

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS IN QLD SNAPSHOT

2026 EDITION



Independent Schools
Queensland

choice & diversity

LATEST AVAILABLE FACTS AND FIGURES

The Queensland Independent school sector is a diverse and growing group of non-government schools. This snapshot provides an overview of the key characteristics of Independent schools, the students, the teaching and non-teaching staff, and how these schools are funded.

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

CHARACTERISTICS OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

- ✓ Choice for parents
- ✓ Strong community links
- ✓ Diversity of school type, size and focus
- ✓ Autonomous governance arrangements
- ✓ Comprehensive accountability

SCHOOL METRICS

In 2025, there were 238 Independent schools in QLD, including 31 boarding schools.



238

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS



160,056

TOTAL STUDENTS

TYPES OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

63% (151)

COMBINED

13% (31)

PRIMARY

9% (21)

SECONDARY

15% (35)

SPECIAL/SPECIAL ASSISTANCE SCHOOLS



LOCATION OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

61.3%

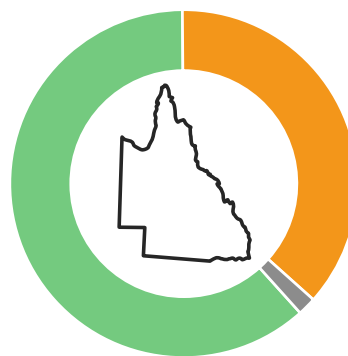
MAJOR CITIES

37.0%

REGIONAL

1.7%

REMOTE



STUDENT ENROLMENTS

The rate of growth in Independent schools has been increasing. In 2025, enrolments in QLD Independent schools grew at a rate of 3.8%, higher than government (-0.6%) and Catholic (+1.4%) schools.



QLD ENROLMENTS BY SCHOOL SECTOR AND LEVEL (%) 2025

	GOVERNMENT	CATHOLIC	INDEPENDENT
SECONDARY SCHOOL	58.2	19.6	22.2
PRIMARY SCHOOL	68.0	17.6	14.4
TOTAL ENROLMENTS	63.4	18.6	18.0

QLD INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS IN 2025:



7,747

ABORIGINAL and
TORRES STRAIT
ISLANDER
STUDENTS

QLD ENROLMENT CHANGE OVER TIME BY SCHOOL SECTOR (%)

	GOVERNMENT	CATHOLIC	INDEPENDENT
2000	71.5	16.1	12.4
2005	69.7	16.2	14.1
2010	67.1	18.1	14.8
2015	66.7	18.5	14.8
2020	66.9	17.9	15.2
2025	63.4	18.6	18.0

Shown as percentage of total enrolments.



1,648

OVERSEAS
STUDENTS

TOTAL NUMBER OF ADDITIONAL ENROLMENTS BY QLD SCHOOL SECTOR 2000-2025

INDEPENDENT	84,607
CATHOLIC	67,475
GOVERNMENT	130,992



3,826

BOARDING
STUDENTS

ENROLMENTS BY GENDER AND LEVEL QLD INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS 2025

	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
PRIMARY	34,088	34,691	68,779
SECONDARY	45,022	46,255	91,277
TOTAL	79,110	80,946	160,056



35,400

STUDENTS WITH
DISABILITY
(ESTIMATED)

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY (EST.) QLD INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS* 2025

SUPPORT PROVIDED WITHIN A QUALITY DIFFERENTIATED TEACHING PRACTICE	9,000
SUPPLEMENTARY	17,100
SUBSTANTIAL	8,100
EXTENSIVE	1,200

* More information on the levels of adjustment for students with disability is available at www.nccd.edu.au

SCHOOL FUNDING

Parents and communities contributed over 43% of all QLD Independent school funding (recurrent and capital combined).



FAMILIES CONTRIBUTED
\$1.8 BILLION
 (RECURRENT AND CAPITAL)
 TO QLD INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS IN 2024



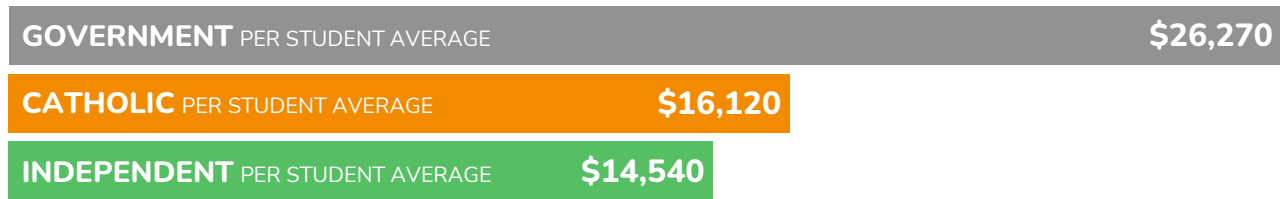
AN ESTIMATED SAVING OF
\$1.8 BILLION
 TO GOVERNMENTS



MEDIAN ANNUAL FEE
 FOR QLD INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS IN 2024
\$6,045

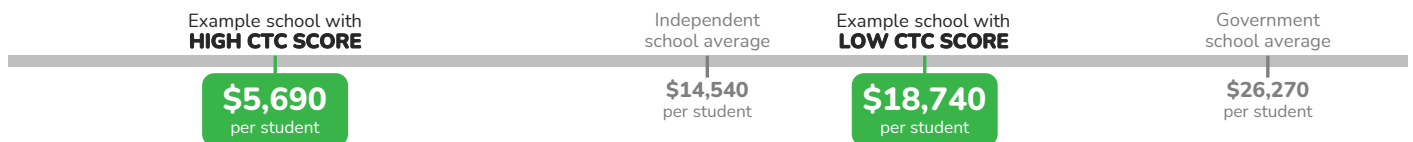
Each QLD Independent school student received **\$11,700 less government funding** (on average) compared to students in government schools

AVERAGE GOVERNMENT RECURRENT FUNDING PER QLD STUDENT FY 2023-24



The Australian Government is the primary funding source for non-government schools, with the QLD Government the primary source for government schools. The Schooling Resource Standard (SRS) is a needs-based funding model that includes base funding plus loadings to address educational disadvantage.

Base funding for Independent schools is adjusted according to families' estimated capacity to contribute (CTC), assessed on parental income tax data. Schools with a higher CTC score receive less per student base funding, and schools with a lower CTC receive more.



RECURRENT FUNDING FOR SCHOOL EDUCATION IN QLD \$BILLION FY 2023-24

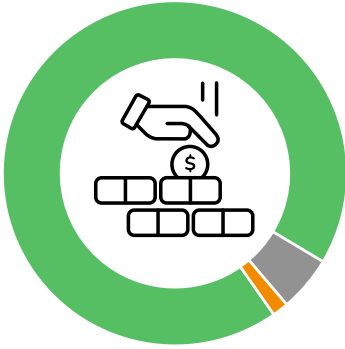


AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT QLD GOVERNMENT PRIVATE INCOME (PARENTS, etc)

CAPITAL FUNDING

Parents and communities of Independent schools contribute the vast majority of capital investment – through fees, fundraising and voluntary contributions.

SOURCES OF CAPITAL EXPENDITURE QLD INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS 2024



PRIVATE SOURCES (parents and donors)

\$722 MILLION (93%)

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

QLD GOVERNMENT

\$40 MILLION (5%)

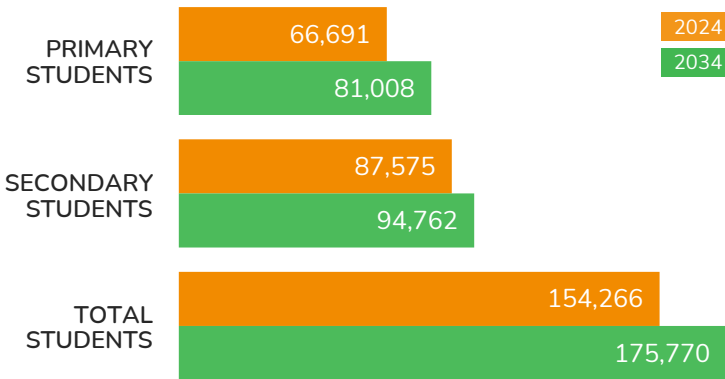
The QLD Government assistance for capital funding is limited.

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT CAPITAL GRANTS PROGRAM

\$12 MILLION (2%)

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.

PROJECTED ENROLMENT GROWTH IN QLD INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS 2024-2034



41 NEW SCHOOLS and CAMPUSES will need to be built in QLD by 2034

(Based on average Independent school size)

In 2024, total government capital expenditure per student for government schools was almost **6 times more** than in Independent schools in QLD

TOTAL GOVERNMENT CAPITAL EXPENDITURE PER QLD STUDENT COMPARISON 2024



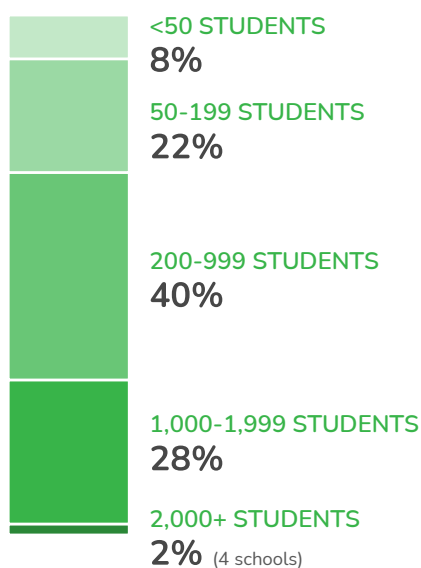
SCHOOL PROFILE

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

AFFILIATIONS OF QLD INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS 2025

AFFILIATION	NUMBER of SCHOOLS	STUDENTS FTE	STUDENTS %
CHRISTIAN	41	32,472	20.3%
ANGLICAN	23	29,623	18.5%
NON-DENOMINATIONAL	45	25,496	15.9%
LUTHERAN	26	21,542	13.5%
ASSEMBLIES OF GOD	10	7,265	4.5%
UNITING CHURCH	7	6,391	4.0%
INTER-DENOMINATIONAL	6	6,136	3.8%
BAPTIST	7	4,481	2.8%
SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST	10	3,190	2.0%
BRETHREN	3	3,109	1.9%
STEINER SCHOOL	6	1,235	0.8%
MONTESSORI SCHOOL	4	741	0.5%
OTHER RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION	10	8,735	5.5%
OTHER	40	9,641	6.0%

SIZE OF QLD INDEPENDENT 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 20% of QLD Independent schools operate within an approved system authority. These include the Anglican, Lutheran and Seventh Day Adventist systems.

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



SCHOOL TEACHERS

Independent schools employ 18% of all teachers in QLD schools.

The ratio of student to teacher in Independent schools compares well with other school sectors.



12,357

NUMBER OF TEACHERS
FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT
IN 2025



13,251

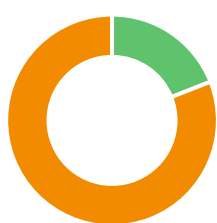
NUMBER OF TEACHERS
HEADCOUNT IN 2025



26,347

NUMBER OF TEACHING AND
NON-TEACHING STAFF
HEADCOUNT IN 2025

TEACHERS IN THE QLD INDEPENDENT SECTOR BY GENDER AND LEVEL 2025



PRIMARY TEACHERS

18.4% (836)

MALE

81.6% (3,707)

FEMALE



SECONDARY TEACHERS

40.9% (3,200)

MALE

59.1% (4,614)

FEMALE

QLD STUDENT TO TEACHER RATIOS BY SCHOOL LEVEL 2005-2025

	PRIMARY SCHOOLS			SECONDARY SCHOOLS		
	GOVERNMENT	CATHOLIC*	INDEPENDENT	GOVERNMENT	CATHOLIC*	INDEPENDENT
2005	15.5	17.1	15.1	13.0	13.1	11.9
2010	15.4	18.1	16.7	12.6	12.9	11.9
2015	14.8	17.2	15.5	12.7	12.8	12.1
2020	14.3	16.3	15.5	12.1	12.3	11.9
2025	13.9	15.9	15.1	11.4	12.2	11.7

QLD STUDENT TO TEACHER RATIOS (AVERAGE) 2025



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

13.0 to 1



GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

12.7 to 1



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS*

13.8 to 1

* Independent Catholic schools are included with Catholic schools.

SOURCES

Figures in this 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 2023-24, or for the calendar year 2024. Due to data availability, capital expenditure by source has been used instead of capital income, as was the case in previous snapshots. Unless otherwise specified, student enrolment figures are full-time equivalent.

Produced by Independent Schools Australia.

WWW.ISQ.QLD.EDU.AU



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Queensland**

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