

*Last updated April 2018*

# Fact sheet for parents and carers

## What is the NCCD?

The Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (the national data collection) is an annual collection that counts the number of school students receiving an adjustment due to disability and the level of adjustment they are receiving to access education on the same basis as other students.

Each of the included students has been identified by a school team as receiving a reasonable adjustment to address a disability under the [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](http://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2017C00339) (the Act) ([www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2017C00339](http://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2017C00339)).

## Why is this data being collected?

All schools across Australia collect information about students with disability. However, until recently, the type of information collected has varied between each state and territory and across government, Catholic and independent school sectors. The national data collection ensures that, for the first time, information about students with disability is transparent, consistent and reliable at a national level.

A nationally consistent approach to collecting data provides evidence on:

- the number of school students receiving an adjustment due to disability
- the level of adjustment they receive
- the broad type of disability.

From 2018, the student with disability loading provided by the Australian Government is based on the national data collection. Funding is being provided via a loading at different rates based on students' received level of adjustment (supplementary, substantial or extensive). This will enable funding to be better targeted to student need as identified through the collection. Schools will

continue to manage their total resources to meet the learning needs of their students based on the educational expertise of their staff.

It is important to note that states and territories are responsible for decisions about the level of funding for government schools; and non-government education systems and approved authorities are responsible for the distribution of the needs-based Commonwealth funding that they receive. While Government funding is calculated with reference to students enrolled at a school, the Government expects schools and school systems to pool their funding from all sources—Australian Government, state/territory and private—and prioritise their spending to meet the educational needs of all of their students. This is because the Government recognises that schools and school systems are best placed to understand the individual needs of students and budget accordingly.

The students with disability loading may be used for broader supports at the classroom, school and sector level, as well as for supports for individual students. Education authorities may, for example, opt to use funding for professional learning and to build capacity and inclusive cultures in schools.

Better information about school students with disability helps parents, carers, teachers, principals, education authorities and government to gain a more complete understanding of students who are receiving adjustments because of disability and how to best support them to take part in schooling on the same basis as other students.

### **What information will be collected?**

Every year, your child's school will collect the following information for each student receiving an adjustment due to disability:

- the student's year of schooling
- the student's level of adjustment
- the student's broad type of disability.

If a student has multiple disabilities, the school team, using their professional judgement, selects the broad category of disability that has the greatest impact on his/her access to education and for which adjustments are being provided.

When undertaking the national data collection, every school in Australia uses the same method to collect information. Therefore, a government school in suburban Sydney collects and submits data

in the same way as a Catholic school in country Victoria and an independent school in the Northern Territory. The information collected by schools will be available to all governments to inform policy and program improvement for students with disability.

### **How will this data be used?**

The information provided through the national data collection will give governments greater insight into the numbers and distribution of students receiving adjustments because of disability in Australian schools.

In addition to informing funding, the data will inform work at a school and system/sectoral level. It will help to ensure that better support for students who are receiving adjustments because of disability becomes routine in the day-to-day practice of schools through:

- strengthening understanding of schools' legislative obligations and the Disability Standards for Education 2005 in relation to students who are receiving adjustments because of disability
- focusing attention on the individual adjustments required to support students with disability to participate in learning on the same basis as other students, and enabling schools to better reflect on the needs of these students and to support them more effectively
- facilitating a more collaborative and coordinated approach to supporting students who are receiving adjustments because of disability, including through encouraging improvements in documentation at the school level
- strengthening communication between schools, parents/carers and the broader community about the needs of students who are receiving adjustments because of disability.

### **Who is included in the national data collection?**

The definition of disability for the national data collection is based on the broad definition under the [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](http://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2017C00339) (www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2017C00339).

For the purposes of the national data collection, students with learning difficulties (such as dyslexia or auditory processing disorder) or chronic health conditions (like epilepsy or diabetes) that require monitoring and the provision of adjustments by the school may be included.

## **Who collects information for the national data collection?**

Teachers and school staff identify the number of students receiving an adjustment due to disability in their school, the broad type of disability and the level of adjustment provided, based on:

- consultation with parents and carers in the course of determining and providing adjustments
- the school team's observations and professional judgements
- any medical or other professional diagnosis
- other relevant information.

School principals are responsible for ensuring the information identified about each student is accurate.

## **What are the benefits of the national data collection for my child?**

The aim of the national data collection is to collect quality information about Australian school students receiving adjustments due to disability.

This information will help teachers, principals, education authorities and governments to better support students with disability to take part in school on the same basis as other students.

The national data collection provides an opportunity for schools to review their learning and support systems and processes to continually improve education outcomes for students with disability and all students.

## **What are schools required to do for students with disability?**

All students are entitled to a quality learning experience at school.

Schools are required to make reasonable adjustments, where needed, to assist students with disability to access and participate in education free from discrimination and on the same basis as other students.

These responsibilities are outlined in the [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](http://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2017C00339) (www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2017C00339) and the [Disability Standards for Education 2005](http://www.docs.education.gov.au/node/16354) (the Standards) (www.docs.education.gov.au/node/16354). The Standards require educators, students, parents and others (e.g. allied health professionals) to work together to ensure students with disability can participate in education.

## **What is a reasonable adjustment?**

A reasonable adjustment is a measure or action taken to help a student with disability access and participate in education on the same basis as other students. Adjustments can be made across the whole school setting (e.g. ramps into school buildings), in the classroom (such as adapting teaching methods) and at an individual student level (e.g. extra tuition for a student with learning difficulties).

Reasonable adjustments reflect the assessed individual needs of the student, and are provided in consultation with the student and/or their parents and carers. For the [Disability Standards for Education 2005](http://www.docs.education.gov.au/node/16354) ([www.docs.education.gov.au/node/16354](http://www.docs.education.gov.au/node/16354)), an adjustment is reasonable in relation to a student with disability if it balances the interests of all parties affected. Schools are required to make reasonable adjustments for students with disability under the Standards.

## **When does the collection take place?**

The national data collection is conducted in August each year.

## **Is the national data collection compulsory?**

Yes. All education ministers agreed to full implementation of the national data collection from 2015. This means that all schools must now collect and submit information annually on the number of students receiving adjustments due to disability in their care, and the level of adjustment they receive.

Information about the arrangements that may apply to your school in relation to this data collection is available from your child's school principal and the relevant education authority.

## **How is my child's privacy protected?**

Protecting the privacy and confidentiality of all students and their families is essential and is an explicit focus of the national data collection. Data is collected within each school, and personal details, such as student names or other identifying information, are not provided to local or federal education authorities.

Further information about privacy is available in the [Public information notice](http://www.docs.education.gov.au/node/33415) ([www.docs.education.gov.au/node/33415](http://www.docs.education.gov.au/node/33415)).

## Further information

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

You can also visit the [Department of Education and Training's national data collection webpage](http://www.education.gov.au/nationally-consistent-collection-data-school-students-disability) (www.education.gov.au/nationally-consistent-collection-data-school-students-disability).

An [e-learning resource](https://resource.dse.theeducationinstitute.edu.au/) (https://resource.dse.theeducationinstitute.edu.au/) about the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and Disability Standards for Education 2005 is freely available for the use of individuals, families and communities.



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