own actions and follow the established classroom routines. Children will be encouraged to take risks in their daily learning and to accept that making mistakes is a natural part of learning.

## **The role of Parents and Carers**

A child's **first** teachers are their parents. Teachers and parents are both facilitators of learning. As such, it is important to positively encourage children, to listen to them, to provide resources for learning and demonstrate appropriate role modeling. It is also important to foster growing independence and responsibility for actions, belongings and behaviour.

Positive communication between home and school is essential. Parents are welcome to initiate a discussion with us regarding concerns or the progress of their child/children. Similarly, we may need to contact you to discuss your child's learning or behaviour.

Parents and carers are encouraged to become an active part of their child/ren's education by assisting in the classroom, attending parades and other significant events and activities.

## **What can you do at home?**

- ✓ **ASK** your child about his/her day.
- ✓ **INVOLVE** him or her in the things that you do at home
- ✓ **TALK** about the things that you do

We invite all Parents and Carers to come and TALK with us, see what we are doing and become involved!

