

My School overview video

Welcome to the *My School* website at www.myschool.edu.au

My School provides information about all schools in Australia – about schools, student cohorts, staff, operations, financial information and NAPLAN results data.

ACARA works closely with the Australian Government, states and territories, and all sectors of school education to collect the information published on the *My School* website. This video provides an overview of the key features of the *My School* website, but it is only a part of a range of information provided to support its use.

On the top of every page there is a 'More information' button. This will take you to an area where individual fact sheets and answers to frequently asked questions can be read on screen or downloaded as PDF files. And for any further information you can contact ACARA directly via phone or email.

The 'Welcome' page is the first page you will see, from here you are able to search for a school using its name, suburb or postcode, and you can choose to see schools only from a particular sector. You can return to this page by selecting the 'Find a school' button, or search for another school by using the 'Search' box available at the top of every page.

After selecting a school, the page with terms and conditions for using the site is displayed. This is designed to prevent misuse of the information presented and is an important security measure.

The *My School* website has dedicated web pages for every school in Australia with five key areas of information about each school. A side bar menu allows you to navigate between these areas or you can use the icons at the bottom of each page.

Each school has its own profile page. The 'School comments' section is an opportunity for a school to tell people about its context, including its ethos, programs and achievements. Where a school has a website of its own, the link is provided. The 'School profile' page includes key information about a school such as school type and year range, student enrolment and attendance rates, and staff numbers. For some schools with students in the senior secondary years, you will see information about their outcomes; where available, students' post-school destinations information are also shown. A page for these schools provides detailed reporting on students' participation in vocational education and training. A student background section shows the school's assigned value on the Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA), a summary of financial data is also presented on the 'School profile' page.

Throughout the website, more information can also be found via underlined links, question-mark icons and other buttons and the 'More information' tab at the top of the page.

The 'School finances' page provides details about resources available to individual schools to support education of their students. Financial information is reported as recurrent income and capital expenditure; for this report, recurrent income is income available to schools to spend on their students in the calendar year. It is divided into various sources, which are presented as a total figure and an average amount per student. Deductions for capital expenditure are identified and a net recurrent amount is calculated.

The second section on this page report on capital expenditure for the calendar year. Capital expenditure supports infrastructure used over many years and for this reason the per student amount is not given. The page will include figures for the sum of capital expenditure for 2009–11 for each school that has data for all three years.

Many factors affect school finances including the location, type and size of a school, its programs and operations. By clicking the 'Further information' link, you can access comprehensive information on financial methodology and state by state backgrounds.

The Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage is an important element of the *My School* website. Research shows that family background factors such as parent education level and occupation are closely linked with student educational outcomes. The development of ICSEA involved identifying through the use of statistical models the combination of variables that were most closely associated with student achievement in NAPLAN tests.

When enrolling their child in school, parents are asked to provide information such as occupation, school education, and non-school education. These are given a weighting and calculations of student level and socio-educational advantage are made. These results are averaged to give a school level educational advantage value; for some schools where not enough direct student data are available, ABS census of population and housing data are used instead with a relevant set of variables. The SEA value for each school is then combined with school community variables, these are the percentage of indigenous students and remoteness of the school.

ICSEA has been developed specifically for the *My School* website. Every school is given an ICSEA value on a scale which has a mean of 1000 and a standard deviation of 100. ICSEA values range from around 500, representing extreme disadvantage, to around 1300, representing high advantage. ICSEA is used to create a group of up to 60 schools serving students from statistically similar backgrounds, known as 'similar schools'. This allows fair and meaningful comparisons of literacy and numeracy of students in one school with students in similar schools.

My School provides extensive reporting on the results of the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). NAPLAN is an important Australian initiative in which all students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 are tested in their literacy and numeracy skills. Average achievement in NAPLAN for each school is presented in graphs, in numbers and in bands. The first page shows NAPLAN outcomes for the school presented in a graph, which displays results and participation for each test year and a rolling average across three years. Results are displayed for each year level for which NAPLAN is tested and in each of the NAPLAN domains. Selecting buttons allow the results for the selected school to be viewed in comparison with similar schools or with the average for all Australian schools.

An important feature of the website that can help you compare results is colour coding, the NAPLAN results table depicts the same data but results for all year levels tested at the school and for all test domains are displayed in a single table. The averages of similar schools and of all Australian schools are shown with each of the selected school's scores. The same colour coding is used for quick comparisons. A feature of this page is the colour change button which alters the colours used in the table for people with colour vision deficiency.

The results in the 'Bands' page goes deeper into a school's NAPLAN results by presenting the spread of student performance in percentages for each of the NAPLAN performance bands. The information presented on the 'Student gain' page provides a measure of the influence of the school on student progress. Student gain represents the change in results for students who have taken NAPLAN tests twice in the same school. Only students who undertook NAPLAN in two year levels in the same school are included, that is in 2009 and 2011 or in 2010 and 2012. The percentage of the school's students in each group is clearly shown. For some schools such as high schools that start in Year 8, it is not possible to represent student gain. Results are displayed for the year levels in which the students were tested, and in each of the NAPLAN domains where results are available. The information displayed shows the change in average results between the two year levels tested and whether the selected school's students are performing at higher or lower levels than comparable schools and all students across all schools.

The 'Similar schools' page enables you to contextualise a school's NAPLAN results by showing how the school compares with schools from statistically similar backgrounds. Results are displayed for each year level in which NAPLAN is tested, and in each of the NAPLAN domains. The NAPLAN results of a group of up to 60 schools with similar ICSEA values are shown. These schools can be located across Australia but, based on ICSEA, their students have similar levels of educational advantage. Schools are represented on the graph by circles, placed depending on their students' average score. The circles are coloured to differentiate the selected school from similar schools. This tells you at a glance where the selected school is placed compared to similar schools. Placing the mouse over a circle reveals the school's NAPLAN result. Clicking on the school activates a direct link to that school's *My School* pages. The graph view can be changed using the drop-down menu options.

Selecting 'All schools' alters the graph to show the whole school group in relation to the national average. Similar schools can also be viewed in a list.

My School also has a page to report vocational education and training measures. If a school has students undertaking VET units, this page will display the number of course enrollments and qualifications completed for students, displayed by qualification level and industry area if available.

The local schools page will display a list of up to 20 schools that are closest geographically to the selected school. You can resort the list order by clicking on each the column titles. From this list you can navigate to the 'School profile' page for these schools by selecting the highlighted school name.

That brings this video to a close, but remember – there is a lot more detailed information available in the 'More information' section and for anything further you can contact ACARA directly by email or phone.