# Value added methodology for Year K to Year 3 (VA K-3)

VA K-3 is an experimental measure that provides an indication of student progress from Kindergarten to Year 3 compared to similar schools with similar students. It does this by adjusting for the characteristics of the school and its students, including performance in Kindergarten.

For Kindergarten performance, the measure uses estimates of literacy and numeracy from the Best Start assessment. These estimates are derived from a measurement analysis of students' levels on each of the aspects of literacy and numeracy, using the same methodology as for generating NAPLAN scores.

The Year 3 performance used for the measure is an average of NAPLAN reading and numeracy scores, as used in other VA measures.

The analysis model used to generate VA K-3 results is very similar to that used for other VA measures. It takes account of the following student and school contextual factors:

- Student SES

- Student Aboriginality

- Student gender

- School SES (FOEI)

Other features of the VA K-3 measure, similar to other VA measures, are that:

- It is based only on those students in the same school at Kindergarten and at Year 3. An exception is made for Infants Schools where students' Year 3 results are credited back to the Infants School they attended so that a VA K-3 result can be determined for these schools.

- It is based on data pooled across two measurement periods. The result reported for 2016 is based on 2013 Best Start to 2016 Year 3 NAPLAN, as well as 2012 Best Start to 2015 Year 3 NAPLAN. This ensures that estimates are reflecting persistent differences in school performance, rather than normal variation.

- The methodology adjusts the VA estimates in proportion to their reliability. This means that estimates that we are less sure about are adjusted to be closer to the average school. This is important in NSW, which has a large number of small schools.

- The VA K-3 measure assumes that Best Start results are based on consistent teacher judgement, and are therefore an accurate and reliable measure of student ability at the beginning of Kindergarten. While psychometric analysis of Best Start data shows that teacher judgements on average are quite robust, there could be issues in the quality of teacher judgements for individual schools.