



NATIONAL STANDARDS FACTSHEET

National Standards was a government policy introduced in 2010. The policy required all schools to report to parents against nationally-determined criteria in reading, writing and mathematics. The standards were devised and implemented with little meaningful consultation or input from the education sector, setting out specific criteria in each subject area that all children were expected to achieve at each year level. This policy has now been discontinued, and schools are no longer required to report against them.

This factsheet is designed to give information on what parents can expect at MENPS following these changes.

WHAT IS THE SCHOOL'S POSITION ON THE END OF NATIONAL STANDARDS?

The MENPS position on National Standards is unchanged. Since their inception, the school (along with the overwhelming majority within the education sector) took the view that they were a fundamentally flawed model of student progress and child development. The standards imposed a 'one-size fits all' approach that we did not feel was in any way beneficial to teachers, learners or informing parents in a realistic, individualised and responsive way. We welcome the change in policy, and National Standards will, therefore, no longer be used as a reference point for student assessment and reporting at MENPS.

HOW IS THE END OF NATIONAL STANDARDS LIKELY TO AFFECT STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT?

In terms of student achievement in reading, writing and maths, National Standards were conceived as part of a drive to raise student achievement in literacy and numeracy, despite clear international evidence of the ineffectiveness of similar standards-based educational reforms. In reality, they had no measurable positive impact on student achievement, either nationally or locally, since their introduction in 2010, and so demonstrably failed to achieve the intended outcome.

Concerns were widely raised in the education sector under the National Standards policy that the only discernible effect was to risk a 'narrowing' of the curriculum by focusing solely on reading, writing and maths as measures of student success. Furthermore, the standards were designed and implemented in a way that risked labelling children as a success or a failure in a potentially damaging way from an early age.

At MENPS, we have continued to ensure that we maintain our unique approach and focus on delivering the whole curriculum in a holistic, coherent and individually responsive way. In addition, we continue to promote the dispositions or 'touchstones' that form the foundations for success across the curriculum at our school. We believe that achievement takes many forms, and that children develop in different ways and at different times. We value progress and success, but we also recognise that this is unique to every child's learning journey.

We are confident that student achievement, both in terms of the foundation subjects and the broader curriculum, will not be negatively impacted in any way by the end of National Standards requirements. Moreover, we feel this is a positive change, removing unnecessary workload for teachers and putting an end to a reductive 'pass or fail' model of primary education.

WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

Our approach to teaching and learning at school will continue, unchanged, using established testing and assessment tools, as before, to measure progress across the curriculum, along with sound teacher judgement and professional knowledge.

Student achievement and reports will no longer be measured against National Standards, but instead referenced to 'MENPS Indicators', which are based on and closely referenced to NZ Curriculum achievement levels, but which allow for a broader, more flexible range of achievement expectations.

We will otherwise continue to report similar information to parents about their child's individual progress and achievement, including areas in which they may require further help or support, as part of our commitment to developing and maintaining positive, learning-focused partnerships between teachers, children and parents.