

From:
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I do not believe the website paints an accurate picture of schools. The school I work in is small and statistically the results are not viable- we may have only 3 children in a particular cohort. When we publish our results we always add a cautionary note of the small numbers. Depending on what group you are looking at 1 or 2 people can make a huge difference to whether you are a failing school or not according to the website. Whilst there is an attempt to justify the results by making them seem 'equal' each community is unique and has its own culture including what it values including a simple thing like time. This is not reflected in the results, an example is those cultures who have 'rubber time', in Indonesia there is even a name for it! When your student welfare result is based around absences and these children arrive late and are counted away for the morning this can make a huge difference to your results. Another example is a chronic illness (including mental) that children from one family miss a lot of school- the results do not indicate the work- other than Literacy and Numeracy that is done for these children. The results do not (as they are) truly represent the huge differences that schools make in the lives of children. This can not be measured against goalposts that are continually moving according to which Government, which agenda is being pushed or what is the 'flavour of the month' in terms of public opinion. Most of the research from other countries clearly points out that 'league tables' will only improve standards to a point. If you read much of the research this 'big stick' approach has a very limited impact and serves only to be divisive and cause a bigger divide between the quality of the education children receive. I will end with a quote from Astuto, Clark et al (1993) "The insidious effect of taken-for-granted assumptions is the way they interconnect with and reify one another in a seemingly logical set of relationships." (p41) she is talking about the prevalence of narrow assumptions that lie beneath current reforms- it was written in 1993 and still applies today.