Australian, state and territory governments have agreed on a new approach to collecting data on school students with disability. All Australian governments agree that every child in an Australian school should have a high quality education. It doesn’t matter what the individual child’s circumstances are – every child should have the same opportunity to succeed at school.

The Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability provides Australian schools, parents, education authorities and the community with information about the number of students with disability in schools, where they are located and the adjustments they receive. As well as identifying the level of reasonable adjustment being provided for each student identified for inclusion in the national data collection, schools are asked to identify the broad category of disability for each student from one of four categories:

- Physical
- Cognitive
- Sensory
- Social/Emotional

The national data collection on students with disability reinforces the existing obligations that schools have towards students under the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the Disability Standards for Education 2005. It counts the number of students who are supported under these obligations based on the professional judgement of teachers and their understanding and knowledge of their students.

The national data collection on students with disability acknowledges the work already undertaken by St Ursula's College, Toowoomba to support students with disability. It assists schools to identify and to support students with disability so they can access and participate in education on the same basis as their peers.

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**... INFORMATION FOR PARENT/CARERS**

### Why introduce a National Collection of Data on School Students with Disability?

- All Australian governments agree that every child in an Australian school, regardless of his or her circumstances, has the right to a high quality and inclusive education that meets his or her needs.
- Better information about school students with disability will assist teachers, principals and education authorities to support their participation in schooling on the same basis as students without disability.

### How will it benefit my child?

- There are students with disability in every school in Australia at some point. This means that every school needs to be ready and able to support students with disability to ensure that any obstacles to participation and achievement in their school education are identified and minimised.
- This new national data collection will reinforce the actions required of schools under the national Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the Disability Standards for Education 2005. These laws mean that schools and education systems are required to make, where needed, reasonable adjustments for students with disability.
- An adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist a student with disability to participate in education on the same basis as other students. Adjustments can be made across the whole school setting, in the classroom and at the individual level.
- Determining the level and type of support needed for an individual student is not a new activity for Australian schools.
- Currently there is only limited and inconsistent information available at a national level about school students with disability, their educational needs and the support provided to them.
• The information provided by this new national data collection will enable all Australian governments to better target support and resources. That will assist students with disability in government and non-government schools across Australia to complete school and go on to further education or find employment.

... WHAT INFORMATION WILL BE COLLECTED?
The following information will be collected annually at the school level:
• the level of adjustment provided;
• the number of students receiving each level of adjustment to enable them to participate in education on the same basis as other students;
• and where known, the student’s type of disability.

... WHO WILL COLLECT MY CHILD’S INFORMATION AND HOW WILL THEY DO IT?
School teams will collect evidence from the following sources:
• consultation with parents/carers;
• their observations and professional judgements;
• and any medical diagnosis.

The evidence will be collected over at least a 10 week period. This evidence will help the school teams to determine:
• which students to include in the data collection;
• the levels of adjustment that are provided, both within and outside the classroom;
• and the broad category of disability.

• In line with good teaching practice and the requirements of the Disability Standards for Education 2005, you will continue to be provided with opportunities to discuss ways to assist your child overcome barriers and the adjustments that could be made to support your child.
• Principals and school teams will be supported with training to assist them to make accurate judgements. School principals will assure the accuracy of information collected about each student.

A student will only be included in the data collection if she meets the definition of disability under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the school has evidence of this.

... CAN I WITHDRAW MY CHILD’S INFORMATION FROM BEING INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REPORTING ACTIVITY?
You decide whether you want your child’s information to be included or not in the national reporting activity. You must advise the College if you do not want your child’s information to be included.

... 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.

... WHAT WILL THE INFORMATION BE USED FOR?
• It is intended that the data collected about students with disability will be published on the My School website and in other national reports on schooling from 2016 onwards.
• Public reporting of this data will mean more is known about how all Australian schools and education authorities support students with disability.
• Australian schools and education authorities will use this data as evidence to improve their support for students with disability.

... WHICH SCHOOLS AND STUDENTS WILL BE INCLUDED:
Beginning in 2015, this data collection will occur in every school every year.