

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS SNAPSHOT

2024 EDITION

LATEST AVAILABLE  
FACTS AND FIGURES



The Independent school sector is a diverse and growing group of non-government schools. This snapshot provides an overview of the key characteristics of the sector, those who are enrolled, those who work in Independent schools, and how these schools are funded.

The Independent school figures in this snapshot include Independent Catholic schools, except where otherwise indicated.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL SECTOR

BROAD CHOICE FOR PARENTS

STRONG COMMUNITY LINKS

DIVERSITY OF SCHOOL TYPE,  
SIZE AND FOCUS

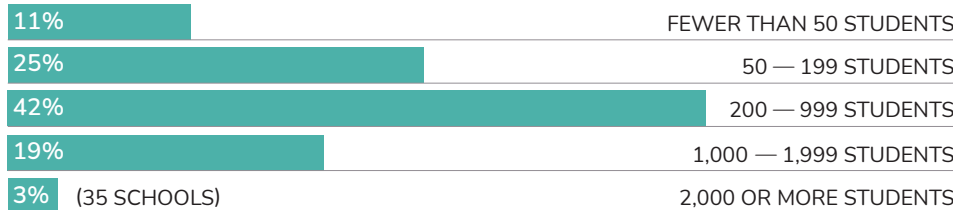
AUTONOMOUS GOVERNANCE  
ARRANGEMENTS

COMPREHENSIVE ACCOUNTABILITY

## SCHOOL METRICS

In 2023, there were 1,216 Independent schools of which 139 were boarding schools. Most Independent schools are co-educational.

### SIZE OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS



### NUMBER OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

PRIMARY	226	19%
SECONDARY	77	6%
COMBINED	770	63%
SPECIAL SCHOOLS	143	12%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,216</b>	<b>100%</b>

### TYPE OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

BOYS' SCHOOLS	4%
GIRLS' SCHOOLS	6%
CO-EDUCATIONAL SCHOOLS	90%

1,216



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

590



AVERAGE NUMBER  
OF STUDENTS ENROLLED AT  
AN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL

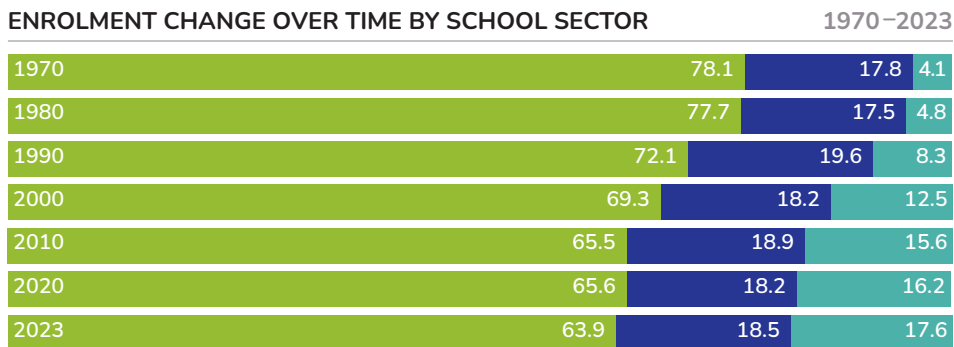
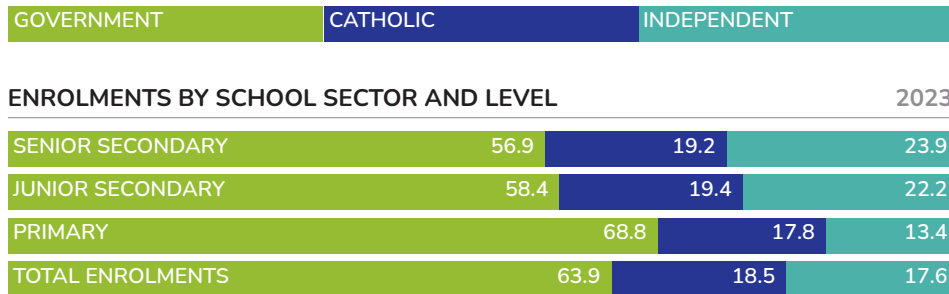
389



AVERAGE NUMBER OF  
STUDENTS ENROLLED AT A  
GOVERNMENT SCHOOL

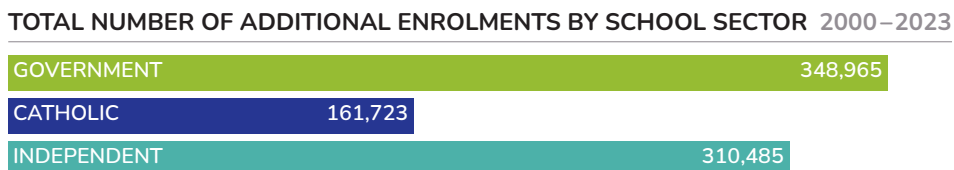
# STUDENT ENROLMENTS

The rate of growth of the Independent school sector has been increasing. In 2023, enrolments in Independent schools grew by 3.8 per cent.



SHOWN AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL ENROLMENTS. ENROLMENT CHANGE FIGURES IN 1970, 1980 AND 1990 ARE SOURCED FROM AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS WHERE INDEPENDENT CATHOLIC SCHOOLS ARE INCLUDED IN CATHOLIC SCHOOL CATEGORY.

PERCENTAGE SHARE %



	<b>ENROLMENTS IN INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS</b>			<b>2023</b>
	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	
PRIMARY	151,349	151,729	303,078	
SECONDARY	205,060	208,710	413,770	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>356,409</b>	<b>360,439</b>	<b>716,848</b>	

	<b>STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY IN INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS (EST)*</b>	<b>2023</b>
SUPPORT PROVIDED WITHIN A QUALITY DIFFERENTIATED TEACHING PRACTICE	58,800	
SUPPLEMENTARY	68,100	
SUBSTANTIAL	22,900	
EXTENSIVE	7,200	

\*MORE INFORMATION ON THE LEVELS OF ADJUSTMENT FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY IS AVAILABLE AT [WWW.NCCD.EDU.AU](http://WWW.NCCD.EDU.AU)



**3.8%**

GROWTH IN ENROLMENTS IN INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS



**716,848**

TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS



**19,299**

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STUDENTS



**4,352**

OVERSEAS STUDENTS



**15,204**

BOARDING STUDENTS



**157,000**

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY (ESTIMATED)

# SCHOOL PROFILE

Independent schools have diverse religious or philosophical affiliations. They represent a range of approaches to teaching and learning.



82%

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS WITH A RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION

## AFFILIATIONS OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS BY NUMBER OF ENROLMENTS

2023

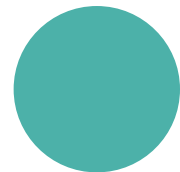
AFFILIATION	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	STUDENTS FTE	STUDENTS FTE
ANGLICAN	154	173,549	24.2%
NON-DENOMINATIONAL	234	109,061	15.2%
CHRISTIAN SCHOOL	162	88,330	12.3%
ISLAMIC	54	49,077	6.8%
UNITING CHURCH	40	48,050	6.7%
CATHOLIC, ROMAN	55	46,967	6.6%
LUTHERAN	78	44,310	6.2%
BAPTIST	41	26,337	3.7%
INTER-DENOMINATIONAL	24	19,061	2.7%
SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST	44	16,312	2.3%
PRESBYTERIAN	13	12,479	1.7%
STEINER SCHOOL	51	9,924	1.4%
PENTACOSTAL	20	9,553	1.3%
JEWISH	18	9,007	1.3%
ASSEMBLIES OF GOD	11	7,557	1.1%
BRETHREN	20	5,655	0.8%
MONTESSORI SCHOOL	39	5,023	0.7%
ORTHODOX, GREEK	8	4,037	0.6%
CATHOLIC, OTHER	8	3,817	0.5%
ORTHODOX, OTHER	6	2,620	0.4%
OTHER RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION*	13	5,985	0.8%
OTHER**	123	20,140	2.8%

\* 'OTHER RELIGIOUS' AFFILIATIONS INCLUDE CHURCHES OF CHRIST, ANANDA MARGA, HARE KRISHNA AND SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

\*\* 'OTHER' INCLUDES SPECIAL SCHOOLS, INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS, ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER SCHOOLS, AND COMMUNITY SCHOOLS.



SCHOOL LOCATIONS



66.1%

MAJOR CITIES



30.4%

REGIONAL



3.5%

REMOTE

## GOVERNANCE

Independent schools are generally not-for-profit institutions founded by groups in the community. All Independent schools are registered with the relevant state or territory education authorities.

Independent schools are primarily accountable to their parent and school communities.

About 17 per cent of Independent schools operate within an approved system authority. These include the Anglican, Lutheran or Seventh Day Adventist Systems.

All Independent schools comply with relevant state and federal education legislation and regulation.

# SOURCES OF INCOME

Most of the income of Independent schools comes from families. Most of the recurrent income of Independent schools comes from families. Governments save an estimated \$7.1 billion due to the contribution of families and other private sources.



**\$7.1 BILLION**

SAVINGS TO GOVERNMENTS



**\$5,537**

MEDIAN ANNUAL FEE  
2022

## GOVERNMENT FUNDING OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

Government funding for schools is provided by the Australian Government and state and territory governments. The Australian Government is the main government funding source for non-government schools, currently providing 78 per cent of total government recurrent funding for Independent schools while states and territories provide 22 per cent. State and territory governments are the main funding source for government schools. The proportions of private/government funding vary greatly from school to school.

### RECURRENT FUNDING FOR SCHOOL EDUCATION \$ BILLION

FY 2021–22

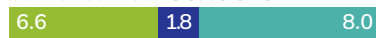
#### GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS



#### CATHOLIC SCHOOLS



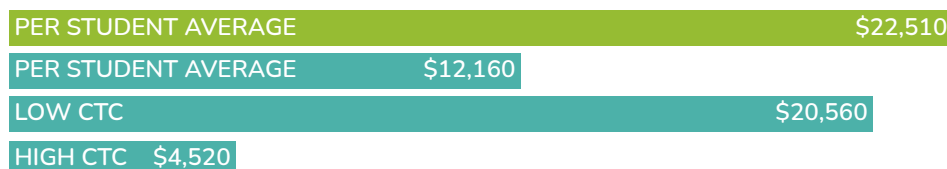
#### INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS



AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT STATE GOVERNMENT PRIVATE INCOME (PARENTS, ETC)

### TOTAL GOVERNMENT RECURRENT FUNDING PER STUDENT COMPARISON

FY 2021–22



#### GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

ALL GOVERNMENT SOURCES. THE AMOUNT OF FUNDING RECEIVED FROM ALL GOVERNMENT SOURCES VARIES SIGNIFICANTLY DEPENDING ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE SCHOOL.

### AVERAGE GOVERNMENT RECURRENT FUNDING PER STUDENT

FY 2021–22



### FUNDING MODEL

The current Australian Government funding model for schools, the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS) comprises base funding plus loadings to address educational disadvantage. Base funding for Independent schools is adjusted according to the school community's estimated capacity to contribute (CTC) to the costs of education, assessed on parental income tax data. This methodology is known as the Direct Measure of Income (DMI). Schools with a higher CTC score receive less per capita base funding.

#### LOADINGS:

- SCHOOL LOCATION
- SCHOOL SIZE
- SOCIO-EDUCATIONAL DISADVANTAGE
- INDIGENEITY
- LOW ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY
- STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY

## SOURCES OF INCOME

The majority of Independent school funding (recurrent and capital) comes from private sources.

52%

PRIVATE SOURCES OF FUNDING

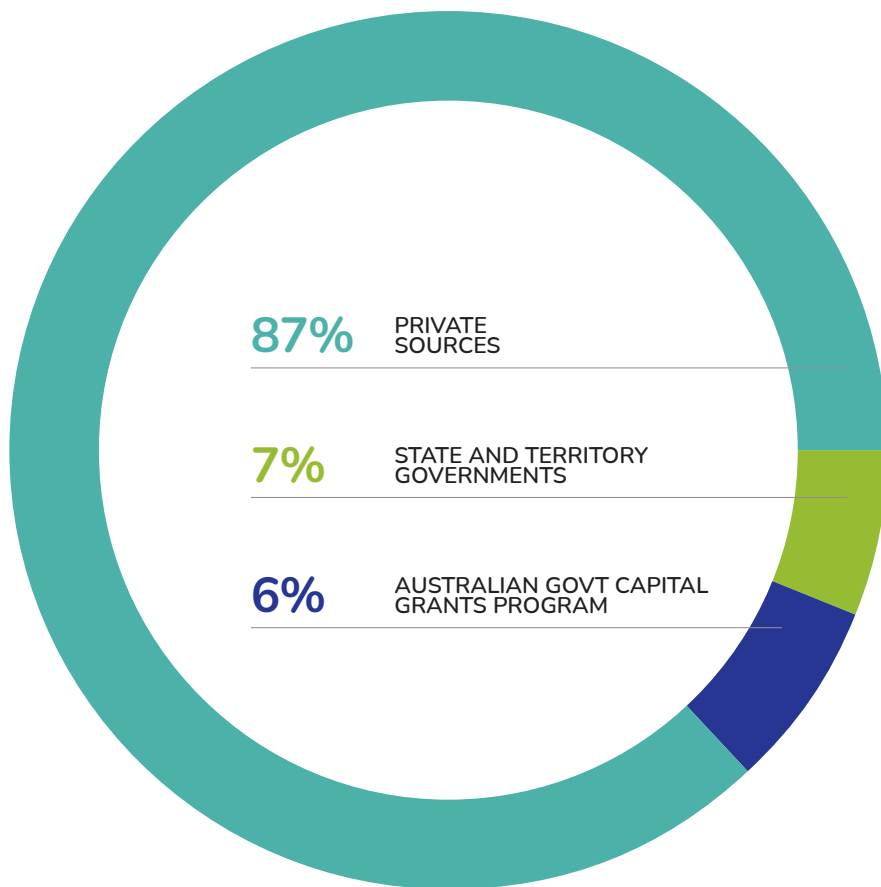
48%

ALL GOVERNMENT SOURCES

Parents and communities contributed \$9.6 billion (recurrent and capital) to Independent schools in 2022.

## MAIN SOURCES OF CAPITAL FUNDING

On average, parents and school communities provide 87 per cent of capital funding. The amount of capital funding from private sources in 2022 was \$1.23 billion.



**\$1.23 BILLION** 87%

**PRIVATE SOURCES**  
PARENTS AND DONORS

Most capital funding is sourced through borrowing, fund raising, levies on parents or school reserves.

**\$100 MILLION** 7%

**STATE AND TERRITORY GOVERNMENTS**

State and territory government assistance for capital funding is limited. Some states and territory governments provide capital grants and several also provide interest subsidy arrangements.

**\$79 MILLION** 6%

**AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT CAPITAL GRANTS PROGRAM**

Australian Government grants are distributed to Independent schools on a needs basis through Block Grant Authorities, with priority given to disadvantaged school communities with the least capacity to raise funds.

It is estimated that grants for the Independent sector in 2023 will total approximately \$89 million.



# SCHOOL TEACHERS

Independent schools employ more than 19.6 per cent of all teachers in Australian schools. The ratio of student to teachers in Independent schools is the lowest of the school sectors.



19.6%

TEACHERS EMPLOYED BY INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

## TEACHERS IN THE INDEPENDENT SECTOR BY GENDER AND LEVEL (FTE) 2023

	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
PRIMARY TEACHERS	4,356	17,434	21,790		
PER CENT	20.0%	80.0%	100%		
SECONDARY TEACHERS	16,067	23,144	39,211		
PER CENT	41.0%	59.0%	100%		

61,001

NUMBER OF TEACHERS FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT

69,503

NUMBER OF TEACHERS HEAD COUNT

121,941

NUMBER OF TEACHING AND NON-TEACHING STAFF

## STUDENT TO TEACHER RATIOS

CHANGE 1980 – 2023

INDEPENDENT CATHOLIC SCHOOLS ARE INCLUDED WITH CATHOLIC SCHOOLS.

	GOVERNMENT		NON-GOVERNMENT			
	PRIMARY	SECONDARY	PRIMARY	CATHOLIC SECONDARY	PRIMARY	INDEPENDENT SECONDARY
1980	20.2	12.2	23.9	16.6	17.3	13.3
2000	17.1	12.6	19.1	13.4	15.7	11.4
2020	14.8	12.6	15.5	12.2	13.9	10.5
2023	14.2	12.3	15.1	12.0	14.0	10.4

SOURCES: FIGURES IN SNAPSHOT ARE DERIVED FROM DATA PROVIDED BY THE AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS, THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, THE PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION AND THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM, ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING AUTHORITY. SOME FIGURES MAY NOT ADD DUE TO ROUNDING. FUNDING FIGURES IN THE SNAPSHOT USE THE LATEST AVAILABLE FINANCIAL DATA WHICH IS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2021–22, OR FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2022. UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED, STUDENT ENROLMENT FIGURES ARE FULL TIME EQUIVALENT.



## STUDENT TO TEACHER RATIOS (AVERAGE)

INDEPENDENT	11.8 TO 1
CATHOLIC	13.4 TO 1
GOVERNMENT	13.4 TO 1

