

## Independent schools in Australia

Characteristics of the sector include:

- a significant and growing share of the number of Australian students
- schools that have strong community links
- a diversity of schools in terms of type, size and focus, educating boys and girls, students with special needs, and overseas students
- sound autonomous governance arrangements
- a comprehensive range of accountabilities of schools to parents and other stakeholders
- giving parents choice by providing a wide range of educational programmes and settings
- independent schools are not for profit organisations.

### Size of independent sector

Number of schools		School type	
Primary	259 25%	Boys' schools	6%
Secondary	84 8%	Girls' schools	8%
Combined	625 61%	Coeducational schools	87%
Special schools	54 5%		
<b>Total</b>	<b>1022 100%</b>	Boarding schools	154

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data does not categorise independent Catholic schools as independent. These schools are a significant part of the independent sector and when included there were a total of 1,096 schools and 538,406 full time equivalent students in 2009.

### Make-up of independent schools

Unlike other sectors, the majority of independent schools operate autonomously. These schools do not rely on central bureaucracies or bodies, and are separately accountable to their parent and school communities. Some independent schools with common philosophies operate within approved systems. These include Anglican, Lutheran and Seventh-Day Adventist systems. There are also some other groupings of independent schools. All independent schools comply with state and federal education regulations and standards.

### Location of independent schools

Metropolitan: 69%	Provincial: 28%	Remote: 3%
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### School size

- 14% of schools have less than 50 students
- 40% of schools have less than 200 students
- 43% of schools have 200–1000 students
- 16% of schools have 1000–2000 students
- 1% or 12 schools have more than 2000 students
- the average size of independent schools is about 475 students
- the average size of government schools is about 335 students

### Affiliations of independent schools

84% of all independent schools have a religious affiliation

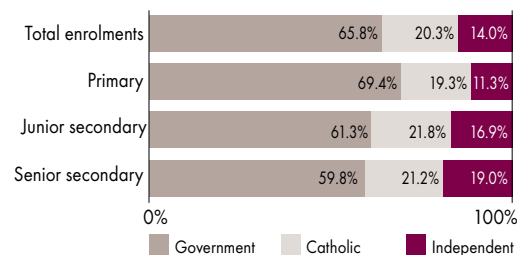
Affiliation	Schools	Student FTE	%
Anglican	156	135,893	25.2%
Non-Denominational	192	72,231	13.4%
Christian Schools	134	53,392	9.9%
Catholic	66	50,444	9.4%
Uniting Church in Australia	42	48,705	9.0%
Lutheran	85	35,501	6.6%
Islamic	32	18,507	3.4%
Inter-Denominational	26	18,380	3.4%
Baptist	40	16,808	3.1%
Seventh-Day Adventist	49	10,823	2.0%
Presbyterian	14	9,792	1.8%
Jewish	19	9,015	1.7%
Steiner School	43	7,810	1.5%
Pentecostal	18	6,940	1.3%
Assemblies of God	10	6,193	1.2%
Brethren	8	4,241	0.8%
Greek Orthodox	8	3,956	0.7%
Montessori School	38	3,768	0.7%
Other Catholic	8	3,469	0.6%
Other Orthodox	6	2,157	0.4%
Other Religious Affiliation*	11	4,945	0.9%
Other**	91	15,433	2.9%

\*Other Religious includes Churches of Christ, Ananda Marga, Hare Krishna and Society of Friends.

\*\*Other includes special schools, international schools, Indigenous schools and community schools.

## Student enrolments

### School enrolments by sector and level, 2009

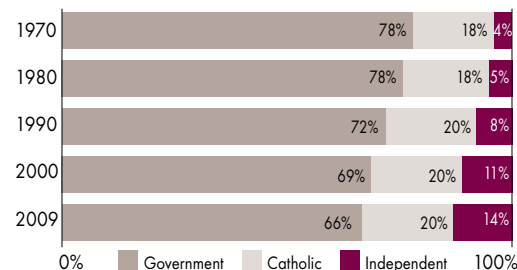


### Enrolments in independent schools, 2009

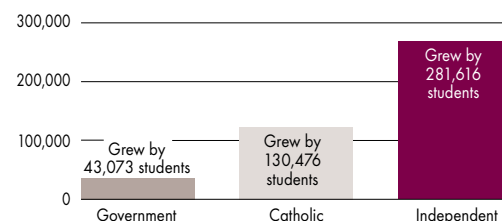
	Male	Female	Total
Primary	112,014	111,041	223,055
Secondary	129,402	130,873	260,275
<b>Total</b>	<b>241,416</b>	<b>241,914</b>	<b>483,330</b>

Indigenous students in independent schools	8,652
Students with disabilities in independent schools	11,191
Overseas students in independent schools	10,124
Boarding students in independent schools	17,097

### Enrolment change by sector, 1970–2009



### Growth in enrolment share, 1985–2009



## Independent school teachers

Independent schools employ about 16% of all teachers in Australian schools.

Total number (full-time and part-time)	46,517
FTE (full-time equivalent)	39,823

### Teachers in independent schools by gender and level (FTE) 2009

	Primary	%	Secondary	%
Male	3,478	23	11,075	45
Female	11,653	77	13,618	55
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,130</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>24,692</b>	<b>100</b>

### Student-teacher ratios, 1973–2009

Year	Government		Non-government	
	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary
1973	25.1	16.2	29.6	22.2
1980	20.2	12.2	23.9	16.6
1990	17.9	12.0	21.1	14.0
2000	17.1	12.4	19.1	13.4
2009	15.5	12.3	17.6	12.8

Sources: Figures in *Snapshot* are derived from data provided by the ABS, the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) and the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA). Depending on the availability of data, enrolment figures are either full time or full-time equivalent (FTE). Some figures include independent Catholic schools and overseas students. Some figures may not add due to rounding.

### Sources of income for independent schools

Private sources of funding (mainly parents)	59%
All government sources	41%

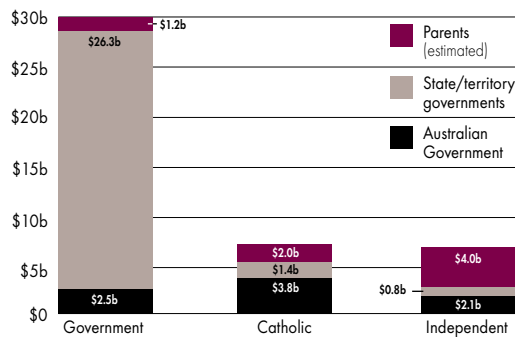
The proportions of private/government funding vary greatly from school to school.

Estimated savings to governments from the independent schools sector	\$3.1 billion pa
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### Public funding of independent schools

All state and territory governments and the Australian Government share responsibility for the public funding of schools in Australia. State and territory governments are the principal public funding sources for government schools, while the Australian Government is the main public funding source for non-government schools.

### Recurrent funding for school education 2007-08



### Average government recurrent funding per student 2007-08

Government schools	\$12,639
Non-government schools	\$6,607
Independent schools	\$6,076

### State and territory government funding

Overall, state and territory governments provide 27% of total government recurrent funding for independent schools. However the levels of funding for schools and methods used to assess them vary among the states and territories.

### Australian Government recurrent funding 2009-12

Legislation authorising the Australian Government to maintain the SES funding model for non-government schools over the 2009-12 quadrennium passed Federal Parliament in 2008. Most of the funding is in the form of general recurrent grants.

It also includes funding for capital grants and existing targeted programs, including literacy, numeracy and special learning needs, languages education, ESL new arrivals, country areas and short-term emergency assistance.

### Australian Government general recurrent grants

The Average Government School Recurrent Costs (AGSRC) index is used to determine the level of Australian Government recurrent grants for non-government schools. The changes in the recurrent costs of educating a student in a government school, as measured by the AGSRC, are the basis for annual increases in Australian Government funding for both government and non-government schools.

### AGSRC amounts for 2009

Primary	\$8,380 (4.2% increase from 2008)
Secondary	\$10,646 (5.8% increase from 2008)

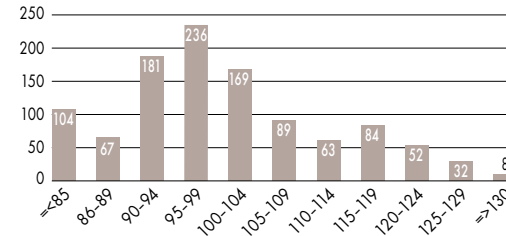
### Needs-based funding

The Socio-Economic Status (SES) funding scheme for Australian Government funding measures the relative socio-economic status of independent school communities. A score is derived for each school which places it on a sliding scale of funding entitlement. SES scores range from 63 to over 130.

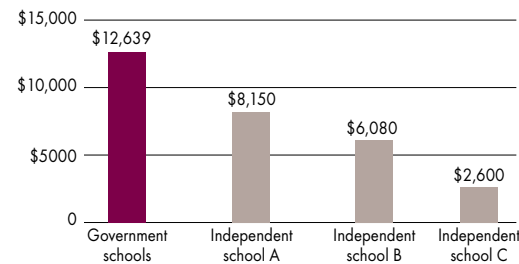
- Schools with SES scores of 85 and below receive 70% of the AGSRC amount.
- Schools with SES scores of 130 and above receive 13.7% of the AGSRC amount.

The amount of funding received from all government sources varies significantly depending on the circumstances of the school.

### Number of schools within each SES score range 2009



### Total government funding per student 2007-08 (all government sources)

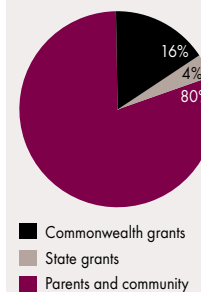


### Capital funding

#### Parents and donors

On average, parents and donors in independent school communities contribute 80% of funds for capital developments, such as school buildings, grounds and equipment.

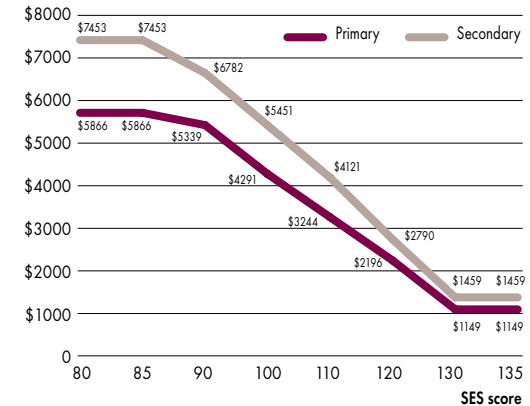
#### Sources of funding for capital development



#### Australian Government capital grants allocations 2007-08

All schools	\$436m
Government schools	\$310m 71%
Non-government schools	\$127m 29%
Estimated independent school share	\$50m 11%

### Sliding scale of funding entitlement per student according to SES score



**Note:** Funding figures in Snapshot use the latest available data which is for the financial year 2007-08 or for the calendar year 2008. For more information visit: [www.isca.edu.au](http://www.isca.edu.au)

Independent committees called Block Grant Authorities in each state and territory administer capital grants for non-government schools on behalf of the Australian Government.

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

In 2008, 65 per cent of total capital funding available to independent schools went to schools with an SES score of 100 or less, and 88 per cent of grants went to schools with an SES score of 110 or less.

### State and territory government assistance

In Queensland some capital grants for independent schools are provided by the state government. Several state and territory governments also provide interest subsidy arrangements.