THE MY SCHOOL WEBSITE
AND CATHOLIC SYSTEMIC SCHOOLS

Communication to Parents No 3

On the My School website in 2010, it will be possible to look at the progress your child has made based on the scores he/she attained in NAPLAN 2008. This measure of growth is called ‘value added’.

How is the ‘value-added’ figure determined?
Put simply, each student’s 2008 NAPLAN score in each test is compared to his/her 2010 NAPLAN score in that same test area. The student’s rate of growth (‘value-added’) is then calculated according to how much he/she has improved in that area over that two-year period.

Is the ‘value-added’ feature on the My School website helpful?
It can be. Keeping in mind that NAPLAN is just one assessment snapshot of student progress, it can be helpful to know whether your child has improved on what he/she achieved in NAPLAN back in 2008.

However, it is also very important to keep in mind that students who achieved very highly in NAPLAN 2008 may find it more difficult to attain a high rate of growth compared to students who did not achieve as high a score in NAPLAN 2008.

How do Sydney Catholic schools use NAPLAN data?
School Catholic schools use the information received from NAPLAN as a diagnostic tool. It is a four-step approach:

1) Diagnose: Schools examine and interpret NAPLAN data and identify areas of need
2) Plan: A co-ordinated approach to addressing these areas of need is planned
3) Respond: This plan is implemented in a very strategic and ‘whole-of-school’ way
4) Evaluate: The plan is constantly evaluated and adjusted as circumstances and needs change.

Remember, there is not one single instrument that can effectively measure improvement in student learning. Comparing two sets of NAPLAN scores can be helpful, but it is critical that parents always look at a range of factors when evaluating learning outcomes for their children.