



SCSEEC

Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood

Nationally Consistent Collection of Data School Students with Disability

Information for Schools

The Australian Government and all state and territory governments have agreed to work towards the full implementation of a nationally consistent collection of data on school students with disability by 2015.

Collecting these data will help schools and education systems to implement Australian education ministers' Melbourne Declaration (2008) to work towards two important educational goals for young Australians, that:

- Australian schooling promotes equity and excellence; and
- All young Australians become:
 - successful learners;
 - confident and creative individuals; and
 - active and informed citizens.

Starting with a phased implementation approach from 2013, this collection of data will help build the evidence base to inform improved schooling for students with disability, giving them every possible opportunity to reach their full potential.

Education ministers have agreed that 2013 and 2014 will be transition years so that all Australian schools and sectors have time to prepare for the data collection, including undertaking professional learning and refining processes, prior to full implementation in 2015.

WHY IS NATIONALLY CONSISTENT COLLECTION OF DATA NECESSARY?

Currently, not enough is known about Australian school students with disability to enable all governments to best target support and resources to assist these young Australians to complete school and go on to further education or to find employment.

The implementation of a nationally consistent approach to collecting data on school students with disability will provide all Australian schools, education authorities and the community with information about:

- how many school students with disability there are;
- where they are; and
- the level of adjustment provided for them to participate in schooling on the same basis as other students.

WHEN WILL THE DATA COLLECTION BE ROLLED OUT?

Data collection will commence in schools in October 2013 and will be rolled out on an increased scale in 2014, with all schools to undertake the collection annually from 2015. Schools selected to participate in recording data in October 2013 will be advised by their education authorities in about their involvement.

WHAT PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND SUPPORT WILL BE THERE FOR SCHOOL STAFF?

Professional learning on the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the *Disability Standards for Education 2005* will be available to reinforce the importance of embedding these laws into everyday practice and to help provide a high quality learning experience for every school student with disability. Materials on the data collection process will also be available. Education authorities will advise schools during 2013 how this professional learning and training will be delivered and accessed.



HOW WILL IT BE DECIDED WHICH STUDENTS ARE TO BE INCLUDED?

The nationally consistent collection of data on school students with disability draws on documented evidence based on observation, information provided by and in consultation with parents/carers, diagnostic and other data and judgements made by teachers and appropriate school staff. This evidence supports the school team to determine the levels of adjustment that are provided, both within and outside the classroom to assist in students' learning programs or courses, and to access their school's facilities and services.

Schools must have at least 10 weeks of evidence to support the inclusion of a student as meeting the definition of disability under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*. A student will only be included in the data collection where there is documented evidence held by the school.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE COLLECTION IN MY SCHOOL?

While this approach of making judgements and recording data is a collaborative one, school principals will be ultimately responsible for signing off on the data and supporting evidence for each student entry related to their own school.

HOW WILL DATA BE COLLECTED AND WILL A STUDENT'S PERSONAL DETAILS BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

Data security and protection will be a priority. Data will be de-identified at the school level. Only de-identified school level data will be transmitted beyond the school to ensure that the privacy of the individual student is maintained.

Staff in each school will collect evidence and record it. School staff will only be able to see the data related to their own school.

WHAT DATA WILL BE COLLECTED?

From the commencement of the data collection in 2013, the following student information will be collected at the school level on an annual basis:

- the level of adjustment provided;
- number of students receiving each level of adjustment to participate in education on the same basis as other students; and
- where known, the student's type of disability.

WHAT IF PARENTS/CARERS DON'T WANT THEIR CHILD TO BE INVOLVED?

Parents/carers will be engaged in consultations with school staff as required under the Disability Standards for Education 2005. This is an important part of the evidence gathering process for the data collection.

Education authorities and school principals will provide advice on what parents/carers need to do if they do not want information about their child to be recorded in the national data collection.

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE INFORMATION COLLECTED FROM SCHOOLS?

De-identified school level data on school students with disability collected in 2013 and 2014 will be analysed to assist in refining and improving future data collections. De-identified school level data collected from all Australian schools in 2015 are expected to be made available on the *My School* website and in other national reports on schooling from 2016. Reported data will be aggregated at the school level by year level and will be reported in such a way that the privacy of all students is maintained.

HOW WILL THE INFORMATION BE USED?

This approach will enable more accurate information to be collected about the number of school students with disability, including their levels of need, and will inform planning and decisions at the national, state and sector level. This information will help all Australian schools to better meet their responsibilities under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and improve support for the learning needs and aspirations of students with disability in all Australian schools.

A nationally consistent collection of data will provide an evidence base on the national distribution of students with disability and the levels of adjustment they receive. The processes around the national data collection, including the professional learning, have the potential to contribute to a more inclusive schooling system for all Australian students.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information about the national collection of data on Australian school students with disability and how you can support it, please visit

www.deewr.gov.au/students-disability.