

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS IN NEW SOUTH WALES SNAPSHOT

The New South Wales Independent school sector is a diverse and growing group of non-government schools. This is a snapshot of the key characteristics of the NSW Independent school 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.

2024 EDITION

LATEST AVAILABLE FACTS AND FIGURES

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL SECTOR

BROAD CHOICE FOR PARENTS

STRONG COMMUNITY LINKS

DIVERSITY OF SCHOOL TYPE,
SIZE AND FOCUS

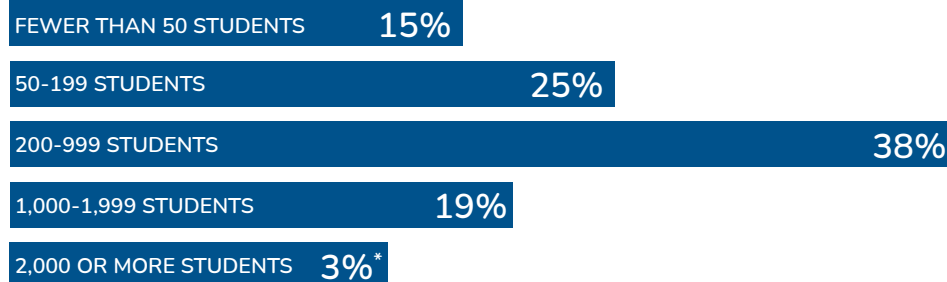
AUTONOMOUS GOVERNANCE
ARRANGEMENTS

COMPREHENSIVE ACCOUNTABILITY

SCHOOL METRICS

In 2023, there were 426 Independent schools across 563 campuses in NSW of which 53 offered boarding services. Most Independent schools in NSW are co-educational.

SIZE OF NSW INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS



* OR 12 SCHOOLS.

NUMBER OF NSW INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

PRIMARY	77	18%
SECONDARY	33	8%
COMBINED	252	59%
SAS/SPECIAL SCHOOLS	64	15%
TOTAL	426	100%

TYPE OF NSW INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

BOYS' SCHOOLS	24	6%
GIRLS' SCHOOLS	31	7%
CO-EDUCATIONAL SCHOOLS	367	87%



426 SCHOOLS
+137 CAMPUSES

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS IN NSW



556

AVERAGE NUMBER
OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN A
NSW INDEPENDENT SCHOOL



365

AVERAGE NUMBER OF
STUDENTS ENROLLED IN A
NSW GOVERNMENT SCHOOL

SCHOOL PROFILE

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

AFFILIATIONS OF NSW INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS BY NUMBER OF ENROLMENTS

2023

AFFILIATION	SCHOOLS	STUDENT FTE	%
ANGLICAN	60	60,571	25.6%
INDEPENDENT CATHOLIC	50	40,136	16.9%
NON-DENOMINATIONAL	77	32,700	13.8%
CHRISTIAN	54	23,945	10.1%
ISLAMIC	25	21,442	9.1%
UNITING CHURCH	8	12,219	5.2%
SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST	17	7,619	3.2%
INTER-DENOMINATIONAL	7	5,902	2.5%
PRESBYTERIAN	6	5,147	2.2%
BAPTIST	12	4,156	1.8%
STEINER	21	4,006	1.7%
JEWISH	5	3,391	1.4%
PENTECOSTAL	6	3,046	1.3%
GREEK ORTHODOX	3	1,984	0.8%
OTHER ORTHODOX	5	1,704	0.7%
MONTESSORI	16	1,021	0.4%
BRETHREN	12	1,009	0.4%
LUTHERAN	4	857	0.4%
OTHER RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION*	6	2,169	0.9%
OTHER**	32	3,889	1.6%

* OTHER RELIGIOUS AFFILIATIONS INCLUDE ANANDA MARGA AND HARE KRISHNA.

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

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 10 per cent of Independent schools in NSW operate within approved system authorities. These include the Anglican, Seventh Day Adventist or Lutheran Systems.

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



83%

NSW INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS WITH A RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION



NSW SCHOOL LOCATIONS



69%

MAJOR CITIES



30%

REGIONAL



<1%

REMOTE

STUDENT ENROLMENTS

The rate of enrolment of the Independent school sector has been increasing. In 2023, enrolments in NSW Independent schools grew by 3.6 per cent, outpacing overall student population growth of 0.6 per cent.

GOVERNMENT	CATHOLIC	INDEPENDENT
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NSW ENROLMENTS BY SCHOOL SECTOR AND LEVEL 2023

LEVEL	GOVERNMENT	CATHOLIC	INDEPENDENT
TOTAL ENROLMENTS	62.8%	18.2%	19.0%
PRIMARY	67.9%	18.3%	13.8%
JUNIOR SECONDARY	57.0%	18.1%	24.9%
SENIOR SECONDARY – YEAR 11	56.7%	17.7%	25.6%
SENIOR SECONDARY – YEAR 12	54.1%	18.5%	27.4%

PERCENTAGE SHARE %

NSW ENROLMENT CHANGE OVER TIME BY SCHOOL SECTOR 2000–2023

YEAR	GOVERNMENT	CATHOLIC	INDEPENDENT
2000	69.5%	17.4%	13.1%
2005	66.9%	18.2%	14.9%
2010	66.2%	18.2%	15.6%
2015	65.3%	18.5%	16.2%
2020	65.2%	17.6%	17.2%
2023	62.8%	18.2%	19.0%

PERCENTAGE SHARE %

TOTAL ADDITIONAL ENROLMENTS BY NSW SCHOOL SECTOR 2000–2023

GOVERNMENT	24,011
CATHOLIC	36,082
INDEPENDENT	93,025

ENROLMENTS IN NSW INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS 2023

	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
PRIMARY	49,142	47,670	96,812
SECONDARY	70,871	69,230	140,101
TOTAL	120,013	116,900	236,913

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY IN NSW INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS (est.)* 2023

SUPPORT PROVIDED WITHIN A QUALITY DIFFERENTIATED TEACHING PRACTICE	2023
SUPPORTIVE	19,100
SUPPLEMENTARY	18,800
SUBSTANTIAL	5,800
EXTENSIVE	3,200

*MORE INFORMATION ON THE LEVELS OF ADJUSTMENT FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY ARE AVAILABLE AT WWW.NCCD.EDU.AU



3.6%

MAJOR CITIES 4.3% REGIONAL 1.7%

GROWTH IN ENROLMENTS IN NSW INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS



236,913

TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN NSW INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS



5,894

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STUDENTS



950

OVERSEAS STUDENTS



5,241

BOARDING STUDENTS



46,900

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY (est.)

SOURCES OF INCOME

Families and other private sources provide most of the recurrent income for Independent schools. This reduces the amount governments need to spend to educate NSW students by \$2.6 billion a year.



\$2.6 BILLION
PER ANNUM

SAVINGS TO GOVERNMENT FROM
NSW INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS



\$5,785

MEDIAN ANNUAL TUITION FEE
2022

GOVERNMENT FUNDING OF NSW 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, providing 76 per cent of total government recurrent funding while the NSW Government provides 24 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 IN NSW \$ BILLION FY 2021–22

GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS



AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT NSW GOVERNMENT PRIVATE INCOME (Parents, etc)

FUNDING MODEL

The current funding model for schools, the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS), comprises base funding plus loadings to address educational disadvantage. Governments reduce the base funding paid to Independent schools 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

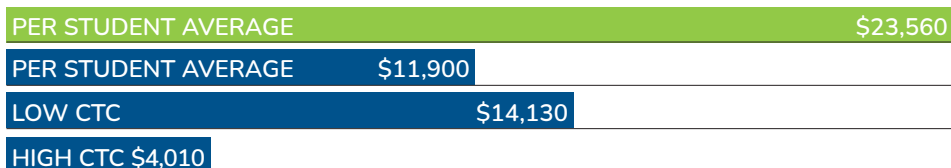
AVERAGE GOVERNMENT RECURRENT FUNDING PER NSW STUDENT

FY 2021–22



AVERAGE GOVERNMENT RECURRENT FUNDING PER NSW STUDENT COMPARISON

FY 2021–22



NSW GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS NSW INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

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

SOURCES OF INCOME

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

Parents and communities contributed \$3.6 billion (recurrent and capital) to NSW Independent schools.



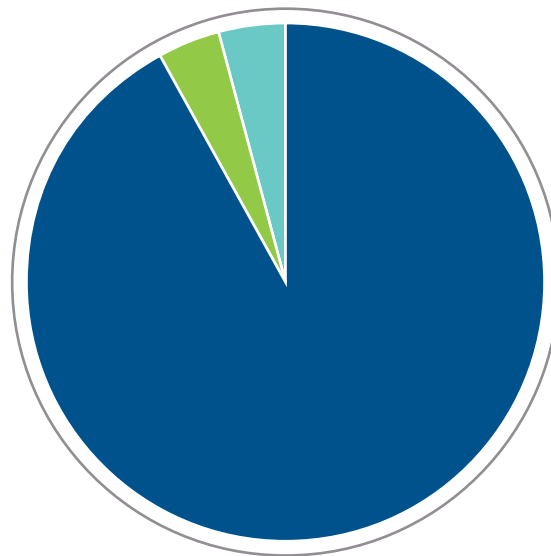
**PRIVATE SOURCES
OF FUNDING**



**ALL GOVERNMENT
SOURCES**

MAIN SOURCES OF CAPITAL INCOME

On average, parents and communities provide 92 per cent of capital funding for NSW Independent schools. The amount of capital funding in NSW Independent schools from private sources in 2022 was \$472 million.



92%

PRIVATE SOURCES PARENTS AND DONORS

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

4%

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT CAPITAL GRANTS PROGRAM FOR NSW

In 2022 the Australian Government provided \$22.9 million in capital grants to NSW Independent schools. In 2023 it is estimated that new capital grants for the NSW Independent sector will total approximately \$26.7 million.

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

4%

NSW STATE CAPITAL FUNDING

In 2022 the NSW Government provided \$18.6 million in capital grants to NSW Independent schools.

SCHOOL TEACHERS

Independent schools employ more than 19.6 per cent of all teachers in Australian schools. **NSW Independent schools employ more than 22 per cent of all teachers in NSW schools.**



22%

NSW TEACHERS EMPLOYED BY INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

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

	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
PRIMARY TEACHERS	1,371	5,505	6,876		
PER CENT %	19.9%	80.1%	100%		
SECONDARY TEACHERS	5,410	8,117	13,527		
PER CENT %	40.0%	60.0%	100%		

20,403

NUMBER OF TEACHERS FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT

22,982

NUMBER OF TEACHERS HEAD COUNT

38,029

NUMBER OF TEACHING AND NON-TEACHING STAFF

NSW STUDENT TO TEACHER RATIOS

CHANGE 2000 – 2023

	GOVERNMENT		NON-GOVERNMENT			
	PRIMARY	SECONDARY	CATHOLIC PRIMARY	CATHOLIC SECONDARY	INDEPENDENT PRIMARY	INDEPENDENT SECONDARY
2000	17.7	12.6	19.6	13.5	16.1	10.8
2005	16.7	12.4	18.4	13.0	14.9	10.2
2010	15.7	12.5	18.3	13.1	14.4	10.3
2015	15.8	12.5	17.9	13.0	14.0	10.2
2020	16.0	13.4	16.1	12.2	14.1	10.0
2023	14.9	13.2	15.8	12.1	14.1	10.0



STUDENT TO TEACHER RATIOS (AVERAGE)

	2023
INDEPENDENT	11.6 TO 1
CATHOLIC	13.7 TO 1
GOVERNMENT	14.1 TO 1

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.

PRODUCED BY INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS AUSTRALIA.

ENROLMENT FIGURES INCLUDE SOME FOR-PROFIT INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS, WHICH ARE NOT CURRENTLY INCLUDED IN VARIOUS DATASETS DUE TO THE DATA COLLECTION METHOD.



The Association of independent schools of New South Wales