

From:  
Mrs Sue Nelson

Officer P.S. is a really unique school setting; our student profile of 170 is made up of 20 students who live within the "boundary" that is Officer, 150 who travel from Dandenong to Longwarry, in order to come to our school. We are proud of being able to cater for a very broad range of students, we frequently have students "referred" to us for many reasons, usually because they have been unsuccessful at their neighbourhood school. Our SFO is .5500. As Principal of the school, this year I was involved in the supervision of the NAPLAN assessments, for the first time in many years. The most distressing part was to witness the pressure the students were under; several students were so anxious by it, that they were emotional and just gave up. Others verbalised their lack of interest in doing it and I observed some who answered randomly, clearly not really engaging with the content. In the play ground during the testing period, we had many emotional outbursts, again a spillover of the tension the kids felt. I find it very frustrating that the results of these tests are used to measure the success of my school and my personal performance as a school leader. the media has not helped this either! Assessemnet of students is an essential part of the learning cycle, but it should not be used to measure a school's effect on students or to place it in a public table that defines a good or a bad school.