



## School education

Primary and secondary school education in Australia is divided into two categories – government schools and private schools.

### Government schools

Most children will likely attend a government or state school in which tuition is free, although there will be additional costs such as books, uniforms, and other administration fees. If you are unable to pay for those expenses you can speak to the school administration.

### Private schools

Private schools are generally run either by religious organisations (for example, Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, or Protestant Churches) or other independent bodies. There are also a small number of Jewish and Islamic schools. Most private schools charge high fees.

### Enrolling in school

Your caseworker or proposer will help you to enroll your children in school. You will need to show your **travel documents**, your **child's immunisation records** and any school **reports** and **certificates** of previous study.

Children in Australia are required by law to attend school between the ages of five and 17. They complete six or seven years of primary school and at least four years of secondary school. Most children also attend one year (part time) of preschool before entering primary school.

Children are placed into grades according to their age; however, there are slight differences between the states and territories.

### Attending school

Most schools have four school terms with the school year starting in late January and lasting through to December. There are school holidays between school terms and schools close on public holidays. Most children attend school for about six hours a day, Monday through Friday. School attendance is very important and is compulsory. When students miss school, parents are expected to provide a written explanation to the school.



In Australian schools, children from different racial, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds study and interact together in the classroom and during out-of-class activities. Most schools are coeducational which means boys and girls are taught in the same classroom.

Children who need extra English language support will also attend English as an Additional Language (EAL) classes, usually within their school. Children with special needs such as mental or physical disabilities have the same rights to education as everyone else. This includes children who are deaf, blind or have severe learning or behavioural problems. Classes for these students are often provided within regular schools. Some schools specialise in teaching students with special needs.

Teachers encourage children to learn by thinking and analysing. It is more than just remembering things. Students participate by asking questions, joining in discussions and participating in activities, even if they do not speak much English.

Children are encouraged to participate in different types of school classes including academic studies, sports programs and music activities. Schools also plan excursions and camping activities which provide a real experience to the topics studied in the classroom. All schools teach the Australian Curriculum. You can see what your child will be learning at school by looking at the Australian Curriculum website.

For more information, go to [www.australiancurriculum.edu.au](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au)

Parents are encouraged to get involved in their children's education, for example, by attending meetings with their child's teacher, ensuring their child completes school assignments and attending school events. Talking to the teacher or the principal about your child's education and general experiences at school is very acceptable. For more information, go to [www.education.gov.au](http://www.education.gov.au)

## Child care and early learning

Child care and early learning provides the foundation for children to develop in a safe environment while also having the opportunity to socialise with other children. In addition to benefiting the child's early years' development, child care and early learning also helps working families to return to work. For government information about child care services and regulations, financial assistance, services for special needs children and children from various cultural backgrounds, go to [www.mychild.gov.au](http://www.mychild.gov.au)

As well as providing care, child care and early learning services provide an opportunity for your child to develop social, emotional and learning skills. Government information on your child care and early learning options is available at the MyChild website. For more information, go to [www.mychild.gov.au/childcare-information/options](http://www.mychild.gov.au/childcare-information/options)

