

PUBLIC vs PRIVATE SCHOOL – WHAT’S YOUR OPINION?

Over the last few decades, a noticeable shift has occurred between enrolment numbers of students at Government Public School and Independent or Private School student numbers. This population move has stirred conversation (and arguments) from all sides, including discussion about taxpayers’ money distribution as described in the Gonski Review of 2011, commissioned by the Federal Government. Those arguments are ongoing and surrounded by politics. All sides, however, agree that Australian parents want the very best education for their child, in whatever form that may be delivered. Individual wants and needs for children, however, are widely varied; lying at the heart of the landscape of schooling choice for our children in Queensland.

There has been a further change in Public and Private School enrolment since 2010. According to a survey of 1,000 parents by Independent Schools Queensland in 2014, it was found that:

- In 2010, 89% of parents of under school age children thought their child would attend a Private School, with 8% undecided. In 2014, only 12% were undecided;
- 48% of parents considered only Private Schools in 2014, down from a comparative 56% in 2010;
- The proportion of parents considering both education sectors (Public and Private) was 50% in 2010. This figure had increased in 2014 to 70% of parents considering all of their options for their child.

The decline in Private school enrolment rates is thought to be a result of economic factors affecting families; Australian households are finding their budgets to be tighter, therefore, being able to afford a Private education for their child is somewhat slipping from reach. According to the survey, the most important reason parents chose a Private school were:

- Preparation for student to fulfil their potential;
- Good discipline;
- Encouragement of a responsible attitude to schoolwork;
- High quality of teachers;
- Teaching methods and philosophy.

For many parents, the power of word-of-mouth is highly important towards their decision-making process too. A typical comment from parents at Caloundra City Private School would be, “word of mouth from friends was the most influential thing and observing the growth and development of their children at the school” towards making a confident choice in my child’s education.

At Caloundra City Private School, our Mission is to provide an outstanding educational environment that is vibrant and exciting; a place of exceptional standards in a nurturing setting with emphasis on the care and attention of each individual student. We embody this mission in all that we do. One way in which this is reflected is in our school’s NAPLAN results.

NAPLAN Learning Gains: how much on average CCPS children have progressed or learned in their NAPLAN performance over two years of testing in literacy and numeracy.

The NAPLAN Learning Gains of CCPS students are on par with those of other schools in the surrounding Sunshine Coast Region, particularly among our Junior school students. These building blocks of academic learning form a foundation for lifelong careers and a love of learning; helping foster a child's sense of identity as they grow and progress. This approach is why we endeavour to assess our students' progress from the early years of Prep and up. Our Prep students have assessments for hearing, sight and language acquisition by external consultant experts. These are just some of the simple ways in which we endeavour to fulfil our mission at Caloundra City Private School, and aid parent's in their educational decision-making on behalf of their children, from day one. We strongly believe in the vitality of every child to ensure they are given the fullest opportunity to excel with their own specific abilities.

Data from over 1,600 Year graduates from 12 different Independent School students showed that students who had enrolled in Private School education from the outset of their junior schooling, on average, were two Overall Position (OP) points better, compared to students who only commenced their private education during their senior schooling years. Therefore, the earlier a student enrolls into private school, the higher their marks will be on average. In the long run, this can mean the difference between direct entry into a tertiary degree, or a longer road ahead for a young student.

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