

## Information for parents of Year 3 students

As your child progresses through school, it is very important to check along the way to see how well they learn essential skills that will set them firmly upon the path to success as adults.

As a Year 3 student, your child will take part in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) for the first time. In May of every year, students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 take part in NAPLAN. NAPLAN tests important literacy and numeracy skills that every child will need if they are to successfully progress through school and life.

Testing these skills on a regular basis helps identify strengths and weaknesses. This allows schools and teachers to adjust teaching programs to ensure your child is challenged at the right level and is constantly improving.

### NAPLAN and your child

As a Year 3 student, your child will take part in the NAPLAN tests for the first time. The literacy tests include reading, writing, language conventions (spelling, grammar and punctuation) and numeracy. The numeracy test assesses mathematics skills applied to real-life contexts, suitable to the age and knowledge of the students. These tests are done at school and are considered as another part of the curriculum.

It is important for you to know that NAPLAN is not a pass or fail test. It simply looks at what level students are achieving in literacy and numeracy, in a school and national context. NAPLAN is not a test that can be studied for, and students are not expected to do so.

### When are the tests?

The tests take place every year in May and are held over three consecutive days.

Year 3 students complete four tests:

- **language conventions** (spelling, grammar and punctuation)
- **writing**
- **reading**
- **numeracy.**

Each test takes 40–45 minutes to complete.

## 2014 NAPLAN Year 3 test timetable

	<b>Tuesday 13 May</b>	<b>Wednesday 14 May</b>	<b>Thursday 15 May</b>
<b>Year 3</b>	Language conventions 40 minutes Writing 40 minutes	Reading 45 minutes	Numeracy 45 minutes

### What format does the testing take?

The tests usually take place in a normal classroom, and are usually administered by the teacher. Students must do the tests without any assistance from the teacher or other students, and teachers are asked to remove any charts in the classroom that may provide answers.

Schools have access to past test papers, which they can use to familiarise children with the types of questions students will be asked. Familiarising the students with previous test papers is also a good way for teachers to introduce students to the testing procedures and help them feel comfortable about doing the test.

### What do the tests demonstrate?

The NAPLAN tests provide information to you and the school about your child's learning progress in the areas of reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy. They also help you place your child's performance in a school and national context. This information is useful in identifying opportunities to develop students' skills further and provides further direction for your child's learning.

The tests also help governments and education authorities better understand how schools, school systems and the nation are going in these important areas of the curriculum.

### What preparation does my child need to do for the NAPLAN tests?

Students cannot prepare specifically for these tests and are not expected to do so. NAPLAN is not a test of content. Instead, it tests skills in literacy and numeracy that are developed over time through the school curriculum. These tests contain questions similar to those that occur in regular classroom learning and assessment. The best way you can help your child prepare for NAPLAN is to reassure them that NAPLAN tests are just one part of their school program, and to encourage them to simply do the best they can on the day.

If you have any questions about your child's preparation for NAPLAN, make a time to speak with their teacher.

### When do I get the results?

Results will be available later in the year. Your child's report will be sent to your school. The school will notify you as to when they are sending the reports on to you. No one else sees these individual results – they are strictly confidential.

Your school's overall average results will also be available on the *My School* website when it is updated the following year. Publicly available results never include names or personal details.

### What if my child fails?

These tests are designed to provide information, not a pass or fail grade. Your child's results in each area will be plotted on a scale. This will show their skill level and where they are in relation to the national average for their year level. The report also shows the range for the middle 60 per cent of students in Year 3 and where your child sits in relation to this.

### Why does it take so long for results to be available?

The lead time is due to the depth of analysis required to produce reports that draw comparisons across a variety of levels – individual, school, state and national.

### What should I do with my child's results?

The results are just one tool to help you understand your child's learning progress in literacy and numeracy. NAPLAN results should always be considered alongside all the other important information the teacher will have from ongoing assessment of your child's learning in the classroom.

### Does my child have to take part?

While all students are expected to participate, you as a parent/carer may withdraw your child from the tests due to religious beliefs and philosophical objections to testing. This is a matter for consideration by individual parents/carers. A formal application in the manner specified by each state or territory must be received by a school principal prior to the testing. Your principal can provide further information about the withdrawal process. However, it is not appropriate for a teacher or principal to put pressure on you to withdraw your child.

### Can my school exempt my child from the testing?

All students are expected to participate; however, in special cases, a school principal can submit a formal exemption for students with disabilities and newly arrived migrants to Australia from a non-English speaking background. In both cases, schools need to discuss the proposed exemption with the student's parent/carer and gain their permission prior to the testing period.

### What if my child feels nervous about taking the tests?

Sometimes new situations can be a bit unnerving for children. As this is the first time your child will do NAPLAN tests, it is natural if they feel a little nervous. However, it can help students feel less nervous if they understand the process involved and what information will be provided from the tests. As a parent, you can also help your child by reassuring them that NAPLAN tests are just one part of their school program, and by encouraging them to simply do the best they can on the day. Ensure your child gets a good night's sleep beforehand and has a good breakfast. If you are concerned about your child's level of nervousness, please talk to your child's teacher.

### Is there more information available about NAPLAN?

If you would like to find out more about NAPLAN, refer to the [NAP website](#).