

Welcome to *My School*

Welcome to the *My School* website. *My School* is a website designed to help school staff and parents evaluate important aspects of the quality of their school.

Quality is not a simple matter. How effectively schools ensure students build a strong foundation in literacy and numeracy is very important but there's much more as well. Schools should also ensure that students have a rich curriculum beyond these basics – a curriculum that deals with literature, with humanities and social sciences, science and technology and the arts.

You can't judge the quality of a school simply by the level of achievement of its students because those achievements aren't created by the school alone. Students' homes make a very important contribution. Schools' enrolment practices can also have a significant influence.

To judge a school, you need to know what the school has added in its students' learning and achievements. In relation to literacy and numeracy, the *My School* website helps you do this in two ways.

First, it provides comparisons among schools with students from similar social backgrounds. This separates the schools' contributions from the contributions of the students' families. On the *My School* website you will find, for each school, a comparison with 60 other schools from around the country, with students from similar backgrounds.

Secondly, the *My School* website compares schools on the basis of the growth achieved by their students over the two years between NAPLAN tests, year 3 to year 5, for example. Again, the comparisons of students' developments are provided for each school with those of the 60 other schools with students from similar backgrounds.

Comparisons are also provided with students from around the country who were at the same starting point in literacy and numeracy. These are fair comparisons among schools. They don't come from unfair league tables that take no account of students' backgrounds.

The *My School* website offers a fuller picture of a school than its students' literacy and numeracy levels. You can also look up student and staff numbers, attendance rates, school finances and more. You can read a school's description of itself and its values and find a link to the school's own website.

There are marked differences among schools working with students from similar backgrounds. All schools should aspire to match the best.

Parents and students should expect their schools to have this aspiration. They should also expect their school's staff to provide information on their school's improvement strategies and progress.

The information on the *My School* website can help both parents and teachers have an informed discussion about school improvement and development.

All our young people deserve it.