

Life at school for students with disability

What we learned from our research

Easy Read report



How to use this report



The NSW Government Department of Education wrote this report.

When you see the word 'we', it means the Department of Education.



We have written this report in an easy to read way.

We use pictures to explain some ideas.

Not bold Bold

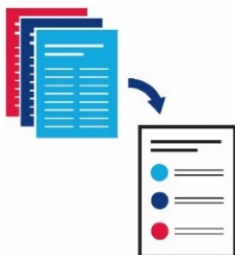
We have written some words in **bold**.

This means the letters are thicker and darker.



We explain what these words mean.

There is a list of these words on page 19.



This Easy Read report is a summary of another report. This means it only includes the most important ideas.



You can find the other report on our website at education.nsw.gov.au



You can ask for help to read this report. A friend, family member or support person may be able to help you.



We want to thank everyone who took part in our research for:

- talking to us
- sharing their stories.

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Inclusive public schools in NSW



We want public schools in NSW to be **inclusive**.



When something is inclusive, everyone can take part.



In NSW we want schools to be inclusive for students with disability.

All students need an equal chance to:



- go to school



- take part in learning.



All students should get the support they need to get an education that is right for them.

We call this **inclusion**.



We did our research to find out how to make NSW public schools more inclusive.

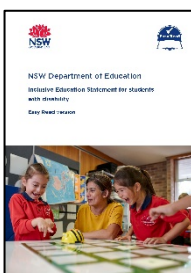


We also wrote two documents to help make NSW public schools more inclusive.

These documents are our:

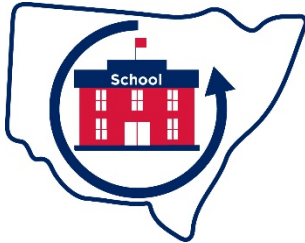


- [Disability Strategy](#)



- [Inclusive Education Statement.](#)

These documents will help make:



- public schools in NSW more inclusive



- school better for students with disability.



You can read these documents on our website education.nsw.gov.au.

How did we do our research?

We worked with JFA Purple Orange to talk to:



- students with disability



- their parents or carers.



JFA Purple Orange is an **advocacy organisation** in South Australia.

Advocacy organisations are groups that speak up for people with disability.



They can:

- help you have your say
- give you information and advice.

We also worked with:



- a school principal



- 2 young people with disability



- an expert who works at a university



- someone who works in the Department of Education.

We all worked together to make sure we can get helpful information from:



- students with disability



- their parents or carers.

Who did we talk to?

75



We talked to 75 **participants**.

Participants are people who take part in:



- interviews



- focus groups.



A focus group is a group of people who meet to talk about their:

- ideas
- opinions.



We talked to students with disability who go to NSW public schools now.



We talked to people with disability who used to go to NSW public schools.



We talked to parents and carers of students at NSW public schools.

People told us what:



- works well



- doesn't work well.

What did people tell us?

What worked well

Lots of students with disability said:



- they felt supported by their teachers



- their teachers got to know them.



This made them feel:

- seen
- heard
- understood.

Some participants said they took part in decisions that affected:



- them
- their school.

They told us about times when they were supported at school, like:



- getting more time to finish a test



- having a test in a different format.



We heard stories about parents and teachers working together to support students with disability.



We heard stories about students with disability making friends at school.



Participants said some schools are good at communicating with students with disability.



Some participants told us they felt included by their school.



Participants talked about good experiences with **School Learning Support Officers (SLSO)**.

SLSOs help students with disability:



- at school
- in the classroom
- with their learning.



People with disability who used to go to school said they had good experiences learning with other students.

What didn't work well

Some students with disability told us their schoolwork doesn't match what they:



- can already do



- are good at.

They also don't get many chances to:



- take part in decisions that affect their school



- speak up about problems they face.

Participants told us that school leaders don't always think about:



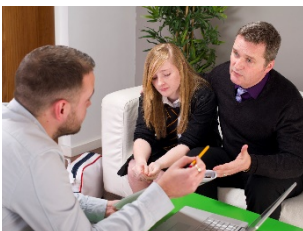
- inclusion



- students with disability.



Parents and carers told us they had problems talking to their child's teacher.



We heard about parents and carers who felt like schools didn't treat them as people who understood their child.



Participants told us they didn't get enough information about changing the school's program so students with disability could get what they need.



Lots of participants told us teachers don't get enough support.

They also said teachers:



- don't have enough time to plan because they're working too much



- find it hard to support students with disability well.



Participants told us schools don't understand:

- disability
- inclusion.



They also said schools should know more about what each student is good at.



People with disability who used to go to school said they weren't supported when they left school.

Word list

This list explains what the **bold** words in this document mean.



Advocacy organisation

Advocacy organisations are groups that speak up for people with disability. They can:

- help you have your say
- give you information and advice.



Inclusion

All students should get the support they need to get an education that is right for them.

We call this inclusion.



Inclusive

When something is inclusive, everyone can take part.



Participants

Participants are people who take part in:

- interviews
- focus groups.

School Learning Support Officers (SLSO)

SLSOs help students with disability at school



- at school
- in the classroom
- with their learning.

Contact us



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