



It's hard to see the big picture with only a couple of pieces of the puzzle.

National Standards in their current form don't provide the whole story.

As parents you deserve accurate feedback about your child's progress at school. Information you can understand.

But, while National Standards are a general guide in specific areas they won't tell you everything you need to know. You'll need to consider them in context and look at more than just those results to see how your school and your child is doing.

You will start seeing reports based on National Standards data, but it's important to remember that this doesn't give you all the information ... or put that information in the wider context.

It's incredibly difficult to apply a single set of standards across the country, without taking into account a variety of other factors. The same 'year standard' may not, in fact, be an appropriate goal for all students. Research and experience suggest that straight comparisons are often not as helpful as evidence of a child's progress across time. It's a complicated issue and unfortunately not easily simplified. However, we're always happy to talk to you and give you some of that other information you might need, in plain language.

We want the best for your child.

The reasons why Principals are so concerned about National Standards are because...

- We want to ensure that National Standards are only used inside schools to enhance teaching and learning and to improve formative assessment practices.
- The idea of league tables and comparisons is hugely dangerous, especially given the difficulties involved in making such comparisons in a fair manner.
- Many of the tools are not aligned to the standards, or even the National Curriculum.
- Gaining consistency across the whole country through a new moderation process, which is still being developed, is likely to be hugely problematic.
- Changes are still happening with National Standards that make it hard for a school to respond effectively.
- Not all schools have the same attitude towards National Standards. In fact, schools will be working in isolation, with different levels of understanding of National Standards.
- There is a risk of simplistic adoption that could result in an over-reliance on certain tests - again not giving the whole picture.
- There are major concerns around data validity and data safety and the use of information.

Meanwhile your Principal and the NZPF are working with the Government to try to get changes to National Standards so they can provide a more accurate reflection of how your child and your school are performing.

The children of New Zealand look to us. We have the best interests of our children at heart
Talk to us if you'd like more information.