



# **Reef Guardian School Profile**

## **WOREE STATE HIGH SCHOOL**

AUGUST 2003

### **Location:**

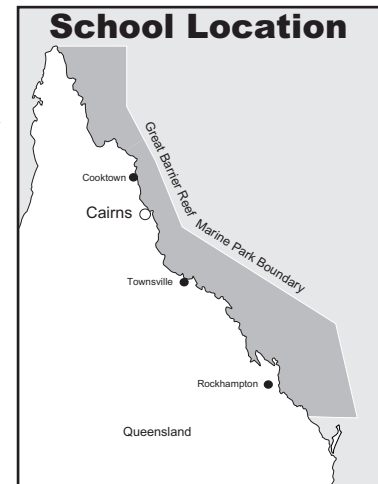
Woree State High School is situated in the Cairns region, North Queensland and services students from White Rock and Edmonton, and the southern suburbs of Cairns.

### **Size of School:**

About 700 students.

### **Community:**

Located in the southern part of the Cairns district, the school is located in an area of rapid growth and the community consists mainly of residential areas. The region however, comprises a significant sugar cane growing industry and a strong tourism industry.



### **What's unique about Woree State High School?**

Students at Woree State High School enjoy the benefits of their close location to the spectacular Great Barrier Reef and nearby islands. Students can study unique marine environments, animals and habitats without leaving the region.



### **Woree State High School as a Reef Guardian School**

As part of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority's Reef Guardian Schools Program, Woree State High School provides learning opportunities that reflect environmentally sustainable practices and reef-related education.

### **Curriculum**

As part of the school's Reef Guardian curriculum, students develop skills to investigate and solve issues affecting the Reef. Reef-related curriculum studies help develop students' understanding and appreciation of the nature and function of reef ecosystems. Studies also focus on the impact of people on the Reef environment, and the role of the community, politics and market forces in environmental decision-making. Developing awareness about the principles of ecologically sustainable development and career opportunities associated with the marine environment are also an important part of the curriculum.

The Reef Guardian Schools program will develop students' skills in identifying, assessing and resolving environmental issues and communicating environmental messages to others. Students will also learn to

apply technical expertise within an environmental context. Reef-related education will encourage students to adopt behaviours and practices that protect the Great Barrier Reef.

## Resource Management

As part of the Reef Guardian Schools program, students are learning about best environmental practices and the need to ensure drains and gutters are free of waste to reduce the impacts of litter, debris, chemicals and waste on the marine environment. To help protect the Great Barrier Reef, students have established a recycling and composting program and have adopted a local stream where they carry out water testing. They also regularly collect fallen leaves and audit and clean drains within the school, and monitor and study local catchment areas.

Students address the management of water quality output and its affect on the Great Barrier Reef through:

- Identifying the schools catchment area and the stormwater outlets;
- Mapping outlet drains and auditing the condition of stormwater drains in the school;
- Monitoring waste;
- Designing appropriate ways to reuse material; *and*
- Negotiating better environmental practices with school management and cleaning staff.

## Community Resources

Students support the protection and conservation of the Great Barrier Reef and work to improve environments within the community by:

- Involving other students in investigating, maintaining and improving the school and local environments;
- Incorporating outreach programs such as Waterwatch, Coastcare and Seagrass Watch into school programs;
- Utilising the facilities and educational programs of Cairns public aquaria;
- Using community resources to investigate issues affecting the Great Barrier Reef;
- Studying catchment areas and local water activity to determine where run-off occurs along nearby rivers and coastal areas; *and*
- Visiting Fitzroy Island to identify impacts to the local environment to decide on the most effective best environmental practices for the area.



## Community Education

A Year 8 class has used their knowledge of the Reef to establish a Business Enterprise, where students will sell goods that encourage best environmental practices in the local community. From this activity, the class will learn how to run a business, while educating the community about reef protection. Money generated from sale of the goods will help fund the purchase of mesh to make traps for more than 30 drains around the school.

All Year 8 students participate in an action plan that involves studying the Great Barrier Reef to develop an understanding of biodiversity and adopt best practices for reef usage. The students will write environmental impact reports and create poster charts to educate the public. They will also promote Reef awareness and public education through newsletters, the school website and local media.