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## **Technology-minded Canberra preschool teacher a finalist in national awards**

A Canberra preschool teacher and blogger with a keen interest in early-years education is a finalist in the 2014 HESTA Early Childhood Education and Care Awards.

Kylie Buckley, of the AIS Caretaker's Cottage Childcare Centre in Bruce, is one of five finalists in the Outstanding Young Graduate Award category.

She has been recognised for her use of technology to document children's progress and generate discussion with parents, staff and other educators.

AIS Caretaker's Cottage Manager, Lisa Syrette, said that, while she is technology-minded, Mrs Buckley ensures the centre's physical environment allows children to explore and enhance their interests.

"Kylie puts a lot of thought and research into the learning environment. She works with children, families and other educators, always reflecting on children's interests before creating new learning experiences," Ms Syrette said.

"Kylie uses her role as educational leader to drive change at the centre and improve quality of the education and care provided to children.

"Her innovative use of technology to document learning via e-portfolios, has enabled her to share children's progress with parents electronically and gain their feedback — resulting in more detailed snapshots of children's development.

"She has led educators in producing pedagogical documentation to chart children's learning journeys and introduced a reflective journal for educators to note down opinions and ideas."

Mrs Buckley started her own blog on the Centre's intranet to encourage further conversations about policy and practice in early-years education and encouraged others to do the same.

"Monthly educator meetings are another initiative Kylie uses to lead discussions on topics including curriculum decision making and the role of resources in early-years learning," Ms Syrette said.

Mrs Buckley and other interstate finalists will be flown to Melbourne to attend an awards dinner, where the winners will be announced during the Early Childhood Australia National Conference on Saturday 6 September 2014.

A \$30,000 prize pool will be shared among the winners, generously provided by long-term HESTA awards supporter ME Bank.

The winner of the Outstanding Young Graduate Award will receive a \$10,000 development grant. The Excellence in Building Inclusion, and Advancing Pedagogy and Practice Award winners will each receive \$10,000 to further implement their program or initiative.

HESTA is the super fund for health and community services, with more than 785,000 members and \$28 billion in assets. More people in health and community services choose HESTA for their super.

Visit [hestaawards.com.au](http://hestaawards.com.au) for tickets for the awards dinner or to learn more about the awards.

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