



NAPLAN.



NATIONAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAM Literacy and Numeracy

2009 marked the second year of the **NAPLAN** program - the *National Assessment Program: Literacy And Numeracy*. Before 2008 each state ran their own assessment programs across their school systems such as the **Basic Skills Test** and the **SNAP** and **ELLA** tests. However, the NAPLAN assesses important skills across the whole of Australia, and across a range of Year groups; Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. Literacy testing covers Reading, Writing, Spelling and Grammar/Punctuation, while the Numeracy component covers the mathematical skills appropriate to the age level.

NAPLAN assessments provide an wonderful opportunity for schools to see how effective their teaching is. Results do of course depend to some degree on the ability level of the students, but another useful feature will be that from next year, schools will be able to see if their students are improving over time; for example, we will be able to compare the students' Year 3, 2008 results with the Year 5, 2010 results - the same group of students.

St Mark's 2009 results were stunning. Of the 20 categories across the four Year groups, our students were below the national average in only 4/20. They were on the national average in another 3/20, and above the national average in 13/20. This means that in 16/20 of the categories (or 80%) the students were average or better, and mostly better. Worthy of special mention was the College's Year 5 group who performed above average in every single category.

Most importantly, the assessement reports provide detailed information for teachers and parents, identifying very specifically the areas in which the students performed below average. This feedback heavily influences the development of the College's teaching programs so that there is a continual process of improvement.

This kind of development is a very important part of the educational philosophy of St Mark's College. Under the leadership of Head of College, Mrs Stewart, a strong emphasis is being placed on **differentiating** teaching programs - that is, tailoring the teaching and learning to the needs of individual students as much as possible. A 5 year strategy that incorporates this and other cutting edge techniques is currently under construction. St Mark's College is constantly moving forward in order to build upon its already proud academic tradition. More information as it comes to hand...

You can find more information on the NAPLAN at www.naplan.edu.au

Contact the school for information on how to enrol: 9825-6768.

More news and information at www.stmarks.nsw.edu.au