



Dear parent/guardian

### **Commonwealth School Data Collection Notice**

The Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment (the department) would like to advise all parents and guardians that it collects certain information about your child's school, its staff, and student body.

#### **Why is this information collected?**

This information is collected by the department in accordance with the *Australian Education Act 2013* (the Act) and the *Australian Education Regulation 2013* (the Regulation). The Act and the Regulation require the legal entity responsible for the administration of the school (the Approved Authority) to provide certain information to the department. The department collects this information to:

- Ensure the provision of Australian Government funding to schools is properly calculated and appropriately managed.
- Conduct research, statistical analysis and develop school education policy for the Australian Government.
- Meet national and international reporting obligations on school students in Australia.
- Publish and provide information about schools to the public.

#### **How is information collected?**

Information is provided to the department by a school or their approved authority via various data collections on the [SchoolsHUB website](#).

#### **What information is collected?**

Each data collection fulfils a separate reporting requirement. The data collections conducted through SchoolsHUB are:

- **The Student Residential Address and Other Information Collection (Address collection)** provides student residential addresses (excluding student names), and the names and addresses of parents/guardians of students for eligible full or part-time primary and secondary students enrolled at most non-government schools.
- **The Financial Accountability (FA)** assurance activity is done to certify that the financial assistance provided by the Australian Government for schools has been spent or committed to be spent to provide school education.
- **The Financial Questionnaire (FQ)** reports the income, expenditure, assets and liabilities from all non-government Australian schools receiving Australian Government recurrent grant funding.
- **Student Attendance (STATS)** provides a school's student attendance rate data by grade, gender and indigeneity from non-government schools for full-time students in Years 1 to 10 attending regular and special schools.
- **The Non-Government Schools Census (Census)** provides information about the number and characteristics of the school's staff and student body during a specific reference period. Characteristics include student year level and workload, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students, students with disability, students receiving distance education, boarding students, and overseas students. The names of students and staff are not collected, apart from

the name, position and contact details of the staff member nominated as the primary contact for the annual census.

- **Census Special Circumstances Applications** may also be made by schools to include a student/s who did not attend during the Census reference period but otherwise meets Census eligibility requirements. Schools will provide the department with information and documents about the student demonstrating their eligibility. The department does not require information that personally identifies a student and asks schools to de-identify any documents before providing them.

### **How will the information be used and disclosed?**

Some of the information collected by the department from schools in accordance with the Act and the Regulation, may be 'personal information' for the purposes of the *Privacy Act 1988* (Privacy Act). Personal information is protected by law, including under the Privacy Act. Any use or disclosure of your personal information must occur in accordance with the Regulation. Personal information is information or an opinion about an identifiable individual. Personal information includes an individual's name and contact details.

Personal information collected by the department may be used or disclosed for the following:

- Used by the department to review school funding calculations and develop school education policy.
- Used or disclosed where it is otherwise required or authorised by law, including under the Act or Regulation, or otherwise permitted under the Privacy Act.
- Disclosed to the Australian Bureau of Statistics to calculate your non-government school community's capacity to contribute to the costs of schooling (Address collection only).
- Disclosed to the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) to publish on the [My School website](#) and include as high-level data for ACARA's National Report on Schooling in Australia and the Productivity Commission Report on Government Services (Census and STATS only).
- Disclosed to state and territory education departments and authorities in accordance with the Act.
- Disclosed to a contracted auditor where the department decides to audit or verify the information provided by an approved authority about a school. The contracted auditor may use previously collected information or request access to individual student records for comparison purposes. The contractors may pass this information onto officers within the department, if there is a discrepancy in the data provided by the school and the school's records and further investigation is required. The contracted auditor must handle personal information in accordance with the Privacy Act.
- Disclosed to its service providers for the purposes of the provision of information and communications technology (ICT) support services to the department.
- Other than in exceptional circumstances (for example, investigation of fraud relating to overseas students), the department does not disclose any of the personal information collected to overseas recipients.

For more information about how the department handles personal information, please review the department's [privacy policy](#).

### **Protecting your child's privacy**

When student information is provided to the department by schools or approved authorities, the department requests that the information must not explicitly identify any student. For example,

student names or student identifiers are not provided. To help protect your child's privacy, we support schools to submit their reporting requirements using de-identified records.

In limited cases, even without student names or identifiers, a student may be reasonably identifiable from the information provided (for example, because of the small size of a particular school). In this event, the disclosure of such personal information to the department by a school, and the collection of that personal information by the department, are both required and authorised by law for the purposes of the Privacy Act.

**What do you need to do?**

You do not need to do anything. Your school is responsible for providing the requested information to the department.

**Want more information?**

Your school can provide information about data provided for your child. To find out more about school data collections and reporting, visit [SchoolsHUB](#).