



SCSEEC

Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood



Nationally Consistent Collection of Data School Students with Disability

Information for Parents/Carers

From 2013, schools across Australia will take part in a new national data collection on school students with disability.

The data collection is being introduced in stages over three years, starting in October 2013. From 2015, this information will be collected in every school across Australia, every year.

All Australian governments have agreed to this.

WHAT IS THE BENEFIT FOR MY CHILD?

All Australian governments agree that every child in an Australian school should have a high quality education. It shouldn't matter what the individual child's circumstances are – every child should have the same opportunity to succeed at school.

The aim of this new data collection is to have better information about school students with disability in Australia.

Better information about school students with disability will help teachers, principals and education authorities to support students with disability to take part in school on the same basis as students without disability.

WHY IS THIS DATA BEING COLLECTED?

There is nothing new about schools collecting information about students with disability – in fact, schools have had to do this by law for some time. But the type of information currently collected varies between each state and territory.

With the new data collection, every school in Australia will use the same method to collect this information – that is, a government school in suburban Sydney will collect and report data in the same way as a Catholic school in country Victoria and an independent school in the Northern Territory.

The information provided through this new national data collection will enable all Australian governments to better target support and resources to benefit students with

disability. It will help to put the right supports in place for students with disability so that they have the same opportunities for a high quality education as students without a disability.

WHAT ARE SCHOOLS REQUIRED TO DO?

Every school in Australia is likely to have a student with disability at some point. Schools need to be able to support students with disability by removing any obstacles for them to participate in their education.

By law, schools are required to make reasonable adjustments where needed to assist students with disability. These responsibilities are outlined in the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the *Disability Standards for Education 2005*. This means that schools need to talk to the student and/or their parent/carer about reasonable adjustments. These are things the schools do now and this won't change.

The new data collection will record students who have been identified by a school team as meeting the definition of disability under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and provided with an adjustment.

WHAT IS AN ADJUSTMENT?

An adjustment is a measure or action taken to help a student with disability participate in education on the same basis as other students. Adjustments can be made across the whole school setting (like ramps into classrooms), in the classroom and at an individual student level (like extra tuition for a student with a learning difficulty).



WHAT INFORMATION WILL BE COLLECTED?

Your child's school will collect and report information every year about:

- the level of adjustment provided
- the number of students who receive each level of adjustment
- where known, the student's broad type of disability.

Some students who are not provided with an adjustment at the time of the collection will meet the definition of disability under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and will be eligible to be included in the data collection.

WHO WILL COLLECT MY CHILD'S INFORMATION?

Teachers and other school staff from your child's school will collect the above information based on:

- consultation with parents/carers
- the school team's observations and professional judgements
- any medical diagnosis
- other relevant information.

School principals are responsible for making sure that the information collected about each student is accurate.

HOW WILL MY CHILD'S PRIVACY BE PROTECTED?

Protecting the privacy and confidentiality of all children and their families is very important. With the new data collection, this will be done in the following ways:

- Personal or confidential information will not be given to anyone not authorised to see it.
- When the information is sent by your child's school to the local or federal education authority for combination with information from other schools, it will be by school only – student names will not be recorded as part of the data collection.
- When the information is reported from 2016 onwards, it will be by school only – student names will not be recorded as part of the data collection.

WHEN AND WHERE WILL THE DATA BE AVAILABLE?

When all Australian schools are taking part in the new data collection, the information will be reported on the *My School* website from 2016 onwards. It will be by school only – no student names are recorded as part of the data collection.

CAN I DECIDE WHETHER MY CHILD'S INFORMATION IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL DATA COLLECTION?

It's your decision about whether you want your child's information to be included in the national reporting or not.

Including every school child who is being provided with an adjustment because of disability in this new national data collection each year will help schools, education authorities and governments to better meet students' needs.

Your school will tell you what you need to do if you don't want to have your child's information included in the national data collection.

Even if your child's information is not included in the national data collection, your school is still required to provide support to your child with disability and any adjustments that may be needed to help him/her participate at school.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Contact your child's school if you have further questions about the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability and how it may affect your child.

You can also visit www.deewr.gov.au/students-disability