SCHOOL ENROLMENT TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS

ISA RESEARCH REPORT

2023 EDITION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS AUSTRALIA

Independent Schools Australia acknowledges the traditional custodians of country throughout Australia and recognises the continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay respect to Elders past and present, and commit to the ongoing journey of reconciliation.

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RESEARCH PURPOSE 1

Independent Schools Australia (ISA) regularly undertakes in-depth analysis of school enrolment trends and projections. Combining the most up-to-date Australia Bureau of Statistics (ABS) enrolment figures with other data sources allows us to present historical, current and future student enrolment trends across the three school sectors (Independent, Catholic and government) at a national and state or territory level.

This analysis focuses on:

- An overview of current student enrolment figures (2022 data).
- Historical analysis of enrolments (enrolment figures, growth, share)
- Projections of future enrolments to 2032.

ANALYSIS NOTES 2

2.1 DATA SOURCES

This report primarily utilises publicly available sources of data. All historical and current enrolment data is taken from the ABS Schools Australia publication and the Australian Government Department of Education Non-Government Schools Census (unpublished). The enrolment projections use the ABS Population Projections dataset in addition to these two data sources.

ABS Schools Australia

The ABS Schools Australia data provides enrolment figures by state and territory including by primary and secondary and staff. This report uses FTE (full time equivalent) figures for enrolments.

https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/education/schools/latest-release, Table 43a

ABS Population Projections

The ABS produces a series of population projections every five years following the Census of Population and Housing. The current series of projections cover the entire Australian population for the period 2018 to 2066 for each Australian state and territory.

These ABS projections contain assumptions concerning fertility, life expectancy, net overseas migration (NOM) and for the state and territories, interstate migration.

https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/population-projections-australia/latest-release, Data extracted via ABS.Stat

Note: ABS's population projections were last revised in November 2018 and recent key events, notably the coronavirus pandemic, are not incorporated into these projections. ABS is releasing new population projections in late-2023, which will be incorporated into future ISA reports.

Australian Government Department of Education Non-Government Schools Census

Unpublished data detailing Independent sector enrolments at a school level. Includes independent Catholic schools.

2.2 SECTOR CLASSIFICATION

This report covers all three schooling sectors: Independent, Catholic and government. There is a subset of Catholic schools that are not members of the Catholic school systems, operate independently and are often members of their respective Association of Independent Schools. The ABS Schools Australia dataset classifies all schools with a Catholic affiliation as 'Catholic' even though operationally most non-systemic Catholic schools are more similar to Independent schools.

For the purposes of this Research Report, ISA has included independent Catholic schools in the Independent sector.

Assigning independent Catholic schools to the Independent sector is accomplished by utilising the Australian Government Department of Education Non-Government Schools Census, which details enrolments at a school level for all Independent schools, including independent Catholic schools. Independent school enrolments by year (2000-2022), state and grade replace corresponding values from the ABS Schools Australia dataset. Differences are subtracted from the Catholic school figures, resulting in the reassignment of independent Catholic schools to the Independent sector.

2.3 DATA INCONSISTENCIES

ABS Schools Australia

Occasionally there are discrepancies that occur in the enrolment data due to jurisdictions making changes in the administration of their education system. These include age realignments between years, changes to school starting ages, and states and territories transitioning year 7 from primary to secondary.

A full list of possible data inconsistencies is available in the ABS Schools Australia explanatory notes.

- ABS Schools Australia 2022 methodology and explanatory notes (covering 2012-2022)
- https://www.abs.gov.au/methodologies/schools-methodology/2022
- ABS Schools Australia 2012 explanatory notes (covering 1998-2012)

  https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4221.0Explanatory%20Notes12012

Data variation is most noticeable when comparing growth levels between a subset of school years (such as Year 7 to Year 12) and state/territory-level time series data.

Australian Government Department of Education Non-Government Schools Census

There are instances during 2000-2013 where independent Catholic schools have changed from non-systemic to systemic and do not appear in the dataset in proceeding years. This also occurred in South Australia for 2021 and 2022.

This resulted in some unusual movement in enrolments and growth between the Independent and Catholic sector, most notably in 2010-2014, and 2021-2022 in South Australia.

KEY FINDINGS 3

- There are currently 4 million full time equivalent students enrolled in Australian schools across all sectors. The government sector has the most enrolments (2.6 million or 64% of total enrolments), followed by the Catholic sector (0.75 million or 18%) and the Independent sector (0.69 million or 17%).
- The overall student population grew by only 0.6% from 2020 to 2021 and 0.3% from 2021 to 2022, primarily due to the introduction of COVID-19 restrictions. Prior to this, the student population was growing on average by 1.4% per annum over the last five years.
- The Independent sector grew by 3.2% from 2021, the sector's strongest growth in more than a decade, despite student population growth of only 0.3% and declining enrolments in government schools (-0.7%). Data suggests that Independent schools were preferred by parents during the COVID-19 pandemic, and this has continued in 2022. The Independent sector share of enrolments increased across every state and territory. Student enrolment growth is slowing across both primary and secondary grades, but most noticeably in primary grades where negative population growth has occurred in 2022. Years 0 and 1 have experienced three consecutive years of negative population growth.
- The government sector's share of enrolments reached 69.3% in 2000 but progressively dropped to a low of 65.1% in 2014. After gradually increasing its enrolment share year on year since, a significant fall in share occurred in both 2021 and 2022, likely due to COVID-19 related factors, resulting in a record low share of 64.4%.
- The Independent sector has increased its enrolment share every year for the past nine consecutive years, climbing steadily to a high of 17.1% in 2022. Over the past 20 years, Independent sector growth has consistently exceeded student population growth.
- The Catholic sector share of enrolments peaked in 2013 with a high of 19.3% but has since been on slow decline, with enrolment share currently at 18.5%.
- Over the past five years, the Independent sector has seen an average enrolment growth rate of 2.6% per year which exceeds overall student population growth over the same period (1.0%), followed by the Catholic sector with 0.8% and the government sector with 0.7%. In this time, the government sector has enrolled the highest number of new students (84,584), followed by the Independent sector (84,202) and the Catholic sector (28,080). The Independent sector has enrolled 43% of all new students over the past five years.
- 83% of additional students enrolled in the Independent sector from 2017 onwards were in New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland Independent schools.
- Additional analysis by ISA shows that growth in Independent schools is across all fee levels, with the strongest growth in low fee (below $5,000 per annum) Independent schools.[1]

[1] ISA analysis of ACARA My School data.

- Over the last five years, the Queensland Independent sector was the fastest growing state/sector across Australia[2] with an average annual growth of 3.5%, followed by the Tasmanian Independent sector with 2.9% and the New South Wales Independent sector with 2.7%.
- Over the last five years, the Northern Territory Independent sector has shown the least growth of any state/sector across Australia with an average annual growth of -1.2%, followed by the Northern Territory Catholic sector with -0.7% and the Northern Territory government sector with -0.7%.
- ISA projections show that overall school enrolments in Australia could increase by 1.2%[3] per year to 2032, with the Independent sector growing by 2.5% per year, the Catholic sector 1.2% per year and the government sector 0.8% per year. Growth in the Independent sector is driven primarily by Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland but it is important to note that growth has been strong across all states and territories for the past two years. ISA projects that the Independent sector could overtake the Catholic sector in enrolments by 2029.
- Over the next 10 years, ISA projects that Independent schools could enrol an additional 195,000 students. Based on an average school size of 570, around 342 additional Independent schools would be required to accommodate the increase in students. Based on the current distribution of students and schools, it is anticipated that 8 out of 10 of these new schools will need to be in New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland.

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[2] South Australian Catholic and Independent Western Australia sectors omitted as recent high growth has been influenced by Catholic schools switching between sectors.

[3] Based on the latest ABS Population Projections, released in 2018.

SCHOOL ENROLMENTS OVERVIEW 4

According to the ABS, in 2022 there were 4,037,115 full-time equivalent enrolments in Australia across all school sectors. This is an increase in enrolments of 0.3% across all sectors from 2021, in line with overall Australian population growth.

New South Wales has the highest proportion of student enrolments at 31%, while the Northern Territory enrols 1% of Australian school students.

Independent schools enrolled 17.1% of all students in Australia, Catholic schools enrolled 18.5% and Government schools enrolled 64.4%.

As noted in the Analysis Notes, this Research Report includes all independent (non-systemic) Catholic affiliated schools in the Independent sector which differs from the ABS methodology. This has the most impact on enrolments in NSW and ACT which have the largest proportion of independent Catholic schools.

FIGURE 4.1 TOTAL STUDENT POPULATION IN AUSTRALIA, 2022

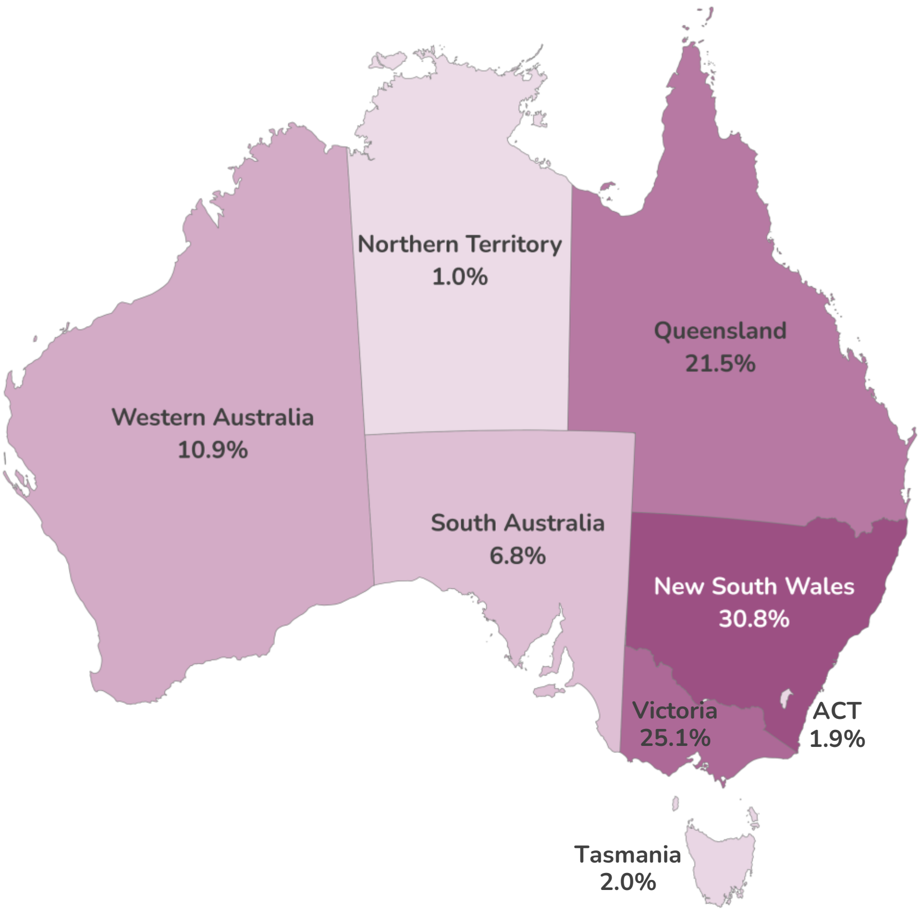


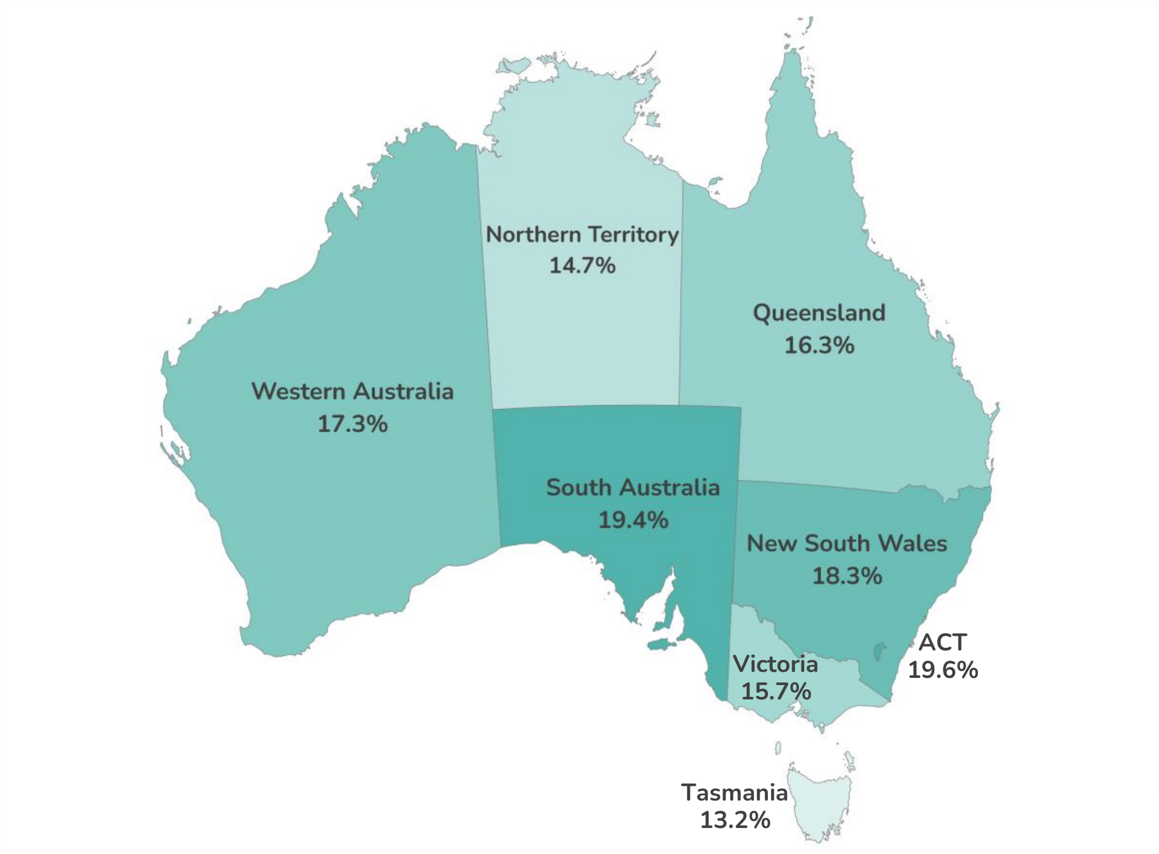
TABLE 4.1 ENROLMENTS BY STATE/TERRITORY AND SECTOR

STATE/TERRITORY	INDEPENDENT	CATHOLIC	GOVERNMENT	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
NSW	227,226	223,490	790,849	1,241,564	30.8%
VIC	159,179	210,516	644,598	1,014,293	25.1%
QLD	141,466	157,688	570,110	869,264	21.5%
SA	53,380	49,623	171,983	274,986	6.8%
WA	75,985	71,092	292,818	439,896	10.9%
TAS	10,705	15,407	55,185	81,297	2.0%
NT	5,863	4,788	29,331	39,981	1.0%
ACT	14,836	14,810	46,188	75,834	1.9%
Total	688,638	747,415	2,601,061	4,037,115	100.0%
Percentage	17.1%	18.5%	64.4%	100.0%	

Note: Data excludes for-profit Independent schools, which are not currently included in ABS's dataset due to the data collection method. This omission relates to 1,339 NSW Independent sector enrolments in 2021 and 1,376 in 2022.

The Independent sector enrols 17.1% of all students within Australia. At a state and territory level this figure varies from a high of 19.6% (Australian Capital Territory) to a low of 13.2% (Tasmania).

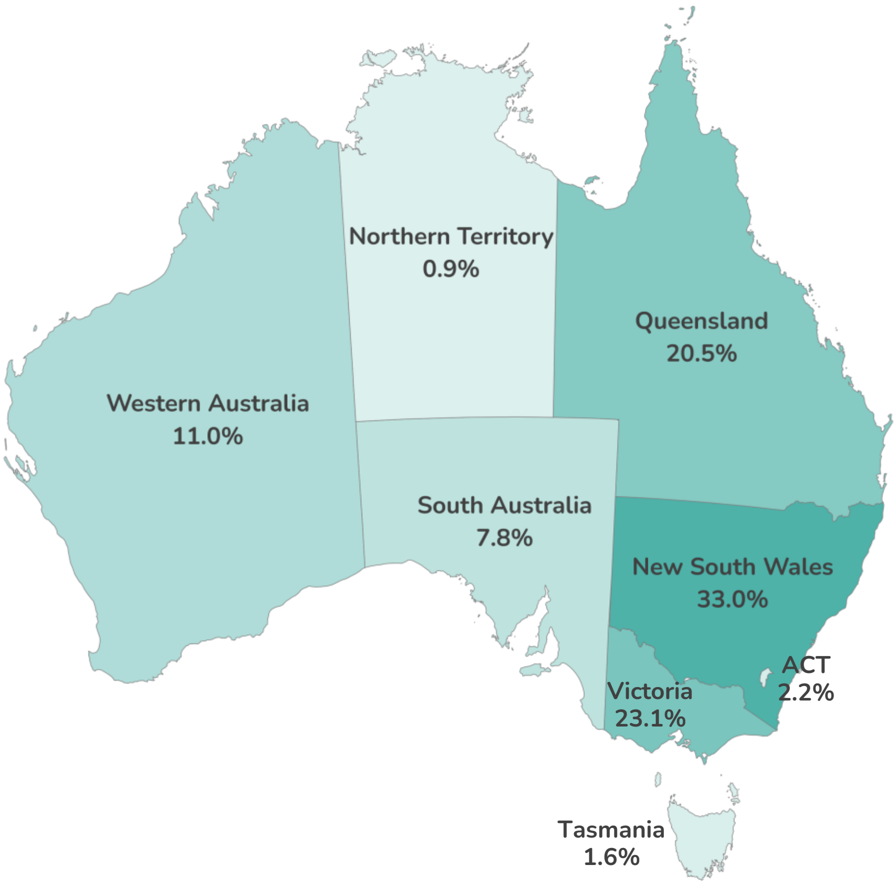
FIGURE 4.2 INDEPENDENT SECTOR SHARE OF TOTAL ENROLMENTS BY STATE, 2022



New South Wales enrols the most Independent students within the sector, enrolling 33.0% of all Independent school students.

Victoria enrols the second largest proportion of Independent students with 23.1%, followed by Queensland with 20.5%. The Northern Territory enrols the lowest proportion of Independent students with 0.9%.

FIGURE 4.3 PROPORTION OF INDEPENDENT SECTOR ENROLMENTS, 2022



GROWTH 5

Over the last five years, total school enrolments across Australia have grown by 1.0% per year. The Independent sector grew by 2.6% per year over the last five years, the Catholic sector grew by 0.8% and the government sector grew by 0.7%.

From 2021 to 2022, the Independent sector increased by 3.2%.

Additional analysis by ISA shows that growth in Independent schools is across all fee levels, with the strongest growth in low fee (below $5,000 per annum) Independent schools.[4]

5.1 GROWTH 2017 TO 2022

From 2017 to 2022, average annual growth across all sectors has been 1.0%. Government sector enrolments grew by 0.7% per annum, Independent sector enrolments grew by 2.6% and Catholic sector enrolments grew by 0.8%.

Over this period and across all sectors, the ACT has seen the largest average growth in student population of any state or territory with 1.8% per year. Queensland has the second highest growth with 1.5%. Notably, over the last five years Tasmania has seen minimal additional enrolments in schools, and the Northern Territory has had a reduction in enrolments.

The Queensland Independent sector was the fastest growing state/sector across Australia with an average annual growth of 3.5%, followed by the Tasmanian Independent sector with 2.9% and the New South Wales Independent sector with 2.7%.

The Northern Territory Independent sector has shown the least growth of any state/sector across Australia with an average annual growth of -1.2%, followed by the Northern Territory Catholic sector with -0.7% and the Northern Territory government sector with -0.7%.

Over the last five years, 79% of all additional enrolments have occurred in New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland despite only enrolling 77% of all students in Australia. In the Independent sector, 83% of additional enrolments are from these states despite only enrolling 77% of all Independent students in Australia. In the past two years, growth has been distributed more evenly across all states and territories.

[4] ISA analysis of ACARA My School data.

TABLE 5.1 AVERAGE ANNUAL ENROLMENT GROWTH, 2017 TO 2022

STATE/TERRITORY	INDEPENDENT	CATHOLIC	GOVERNMENT	ALL SECTORS
NSW	2.7%	0.5%	0.0%	0.5%
VIC	2.6%	0.2%	1.3%	1.3%
QLD	3.5%	1.5%	1.0%	1.5%
SA	0.9%	3.4%	-0.1%	0.7%
WA	2.8%	0.1%	1.2%	1.3%
TAS	2.9%	0.5%	-0.5%	0.1%
NT	-1.2%	-0.7%	-0.7%	-0.8%
ACT	1.7%	1.3%	2.0%	1.8%
Total	2.6%	0.8%	0.7%	1.0%

TABLE 5.2 NUMBER OF ADDITIONAL STUDENTS ENROLLED, 2017 TO 2022

STATE/TERRITORY	INDEPENDENT	CATHOLIC	GOVERNMENT	ALL SECTORS
NSW	+27,867	+5,418	-191	+33,094
VIC	+19,450	+2,254	+39,527	+61,230
QLD	+22,353	+11,274	+27,231	+60,858
SA	+2,342	+7,567	-552	+9,357
WA	+9,888	+438	+16,533	+26,858
TAS	+1,433	+377	-1,321	+488
NT	-352	-173	-1,017	-1,541
ACT	+1,221	+926	+4,374	+6,521
Total	+84,202	+28,080	+84,584	+196,866

5.2 GROWTH 2021 TO 2022

2022 data shows that the total student population across Australia only grew by 0.3% from the previous year, compared with 0.6% in 2021 and a more typical 1.5% in 2020. This low growth was due to COVID-19 related international border closures which effectively stopped migration to Australia during 2021 and 2022.

Western Australia and the ACT experienced the highest student population growth, increasing by 0.9% and 0.8% respectively, while the Northern Territory and Tasmania grew the least with growth of -1.2% and -0.3% respectively.

Growth in 2021 and 2022 was very strong in the Independent sector (3.1% and 3.2% respectively). The Catholic sector grew by 1.0%, their fourth consecutive year of enrolment growth. The Government sector declined by 0.7%.

In the past three years, the Catholic sector experienced a strong and notable resurgence in enrolments across most states and territories following a period of decline.

The Independent sector enrolled more additional students than any other sector in 2021 and 2022, with an additional 21,379 students in 2022, while the Catholic sector enrolled an additional 7,350 students and the government sector declined by 17,046 students.

Between 2021 and 2022, 56% of all additional enrolments occurred in New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland. In the Independent sector, 77% of additional enrolments were from these states.

TABLE 5.3 ENROLMENT GROWTH, 2021 TO 2022

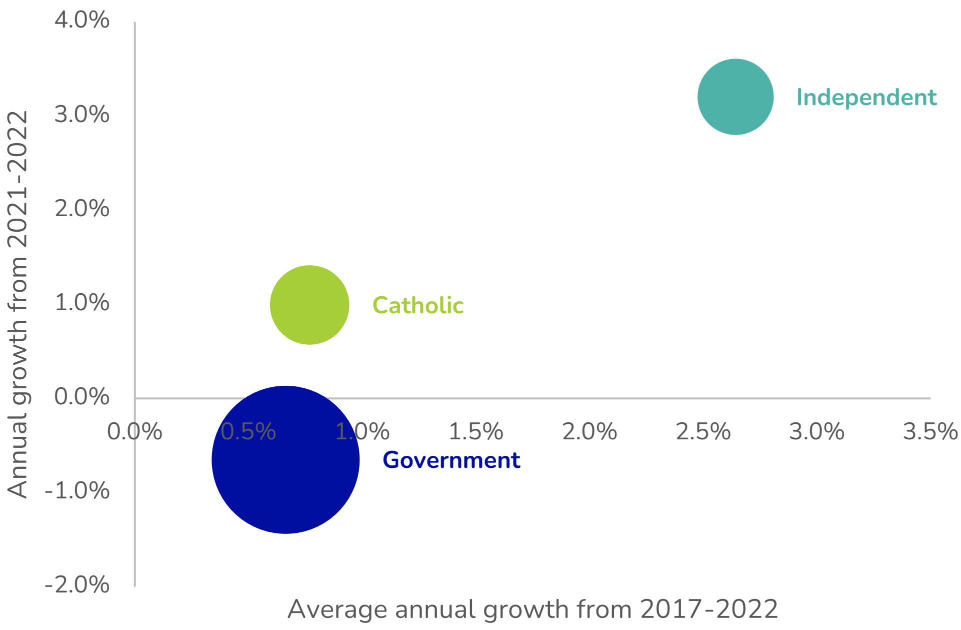
STATE/TERRITORY	INDEPENDENT	CATHOLIC	GOVERNMENT	ALL SECTORS
NSW	3.1%	1.3%	-1.4%	-0.1%
VIC	2.9%	-0.1%	0.1%	0.5%
QLD	3.8%	1.2%	-0.6%	0.4%
SA[5]	-0.3%	6.9%	-0.9%	0.6%
WA	5.7%	-1.0%	0.1%	0.9%
TAS	2.8%	1.0%	-1.2%	-0.3%
NT	4.4%	-1.2%	-2.2%	-1.2%
ACT	2.4%	0.9%	0.2%	0.8%
Total	3.2%	1.0%	-0.7%	0.3%

TABLE 5.4 NUMBER OF ADDITIONAL STUDENTS ENROLLED, 2021 TO 2022

STATE/TERRITORY	INDEPENDENT	CATHOLIC	GOVERNMENT	ALL SECTORS
NSW	+6,820	+2,928	-11,334	-1,586
VIC	+4,488	-134	+360	+4,715
QLD	+5,239	+1,860	-3,723	+3,377
SA[3]	-151	+3,210	-1,488	+1,570
WA	+4,092	-744	+368	+3,717
TAS	+295	+153	-654	-207
NT	+246	-57	-672	-483
ACT	+349	+135	+96	+580
Total	+21,379	+7,350	-17,046	+11,683

[5] In 2022, one large independent South Australian Catholic school joined the Catholic system.

FIGURE 5.1 ADDITIONAL ENROLMENTS FROM 2021-2022 AND 2017-2022 BY SECTOR



5.3 GROWTH TRENDS

Growth 2013-2020 (Pre-COVID-19)

The government sector has maintained a steady growth rate from 2013 onwards. The Independent sector's growth has remained generally higher than other sectors and since 2017 the sector's growth rate has increased each consecutive year. The Catholic sector saw a levelling off in growth starting around 2013, followed by five consecutive years of decreasing growth and even negative growth in 2017 and 2018. Recently, the Catholic sector has seen a rebound in growth.

Growth 2021 and 2022 (Impact of COVID-19)

Enrolments trends in 2021 and 2022 were heavily influenced by COVID-19 as can be seen in the following charts.

Despite overall student population growth in 2021 and 2022 being only 0.6% and 0.3% respectively (from 1.5% in 2020), the Independent sector experienced record growth levels (3.1% and 3.2%). This contrasts with the government sector, which, due to its size, typically follows the same trend as student population growth. However, in 2021 and 2022 the government sector experienced negative growth.

ISA's analysis suggests during the pandemic, many parents chose to enrol their child (or switch to) in an Independent school when pre-COVID they may have enrolled (or were enrolled) in a government school.

FIGURE 5.2 STUDENT ENROLMENT GROWTH BY SCHOOL SECTOR, 2013 TO 2022, ALL GRADES

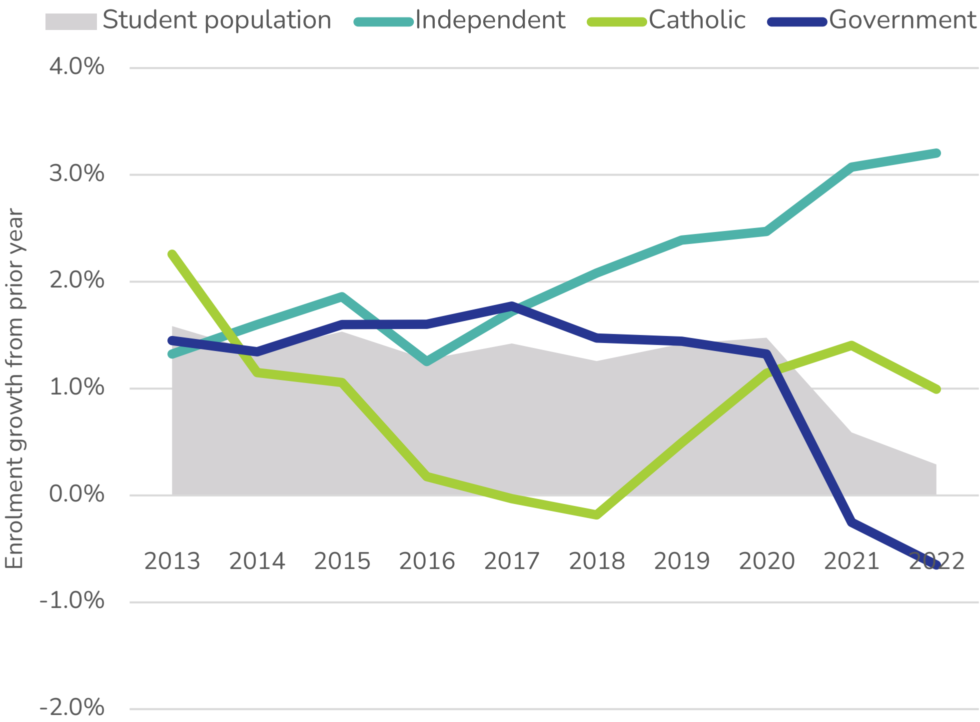


FIGURE 5.3 ADDITIONAL ENROLMENTS, 2013 TO 2022, ALL GRADES, INDEPENDENT SECTOR

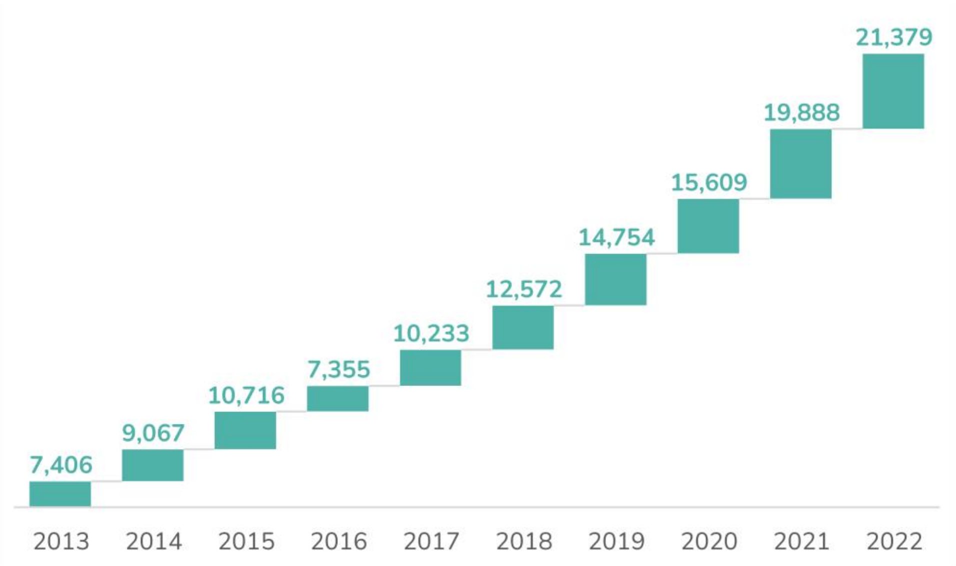


FIGURE 5.4 ADDITIONAL ENROLMENTS, 2013 TO 2022, ALL GRADES, CATHOLIC SECTOR

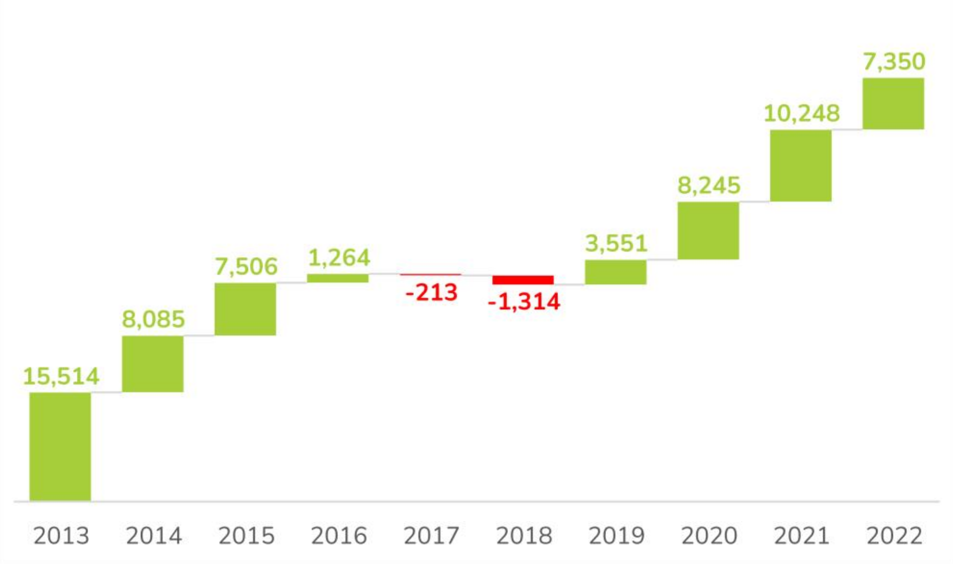
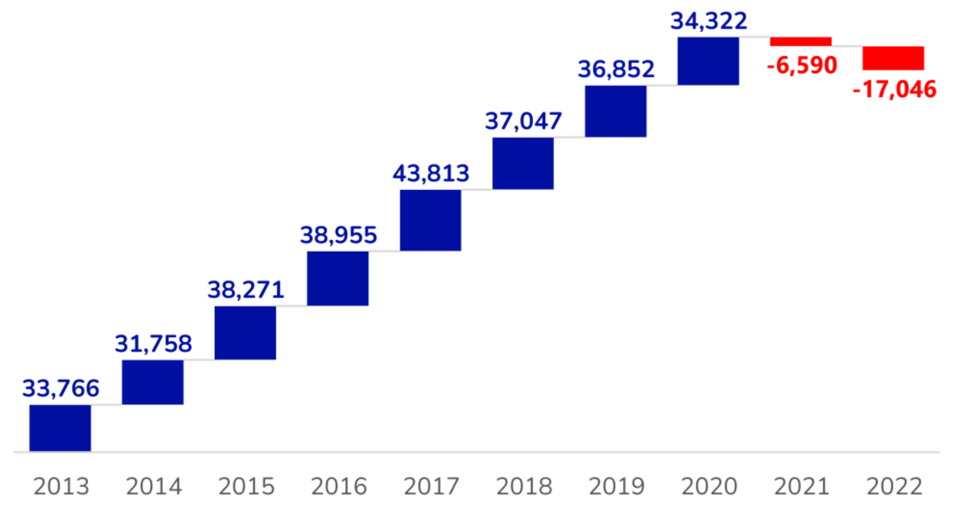


FIGURE 5.5 ADDITIONAL ENROLMENTS, 2013 TO 2022, ALL GRADES, GOVERNMENT SECTOR



5.3.1 GROWTH TRENDS BY PRIMARY AND SECONDARY

Growth 2013-2020 (Pre-COVID-19)

In recent years, the secondary-aged student population has continued to increase in contrast to a sharp decline in the number of primary-aged students. In 2020, growth in the secondary-aged student population was 3.1%, while growth in the primary-aged student population was 0.3%. In years 0 and 1, the student population declined by 0.2%, the continuation of an ongoing trend spanning several years.

The government sector has traditionally seen low growth at the secondary[6] school level, well below the other sectors. However, since 2016, secondary growth has been increasing and is now at above average levels. Primary[7] growth has been above average since 2012 but has slowed considerably due to an overall slowing of the growth of the primary student-aged population. Growth in years 0-1 has historically been higher in the government sector, but since 2019 has slowed considerably and in 2021 experienced negative growth.

The Independent sector has seen consistently high growth at all levels relative to other sectors – secondary, primary and year 0 and 1. The Independent sector has also seen significant growth in primary enrolments since 2018 onwards.

The Catholic sector experienced a notable reduction in growth across all levels, which started around 2013, but has now begun to level-off and recover. At the primary level, enrolment numbers in the Catholic sector have held steady for the past few years despite a rapid slowing of the primary-aged student population overall.

Growth 2021 and 2022 (Impact of COVID-19)

2021 saw a break in many trends due to the pandemic, and this trend continued through 2022. Student population growth reduced across the board. The government sector had a notable reduction in growth in 2021 and 2022 (0.6% and 0.1%, compared with 3.2% in 2020) in secondary-aged students, while the Independent and Catholic sectors have generally held steady with continued high growth, despite reduced population growth.

The government sector also experienced negative growth in primary-aged students for the second consecutive year. Both the Independent and Catholic sectors have seen a significant increase in growth in primary-aged students, most notably the Independent sector at 3.0% in 2022, despite the primary-aged student population declining by 0.2%.

Some of the reduction in government school enrolments can be attributed to the closing of borders as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, with may have impacted the government sector disproportionally. However, taking this into account there does appear to be a strong movement of students moving from the government sector to the non-government sector.

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[6] Secondary schooling is classified as years 7 to 12. At present all states and territories classify secondary schooling as years 7 to 12, apart from South Australia who are currently transitioning year 7 from primary to secondary. Queensland and Western Australia changed their year 7 classification from primary to secondary in 2015.

[7] At present all states and territories classify primary schooling as years 0 to 6, apart from South Australia who are currently transitioning year 7 from primary to secondary. Queensland and Western Australia changed their year 7 classification from primary to secondary in 2015.

FIGURE 5.6 STUDENT ENROLMENT GROWTH BY SCHOOL SECTOR, 2013 TO 2022, SECONDARY – YEAR 7 TO 12

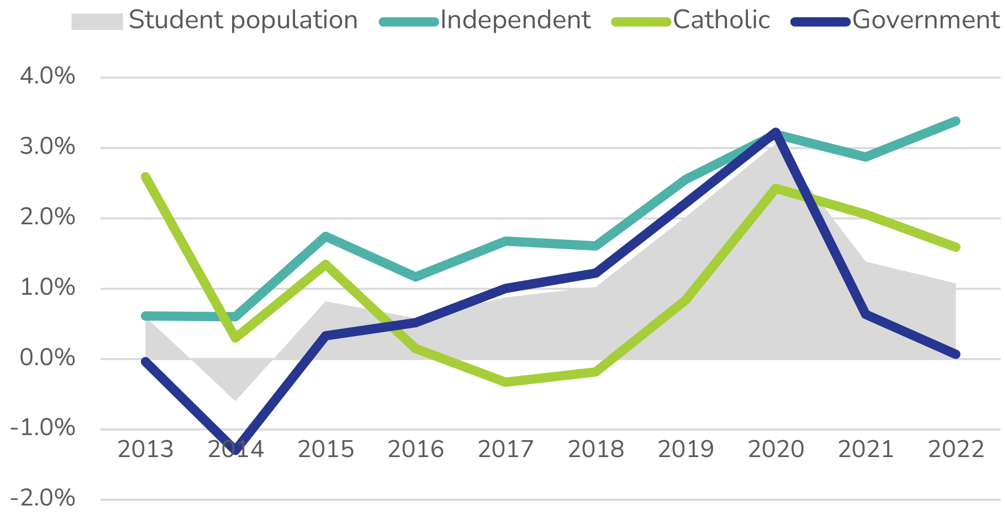
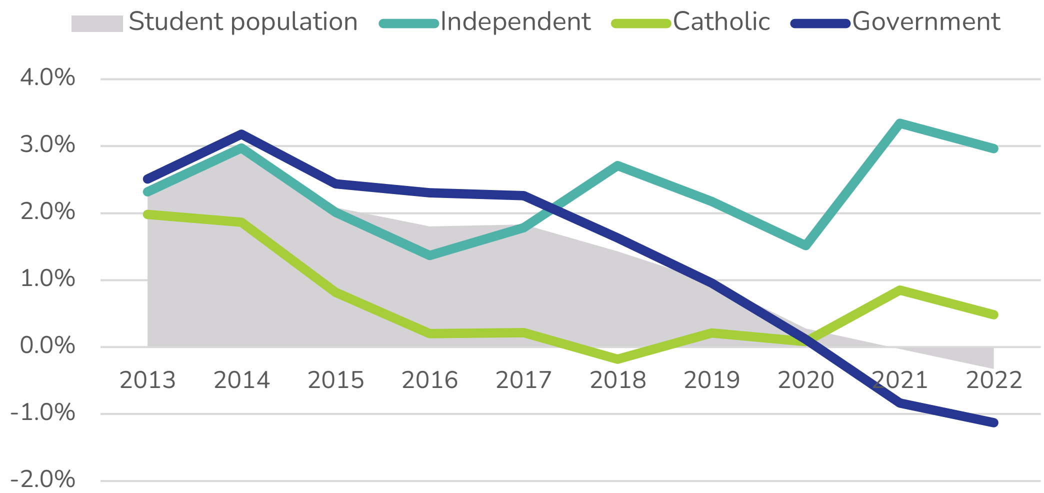


FIGURE 5.7 STUDENT ENROLMENT GROWTH BY SCHOOL SECTOR, 2013 TO 2022, PRIMARY – YEAR 0 TO 6



5.3.2 GROWTH TRENDS BY YEARS 0 AND 1

Differences between school sectors at year 0 (foundation year) and year 1 are a good indicator of the future growth rates of the general school population and the different school sectors, as most students progress through their schooling in the same sector of schooling. In 2022, there were 632,785 students enrolled in year 0 and 1, that is 4,503 less than in 2021, the largest reduction in more than 25 years.

At this level of schooling, sector growth is more variable and is generally influenced by population growth. However, in 2022 growth in these years mirrors trends at the primary and secondary level. The Independent sector has seen very high growth of 3.3% despite the year 0 and 1 population declining by 0.7%. Government sector growth (-1.9%) was significantly below population growth.

FIGURE 5.8 STUDENT ENROLMENT GROWTH BY SCHOOL SECTOR, 2013 TO 2022, YEAR 0 AND 1

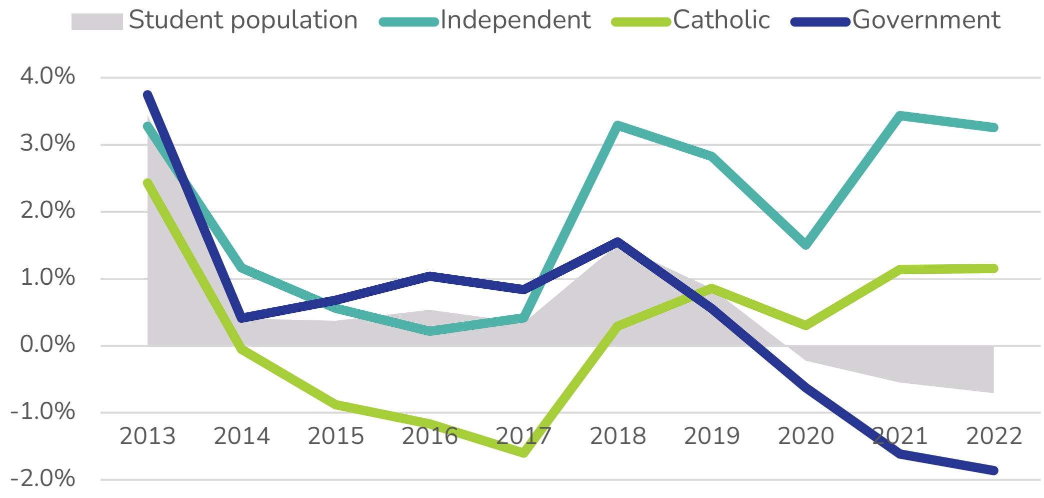


TABLE 5.5 AVERAGE ANNUAL GROWTH BY GRADE LEVEL, 2017 TO 2022

GRADE LEVEL	INDEPENDENT	CATHOLIC	GOVERNMENT	ALL SECTORS
ALL YEARS	2.6%	0.8%	0.7%	1.0%
YEARS 7-12	2.7%	1.3%	1.5%	1.7%
YEARS 0-6	2.4%	0.2%	0.3%	0.5%
YEARS 0-1 ONLY	2.9%	0.7%	-0.4%	0.2%

TABLE 5.6 ANNUAL GROWTH BY GRADE LEVEL, 2021 TO 2022

GRADE LEVEL	INDEPENDENT	CATHOLIC	GOVERNMENT	ALL SECTORS
ALL YEARS	3.2%	1.0%	-0.7%	0.3%
YEARS 7-12	3.4%	1.6%	0.1%	1.1%
YEARS 0-6	2.8%	0.3%	-0.9%	-0.2%
YEARS 0-1 ONLY	3.3%	1.2%	-1.9%	-0.7%

ENROLMENT SHARE 6

The pandemic resulted in a strong shift towards non-government schools in 2021 and 2022, with the government school sector's student share now the lowest on record (64.4%) and the Independent sector share its highest on record (17.1%).

Between 2000 and 2014, there was a notable but slow shift in enrolments from the government sector to the non-government sector. Over this period, the government sector enrolment share steadily declined from 69.3% to 65.1%. At the same time, the Independent sector share rose from 12.5% to 15.7% and the Catholic sector share grew from 18.2% to 19.2%.

From 2015-2020, the picture changed somewhat with a distinct flow of students back towards government schools, a decline in Catholic share, and Independent schools continuing steady but smaller increases.

2021 and 2022 have seen a sharp reduction in the government sector's enrolment share, now down to 64.4%, its lowest in record. This is due to a combination of 23,637 less government sector enrolments over the last two years and a corresponding increase of 41,267 enrolments in the Independent sector and 17,895 in the Catholic sector.

The Catholic sector, following seven consecutive years of enrolment share decline, increased in 2021 and further in 2022.

Independent sector enrolment share has increased every year for the last nine consecutive years and is currently at its highest point at 17.1%.

Sector share by state and territory shows mixed results. Since 2016, the government sector has gained student share in three states and territories, the Catholic sector has gained student share in four states and territories, most notably in Victoria. The Independent sector has gained student share in six states and territories, most notably in New South Wales, Tasmania and Queensland.

FIGURE 6.1 STUDENT ENROLMENT SHARE, 2000 TO 2022

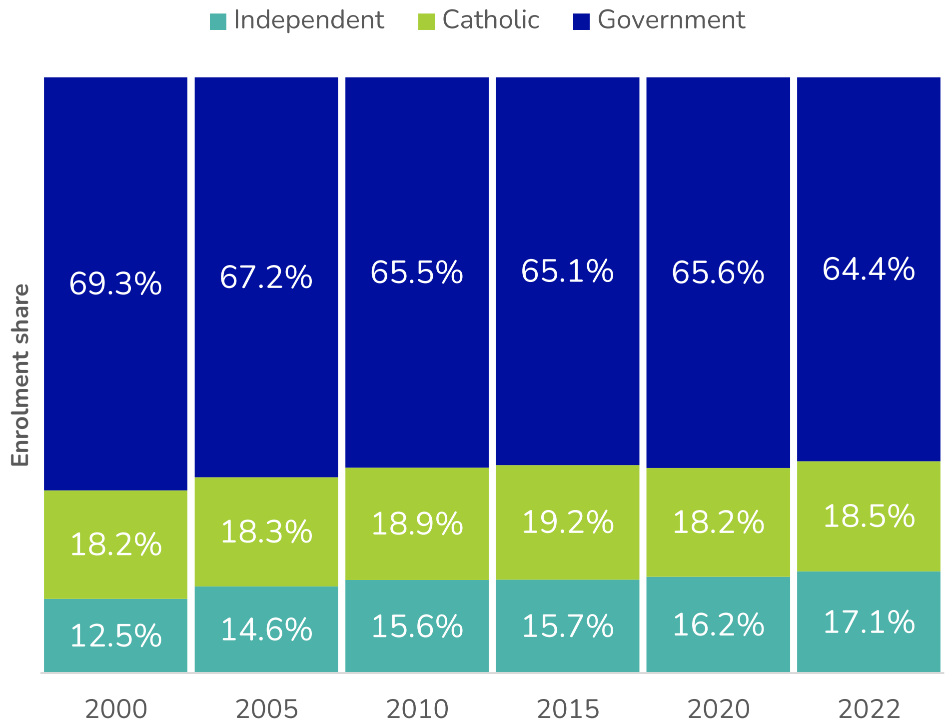
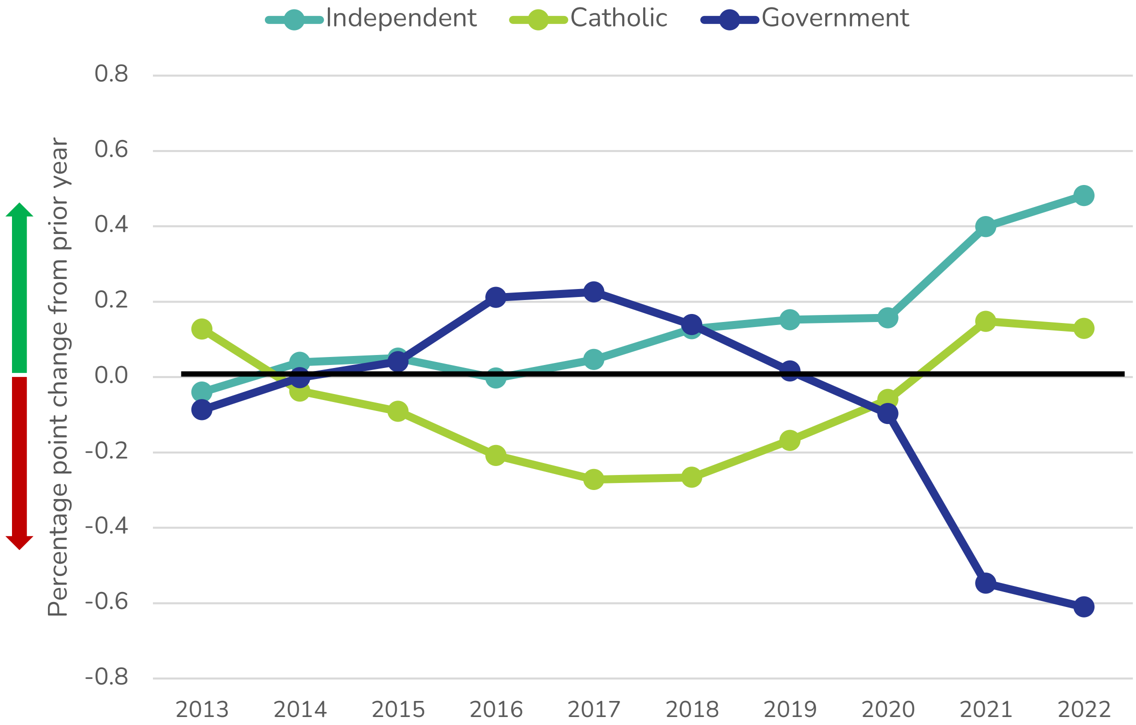


TABLE 6.1 PERCENTAGE POINT CHANGE IN ENROLMENT SHARE, 2017 TO 2022

STATE/TERRITORY	INDEPENDENT	CATHOLIC	GOVERNMENT
NSW	+1.8%	0.0%	-1.8%
VIC	+1.0%	-1.1%	+0.1%
QLD	+1.5%	0.0%	-1.6%
SA	+0.2%	+2.2%	-2.4%
WA	+1.3%	-0.9%	-0.3%
TAS	+1.7%	+0.4%	-2.0%
NT	-0.3%	0.0%	+0.3%
ACT	-0.1%	-0.5%	+0.6%
Total	+1.3%	-0.2%	-1.1%

FIGURE 6.2 ENROLMENT SHARE PERCENTAGE POINT CHANGE FROM PRIOR YEAR, 2013 TO 2022



ENROLMENT PROJECTIONS 7

Independent Schools Australia has used a combination of data from multiple sources to estimate enrolments by school sector and state to 2032.

Note: Caution must be exercised in reviewing these trends. The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in unexpected enrolment patterns in 2021 and 2022 and it is unclear if these will continue, and/or their duration.

7.1 DATASETS

ABS Schools Australia, Australia Bureau of Statistics

https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/education/schools/latest-release

Australian Government Department of Education Non-Government Schools Census

Population Projections, Australian Bureau of Statistics

https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/population-projections-australia/latest-release

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) produces a series of population projections every five years following the Census of Population and Housing. The current series of projections cover the entire Australian population for the period 2018 to 2066 for each Australian state and territory. The latest data was released on 22nd November 2018.

The ABS release three series of projections (Series A, B, C) based on a possible 72 individual combinations of various assumptions. Series A reflects high assumptions of trends in fertility, life expectancy at birth and migration. Series B reflects current trends, while Series C reflects lower assumptions.

	Life expectancy	**Fertility**	**Net overseas migration**	**Net interstate migration**
Series A	High	High	High	Large
Series B	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
Series C	Medium	Low	Low	Small

While not specifically focussed on the student population, the ABS population projections are provided by individual age within the Australian population. By selecting the ages that would best represent school students, age six for Year 1 through to age seventeen for Year 12, the series can be used to project the school age population. The population projections are also provided by gender, state and territory and by city/rest of state within those states and territories. The population projections can be applied directly to actual current student enrolments.

ISA has used Series B projections for this analysis.

7.2 METHODOLOGY

The following provides a high-level outline of the methodology used in calculating sector-level enrolment projections for 2023 to 2032.

Calculate student growth

Using the Population Projections series B, student growth is calculated at a state/territory and year level. This growth is then applied to current 2022 student figures at a state/territory and year level.

Calculate school sector shares

School sector shares are calculated separately by taking the past five years (2018-2022) of historical student data by state/territory, year and sector and forecasting future results using the AAN exponential smoothing model. Various discrepancies in data have been accounted for, including 'half cohorts' of students from Queensland and Western Australia which had caused significant changes to enrolments as the cohort passes through the years.

Apply school sector forecast to student growth projections

School sector share forecasts are applied to student projections. As both student projections and sector share forecasts were calculated at a state/territory and year level, this allows ISA to project future enrolment from the national level down to a state/territory, year and sector level.

Important note

ISA has used the past five years of historical data for projections. As new enrolment trends emerge and if they continue, such as the strong surge in non-government school enrolments in 2021-2022, they will be reflected in future updates of this research paper produced by ISA.

7.3 RESULTS

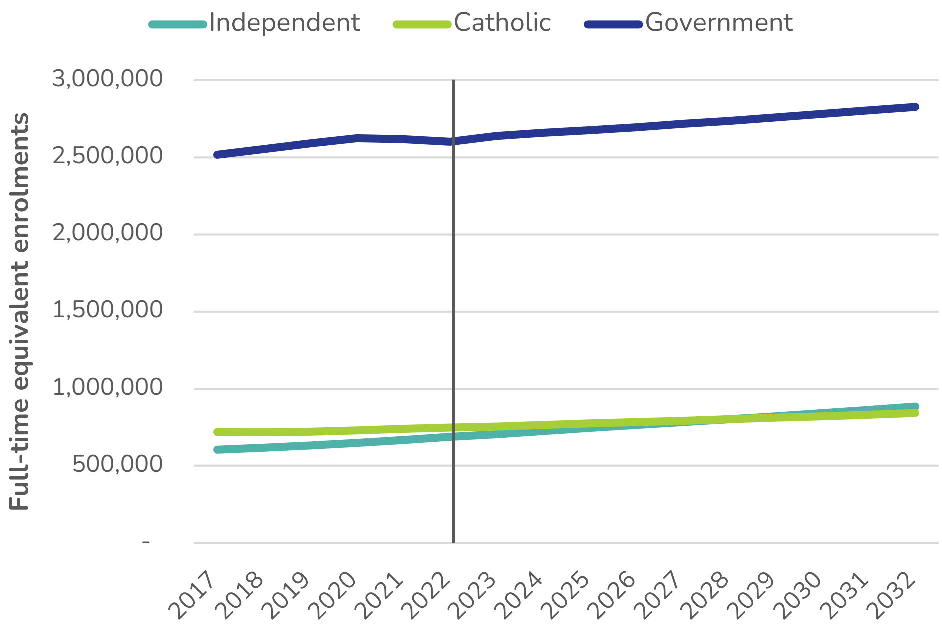
Historically, school enrolments have grown 1.0% per year from 2017 to 2022 with most of the growth seen in the Independent (2.6%) and Catholic (0.8%) sectors.

ISA projections to 2032 show that overall school enrolments could increase by 1.2% per year with the Independent sector growing by 2.5% per year, the government sector by 0.8% and the Catholic sector 1.2% per year. These figures suggest that Independent schools are likely to continue their steady growth and could enrol approximately 195,000 additional students over the next 10 years. This is the equivalent of 342[8] new schools, based on an average school size of 570[9] students.

It is likely that 8 out of 10 of these new schools would need to be in New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland.

ISA projects that the Independent sector will enrol more students than the Catholic sector from 2029 and continue to be the fastest growing schooling sector in Australia.

FIGURE 7.1 PROJECTED ENROLMENTS TO 2032



[8] Assumes all current Independent schools are at capacity.

[9] Average size of an Independent school, based on Non-Government Schools Census

TABLE 7.1 PROJECTED AVERAGE ANNUAL ENROLMENT GROWTH TO 2032

	ACTUAL 2017-2022	PROJECTED 2022-2027	PROJECTED 2027-2032	PROJECTED 2022-2032
INDEPENDENT	2.6%	2.6%	2.5%	2.5%
CATHOLIC	0.8%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%
GOVERNMENT	0.7%	0.9%	0.8%	0.8%
ALL SECTORS	1.0%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%

TABLE 7.2 PERCENTAGE POINT CHANGE IN STUDENT SHARE TO 2032

	ACTUAL 2017-2022	PROJECTED 2022-2027	PROJECTED 2027-2032	PROJECTED 2022-2032
INDEPENDENT	+1.3	+1.2	+1.2	+2.4
CATHOLIC	-0.2	-0.1	0.0	0.0
GOVERNMENT	-1.1	-1.1	-1.2	-2.3

FIGURE 7.2 PROJECTED SECTOR SHARE TO 2032

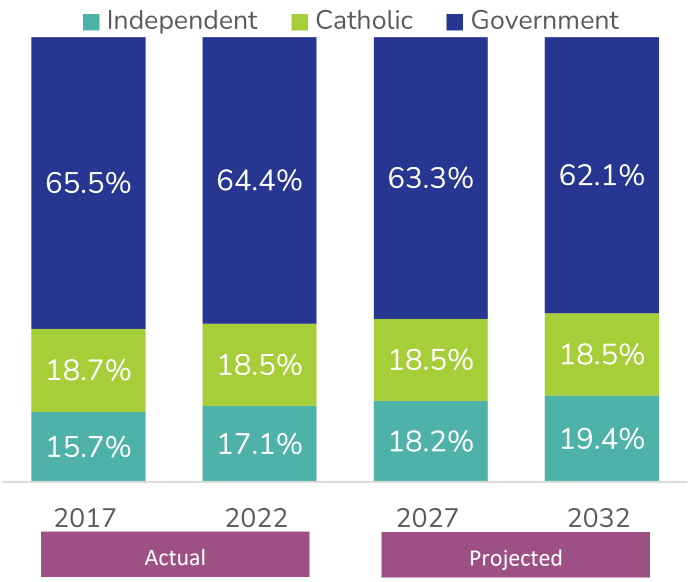


TABLE 7.3 PROJECTED ADDITIONAL ENROLMENTS TO 2032

SECTOR	CURRENT ENROLMENTS 2022	PROJECTED ENROLMENTS 2027	PROJECTED ENROLMENTS 2032	ADDITIONAL ENROLMENTS 2022-2027	ADDITIONAL ENROLMENTS 2027-2032	ADDITIONAL ENROLMENTS 2022-2032
INDEPENDENT	688,638	782,173	884,007	+93,535	+101,834	+195,369
CATHOLIC	747,415	792,358	842,313	+44,943	+49,955	+94,898
GOVERNMENT	2,601,061	2,717,228	2,826,407	+116,167	+109,179	+225,346
ALL SECTORS	4,037,115	4,291,760	4,552,728	+254,645	+260,968	+515,613