

# Domestic Boarding Student Enrolments, 2011-2021

## Key Points

In 2021, there were 69 more boarding students attending independent schools than in 2020 (3,493 boarding students compared to 3,429 students in 2020). This equates to 2.0% growth. This was the second time that growth was recorded since 2015, when Year 7 transferred to secondary. Conversely, enrolments in Catholic schools decreased from 2020 to 2021 by 5.2% (-105 students).

In the past decade, domestic students enrolled as boarding students in Queensland non-government schools has decreased by 10.1% or 608 students; having decreased from 6,015 students in 2011 to 5,407 students in 2021. Reductions were experienced in this timeframe in both independent and Catholic schools. Enrolments decreased by 232 students in Catholic schools (10.8% reduction), while enrolments in independent schools reduced by 376 students (9.7% reduction).

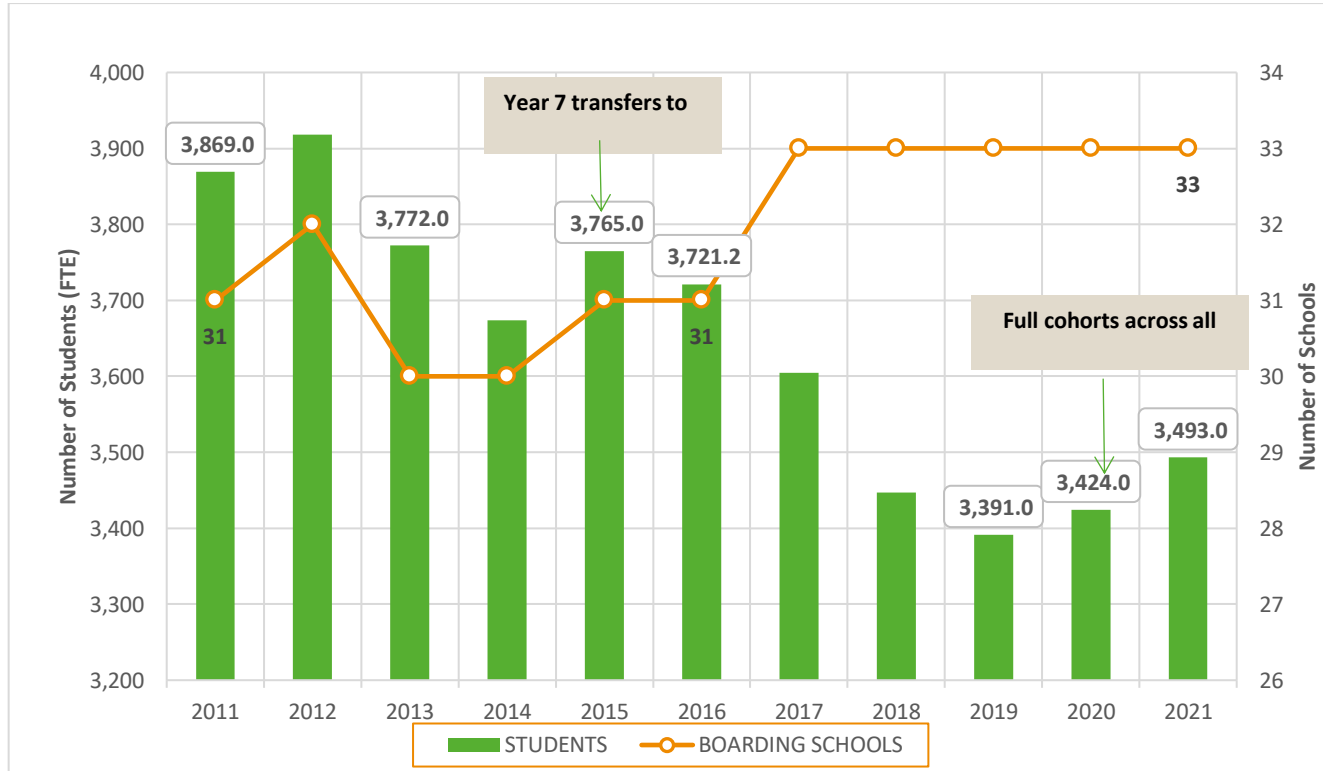
While growth occurred in independent boarding school enrolments from 2020 to 2021, boarding student enrolments increased in co-educational schools only, while male-only schools and female-only schools evidenced decline. This contrasts with an overarching pattern of decline in co-educational boarding student enrolments and modest growth in male-only boarding student enrolments over the past decade.

## Enrolments

In 2021, the independent schooling sector catered for 3,493.0 full-time equivalent (FTE) boarding student enrolments, an increase of 69.0 FTE boarders from 3,424.0 boarding student enrolments in 2020. This represents a 2.0% increase in enrolments in the past year (refer Figure 1 and Table 1). This is the second time since 2015 that boarding student enrolments have increased. The 2015 growth corresponded to the transfer of Year 7 to secondary, while growth in 2020 corresponded to full-year level cohorts being achieved across all year levels in Queensland schools for the first time since the 2007 change to the school starting age.

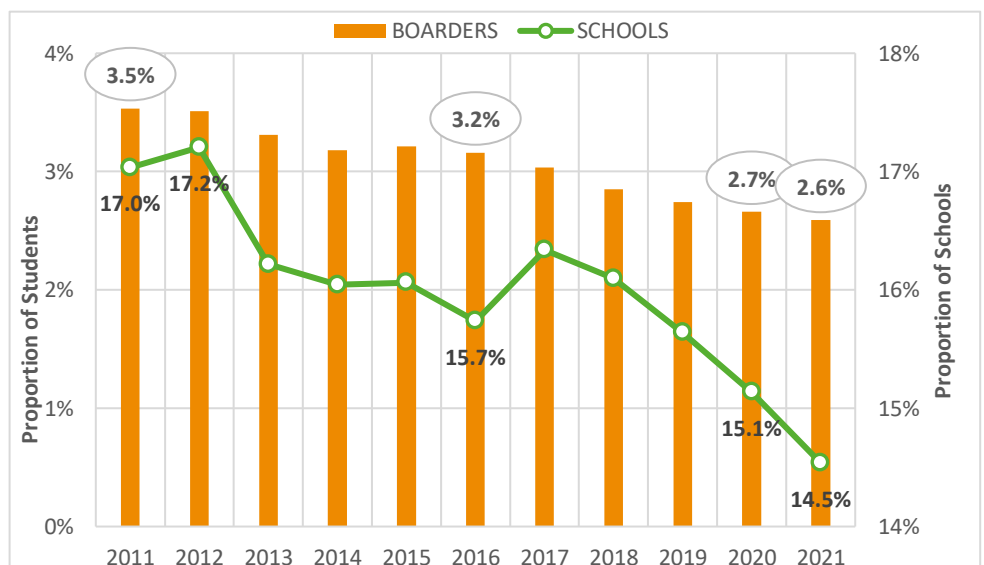
Boarding students in 2021 were catered for by 33 independent schools, the same number of boarding schools that enrolled domestic boarders in the previous four years. In preceding years, from 2011 to 2016 the number of independent schools catering for boarding students ranged from 30 to 32, in a period where, while boarding enrolments were decreasing, they were higher than evidenced in recent years (refer Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Boarding Student Enrolments & Number of Schools Attended, 2011-2021**



In 2021, domestic boarding student enrolments represented 2.6% of all FTE enrolments at independent schools, a slightly lower proportion than 2.7% recorded in 2020 (refer Figure 2). Five years earlier, in 2016, boarding student enrolments represented 3.2% of all FTE enrolments at independent schools, while in 2011 boarding student enrolments represented 3.5% of FTE enrolments.

**Figure 2: Boarding Student & Boarding School Share of Independent School Enrolments & Schools, 2011-2021**



Similarly, over the past 10 years, the proportion of independent schools that have enrolled boarding students has reduced. In 2011, 17.0% of independent schools enrolled boarding students. This decreased to 14.5% of independent schools in 2021 enrolling boarding students.

## Year Level Structure

Most boarding students are enrolled in secondary year levels, with 98.9% of boarding students in 2021 (3,456 boarders) enrolled in secondary years (refer Table 1 below).

Only 37 students were enrolled as boarders in primary year levels, with 30 of these 37 students enrolled in Year 6 (representing 81% of primary boarders). Ten years earlier, in 2011, Year 6 enrolments were in the order of 42 students and have subsequently reduced slightly over time, within a context of modest fluctuations.

In 2021, there were 442 boarding students enrolled in Year 7, an increase from 428 Year 7 boarding students enrolled in 2020. Highest enrolment levels were in Year 11 with 679 boarding students followed by 656 Year 10 boarding students and 633 boarding students in Year 12 (refer Table 1). Year 12 boarding students in 2021 were higher than in 2019 and 2020, but significantly lower than levels recorded for the entire 2011-2018 period.

**Table 1: Independent Boarding Students by Grade, 2011-2021**

Year	Prep	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Ung.	Total	Primary	Secondary
2011	0	0	0	0	5	10	42	194	621	636	785	804	772	0	3,869	251	3,618
2012	0	0	0	1	4	10	43	229	587	684	763	824	773	0	3,918	287	3,631
2013	0	0	0	0	2	14	42	195	595	617	758	785	714	0	3,722	253	3,469
2014	0	0	1	0	3	12	47	166	526	635	715	853	716	0	3,674	229	3,445
2015	0	0	0	1	3	14	49	443	392	577	708	796	782	0	3,765	67	3,698
2016	0	0	0	0	5	8	40	419	545	480	679	782	762	1	3,721	53	3,668
2017	0	0	0	2	4	7	42	457	481	570	560	745	737	0	3,605	55	3,550
2018	0	0	0	1	2	6	46	433	515	538	632	596	678	0	3,447	55	3,392
2019	0	0	1	0	1	6	32	459	458	577	631	671	555	0	3,391	40	3,351
2020	0	0	0	1	1	5	38	428	505	528	636	680	602	0	3,424	45	3,379
2021	0	0	0	0	1	6	30	442	474	572	656	679	633	0	3,493	37	3,456

## Trends in Progression

Progression identifies the extent of movement of students into and out of individual year levels. They reflect a comparison of the number of students in one year level to the number of students that were in the year level that was one year level lower in the preceding year (e.g. a comparison of Year 8 in 2021 to the number of students in Year 7 in 2020). In the case of boarding students, these progression levels provide an indication of the size of the market that exists for independent schools annually.

Since Year 7 became the first year of secondary in 2015, the highest progression of students into boarding occurs from Year 6 to Year 7. In 2021, there were 404 more boarding students in Year 7 than had been enrolled in boarding in Year 6 in the previous year (refer Table 2).

**Table 2: Boarding Students, Apparent Progression by Grade, 2011-2012 to 2020-2021**

Period	Apparent Progression (Number)												Apparent Progression Rate (%)	
	P-Y1	Y1-2	Y2-3	Y3-4	Y4-5	Y5-6	Y6-7	Y7-8	Y8-9	Y9-10	Y10-11	Y11-12	Y10-11	Y11-12
2011-12	0	0	1	4	5	33	187	393	63	127	39	-31	105%	96%
2012-13	0	0	0	1	10	32	152	366	30	74	22	-110	103%	87%
2013-14	0	1	0	3	10	33	124	331	40	98	95	-69	113%	91%
2014-15	0	0	0	3	11	37	396	226	51	73	81	-71	111%	92%
2015-16	0	0	0	4	5	26	370	102	88	102	74	-34	110%	96%
2016-17	0	0	2	4	2	34	417	62	25	80	66	-45	110%	94%
2017-18	0	0	1	0	2	39	391	58	57	62	36	-67	106%	91%
2018-19	0	1	0	0	4	26	413	25	62	93	39	-41	106%	93%
2019-20	0	0	0	1	4	32	396	46	70	59	49	-69	108%	90%
2020-21	0	0	0	0	5	25	404	46	67	128	43	-47	107%	93%

In the past two years, from 2019 to 2020 and from 2020 to 2021, an additional 46 Year 8 students were gained. This is nearly double the number of students that entered Year 8 in the period from 2018 to 2019, but is the second lowest number of students that entered Year 8 since 2014-2015 when Year 8 became the second year of secondary.

The number of students entering Year 9 as boarders has trended upwards for the past four years with 67 more students in Year 9 in 2021 than were in Year 8 in 2020 (refer Table 2). This net gain was slightly higher than the net gain of 62 students into Year 9 in 2019 and slightly higher than the net gain of 57 Year 9 students in 2018. This compares to only an additional 25 students entering Year 9 in 2017.

In 2021, there were 128 more students in Year 10 than were in Year 9 in 2020 (refer Table 2). This is the highest number of Year 10 entering boarding schools in the past 10 years, with the second highest number of Year 10 students entering boarding schools in 2012, with 127 more boarders in Year 10 than were in Year 9 in 2011. The lowest number of Year 10 boarding students entered boarding schools in 2020, with only 59 more boarders in Year 10 in 2020 than were in Year 9 in 2019.

In the past year, the Year 10 to 11 progression rate was in the order of 107%, reflecting 43 more students attending boarding schools in 2021 than there were Year 10 students in 2020 (refer Table 2). This was slightly higher than rates of 106% evidenced from 2017 to 2018 and from 2018 to 2019, but slightly lower than 108% evidenced from 2019 to 2020. These rates are all significantly lower than the 10-11% net gains in previous years from 2013 to 2017.

Year 11 to Year 12 progression is the only transition where boarding students are lost from boarding schools, indicated by progression rates of less than 100%. From 2020 to 2021, 93% of Year 11 students progressed to Year 12, representing a net loss of 47 boarding students. This progression rate is the fourth highest progression rate that has occurred from Year 11 to Year 12 in the past 10 years. In that period, the lowest progression from Year 11 to Year 12 occurred from 2012 to 2013, when only 87% of Year 11 students progressed to Year 12. The highest progression rates from Year 11 to 12 occurred in 2012 and 2016, when Year 12 represented 96% of the previous year's Year 11 students.

## Size of Boarding Schools

Of the 33 schools catering for boarding students in 2021, three schools catered for more than 250 boarding students and a further three schools catered for more than 150 to 250 boarding students (refer Table 3). These six schools catered for 41.9% of boarding student enrolments at independent schools. A further 51.5% of boarding students attended 17 schools where total boarding student enrolments ranged from more than 50 students to 150 students. The balance of boarding students, 6.6%, attended 10 schools where boarding student enrolments totalled 50 or fewer students.

**Table 3: Size of Boarding Student Enrolments, 2021**

Boarding Enrolment Range	Number of Schools	Percentage of Boarding Schools	Percentage of Boarding Students
>0-10	3	9.1%	0.7%
>10-25	3	9.1%	1.5%
>25-50	4	12.1%	4.4%
>50-100	6	18.2%	12.7%
>100-150	11	33.3%	38.8%
>150-250	3	9.1%	16.2%
>250	3	9.1%	25.7%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Table 4: Boarding Student Enrolments as a Percentage of Each Schools' Total Enrolments, 2021**

Boarders as Percentage of Total Enrolment	Number of Schools	Percentage of Boarding Students
>0%-2.5%	4	1.5%
>2.5%-5%	3	3.4%
>5%-10%	10	23.9%
>10%-20	6	26.1%
>20%	10	45.0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

The vast majority of boarding students attend schools where boarding students represent more than 5% of the school's total enrolments (95% of boarding students attending 26 schools).

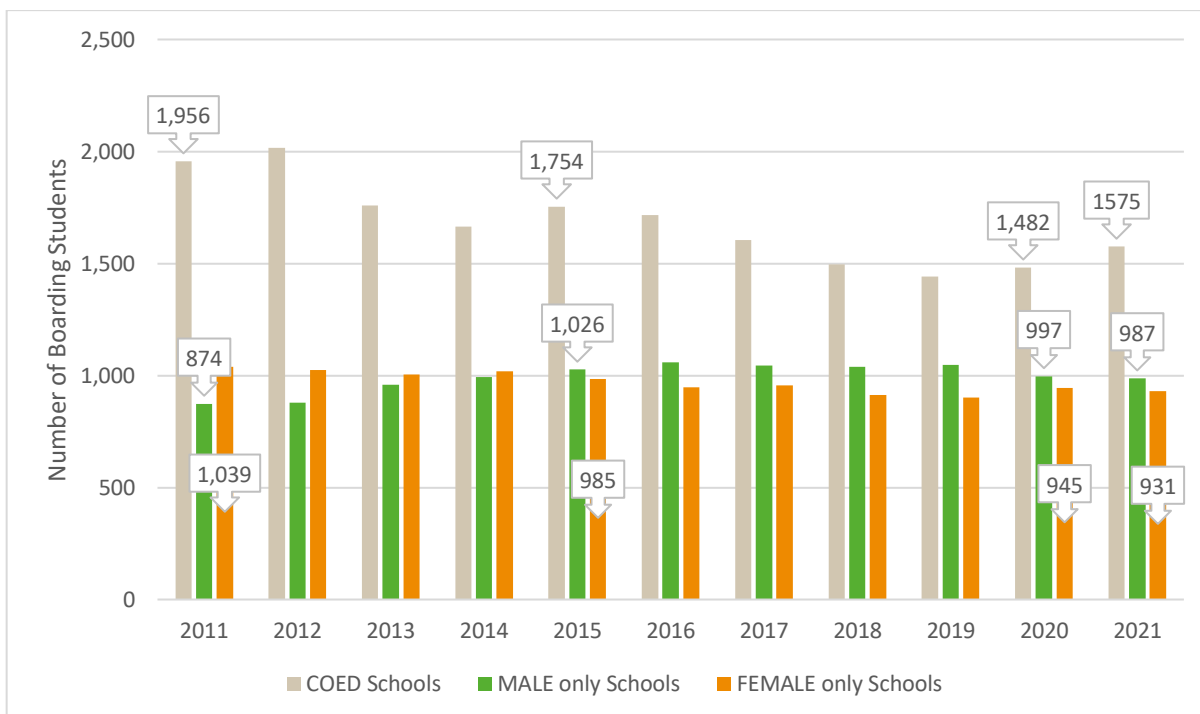
Boarding students in 2021 represented more than 20% of the schools' total student body in 10 schools, with another six schools having >10-20% of total enrolments as boarding students (refer Table 4). Approximately 45% of boarding students attended schools where the boarding school component represented more than 20% of the student body. Another 26% of boarders attended schools where the boarding school component represented >10-20% of the student body.

## Gender

In 2021, 1,575 boarders attended 18 schools offering co-educational schooling while 987 boarders attended six schools catering for only male boarders and 931 boarders attended nine schools catering for only female students. This distribution of boarding school types has been relatively unchanged over the past 10 years, when there were eight female-only schools, six male-only schools and 17 co-educational boarding schools in 2011.

As indicated by a comparison between Figure 1 2 and Figure 3 below, the majority of the decline in boarding school students in independent schools over the 2011 to 2021 period has occurred at co-educational boarding schools. While overall boarding student numbers decreased by 10.8% in the 10-year period, with a decline of 376 boarding students, co-educational boarding student enrolments decreased by 24.1% (-381 students), while female-only boarding student numbers also decreased, however by 11.6% over the timeframe (-108 students). In contrast, boarders in male-only schools increased by 11.6% (+113 students), offsetting some of the decline in other boarding school enrolments.

**Figure 3: Boarding Student Enrolments by School Type, 2011-2021**



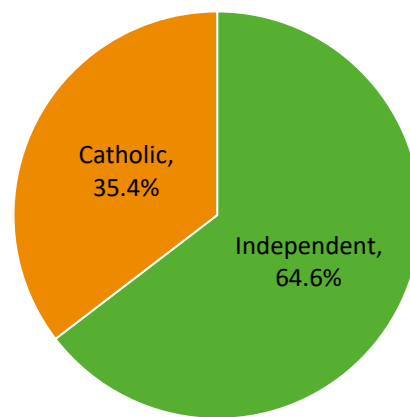
It is of interest to note that in the past year, from 2020 to 2021, the overarching pattern of decline in co-educational schools and growth in male-only boarding school enrolments has reversed. Boarding student enrolments in co-educational schools increased by 93 students, while boarding enrolments in male-only boarding schools decreased by 10 students.

## Non-Government Sector Comparison

**Figure 4: Distribution of Non-Government School Boarding Students by Sector, 2021**

Independent schools continue to be the main provider of schooling for boarding students in Queensland. In 2021, independent schools catered for 64.6% of boarding students. The balance of boarders (35.4%) attended Catholic schools (refer Figure 4).

In the previous year, 2020, independent school market share was lower, with 62.9% of boarding students attending non-government schools enrolled in independent schools. In the past decade, independent school market share has ranged from 62.9% in 2020 to a peak of 65.0% in 2016.



Enrolments in Catholic boarding schools decreased in the past year. In 2021, there were 1,914 boarding students attending Catholic schools, 105 fewer than in 2020 when 2,019 students were enrolled (refer Figure 5). This compares to the independent sector gaining 69 students in the same period.

**Figure 5: Boarding Students by Sector, 2011-2021**

