

Collection notice – schools

The department collects personal and health information about students, their parents, carers, families and other persons of significance before and during the course of a student's enrolment at a NSW government school. This notice provides information about the department's collection and handling of this information as required by privacy legislation.

What information is collected

The department collects information to ensure compliance with its obligations under laws governing or relating to the operation of schools such as those in the areas of education, public health, disability discrimination and child protection and its duty of care. Information the department may collect includes:

- student medical and health conditions and their management, medical records and medical practitioner details
- family details, relevant court orders and parent/carer and emergency contact information
- student school history including previous schools attended and history of suspension or expulsion for violent behaviour
- details about student welfare and wellbeing including attendance and behaviour management
- information on student special learning and support needs including disability
- records of student educational progress and outcomes

The department may also collect personal and health information required for the effective management, resourcing and administration of education in public schools. This includes information about religious and ethics education, Aboriginality, languages other than English spoken at home and parental/carer occupational and educational background.

Why information is collected

Information is collected for the primary purpose of providing every student with the opportunity to achieve their educational potential and for other directly related purposes including but not limited to:

- implementing programs that meet student educational and support needs
- communicating with parents and carers
- maintaining the good order and management of schools
- ensuring the safety and welfare of students, staff and others involved with the school's operation
- conducting lawful research and compiling statistics relating to the education, health, welfare and wellbeing of students and student performance

- assessing and evaluating the effectiveness of programs and their impact on student educational outcomes
- informing State and Federal Governments on matters that may affect resourcing of schools
- operational and administrative purposes
- determining whether students are meeting compulsory school requirements
- satisfying the department's legal obligations, in particular, its duty of care

How information is collected

Information is generally collected directly from the person to whom it relates. In many circumstances student information is collected from parents or carers with responsibility for the student's welfare and learning.

Collection of information from a student depends on the nature of the information involved, the maturity and capacity of the student and whether it is in the student's best interests.

When parents and carers provide schools with personal information about others, such as emergency contacts and other parent /carer details they should obtain the person's authority and inform them that the information is held by the school so they may access it.

Schools may collect personal and health information about current and prospective students from other agencies or individuals if required and permitted by the *Education Act 1990*, child protection legislation or other law.

Access and amendment

The department endeavours to ensure that the personal and health information it collects and holds is accurate, complete and up to date by encouraging families to regularly update the information if there are changes and by allowing access to and alteration of the information.

Requests to access and update personal and health information should be made directly to the school. The department's [privacy management plan](#) has information about how requests are handled.

Parents and carers may be denied access to student information in certain circumstances such as when it may result in a breach of the school's duty of care or other legal obligation, it would have an unreasonable impact on the privacy of others or where the information was provided in confidence.

Disclosure to other agencies

Schools will only disclose personal and health information to other agencies or persons outside the department in compliance with privacy legislation or as permitted or required by any other law.

Personal information collected from students is regularly disclosed to their parents or carers.

The department may disclose personal and health information to other government agencies for the purposes of national reporting. For example, anonymised personal data for students and parents is provided to the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Agency (ACARA) which uses it to enable comparisons of National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)

test results for schools across Australia published on the My School website. ACARA follows the Australian Privacy Principles to ensure that personal and health information is stored securely and is not disclosed without consent.

The department may disclose personal and health information for research and evaluation purposes under some circumstances. Such disclosure only occurs if it is consistent with privacy legislation, where the research or evaluation will be of public benefit and where the department is confident that personal and health information will be protected against further disclosure.

Permission to publish student information

At enrolment and during the course of a student's enrolment parents and carers are asked to provide permission for the school to publish or release for publication in print and electronic media, information about their child's achievements and activities at school. Parents and carers should inform the school if they wish to alter this permission.

Further information about privacy

The department's [privacy management plan](#) details the department's practices and procedures for handling personal and health information. It can be accessed from the department's website.

Concerns about the collection or handling of personal or health information should initially be raised with the school principal.