



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT CATHOLIC EDUCATION

FAQS

Since 1820, Australian families have been choosing a Catholic education for their children. Today, Catholic schools in NSW educate around 255,000 students – that's 1 in 5 school students in NSW.

In the lead-up to a State or Federal election, it is important that Catholic school families understand the issues affecting Catholic education and are able to impress upon their own local candidates and MPs why Catholic schools must secure a fair share of Federal and State Government support.

How many students are educated in Catholic schools?

In 2018, there were 255,000 students enrolled in 595 Catholic schools across NSW. Catholic schools educate one in every five students in NSW.

How many staff are employed in NSW Catholic schools?

Catholic education is one of the largest non-government employers in NSW with almost 23,000 staff, including more than 17,500 teachers.

How much does it cost to educate a student in NSW?

According to the most recent figures available (2018), the average cost of educating a student in NSW is \$13,000 per year.

In Government schools, this cost is met fully by State and Federal governments.

In Catholic schools, this cost is met by State and Federal governments, parents' fees and school fundraising.

How are Catholic schools funded?

Catholic school funding comes from three main sources:

- **Federal Government (53.3%)**
- **State Government (17.1%)**
- **Parents and school community (29.6%)**

How does this compare with other school sectors?

NSW Catholic schools receive significantly less public funding than government schools.

Commonwealth and State governments jointly provide 70% of the funding needed to run Catholic schools in NSW. Parents and school communities must contribute the remainder. Parents in Government schools are not required to contribute funds and do not lose any of their Government funding if they choose to do so.

Independent or other non-government schools receive around 40% of their income from Commonwealth and State governments.

The remaining income in each sector comes from parents (mainly through fees) and other private or community fundraising.

How much do NSW Catholic school parents contribute to their children's education each year?

In 2016 (the most recent figures available), NSW Catholic school parents invested almost \$1.5 billion to support the state's 595 Catholic schools.

Catholic school parents contributed almost \$1.2 billion in fees and an additional \$316.5 million for capital works such as new classrooms, libraries and technology.

The contributions of past generations of parents help to ensure a Catholic education is available for future generations of students.

How are Catholic school buildings and facilities funded?

Capital funding is used to build, expand or upgrade Catholic schools. Capital funding for Catholic schools comes predominantly from parents and the parish community, with some additional funds contributed through grants from Federal and State governments.

Across the 11 dioceses, NSW Catholic education is planning for almost 10,000 additional students over the next three years. This will require up to 11 new schools and the expansion of 41 existing schools. It's only with adequate capital funding support from the NSW and Federal Governments that Catholic schools will be able to build the extra classrooms and facilities we need to take on our share of the state's future enrolment growth.

What is the enrolment policy for Catholic schools?

Catholic schools are open to all students – Catholic, non-Catholic, poor, wealthy, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and those with a disability – and are therefore representative of the wider Australian society.

Each diocese sets its own enrolment policies based on its unique geographic and social settings.

Enrolments of students with a disability and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students have been the fastest growing in NSW Catholic schools for the past 20 years.

Australian Bureau of Statistics data confirms that the socioeconomic profiles of families choosing Catholic schools for their children are similar to families who send their children to government schools across metropolitan, regional and remote Australia.

How many students with disabilities are educated in NSW Catholic schools?

There are 47,880 students with a disability in NSW Catholic schools, which is 18.7% of our student population. This is in line with the proportion across all school sectors.

How many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are educated in NSW Catholic schools?

The number of students who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander in NSW Catholic schools has increased to 7896, up from 3897 in 2007.

In addition, more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are staying on past Year 10.

Why did the Morrison Government announce a funding package of \$4.6 billion for Catholic schools in September 2018?

This funding package is over 10 years and is for all non-government schools (not just Catholic schools) that educate 1.3 million students across the country. It ensures that low-fee Catholic schools will receive a fairer share of non-government school funding in the future. It also means that fees will remain affordable for Catholic school families until a new and more accurate measure of parents' capacity to contribute to their children's education through fees is implemented, with the previous model proving to be unrepresentative and flawed.

Catholic schools have been part of Australia's education system since 1820. For almost 200 years, Australian families have made the choice to send their children to Catholic schools; but families can only make this choice for their children if Catholic education remains affordable.

Why didn't public schools receive an increase?

Public schools are already fully funded by taxpayers. Public school parents are not required to pay tuition fees.



More information: