



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: 4 OCTOBER 2023

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS AUSTRALIA WELCOMES DISABILITY ROYAL COMMISSION REPORT

Independent Schools Australia (ISA) welcomes the release of the Disability Royal Commission's final report.

ISA Chief Executive Officer Mr Graham Catt said, "We welcome the release of the Royal Commission's final report which embodies the considerable work that the Disability Royal Commission has done investigating the experiences of those living with disability in various settings, including schools.

"The revelations arising from the Disability Royal Commission's work show there is much to be done in all settings to maintain the dignity of, and better protect those who live with disability," he said.

Independent schools provide inclusive, equitable and quality education for all their students, making appropriate adjustments for students with disability to participate in learning.

The recommendations from the Disability Royal Commission provide deep insights into what can be done to improve outcomes for students with disability.

The issues relating to schools are extremely complex and ISA is currently examining the recommendations in detail.

Students with disability account for one fifth of students enrolled in Independent schools – a similar proportion to those in government schools. Of these, five in six students with disability are in a mainstream Independent school and one in six is enrolled in a specialised Independent school.

"Specialised school settings support some of the best inclusive practices for students with disability with expertly trained staff, wrap-around support and collaboration with allied health services.

"In fact, it could be detrimental for some students and their families if specialised school settings were phased out," he said.

There are 143 Independent special schools, including 96 special assistance schools, that cater for students with a wide range of needs, including students with disability.

"There is no one way to provide an inclusive education to young people, as all students are individual and have different needs.

“Educators consistently utilise best practice, teaching to diverse student cohorts, including students with complex needs,” Mr Catt said.

ISA is the national peak body representing 1,209 Independent schools with 688,638 enrolled students (full time equivalent), accounting for approximately 17 per cent of Australian school enrolments and a workforce of 115,090 people.

ENDS

ISA Media Contact: Anne Walker, M 0419 505889, E comms@isa.edu.au