

# NAPLAN highlights

## Cheaper SA private schools really make the grade

**MICHELLE ETHERIDGE  
RILEY WALTER**

SOME of South Australia's cheaper private schools are punching well above their weight in the classroom, with the latest NAPLAN results showing they outperformed many much more expensive campuses.

The school-by-school results for Year 3, 5, 7 and 9 students numeracy and literacy tests from 2021 have been released today.

St Peter's Girls' School, Wilderness School and Pembroke were among schools with the top overall average results across all year levels – annual school fees for the three are between \$27,883 and \$28,293 for year 12.

But Emmaus Christian College, which charges \$8660 annually, also fared particularly well among private schools.

Its average results from reading, writing, spelling, grammar and numeracy tests across all year levels were on par with or above some much more expensive schools, such as Scotch College (\$28,040).

Pedare Christian College performed as well as some schools that charged up to \$7000 more.

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) usually releases the data annually, but education ministers agreed to cancel the 2020 NAPLAN tests due to the pandemic.

Emmaus Christian College principal Andrew Linke said his school, which has campuses in South Plympton and Brooklyn Park, often performed well against larger private schools.

However, he said NAPLAN did not affect how students were taught. "This is not just a one-year blip for

### SA's biggest private schools - NAPLAN results

SCHOOL	FEES	YEAR 3 AVERAGE	YEAR 5 AVERAGE	YEAR 7 AVERAGE	YEAR 9 AVERAGE	SCHOOL AVERAGE
Walford Anglican School for Girls	\$28,580	490.6	539.0	575.4	630.8	558.95
<b>Pembroke School</b>	<b>\$28,293</b>	<b>492.6</b>	<b>542.2</b>	<b>596.8</b>	<b>622.8</b>	<b>563.6</b>
Prince Alfred College	\$28,200	463.4	542.0	582.8	602.2	547.6
<b>St Peter's Girls' School</b>	<b>\$28,150</b>	<b>521.6</b>	<b>551.4</b>	<b>589.2</b>	<b>635.6</b>	<b>574.45</b>
St Peter's College	\$28,080	487.0	543.0	596.6	613.2	559.95
<b>Seymour College</b>	<b>\$28,065</b>	<b>456.6</b>	<b>540.8</b>	<b>587.8</b>	<b>614.0</b>	<b>549.8</b>
Scotch College	\$28,040	458.2	525.8	568.6	593.4	536.5
<b>Wilderness School</b>	<b>\$27,888</b>	<b>495.2</b>	<b>559.2</b>	<b>578.4</b>	<b>631.0</b>	<b>565.95</b>
Pulteney Grammar	\$26,650	456.8	550.2	568.2	607.6	545.7
<b>Westminster School</b>	<b>\$24,336</b>	<b>472.6</b>	<b>534.4</b>	<b>557.4</b>	<b>599.4</b>	<b>540.95</b>
Loreto College	\$19,570	445.4	514.2	567.6	612.6	534.95
<b>St John's Grammar</b>	<b>\$18,810</b>	<b>405.8</b>	<b>529.0</b>	<b>586.8</b>	<b>620.8</b>	<b>535.6</b>
Saint Ignatius' College	\$18,803	464.6	533.2	578.4	614.8	547.75
<b>Mercedes College</b>	<b>\$18,020</b>	<b>449.0</b>	<b>512.8</b>	<b>563.0</b>	<b>592.6</b>	<b>529.35</b>
Concordia College	\$16,620	442.0	504.8	565.4	600.4	528.15
<b>Rostrevor College</b>	<b>\$13,845</b>	<b>431.6</b>	<b>498.6</b>	<b>541.2</b>	<b>564.2</b>	<b>508.9</b>
Pedare College	\$10,892	432.4	511.0	569.2	605.8	529.6
<b>St Michael's College</b>	<b>\$10,479</b>	<b>428.2</b>	<b>507.8</b>	<b>544.2</b>	<b>579.2</b>	<b>514.85</b>
Christian Brothers College	\$10,260	412.8	507.0	548.2	578.4	511.6
<b>Blackfriars</b>	<b>\$10,063</b>	<b>390.6</b>	<b>513.4</b>	<b>546.0</b>	<b>577.8</b>	<b>506.95</b>
St Mary's College	\$9820	430.6	491.0	551.2	590.2	515.75
<b>Woodcroft College</b>	<b>\$9500</b>	<b>424.2</b>	<b>503.4</b>	<b>550.4</b>	<b>592.2</b>	<b>517.55</b>
Emmaus Christian College	\$8660	467.4	523.2	577.8	614.4	545.7
<b>Tatachilla Lutheran College</b>	<b>\$8200</b>	<b>446.4</b>	<b>498.8</b>	<b>546.2</b>	<b>584.0</b>	<b>518.85</b>
St Paul's College	\$7710	403.4	486.0	<b>511.0</b>	551.0	487.85
<b>Tenison Woods College, Mt Gambier</b>	<b>\$5000</b>	<b>438.6</b>	<b>481.6</b>	<b>529.2</b>	<b>578.2</b>	<b>506.9</b>
St Columba College	\$4950	<b>366.0</b>	<b>458.8</b>	514.4	<b>539.8</b>	<b>469.75</b>
<b>St Mark's College Port Pirie</b>	<b>\$4639</b>	<b>415.4</b>	<b>483.8</b>	<b>517.6</b>	<b>568.0</b>	<b>496.2</b>

Key: ■ Highest score ■ Lowest score

Source: Florish



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Emmaus. It's not something we focus on – we don't teach the test."

Emmaus embraced both traditional teaching measures and "the best of the new" methods, Mr Linke said.

"Some schools have really embraced project-based learning as a style and that has its merits but if it's all you do, it undercooks kids in other areas as well," Mr Linke said.

Pedare Christian College principal James Tamblyn said creating a curriculum that

students enjoyed was key to good NAPLAN results.

"For us what's at the heart of great teaching and learning is student engagement," Mr Tamblyn said.

"We believe that if students love learning, if they're passionate about learning, if they have a growth mindset, then all of our learners are capable of achieving incredible learning outcomes."

As an example, he said, the school had a team of students heading to Texas to compete

in a robotics championship in May – and Mr Tamblyn believed that program was helping boost students' progress in numeracy and literacy.

This year, more than 500 Australian schools showed well above the average progress of students with the same starting score and similar backgrounds in at least one learning area.

Of these, about a third were in regional or remote areas.

The SA Education Department did not supply a full list

of the schools with the most improved results.

ACARA chief executive David de Carvalho said schools punching above their weight were achieving above the progress level expected, compared with their students' results from two years ago.

"Let's find out what those schools are doing and think about how good practice can be replicated," he said.

Association of independent Schools of South Australia chief executive Carolyn

Grantskalns said NAPLAN showed the results of students' tests on "one day" and education was "a marathon – not a sprint".

"While it's useful ... schools will adopt a range of approaches to support student learning," she said.

"It's by no means the be all and end all.

"I think parents look at the whole offering of a school and they'll pick the school that has the kind of experience that they want their child to have

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# cost of learning

## High fuel costs spark EV frenzy

DAVID MCCOWEN

NEW car buyers are responding to rising fuel prices by ditching gas guzzlers in favour of green machines.

Used car classifieds and new car sales staff are reporting a dramatic increase in queries from customers looking to switch from petrol to more efficient hybrid, or even full electric power.

The national average petrol price has climbed by nearly 50 per cent since 2020, rising from 123.4c per litre to 183.9c last week, according to the Australian Institute of Petroleum.

Independent websites list the real-world price as closer to \$2.10 per litre as the fuel industry responds to price pressures brought on by the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Sales of hybrid and electric cars in the first two months of 2022 have increased by 69 per cent compared to 2020.

Experts expect that number to climb further.

Gumtree Australia spokesman Dan Pugh said the company recorded a dramatic change in buyer behaviour as fuel prices spiked in recent weeks. "At the beginning of March, we saw an all-time high in searches for electric cars," Mr Pugh said.

## Few take green pill

SOUTH Australia's first trial of "prescriptions" for time spent in nature to increase health and wellbeing found that people generally liked the concept but very few were willing to sign up.

Green Adelaide partnered with the Appleton Institute on Greenhill Road on the trial which just six people signed up for. The internationally popular nature prescription program encourages people to spend more time outdoors connecting with nature.

SA's trial involved eight general practitioners and more than 30 patients suffering diabetes and depression.



Emmaus College pupils Amelie, 10, Eva, 9, Yingge, 13, Hudson, 14, Isabella, 8, and Sam, 8. Picture: Morgan Sette

“While it’s useful ... schools will adopt a range of approaches to support student learning”

Carolyn Grantskalns

and that supports their family values.”

Mrs Grantskalns said a number of independent schools had shown strong growth in year 5 students' results. At Seymour College, principal Vanessa Browning said NAPLAN was not the only benchmark the school used, pointing to the college's strong year 12 results last year.

“We were particularly pleased that our Class of 2021 ... cohort achieved 75 merits across 28 subjects and a me-

dian ATAR of more than 92,” she said. “Nevertheless, we are always striving to improve every area of our educational offering and have introduced some additional programs in response to some of the NAPLAN data.”

Catholic Education SA highlighted six schools that had shown increases in their scores significantly greater than both the national average gain and the improvements made by students at similar schools. They in-

cluded: Our Lady of the River School, Berri; Our Lady of Sacred Heart College, Enfield; Our Lady Queen of Peace School, Albert Park; St Dominic's Priory College, North Adelaide; St Joseph's Memorial School, Norwood and St Margaret Mary's School, Croydon Park.

Catholic Education SA deputy director John Mula said the results reflected the schools' “whole-community commitment to improvement”. “Great things are hap-

pening across our state with our schools committed to (Catholic Education)'s overarching strategy to achieve improvement in student learning outcomes, and that commitment should be acknowledged and celebrated,” he said.

St Margaret Mary's School principal Kelly Campbell said 65 per cent of her students spoke a language other than

English at home. “Across all year levels teachers deliver a program that explicitly models, teaches, and assesses strategies for successful language and writing,” she said.

NAPLAN is a nationwide academic measure that can determine whether or not young Australians are developing the literacy and numeracy skills that provide the critical foundation for other learning.

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