



Maths and science are such fun

Heads for numbers ... Sophie Munday, left, Bella Blyth and Eliza Munday are Moerlina Primary School maths whizzes. Photo: Billie Fairclough

Eliza Munday knows how to classify animals.

The Moerlina Primary School Year 2 student is bucking a trend of Australian kids' science and maths results faring poorly compared with those in other countries.

"I like science because we get to do experiments," Eliza said.

"Last term, we classified animals on a big chart. We sorted all the animals into groups."

Eliza and fellow Moerlina students Bella Blyth and Sophie Munday (Year 4) won distinctions in two national competitions.

The International Competi-

tions and Assessments for Schools program has maths, science and English tests, while the Australian Mathematics Competition is the biggest of its kind in Australian schools.

Moerlina principal Perette Minciullo said both competitions were voluntary.

"There may be a national trend of indifferent performance in these vital subjects, but we are bucking it," Perette said.

"We offer these competitions so children can have a go in areas of interest inspired in the classroom.

"It gives them experience in test and exam settings.

"One of our boys was awarded a prize in the Australian Mathematics Competition last year and also got into Perth Modern School."

Bella said she liked maths because it let her solve problems.

"The fun parts are reading it through and doing the calculations," she said.

Sophie said maths was fun because it was logical.

The four-yearly Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study showed Australian students in Years 4 and 8 were being eclipsed by children in many other countries.