

PARENT SURVEY RESULTS

2006-2008

Respondents: 81

Question 1: Do you think children enjoyed their day at Amaroo?

A Lot	A Little	Not at All
80	1	

Comments:

- They seemed very excited before, during and after the excursion.
- Very informative and educational - even for the parents.
- The children just loved the whole day! So much variety/activities and a wonderful venue.
- They loved learning how to put up a tent and learning how to do team work.
- Some did a lot and some were bored for some of the time.
- They were happy outside, and very interested in all that they were learning. I noted plenty of enthusiasm!
- It would have been great if they could have seen some bush animals.
- Kids loved it.
- I think all children from our preschool had a great day and particularly enjoyed doing things they wouldn't usually do e.g. putting up tents.
- Had a great day.
- We had a great day with the children and had the best time.
- He was hoping to see a few more animals.
- The prep class had the bush walk 1st up. Some got hungry while on the walk - they are only little - I, personally, loved it - thank you Mrs Green.
- To keep 5 year olds interested is a big task in itself, the many different activities did this.
- The day provided lots of different opportunities for the students.
- All children had a fantastic time!
- The kids were smiling all day.
- The children were very excited about coming to Amaroo and they weren't disappointed. The Bunyip hunt was an interesting journey of discovery for them. Afterwards some of the children were discussing the possibilities of whether the Bunyip had left the clues as the parents, teachers and Mrs Green had been with them the whole time. So it got them thinking and raising issues to be confirmed or dismissed.
- Still talking about it!!!
- The children were so interested in the Bunyip – all of the children's imaginations were running wild.
- They were really excited then near the end of the day a lot of them were ready to go home, but they enjoyed it a lot.

- I think they got a little distracted because they were 'shooing' the flies away at times.
- But not the flies.
- I loved to see their excited faces.
- They thoroughly enjoyed the expectation of finding a Bunyip.
- Judging by the tired but happy group arriving back at school!
- Loved the outdoor excursion.
- My son said he LOVED it. All the other children in my opinion expressed a high level of excitement and interest. Very expeditious and exciting.
- Every child should go to Amaroo.
- Yes, most wanted to stay the night in their tents!
- All of the children seemed happy and keen to participate in all activities.
- It was an educational fun day away from the classroom.
- Yes, they all had a great time. Mr Brown did a great job on the nature walk, even with the young enthusiastic boys.

Question 2: Were the learning activities pitched at the level of children's understanding?

Most of the Time	Some of the Time	Not at all
78	3	

Comments:

- All of the time.
- A fantastic effort by Mr Brown and Mrs Green to explain "bush life" to preschoolers and answer the children's questions.
- Both teachers were skilful and use a variety of strategies to elicit thoughtful responses from the children. The information and activities were fun but not "dumbed down" or hysterical.
- All activities were fun and aimed at their level of understanding.
- The children enjoyed the bushwalk, looking for all the different things. They will no doubt keep looking everywhere they go.
- Bush walk talks were a little long - didn't hold interest for pre-schoolers the whole time.
- All children wanted a turn!
- Preschoolers are hard to keep focused at the best of times.
- The staff spoke to the children in a way they could be easily understood. The activities were the perfect level for the children to understand.
- It was excellent!!
- It was very engaging and informative for our children.
- **All** of the Time. Excellent - I think most preps full on excitement kicked in during the 'pitch tents' activity. Mr Brown - you sure do have a knack with educating young ones (do you do babysitting?) ha ha.

- Children love to give answers and participate in anyway they can, Mrs Green made this fun in the bushwalk and Mr Brown in the different activities he was involved in.
- I felt the dismantling of the tents (with a prep age group) was not appropriate. The students were very distracted and were not able to be involved.
- All of the time.
- The kids attention was caught all the time.
- Very much so. We had two different year levels (Prep & Yr 1) and even the younger ones were immersed in the tracking and discovery.
- All of the time.
- All of the time. The activities taught children about the bush, as they were having fun.
- Very good.
- You were all wonderful with the children and interacted with them wonderfully.
- I think they enjoyed the activities.
- Discovering the games and friendly messages left by the Bunyip were enjoyed by all.
- The kids enjoyed Mr Browns singing and stories a male role model was appreciated by the boys.
- Challenging is good – otherwise they will get bored too soon.
- Excellent teachers, who make learning fun.
- Yes, could have even challenged them a little more.
- Things were spoken about and explained at an excellent level for the children. They were also explained in an interesting/fun way
e.g. - song for 3 r's
- forest (recycled printing paper)
- explanation of reduce (party for daughter – chip packets).
- Yes the camping was well done and the adults enjoyed the humour of the well practised tent erection demonstration.

Question 3: Did Amaroo staff treat children in a fair and caring manner?

Most of the Time	Some of the Time	Not at all
81		

Comments:

- All of the time.
- The group of children I was with had Mr Brown most of the time and as a parent I found Mr Brown to be very caring and spoke in a soft, gentle, caring manner which was great to see.
- The staff were extremely patient at all times. They were very encouraging with all the children but especially with those who were reluctant to participate. (This was very few).

- Teachers chose different children each time to “star” and they were skilful in ignoring calling out and bringing children back to the task very quietly and in a positive manner.
- The best job I have seen of staff helping children explore nature while keeping them out of danger.
- I was impressed that the staff were very patient with the children and taking the time to call all the children by their names. No question or answer were ignored or fobbed off.
- Yes, the staff were very good had kept the children’s attention at all times.
- Yes were very nice to the children and explained things to them at their age level.
- The staff were fabulous! Sort of like ‘Playschool’ (ABC program) in that there are 2 presenters, teaching children, in a very caring way.
- All of the time.
- All of the time.
- Always listened and spoke with respect to the children.
- Spoke kindly even if the kids were a bit frustrating.
- When explaining things, staff would ask the children questions and involve a different child each time. They were also very patient with the children.
- The staff at Amaroo did a great job teaching the 40+ preschoolers.
- They handled the children’s comments with respect and were easily able to redirect them without offending their feelings and they made them feel worthy.
- Mr and Mrs Brown are great with the children. They were funny and the children loved them. Mr Murphy and staff are all excellent.
- Called them by name and didn’t pick the same kids to help all the time.
- **All** of the time. Mr Murphy, Mrs Green and Mr Brown acted & spoke in a professional manner with compassion for each and every child. Lots of eye contact, lots of smiles, lots of understanding. Great work!
- The children felt special when they were called by their name and got to hold items having their photos taken.
- **All** of the Time. They tried to give the opportunity for as many students as possible to answer questions during activities.
- Care was taken to include all members of the class in activities, and “special jobs” were shared equally.
- Mr Brown and Mr Murphy were wonderful always using the children’s names and keeping eye contact with them.
- All of the time.
- Mrs Green was wonderful with the children. She was thoughtful and caring, and communicated well with the children.
- They all done a great job ALL of the time.
- All of the time.
- Children were all given turns at being leader and all treated equally.
- All of the time. Mrs Green, was very good at being ‘a leader’ and giving every group a turn at finding their own special clues. I wonder if she does Bunyip Birthday Parties?
- All of the time!
- Staff made an effort to include all children.

- All of the time.
- Yes all children were treated fairly and all staff were wonderful with even some of the more rowdy children.
- Yes.
- I really appreciated the small touches, to personalize each child's visit great use of childrens name tags were a really good way to connect individually with individuals during group sessions.
- Everyone was given a turn at being leaders or helping in another way. Disruptiveness was dealt with immediately in a fair manner.
- It's hard for people who do not know the children personally to perhaps treat them according to their needs but I think they do a pretty fair job!
- Used their names well and gave all the kids a fair go.
- Spoken to on their level. Patient and firm.
- They are firm when they need to be, sometimes comical, make everything interesting, are caring, just wonderful people.
- Yes, they were firm but fair.
- All the time.
- Staff explained procedures and rules and activities very well and treated children just lovely.

Question 4: Do you think the visit was educationally worthwhile?

Yes	No
81	

- An absolutely fantastic experience where much learning took place and where children were engaged in much hands on activity.
- Very.
- Definitely. Even I learnt a thing or two!
- The children learnt to respect the bush and also to be careful near "Bull Ants Nests" as well as how to identify stinging nettles which will then help them throughout life if ever they go walking in the bush.
- Some of the children don't get to see or do some of the activities.
- Culminating camping song was great for consolidating/recapping what the children had learned.

Question 5: Do you think Amaroo is a good place for students to visit?

Yes	No
81	

Any comments?

- and adults.
- A great set up.
- All students (and teachers and parents) would gain from a yearly visit to Amaroo.
- I think it was great as there is not many places that can teach the kids about the bush and the animals that surrounds them. Not many kids get to experience how to put up a tent and learn about camp fires and safety.
- All students should have the opportunity to visit Amaroo and remember what it is to be a free child outdoors!
- I think Amaroo is a very worthwhile excursion for the children. It is very well set up and beautifully maintained. The day was very informative and a lot of fun.
- Safe and friendly environment.
- The outing has inspired our family to get 'back to nature' and get motivated. I think this would be good for a lot of students.
- Overall the Amaroo Centre is a very educational experience, I have three children they have all visited the centre and enjoyed their day.
- It's a great place for parents to visit as well.
- I hope future classes enjoy it as much.
- A great learning place.
- Teaches them to respect bush creatures, learn about stuff they don't normally have a chance to learn i.e. damper, tents etc.
- Wonderful, relaxing and very educational. The staff were wonderful teachers.
- I liked how the students got the best out of both teachers skills by swapping the students around.
- Great educational experience.
- Good for all children but especially those foreign to Australia to get right into the bush atmosphere etc.
- Fantastic for the kids to be exposed first hand to things outdoor.
- Good for parents too.
- Any grass roots learning is invaluable to developing minds.
- Wonderful for making children aware of the world around them and the unique qualities of Australian flora and fauna. Great for them to be outdoors.
- Amaroo certainly taught children things they may or may not of learnt from teachers or parents but in a fun and interesting day away from class and home.

General Comments:

- My child had a wonderful day, Mr Brown was excellent, we have not stopped hearing about him since. The camping program was very worthwhile.
- Had a lovely day. Totally enjoyed by all. Even I learnt a thing or two. Mr Brown and Mrs Green both did a wonderful job of keeping the children entertained. Thank you. P.S. I loved the damper - went back for 2nds and 3rds. Thanks Mr Murphy.
- It was a very enjoyable day. My child was still talking about his day at dinner time. Thanks for the day.
- A good trip and the children seemed to really enjoy themselves.
- Many children do not have the opportunity to experience camping and bush settings. The Amaroo Centre and the staff gave the children a fantastic insight to the Australian bush and what it can offer. How to experience the bush, observe the wild life and leave it as we found it. Well done Mr Brown, Mrs Green and Mr Murphy!!! A very worthwhile excursion.
- The whole day was really good. Thank you for having us.
- It was a fantastic experience for children and adults alike. I liked how the teachers spoke to the children and worked at including all in activities and answers and how they gave information to children in such a way that was so successful (not just telling them what to do!) eg before lunch the process for the BBQ - "Mr Murphy likes it if you bend your piece of bread up like a boat and that's a perfect place for your sausage". Not one sausage rolled off a flat piece of bread and on to the ground. A very successful strategy!
- I would recommend Amaroo to any school for a worthwhile lesson in how to visit the bush and keep the environment safe and protected. A wonderful day was had by all preschool children, teachers and volunteers.
- Thank you for making the day great.
- Great place for the kids. Staff were really good with the. Steve Irwin would be proud.
- I found Mr & Mrs Brown very kind and tolerant to the children and answered their questions thoroughly. We had a very enjoyable day.
- Enjoyed the day.
- I think the centre offers a fantastic opportunity to learn about the environment.
- Was a good day with a good program. All the kids seemed very interested and had a very good day and the people running the program were very professional and talked very clearly etc for all the children to understand. Very good day!
- Was an excellent day. Well done.
- We have so much to offer our children in Australia. Thank you to all at Amaroo who obviously care a great deal about our environment and the simple, pure enjoyment of being outside in a natural, free environment. Death to computers.....
- It was a very enjoyable day for our preschoolers.

- This was a fantastic excursion for our preschoolers. It was interesting and the staff were all great.
- I would send my kids again.
- My son has visited Amaroo numerous times through Highfields State School excursions. This is the first time I have been able to attend and I was most impressed. I thoroughly enjoyed my visit as I'm sure the children did. I would like to commend the staff on the running of the facility and the program, and their friendly manner. Thank you.
- Very enjoyable.
- Thank you for our warm, caring educational experience. The children thoroughly enjoyed the many varied activities and for us parents to be involved was a cherished memory both the children and adults will hold dear. Great day. Well done. Keep up the good work.
- Thank you for the day well spent at Amaroo. It was very interesting, educational and its an experience my children will always remember.
- As a mum I thought it was a great day - really enjoyed it. Activities were great and seemed really planned for that particular age group. Thanks!
- It was a great day the children enjoyed it and lots of activity to keep the children interested.
- Fantastic - keep up the good work.
- Very well set out centre.
- Love the photos! Thank you all for a wonderful day out. We still sing that song taught to us by Mr Brown on his guitar. We're off camping in two weeks time.
- When it rains and it is green again it will be an even better experience. As a parent that visited with the class I also felt I learnt things I didn't know for instance I've never put up a tent, if I ever go camping I will feel more confident about this. Thank you.
- This adventure was great. The students were only "prep", being 5 years old, yet the instructors were terrific with the little kids. The fire/damper and tent pitching certainly "lit up the excitement in the kids eyes." The whole day was thoroughly enjoyable. Thank you to Mr Brown, Mrs Green and Mr Murphy.
- It was a wonderful experience for our prep students. More music/drama/stories for this age group to be included may be appropriate. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to provide feedback.
- Amaroo is an excellent resource for the school community in Toowoomba. The enthusiasm shown by Mrs Green was fantastic - well done!
- Was a terrific day out for kids, parents, and teachers. Well worthwhile to visit. Even I learnt heaps. Thanks a lot!!
- Amaroo is very well run with programs developed to suit different age levels. The staff are very friendly and courteous, and make the children's experience interesting and enjoyable. Thank you.
- Sorry I have taken so long to return this survey. Thanks to all who made it such a great day for the Prepies from Dalby State School. Keep up the good work.
- The kids had a fantastic day! I have been a couple of times for various excursions. I think it is great to have such a facility 5 min from school. It is

teaching the kids to respect the bush and enjoy it. Especially for kids who live in the 'burbs'. Keep up the good work!

- The Prep children had a fantastic day, although were a bit disappointed not to find the Bunyip. A great back to nature place for the children to learn about the bush. Well done Mrs Green & Staff.
- I often wondered what exactly went on in that lovely old building (school). I think they should do more activities out there, as the children had a truly fantastic day. We were all exhausted by 2pm. Mrs Green & Mr Murphy did a wonderful job, and I was pleased that I put my name down to be a helper for the day.
- Thank you for a wonderful day.
- Very good. Staff were great, handled children very well. Activities well-planned out, perhaps a bit sunny around campfire though.
- It was a great day.
- I think more of the students learning should be hands on rather than supposedly "learning" – (copying) out of text books and memorising skills. You learn by doing! You guys were great!!
- What a great day out I had, I assume all who travelled with me would agree. Amaroo is a wonderful place full of new experiences in the simple things in life. Keep up all your very hard work.
- The children were very excited to be at Amaroo from the moment they arrived to the time that they left. It's a place where everyone can participate and have fun. It is very well run. The children talk about their trip to Amaroo long after it's over.
- We attended the 'Bunyip' section of the program and it was excellent. I come from a teaching background and found the session, interesting, entertaining and informative and lots of fun. All of the children had a ball – it was great – keep up the good work.
- Although the focus was always on the possibility of discovering a Bunyip, I feel there was also opportunity to learn about the bush environment. Maybe if the children had of been broken up into several groups, this may have been better achieved. Overall, a definitely enjoyable day was had by all – the "bush snack" was a welcome surprise. Many thanks to Judy Green for her patience and enthusiasm!
- A great day had by all teachers, children and parents alike! Thanks.
- Camping was a great idea. Kids were fascinated with the cow jaw that was found along the walk. Cooking damper on the camp fire from start to finished was enjoyed by all. Parents teachers and children interacted together on the activities was a great idea.
- Thank you so much – my elder children always enjoyed their time there and it was great to go and see what they enjoyed so much.
- I thought our day at Amaroo was a great learning experience for both children and adults with competent, caring and knowledgeable staff eager to share and convey their useful knowledge in interesting and interactive ways. It was a thoroughly enjoyable experience.
- I saw the kids all really enjoying themselves. I'm sure they all really appreciated a day learning about the bush and being outdoors. They'll all be able to teach their mums and dads about camping now! Keep up the great work it was a really enjoyable and educational day.

- I think children are privileged to learn about the outdoors and how they can co-exist and survive in it. It makes them more adaptable and accepting of life's "throw-in's" and it gives them a place to escape and it's free!
- A wonderful experience for young and old. Most children I know were very excited to go to Amaroo days before the event.
- A well worthwhile educational experience.
- Well organised and productive day. Thank-you.
- We had a wonderful day I look forward to going with my daughter next year.
- It was an educational and enjoyable day.
- Well done to all the staff. Great facilities. Great people. Thanks for damper recipe.