

# Disability Service Plan 2025-2028



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## Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands, seas, skies and waterways from across Queensland.

We pay our respect to the Elders, past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the state.

For more information, see our [Commitment Statement](#).

## Human rights

We are committed to respecting, protecting and promoting human rights in everything we do to ensure a more inclusive Queensland.

## Note on language

We know there is variation in the disability community with respect to language. While some people prefer person-first language (e.g., person with disability), others prefer identity-first language (e.g., disabled person). We acknowledge the diversity in language preferences, and people's right to choose how they identify and describe themselves and their experiences. The language used in this Plan is not intended to indicate a particular preference or exclude anyone with a preference that differs to the style used.

## Director-General's message

The diversity of our staff, students and school communities is our greatest strength. By valuing culture and creating inclusive teaching and learning environments, we are driving equity and excellence.

Through our work in early years settings, schools and our workplaces, we have a unique opportunity to meaningfully impact the lives of children, students, their families, and our staff.

Our *Disability Service Plan 2025-28* will help us realise these opportunities and set a clear commitment to create and deliver inclusive, supportive and empowering services and spaces.

This Plan would not have been possible without the support and insights provided by students, staff, advocates and stakeholders during co-design.

I invite you all on our journey towards greater inclusion.

[A/DG signature]

Sharon Schimming

## In 2024



**5,450**

children with disability enrolled in a Queensland based kindergarten program



**25.3%**

of all students in Queensland state schools have disability



**37.2%**

of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in Queensland state schools have disability



**5.2%**

of Department of Education employees identify as having disability

# Our commitment

*Our vision is for equity and excellence in everything we do.*

**We are committed to creating accessible and inclusive communities that support and empower all people with disability to realise their potential.**

The Department of Education plays a vital role in supporting children, students, young people, and staff with disability. Through our vision for equity and excellence across our system, we are focused on educational achievement, wellbeing and engagement, and culture and inclusion.

This means all children, students, young people, staff and community members with disability can access and fully participate in all services and spaces we provide, and their experiences are equitable and meet their needs. From kindies and classrooms, to our workplaces we want to make sure all our practices and environments reflect shared values, remove barriers, support inclusion, and promote opportunities for people with disability.



## Engagement and co-design

We believe people with disability should be involved in decision-making that affects them.

This Plan was developed in partnership with staff and students with disability, parent advocacy groups, disability service providers and other key stakeholders. Our approach was underpinned by a commitment to meaningful, respectful and collaborative engagement with those with lived experience in our system.

### Co-design and consultation activities:



In-person and online workshop with students with disability to promote student voice.



Workshop and conversations with parent and disability advocacy groups and organisations.



Online workshops with corporate and school staff with disability, including engagement with the department's Able Steering Committee.



Consultation with unions and associations.



Consultation with the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education and Training Advisory Committee.



Feedback from the Queensland Disability Advisory Council.

Through our co-design process, we have created a safe and collaborative space that has strengthened our relationship with students, staff and our stakeholders and set strong foundations for future collaboration and co-design.

As we develop and implement actions through the life of the Plan, we will continue to engage and work together with different stakeholders from across the State to ensure our efforts are informed by a variety of views, perspectives and experiences.

# Disability landscape

This Plan highlights key actions to achieve our shared vision for an inclusive community that supports and empowers all people with disability to realise their potential.

This Plan sits within a national framework contributing to the implementation of *Australia’s Disability Strategy 2021–2031* and *Queensland’s Disability Plan 2022–27: Together, a better Queensland*.

Actions in this Plan align with broader national disability reform work including Targeted Action Plans under *Australia’s Disability Strategy 2021 – 2031*, recommendations from the *Final Report of the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (Disability Royal Commission)* and the *National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Review*. As the department implements these recommendations, the Plan and actions will be updated to reflect relevant work and associated actions.

This Plan also contributes to delivery of objectives within our Strategic Plan, our education strategy *Equity and Excellence: realising the potential of every student* as well as *EnAbleD: workforce strategy 2024-2027*.

The broader landscape includes:

<b>International</b>	<i>United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities</i>		
<b>National</b>	<i>Australia’s Disability Strategy 2021–2031</i>	<i>National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013</i>	<i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992</i>
	<i>Disability Royal Commission</i>		
	<i>NDIS Review</i>		
<b>State</b>	<i>Human Rights Act 2019</i>	<i>Anti-Discrimination Act 1991</i>	<i>Disability Services Act 2006</i>
	<i>Queensland’s Disability Plan 2022–27: Together, a better Queensland</i>		
	<b>Disability Service Plans</b>		

## Alignment

Actions in this Plan are mapped to five of the seven outcome areas of *Australia’s Disability Strategy 2021-2031*:



### **Outcome 1:**

Employment and financial security



### **Outcome 2:**

Inclusive homes and communities



### **Outcome 5:**

Education and learning



### **Outcome 6:**

Health and wellbeing



### **Outcome 7:**

Community attitudes

# Understanding our Plan

Our Plan is structured using the following impact areas aligned to *Queensland's Disability Plan 2022–27*.

**Children, students, young people and their families** (Service Users)



**Our people**

**Our places**



**Our community**

Implementation of actions in this Plan will be informed by the building blocks of *Queensland's Disability Plan 2022–27*. The department will contribute to an annual progress report on *Queensland's Disability Plan 2022–27* and our Disability Service Plan.

## Co-design

We do things with people with disability, not to them or for them.

## Measurement of outcomes and impact

We will define what success looks like and monitor our impact.

## Human rights

We will promote and protect the rights of people with disability in everything we do.

## Cultural and systems change

We will grow inclusion from within organisations by removing barriers embedded in our structures and systems.

# Our actions







## Children, students, young people and their families (Our service users)

*Enabling children, students and young people with disability to access high-quality education.*

These actions align to the following outcome areas:



Action	Responsible area	Timeframe	Success looks like
<b>Provide support in early years</b>			
Implement and promote Free Kindy to improve access to inclusive and quality early learning programs for all children.	Early Childhood	2025–2028	Increased kindergarten participation of children with disability or additional needs, in safe and responsive learning environments.
Deliver funding for programs that enable targeted inclusion support in early years.	Early Childhood	2025–2028	
Provide support for children with disability to access and participate in inclusive, high-quality education by supporting strong and confident transitions to Kindergarten or Prep.	Early Childhood Schools and Student Support	2025–2028	Children with disability have strong transitions into school supported by quality transition statements, Early Childhood Coordinators and Family Support Coordinators.
Support access to integrated, inclusive services through funded Early Years Services (EYS) including Early Years Places (EYP) for families and children with disability and/or developmental concerns living in remote and diverse communities.	Early Childhood	2025–2028	Increased participation in EYS by children with disability. Increased number of parents/carers with disability participating in activities at an EYS.
Support inclusive practice in State Delivered Kindergartens (SDKs).	Early Childhood Schools and Student Support	2025–2028	Kindergarten is embedded in existing state school systems and inclusive practice processes.
<b>Enable engagement, wellbeing and achievement in school</b>			
Review the <i>Inclusive education policy</i> statement.	Schools and Student Support	2025–2028	Revised policy contributes to building a shared understanding of inclusion.
Support all students with disability to attend school and meaningfully engage in inclusive, high-quality education.	Schools and Student Support	2025–2028	Improved outcomes for students with disability.

Action	Responsible area	Timeframe	Success looks like
Foster culturally responsive, engaging and safe learning environments tailored to the different needs of students with disability, including Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students with disability and students with disability from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.	Schools and Student Support	2025–2028	Increased awareness and knowledge in school communities for creating culturally responsive, engaging and safe learning environments.
School staff and leaders plan for the teaching of the curriculum in a way that is responsive to the diverse learning needs of students with disability.	Schools and Student Support	2025–2028	All students with disability can access and participate in high-quality education and fully engage in the curriculum alongside their peers, supported by reasonable adjustments.
Deliver the Specialist Disability Support in Schools grant program, to provide specialised services, resources and equipment to state and non-state schools.	Policy, Performance, International and Intergovernmental	2025–2027	Three-year grants awarded to approved organisations to support schools and students with disability.
Provide wellbeing and mental health support services in schools through ongoing recruitment of wellbeing professionals.	Schools and Student Support	2025–2028	All students with disability have access to support for their wellbeing and mental health at school.
Provide school staff with access to specialist support in regions.	Schools and Student Support	2025–2028	Teachers and school staff are confident in making reasonable adjustments for students with disability.
Review and update the <i>School transport assistance program for students with disability procedure</i> .	Schools and Student Support	2025–2028	Clear responsibilities and streamlined processes to support students with disability to access school transport assistance appropriate to their needs.
Continue to monitor how best to resource schools to meet the needs of students with disability.	Schools and Student Support	2025–2028	Evidence-informed reasonable adjustments resourcing model.
Support students with disability to access learning pathways relevant to their goals and interests.	Schools and Student Support	2025–2028	Students with disability are able to participate in opportunities aligned to their goals.
Strengthen career education for students with disability transitioning to employment or further education.	Schools and Student Support	2025–2028	Senior education and training planning conducted for students with disability and career education support materials utilised, including the Career Education: Pathways Program.
Improve the collection, analysis and reporting of outcomes data for students with disability in our system.	Schools and Student Support Policy, Performance, International and Intergovernmental	2025–2028	Enhanced understanding of performance outcomes for students with disability.
Strengthen support for students with disability who are geographically isolated or living in rural or remote communities or enrolled in small schools.	Schools and Student Support	2025–2028	Students are able to access support appropriate to their needs.

Action	Responsible area	Timeframe	Success looks like
<b>Foster collaboration and local connections</b>			
Facilitate connections between Early Childhood Development Programs, kindergartens, school-based kindergartens (SDKs, eKindy), schools, NDIS and EYP to ensure successful transitions into school for children with disability.	Early Childhood Schools and Student Support	2025–2028	All children and students with disability are supported to make a positive transition to school.
Collaborate with schools, families and community to share information that supports positive transitions for students with disability as they progress through their schooling.	Schools and Student Support	2025–2028	All students with disability are supported to make positive transitions.
Continue to strengthen mechanisms for schools to consult with students with disability, and their parents and carers, about making reasonable adjustments.	Schools and Student Support	2025–2028	Students with disability and their parents and carers are involved in decision-making about the supports at school.
Collaborate with the National Disability Insurance Agency, other agencies and families to support access to the NDIS for students with disability.	Schools and Student Support	2025–2028	Increased awareness and knowledge in school communities about access to NDIS and other support for students with disability.
Support school leavers to access the NDIS to obtain the supports they need to transition from school-based learning programs to employment, training and further education.	Schools and Student Support	2025–2028	Eligible school leavers are supported to access NDIS services through the Assessment and Referral Team.
Deliver resources to improve understanding of the diverse needs of Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students with disability to improve educational outcomes.	Schools and Student Support First Nations Strategy and Partnerships	2025–2028	Resources delivered.
Support local consultative education bodies to collaborate with schools and local community to provide culturally appropriate responses.	Schools and Student Support First Nations Strategy and Partnerships	2025–2028	Local responses are co-designed and culturally informed.
Continue to foster relationships with advocates and advocacy groups to share ideas to build and promote a culture of inclusion in schools through best practice sharing.	Schools and Student Support	2025–2028	Meetings with relevant organisations to discuss progress towards agreed outcomes.
Develop a roadmap for the department's implementation of <i>Disability Royal Commission</i> recommendations focussed on inclusive education, working with the Commonwealth, states and territories and other Queensland Government agencies as required.	Schools and Student Support	2025–2028	Roadmap developed outlining the department's planned and phased approach to strengthening inclusive education in response to relevant Disability Royal Commission recommendations.

Action	Responsible area	Timeframe	Success looks like
Establish governance arrangements to inform the department's response to recommendations from the <i>Disability Royal Commission</i> .	Schools and Student Support	2025–2028	
Guided by the <i>Queensland Disability Stakeholder Engagement and Co-Design Strategy</i> , consult and co-design with the disability sector to plan for and implement actions that strengthen inclusive education in response to Disability Royal Commission recommendations.	Schools and Student Support	2025–2028	Consultation and co-design undertaken to inform implementation of relevant <i>Disability Royal Commission</i> recommendations.
Improve student access to Advisory Visiting Teacher (blindness/vision impairment, deaf/hard of hearing and physical impairment) and Auslan services by using borderless services.	Schools and Student Support	2025–2028	Students receive direct teaching of impairment specific curriculum (e.g. braille and tactile learning, integration of assistive technologies and signed and spoken language development).
Explore ways in which generative artificial intelligence (AI) can be used to personalise and support student learning for students with disability.	Schools and Student Support	2025–2028	Advice for schools about how generative AI can be used to support learning for students across all areas of disability, within various education settings and for all aspects of their curriculum.
Foster research partnerships through the Education Horizon grant program and other national research initiatives to support best practice and innovation to deliver better outcomes for children, students and young people with disability.	Policy, Performance, International and Intergovernmental	2025–2028	Research grants are allocated and researchers have access to partner with the department and utilise departmental data and sites.
<b>Build staff capability</b>			
Deliver programs that support staff capability building in early years including; Kindy Inclusion Service, Kindy Inclusion Support Scheme, Inclusion Ready Subsidy, Kindy Uplift and the Early Childhood Guidance Program Pilot.	Early Childhood	2025–2028	Increased kindergarten participation of children with disability or developmental concerns, in safe, inclusive and responsive learning environments.
Provide targeted training and resources to staff to help identify the needs of young children with disability and/or developmental concerns in Early Years Places.	Early Childhood	2025–2028	EYP staff identify enhanced practice by using the QSART tool.
Support kindergarten educators to access training and resources for the early identification of disability or developmental concerns in young children, evidence-based practice strategies and wellbeing outcomes.	Early Childhood	2025–2028	Kindergarten services access the Kindy Inclusion Service and Early Years Connect training to enhance their practice.
Provide opportunities for school and regional staff to build their awareness and capability of inclusive education practices, functional impact of disabilities, and how to provide differentiated support to students with disability and their families.	Schools and Student Support	2025–2028	School and regional staff are confident in using inclusive language and embedding inclusive practices.

Action	Responsible area	Timeframe	Success looks like
Provide opportunities to deepen cultural capability for all staff to support and foster positive relationships with children and students with disability from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds as well as children and students with disability from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families.	Human Resources First Nations Strategy and Partnerships	2025–2028	Positive trend in responses from staff to relevant questions about cultural capability in School Opinion Survey.  Departmental staff, teachers and principals are culturally capable and understand migration pathways, local history and contexts.  Departmental staff, teachers and principals are culturally informed in their communication and engagement with parents, carers and community.
Build capability of school staff to implement the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on school students with disability (NCCD), including in discrete communities to support resourcing for students with disability.	Schools and Student Support	2025–2028	School staff are confident in understanding the NCCD model.
Strengthen capability for early childhood and school staff in supporting positive behaviour.	Early Childhood Schools and Student Support	2025–2028	All staff are confident in implementing positive behaviour techniques when managing complex behaviour.
Support teachers to provide tailored adjustments to learning opportunities including considering the needs and preferences of each student.	Schools and Student Support	2025–2028	Teachers are confident in making reasonable adjustments for students with disability.
Strengthen communication to school leaders and teachers of emerging priority research relating to supporting children and students with disability.	Policy, Performance, International and Intergovernmental  Schools and Student Support	2025–2028	Priority research from Education Horizon, Australian Education Research, departmental and other research promoted and shared.



## People

*Ensuring our people are supported by making our workforce inclusive for all.*

These actions align to the following outcome areas:



Action	Responsible area	Timeframe	Success looks like
<b>Deliver programs to support workforce attraction and retention for staff with disability</b>			
Increase the number of staff who identify as a person with disability.			
Encourage staff with disability to share this information and engage with workforce data gathering (such as Workforce Diversity Census), by fostering a safe and inclusive workplace culture.	Human Resources with all divisions	2025–2028	Department’s workforce diversity target of 12% for people with disability is reached.
Improve the attraction and retention of staff with disability through the <i>EnAble</i> d: workforce strategy 2024-2027.	Human Resources	2024–2027	
Embed accessible, equitable and inclusive features into our system to attract, recruit and promote people with disability.	Human Resources with all divisions	2025–2028	Practices are inclusive and accessible to support attraction, recruitment and promotion of staff with disability.
Promote a workplace culture that supports psychological safety and staff mental health and wellbeing.	All divisions	2025–2028	Implementation of the <i>Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategy</i> .
Build capability of leaders and staff to better support members of the workforce with disability.	Human Resources with all divisions	2025–2028	Increase in completions of workplace disability awareness training by leaders and staff.  Positive trend in responses from staff with disability to relevant questions about diversity and inclusion in Working for Queensland and School Opinion surveys.



## Our places

*Ensuring accessible spaces and environments for everyone to use.*

These actions align to the following outcome areas:



Action	Responsible area	Timeframe	Success looks like
<b>Maintain infrastructure and facilities that are accessible</b>			
Create inclusive and accessible learning environments and renewed educational spaces, informed by universal design principles, including for schools in rural and remote areas, and small schools.	Infrastructure Services Schools and Student Support	2025–2028	Accessible and inclusive buildings and spaces.
Provide targeted investment to support equitable infrastructure within educational environments.	Infrastructure Services	2025–2028	Delivery of Education for All (Ed4All) funding.
Support principals and aspiring education leaders to understand and invest in inclusive, accessible education infrastructure.	Infrastructure Services Schools and Student Support	2025–2028	Corporate training and support to principals reviewed.
Partner with universities to research ways to support children, students and young people with disability to foster diversity, inclusion and participation in learning environments.	Infrastructure Services Schools and Student Support Policy, Performance, International and Intergovernmental	2025–2028	Research projects delivered.
Provide inclusive and accessible workplaces for school, corporate and regional staff.	Infrastructure Services Finance, Procurement and Facilities with all divisions	2025–2028	Accessible and inclusive buildings and spaces.
Conduct annual safety assessment to identify, resolve and mitigate potential hazards for people with disability.	All divisions	2025–2028	Assessments are completed annually.



## Our community

*Supporting the community by ensuring everyone is able to access services and information.*

These actions align to the following outcome areas:



Action	Responsible area	Timeframe	Success looks like
<b>Ensure accessible information and resources</b>			
Improve access to information and resources for parents and carers of children with disability including assessment and support services specific to learning needs.	Early Childhood Schools and Student Support	2025–2028	Dedicated resources are easily accessible.
Provide additional guidance to parents and carers with disability to access resources and services.	Schools and Student Support	2025–2028	Support and information easily accessible for family members with disability.
Review departmental websites and information to ensure language is accessible and disability affirming, enabling current and prospective students and staff to see themselves within our community.	All divisions	2025–2028	Information is accessible, disability affirming and written using plain English.
Continue to develop and publish culturally appropriate information using plain English and tailored to audience needs to support Aboriginal families and Torres Strait Islander families and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.	Schools and Student Support First Nations Strategy and Partnerships	2025–2028	Increased targeted audience awareness of resources and visitor traffic on relevant webpages.
Promote best practice in our system through departmental communication channels, events, information sharing and activities to highlight our culture of inclusion.	Strategic Communication & Engagement Schools and Student Support Human Resources	2025–2028	Key awareness days, events, activities are promoted in departmental communication channels.
Deliver inclusive events accessible to people with disability.	Strategic Communication & Engagement Human Resources with all divisions	2025–2028	Events offer accessible and inclusive options for participation.



Action	Responsible area	Timeframe	Success looks like
Ensure delivery of actions within this Plan are meaningfully co-designed.	All divisions	2025–2028	Genuine engagement with people with disability, including staff and students, Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, LGBTQ+ community and young people in care to embed knowledge and perspectives into the delivery of actions within this Plan.