CONSORTIUM FOR OUTCOMES IN DEAF EDUCATION (CODE) REPORT

2025

CODE

Consortium for Outcomes in Deaf Education

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Consortium for Outcomes in Deaf Education (CODE) extend our sincere gratitude to the state and territory education sectors that participated in the 2025 survey. We look forward to increased engagement in future iterations of the CODE survey. Ongoing and expanded participation will ensure that the CODE survey continues to provide a robust annual overview of the educational experiences of deaf children and young people across Australia.

The Consortium acknowledges the contribution of the following representatives from their organisations who contributed to the survey design, data collection and writing of this report.

- Ann Porter AM - Aussie Deaf Kids
- Professor Greg Leigh AO - NextSense Institute/ Macquarie University
- Bronwyn Green - Chair - National Association of Australian Teachers of the Deaf
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- Hayley Stone - Deafness Forum
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The Consortium for Outcomes in Deaf Education (CODE) acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction 3
Summary of Findings 5
Part A: Student population and hearing loss 9
Part B: Educational settings and support 12
Part C: Auslan provision 15
Part D: Teachers of the Deaf and other specialist staff 17
Part E: Additional information 19
Part F: Reflections and Future Improvements 21
Feedback and Areas for Consideration for the 2026 CODE Survey 22
Conclusion and Acknowledgements 22

List of Tables

Table 1.Invitations and survey responses 8
Table 2. Number of deaf children and young people identified as receiving additional educational support in the CODE survey 2025 by state 9
Table 3. The number of deaf children and young people identified as receiving additional educational support by state, categorised by hearing levels. 10
Table 4. Hearing assistive devices provided to children and young people in the data. 11
Table 5. Deaf children and young people enrolled in different types of educational settings and additional specialist teacher support provided 14
Table 6. Deaf children and young people reported to be using Auslan and the associated support provided 16
Table 7. Additional educators working with deaf children and young people 18
Table 8: Time taken to complete the survey and number of personnel involved 21

INTRODUCTION

This report marks the third publication by the Consortium for Outcomes in Deaf Education (CODE), which was established in 2023. In the United Kingdom, the Consortium for Research into Deaf Education (CRIDE) was established to respond to the need for data collection in deaf education. After several years of preparation by special interest groups from the field of deaf education in Australia, inspired by the work of CRIDE, the Consortium for Outcomes in Deaf Education (CODE) was established. CODE's primary function is to collect and report data on the number of deaf children and young people receiving educational services in Australia, as well as to document the nature of these services. CODE operates through the collaboration of key organisations with a shared commitment to deaf education. The consortium includes Aussie Deaf Kids, Deafness Forum Australia, UsherKids Australia, the Australian Childhood Deafness Research – Community Advisory Group, and the National Association of Australian Teachers of the Deaf.

For the purposes of this report, the term "deaf children and young people" refers to school-aged individuals with an educationally significant hearing loss. This includes those who use Australian Sign Language (Auslan) and other modes of communication, as supported by various education sectors.

Educational Governance and Structure

In Australia, responsibility for school education primarily lies with the six state and two territory governments, each providing 13 years of formal schooling. While this decentralised approach allows for regional flexibility, all states and territories are required to implement key Commonwealth initiatives. These include the National Curriculum, the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST), the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1992, and the Disability Standards for Education (DSE) 2005. This framework ensures a level of consistency across the nation while allowing for local adaptations.

Students with Disabilities in Australian Schools

According to the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) National Report on Schooling 2025, 1,125,502 of the 4,160,918 students enrolled in Australian schools in 2025 received an educational adjustment due to disability. This represents 27.0% of total enrolments, up from 24.2% in 2023 and 18.0% in 2015. Based on the broad categories of disability used in the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA) and the Disability Standards for Education 2005, 2.4% of students received an educational adjustment in the sensory category.

Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD)

The Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (NCCD) is an annual initiative in Australia that requires all schools to gather and submit information on students who require educational adjustments to access and participate in learning on the same basis as their peers (Australian Government, 2022).

The NCCD only classifies students into four broad categories: cognitive, physical, sensory, and social/emotional. Deaf/hard of hearing

students are not able to be distinguished within this data because these systems record a child under a single primary category of disability, which risks rendering them invisible in these very 'flat' reporting structures. Specific disability surveys are crucial because this broad categorisation obscures the prevalence of hearing loss, making it difficult to build an accurate understanding of the population and their needs. This CODE survey will support a better allocation of targeted personnel and equipment resources, recognition of the need for specialised teaching skills, support and funding.

Diversity in Education Providers

Beyond government school systems, Australia features a diverse range of non-government education providers. These include system-based providers, such as Catholic education offices operating within each diocese, as well as independent schools. These non-government schools vary widely in terms of resources and fees, ranging from small, low-fee institutions to large, high-fee schools with extensive facilities. The development of education policies and the delivery of support services for all students — including deaf children and young people, are generally managed differently depending on the school type. These responsibilities are primarily handled at the state or territory level, with funding provided by both state and federal governments. In the non-government sector, they are influenced by a combination of state and federal policies, funding arrangements, and the specific governance structures of each school or school system. Two of the government providers deliver services to deaf children and young people in non-government schools, and this will be discussed in a later section.

The 2025 CODE Survey

Building on the foundation laid by the 2023 and 2024 predecessors, the 2025 CODE survey aims to provide a snapshot of the number of deaf children and young people enrolled in schools across Australia, and the educational supports they receive. The 2025 CODE survey design remains largely consistent with the 2024 version, which was developed in consultation with a national reference group of deaf education leaders. While enabling year-on-year comparisons, the survey will gradually incorporate refinements based on sector feedback, balancing data continuity with the flexibility to capture emerging trends and sector-identified priorities in deaf education across Australia. Capturing accurate, comprehensive data on deaf children and young people across Australia's diverse educational landscape requires engagement from all education systems. To this end, the survey was distributed to government, Catholic, and independent schools nationwide. CODE members extend their thanks to the state and territory education sectors that participated in the 2025 survey and look forward to continuing broader participation in future CODE surveys.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The CODE Report 2025 has six parts:

Each part reports on a different aspect of the students represented in the CODE data as outlined below:

A	Student population and hearing loss
B	Educational settings and support
C	Auslan provision
D	Teachers of the Deaf and other specialist staff
E	Additional information
F	Reflections and further improvements

The CODE Report 2025 is the third annual report in this series, providing a snapshot of educational support for deaf children and young people in Australia.

The report is structured into six sections, detailing the number of students, their hearing loss, and device use, alongside enrolment information and specialist teacher support. It also examines Auslan provision and the specialist staff assisting students communicating in Auslan. The current survey represents a larger number of deaf children and young people than included in previous CODE reports, and whilst still acknowledging varying availability of detailed data, it continues to serve as a foundational, though incomplete overview of deaf education nationwide.

Key findings from each section:

Part A: Student Population and Hearing Loss

The 2025 CODE Survey captured data on approximately 10,867 children receiving educational support, of whom about 10,155 were school-aged deaf children and young people in Australia and 712 in early intervention settings. Compared with the 2024 CODE Survey, this represents a greater proportion of the potential population of deaf and hard of hearing students in Australia (i.e., based on comparison with the Hearing Australia data which indicates that there are 18,415 children and young people of school age who have been fitted with hearing aids and/or CI's. Eleven of the 13 respondents provided information on levels of hearing loss, while two major departments were unable to supply detailed data. The survey also collected information on hearing assistive devices, including hearing aids, cochlear implants and additional support systems, with 11 of the 13 respondents able to report the types of devices students were utilising.

Part B: Educational Settings and Support

Consistent with the previous year's data, most students were supported in mainstream educational settings. Eight of the nine respondents reported providing visiting teacher services in these mainstream environments, and five respondents described support via onsite special education settings or units within mainstream schools. Consistent with the previous year's data, early intervention services were reported by Education Departments in the Northern Territory, South Australia, Victoria, Queensland, and Western Australia; New South Wales did not report student numbers for early intervention this year. Victoria and New South Wales identified specialist schools for the deaf. The report also noted that early intervention services have evolved with the National Disability Insurance Scheme, potentially affecting how these services are represented in the data.

Part C: Auslan Provision

In the 2025 CODE survey, responses indicated that approximately 1003 deaf children and young people from the surveyed sectors used Auslan either as their primary means of communication or as a support for communication. Of these, around 37 were supported by a qualified sign language interpreter, about 370 by a communication aide who was not a qualified interpreter, and approximately 127 received support through other means such as Teachers of the Deaf (ToDs) fluent in Auslan, Teacher Aide Auslan Language models (TAALM), note-takers, education assistant support, and Deaf mentors. Some responses noted variability in the qualifications and experience expected of staff using Auslan, particularly for roles that involve interpreting.

Part D: Teachers of the Deaf and Other Specialist Staff

In the CODE survey, approximately 758 teachers were engaged in specialist roles supporting deaf students, a figure broadly similar to 2024 data. About 360 personnel were reported as educational interpreters, with the majority in Victoria and Queensland. At least 206 personnel supported deaf children and young people in roles such as teacher aides or educational support staff. The interpreter and support staff figures are substantially lower than in 2024; this may reflect New South Wales' reduced data set for 2025 and changes to how each system and sector records these positions. Effective full-time equivalent (FTE) data for interpreters and support staff were not available.

Part E: Additional Information

States provided discretionary additional information, offering insights into their specific programs and approaches. This included details on inclusive education support programs, early intervention services, and support for non-government schools.

Part F: Reflections and Future Improvements

The time taken to complete the survey varied among respondents: some reported taking less time and others more than in the previous year. Respondents faced challenges collecting data due to differences in their education sector structures, though several recognised the survey's potential to improve future data collection. Feedback for the 2025 CODE Survey included suggestions for additional questions and clearer definitions of key terms to enhance data accuracy and comparability.

Purpose

This report presents data from the third annual CODE survey, offering insights into the deaf education sector for the 2025 school year. It is intended for a diverse audience including leaders in deaf education, policymakers across all levels of government, academics, citizen advocates, and others interested in the education of deaf children and young people. Educational sectors across all Australian states were invited to participate, with a particular focus on State Education Departments, which serve the majority of deaf children and young people in Australian schools. However, it is important to note that not all sectors responded to the survey, and some participants were unable to provide complete data for every item. In 2025, all eight state education departments were invited to participate with seven providing data. Known providers in the Independent and Catholic Education sectors or schools were approached with six providing data. As with the previous reports, the data presented here is incomplete and should not be considered fully representative of all deaf students within Australia's education sectors. As this survey series continues annually, it is anticipated that both response rates and data coverage will continue to improve. The information in this report is based on responses received from the educational sectors listed in Table 1.

Survey Scope and Data Limitations

Data Variability and Coverage

The amount and type of data provided by respondents varied considerably. As shown in Table 1, some jurisdictions submitted data covering multiple education sectors, while others reported on only a small proportion of students supported by non-government schools or sectors. Notably, no data was received from the ACT. The ACT education department has committed to providing data for the 2026 survey. Among systems that provided data in both 2023 and 2024, the majority were able to provide more information for the 2025 survey than for previous reports.

Survey Representation

The 2025 CODE survey captured data on over 10,000 children receiving educational support, including approximately 712 children accessing early intervention services prior to age five (reported by five systems). In total, the survey captured information on approximately 10,000 deaf children and young people attending schools across Australia in 2025.

For context, children and young people who require hearing devices are provided equipment through Hearing Australia, the statutory Commonwealth authority. Hearing Australia’s most recent Aided Child Demographics Report 2022 recorded 18,415 school-aged children and young people (aged 5 to 18) in Australia who had been fitted with hearing devices due to hearing loss. By comparison, the 2025 CODE survey therefore represents only a portion of the expected deaf student population enrolled in educational programs nationwide.

Some sectors experienced difficulties in providing detailed data, particularly about levels of hearing loss and the devices used by children and young people. Nine of eleven respondents were able to supply this information, but inconsistencies in question completion were noted.

Suggested improvements to address these issues are being incorporated in the 2026 CODE Survey.

Table 1: Invitations and survey responses

State	Sectors invited to participate	Data received
Australian Capital Territory	Directorate- ACT Public Schools	No
	Catholic Education (Canberra and Goulburn)	No
	Independent Education	No
New South Wales	Department of Education	Yes
	Catholic Education	No
	Independent Education NextSense Schools	Yes
Northern Territory	Department of Education	Yes
	Catholic Education	Yes
	Independent Education	Yes
Queensland	Department of Education	Yes
	Catholic Education	No
	Independent Education	No
South Australia	Department of Education	Yes
	Catholic Education	No
	Independent Education	No
Tasmania	Department of Education, Children and Young People	Yes
	Catholic Education	Yes
	Independent Education	Yes
Victoria	Department of Education	Yes
	Catholic Education Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools St Mary's College for the deaf	Yes
	Independent Education	No
Western Australia	Department of Education School of Special Educational Needs: Sensory Shenton College	Yes
	Catholic Education	No
	Independent Education Teach Speak Hear (TSH)	No

Part A: Student Population and Hearing Loss

Respondents were asked to indicate how many deaf children and young people received support from their department or service. Respondents were also asked to categorise their children and young people into groups according to hearing level and device worn. Not all respondents were able to provide complete data for all the categories in the survey. It is important to note that each jurisdiction collected data in different ways, therefore the data is not directly comparable.

Table 2 indicates the number of students who accessed additional educational support in each state in 2025.

Table 2: Number of deaf children and young people identified as receiving additional educational support in the CODE survey 2025 by state

State	Sectors invited	Number of deaf children and young people in the service of responding sectors
New South Wales	Department of Education	2500+
	Independent NextSense Schools	68
Northern Territory	Department of Education (including Catholic & Independent Education)	118
Queensland	Department of Education	3661
South Australia	Department of Education	483
Tasmania	Department of Education, Children and Young People (including Catholic & Independent Education)	393
Victoria	Department of Education	2208
	Catholic Education Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools St Mary's College for the deaf	171 74
Western Australia	Department of Education School of Special Education Needs: Sensory	1154
	Shenton College Deaf Education Centre	37
TOTAL REPORTED		10,867+

Table 3 below provides the numbers of deaf children and young people identified as receiving additional educational support by state, categorised by hearing levels.

Table 3: Number of deaf children and young people identified as receiving additional educational support by state, categorised by hearing levels[#]

State	Sector	0-20dB	21-40dB	41-60dB	61-80dB	81-90dB	91dB+	Data could not be provided	Total no. of students
New South Wales	Dept. of Education	*	*	*	*	*	*	2500+	2500+
	Independent: Next Sense	6	9	18	11	8	16	0	68
Northern Territory	Dept. of Education (incl. Catholic Ed & Independent)	37	33	14	10	5	19	0	118
Queens-land*	Dept. of Education	*	*	*	*	*	*	3661	3661
South Australia ***	Dept. of Education	0	1	38	26	17	24	377	106
Tasmania	Dept. of Education (incl. Catholic Ed & Independent)	131	111	50	23	7	1	70	393
Victoria	Dept. of Education		~1050	~400	~300	~230	~200		~2180
	Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools St Mary's College for the deaf	0	0	19	18	4	33	0	74
	Student Engagement	6	54	53	22	22	14	0	171
Western Australia **	Dept. of Education School of Special Educational Needs: Sensory	~253	~380	~228	~21	~42	~130	~100	1054
	Shenton College Deaf Education Centre	1	1	3	6	2	24		37

0-20dB (Typical hearing); 21-40dB (Mild hearing loss); 41-60dB (Moderate hearing loss); 61-80dB (Severe hearing loss); 81-90dB (Moderate-severe hearing loss); 91dB+ (Profound hearing loss)
*Unable to provide data
**Please interpret the data with caution
***Limited data available: Data only available from centres for deaf education, including two primary settings and two secondary setting

Table 4 below includes information on the devices provided to children and young people identified in the CODE survey. The range of devices worn by Australian deaf children and young people includes hearing aids (HA), bone conduction aids and cochlear implants (CI). Additional devices used by deaf children and young people include remote microphones (RM), and sound field amplification systems. Information on device usage was not a focus of this survey.

Two respondents were unable to provide information about hearing levels for the deaf children and young people in their sector.

Table 4: Hearing assistive devices provided to children and young people in the data

State	Sector	HA unilateral	HA bilateral	CI unilateral	CI bilateral	HA + CI combos	Bone Conduction aids alone	No hearing devices
New South Wales *	Dept. of Education	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	Independent: NextSense Schools	2	25	3	22	7	5	2
Northern Territory	Dept. of Education (incl. Catholic Ed & Independent)	9	36	2	16	3	15	8
Queens-land *	Dept. of Education	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
South Australia ***	Dept. of Education	4	50	11	24	8	2	1
Tasmania	Dept. of Education (incl. Catholic Ed & Independent)	66	123	4	16	7	31	141
Victoria **	Melbourne Archdiocese of Catholic Schools St Mary's College for the deaf	0	29	0	26	18	1	0
	Student Engagement	23	119	4	13	5	7	0
WA **	Dept. of Education: School of Special Educational Needs: Sensory	~165	~460	~23	~92	~37	~123	~140
	Shenton College Deaf Education Centre	0	10	9	9	3	0	6

*Unable to provide data

**Please interpret the data with caution

***Limited data available: Data only available from centres for deaf education, including two primary settings and two secondary settings

It is important to note that soundfield systems (SFAs) are typically allocated and recorded at the school or classroom level rather than to individual students. Consequently, although many deaf children and young people access this technology, the numbers cannot be reported at the individual student level.

Part B: Educational Settings and Support

The survey sought information on the types of educational settings in which deaf children and young people were enrolled, as well as the additional teacher supports provided for these students.

Enrolment Patterns and Support Services

Table 5 presents the number of deaf children and young people reported to be enrolled in specific educational settings, along with information on the provision of specialist teacher support.

Key findings from the 2025 survey:

The majority of deaf students attend mainstream settings with support services.

- Nine of the respondents reported providing visiting teacher services to students in mainstream settings.
- Six respondents described support through onsite specialist education settings/facilities/schools or units hosted at mainstream schools.
- Early intervention services were reported by Education Departments in Northern Territory, Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia and Victoria
- Only Victoria, Western Australia, and New South Wales identified specialist schools for the deaf as part of their provision.

It's important to note that early intervention services for deaf children and their families continue to evolve due to the implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). These services may not currently reside in or be represented by the educational system that provided data, and this situation may vary across Australian states and territories.

Thriving Kids Initiative

The Australian Government's Thriving Kids initiative is slated to begin rollout in October 2026 and scale nationally by January 2028. This initiative will fundamentally reshape how children with developmental delay and autism are supported outside the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). This program will shift children aged 8 and under with low-to-moderate needs into a community-based "foundational supports" model. It is unclear what impacts this may have on the programs and support for DHH students, particularly those with co-occurring conditions.

Supplementary Information about forms of support in different sectors

Five respondents provided additional details about their support provision.

South Australia Department of Education reported: “Within some of our mainstream schools there are special classes or a disability unit. We also have some special schools. Within those sites there are some Deaf and hard of hearing students who are supported by staff within roles at the school but also who may be receiving support via an itinerant model depending on need and location. 12 attend a special class; 24 attend a disability unit. We have 4 centres for Deaf Education which are within a mainstream primary or high school setting. Current total enrolments for these CDEs are 105 Deaf and hard of hearing children.”

Queensland Department of Education reported: “All students in the Queensland system attend a general or mainstream education setting. Some students within the total of 3661 will attend a special school due

to a diagnosed cognitive impairment and may be deaf or hard of hearing as well."

They additionally reported that of the 323 students who are deaf or hard of hearing enrolled in special schools, 33 use Auslan, seven of whom are Deaf-Blind.

Western Australian Education Department School of Special Educational Needs: Sensory reported that while they did not support students in specialist schools or facilities, "other public-school options are Mosman Park School for Deaf Children, Belmont City College Deaf Education Program and Shenton College for Deaf Children."

Victorian Education Department reported: "There are 82 government specialist schools in Victoria, including three Schools for the Deaf, special developmental schools and autism-specific schools. Since 40%-50% of deaf children are reported to have additional disabilities, it is very likely that there are significant numbers of deaf children enrolled in Victorian government specialist schools. Due to the limitations imposed by the recently implemented policy on administrative burden in schools, we were unable to collect data on the number of deaf children in specialist schools. We are planning to collect this data for future CODE surveys."

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools' Schools reported: While there were "171 [students] with support from Learning Partner- Hearing, [an unknown number of students are supported by] (with) school support from Learning Support Officer/MTSS and School Targeted Programs" and "an unknown number attend mainstream setting who do not require extra support or do not wish to seek extra support"

These additional details provide further insights into the diverse approaches to deaf education across different Australian jurisdictions.

Table 5: Deaf children and young people enrolled in different types of educational settings and additional specialist teacher support provided

State	System	Mainstream Classroom with no additional support	Mainstream Classroom + Visiting Teacher service	Onsite specialist education setting/ facility/ unit in a mainstream classroom	Special school that is not a specialist school for the Deaf (without support)	Special school that isn't a specialist school for the Deaf + Visiting Teacher service	Specialist School for the Deaf	Specialist school for the Deaf operating within mainstream school settings	Early intervention service or setting (e.g., specialist service catering for children who are deaf or hard of hearing)
New South Wales	Dept. of Education	0	~2300	250+	*	*	0		*
	Independent NextSense Schools	0	33	6	0	0	35		0
Northern Territory	Dept. of Education (incl. Catholic Ed & Independent)	0	99	0	0	15	0		8
Queens-land	Dept. of Education	0	3394	76	0	323	0		191
South Australia	Dept. of Education	~450	253	105	10	*	0		110
Tasmania	Dept. of Education, Children and Young People (incl. Catholic Ed & Independent)	6	310	0	0	21	0		0
Victoria	Dept. of Education	0	1600	203	*	110	145		260
	Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools St Mary's College for the deaf	0	0	0	0	0	74		0
	Student Engagement	*	171	0	*	1	0		0
Western Australia	Dept. of Education School of Special Educational Needs: Sensory	0	1108	0	0	46	0		143
	Shenton College Deaf Education Centre	0	0	0	0	0	0	37	0

*No data was provided for this category

Note: Numbers may not exactly match the total students supported due to co-enrolment across different contexts

Part C: Auslan Provision

Table 6 below shows the number of deaf children and young people using Auslan and the support provision provided.

In the 2025 CODE survey, responses indicated that there were approximately 1003 deaf children and young people from the surveyed systems who were using Auslan either as their primary means of communication or as a support for communication. Of these, around 37 were identified as being supported by a qualified sign language interpreter, about 370 were identified as being supported by a communication aide who was not a qualified interpreter, and approximately 127 received support through other means such as ToDs fluent in Auslan, Teacher Aide Auslan Language models (TAALM), note-takers, education assistant support, and Deaf mentors. Two services reported on the number of staff using Auslan to support students rather than the number of students receiving specific support. One service supporting children and young people who use Auslan was unable to provide specific data describing the support provided.

It is important to note that some respondents indicated their education systems did not require equivalent formal qualifications for individuals serving in interpreter roles.

As a result, it was not possible to accurately determine how many of the personnel reported as interpreters met equivalent qualification criteria.

There was a mix of staffing reported under 'other provision' including Auslan fluent teachers of the deaf, Auslan Language Models/Deaf Mentors, notetakers, education assistants and inclusion advisors/visiting teachers with NAATI qualifications.

Queensland reported that approximately 82 of their Auslan using students (P-12) spread across 50 different schools were engaged in some online learning during their week with teachers through the Queensland Virtual Academy to ensure direct instruction from a ToD. They reported these students lived in locations without daily access to a ToD or deaf peers.

In addition to Auslan being reported as a natural sign language, some jurisdictions also reported deaf children and young people using augmentative and alternative communication (AAC). South Australia, Tasmania, Western Australia and Victoria recorded approximately 25 children using AAC as part of their communication strategies. AAC can take many forms—both low-tech (for example, gestures, picture-exchange systems and communication boards) and high-tech options (such as speech-generating devices and dedicated apps). The 2025 CODE Survey does not detail specific devices or systems.

Table 6: Deaf children and young people reported to be using Auslan and the associated support provided

State	Service	Number of children and young people using Auslan	Additional numbers of preschool children using Auslan***	Provision of a qualified sign language interpreter	Provision of a communication aide (other than a qualified sign language interpreter)	Number of children and young people using AAC	Other Provision
New South Wales	Dept. of Education	~107		*	*	*	*
	Independent NextSense Schools	17		0	1	0	16 (qualified ToD fluent in Auslan)
Northern Territory	Dept. of Education (incl. Catholic Ed & Independent)	10		0	6	0	9 (inclusion adviser hearing - VT with NAATI qual)
Queensland	Dept. of Education	285	191	30	220	*	60 TAALM** 82 students supported by TODs virtually
South Australia	Dept. of Education	~88		*	88	~13	NA
Tasmania	Dept. of Education, Children and Young People (incl. Catholic Ed & Independent)	3	3	1	12	21	1 (Deaf mentor)
Victoria	Dept. of Education	250 ****		10	260	*	*
	Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools St Mary's College for the deaf	5		4	0	0	1 (ToD with Auslan proficiency)
	Student Engagement	0		0	0	2	0
Western Australia	Dept. of Education: School of Special Educational Needs: Sensory	18	5	1	3	10	2 (Deaf / Auslan role model)
	Shenton College Deaf Education Centre	21		21	0	0	16 (note-takers, education assistant support, Deaf mentors)

Note: These figures also include children who use bimodal communication (listening and spoken language and a signed language)
* Data not available
**TAALM – Teacher Aide Auslan Language Model
***Preschool and / or EI numbers were provided by these respondents alongside their school data
****This number includes children receiving services prior to school age

Part D: Teachers of the Deaf and other Specialist Staff

Table 7 below, shows the number of specialist staff providing support to deaf children and young people as reported in the CODE 2025 survey. Additional staff supporting deaf children and young people may include personnel with or without specialist qualifications such as those held by a Teacher of the Deaf, working alongside classroom teachers in mainstream or specialist educational settings.

Survey responses indicated that, in addition to classroom teachers, approximately 758 teachers were engaged in specialist roles supporting deaf students. This figure differs by two teachers from the number reported in the 2024 survey, demonstrating a consistency in the data. The qualifications of these staff members were not gathered as part of this survey.

As reported in the previous section, approximately 360 personnel were reported to be working as educational interpreters, with the majority based in Victoria (~52) and Queensland (220). Survey participants also reported at least 206 personnel supporting deaf children and young people in roles such as teacher aides or educational support staff. However, the available data does not allow for determination of the effective full-time equivalent (FTE) for either educational interpreters or teacher aide/ support staff roles.

Table 7: Additional educators working with deaf children and young people

State	Service	Teachers engaged in specialised role supporting students who are deaf or hard of hearing		Educational Interpreter		Teacher Aide	
		Number	FTE	Number	FTE	Number	FTE
New South Wales	Department of Education	330 (+ unknown # of teachers in Support Classes Hearing)	*	*	*	*	*
	Independent NextSense Schools	14	13.2	1	0.6	11	8.8
Northern Territory	Department of Education	3	3	0	0	7	3.5
Queensland	Department of Education	100	87.3	220	*	60	*
South Australia	Department of Education	40	28.1	44	36.2	0	0
Tasmania	Department of Education, Children and Young People	13	*	1 (NAATI)	*	12 (Auslan Assistants)	0
Victoria	Department of Education	~152	137.6	~50	*	~100	90.5
	Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic schools St Mary's College for the deaf	25	21.7	2	1.75	10	5.8
	Student Engagement	2	1.6	0	0	*	*
Western Australia	Department of Education: School of Special Educational Needs: Sensory	70	*	4	*	6	*
	Shenton College Deaf Education Centre	9	6.4	26	19	12	7

FTE Full-time equivalent
* Data not available

Part E: Additional information

Each service was invited to share additional information at their discretion. This information is provided verbatim below.

State	Additional information
Northern Territory	We have a very high population of students who have Conductive Hearing Loss due to Otitis Media. These numbers are not reflected in this survey.
South Australia	Services for DHH children in SA are varied. As a whole, the following services are offered within SA – Teachers of the Deaf and Bilingual Student Support Officers working within Centres for Deaf education and 2 preschools For those students enrolled within their local school in a mainstream setting, funding is allocated as a part of the NCCD data collection. If student needs are identified as needing additional support beyond that level, schools are encouraged to submit an additional funding application which is funded by The Inclusive Education Support Program (IESP). These are all considered on an individual basis and are generally required to be beyond what quality differentiated instruction is expected to be delivered by the teacher. Within our Statewide service, visiting teachers have large caseloads and so they consult, work with the school and child and then case close once the referral outcome has been met. This model is in response to workload and needs of the students but, consequently, means that we are unable to track reliable data on just how many DHH children are enrolled in local schools both regionally and within the metropolitan area. As a department, we are currently building a way to monitor this however it is still not ready and will take time to populate. We recognise that our current data systems have limitations.
Queensland	We have a statewide SLP with signing skills, A Guidance Officer with signing skills, we have a Youth Working/Transition Officer.
Western Australia Department of Education School of Special Educational Needs: Sensory	Additional services provided: Audiologists, Deaf/Auslan Role Model, Psychological Consulting Consultant, Peer Engagement Days [PP-Yr 6], Lighthouse Families [0-3 yr olds] Lighthouse Littles [3-y yr old], Youth Engagement Days [Yrs 7-10]
Western Australia Department of Education: Shenton College Deaf Education Centre	In the secondary schooling context only, a number of migrant and refugee children are late identified and late to language. Some students only learned Auslan on commencement of secondary school and now prefer to access the curriculum through an interpreter
Victoria Melbourne Archdiocese of Catholic Schools St Mary's College for the deaf	Additional provision of 0.8 School employed Speech Language Pathologist
Victoria Department of Education	1157 students are supported by Education Support staff across schools/services

Special focus: Data collection challenges and opportunities

Question: Has your engagement in this data collection process been beneficial to your system/state?

Northern Territory Department of Education: Yes, it has helped us get up to date relevant information about deaf and hard of hearing children and young people in the Northern Territory.

Tasmanian Department of Education: To some extent

South Australian Department of Education: What this process shows is the value in having a centralised way of collecting data. It is also a helpful reflection tool of our current resourcing within SA (staffing) and the need for continued training to support DHH children. It highlights that we do not currently have the means to collate the data due to the limitations of our system and working across divisions considering the different models of support that exists within SA. Prompting CDE leaders to contribute to this data has also allowed for meaningful conversations to occur on keeping accurate records for DHH students.

Queensland Department of Education: Engagement with this process is very important as it helps our system to identify data needed in future years. It provides a method to track data in relation to early years best practice recommendations about diagnosis, device use and intervention and to determine how many of the students who use Auslan are doing so because they are not getting enough support until school age. We note a disproportionate number of Auslan students in Queensland who: live remotely; are First Nations; English as an Additional language or Dialect (EALD), recent arrival or from vulnerable/disadvantaged groups.

International best practice guidelines take family preference into consideration in relation to Auslan provision, particularly in the early years when children and families are still investigating their language options and choices. We have, therefore, deliberately delineated when it includes early years data and when it does not.
Consideration of children with conductive hearing loss as a result of Otitis Media (CHL:OM) needs to be clarified in the data as some states may include this data in their overall figures and others (like Queensland) do not.

Victorian Department of Education – Despite the considerable time, effort and frustration involved in collecting data for the CODE survey, the process has provided an excellent opportunity to escalate the need for the Department of Education to provide a streamlined and centralised data collection system. In the meantime, VDEI is developing strategies to work with deaf education schools and services to ensure that relevant data is shared; a VDEI digital repository for deaf education data is being developed which will also provide ready access to the data we need in the future.

Victoria Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools: As Teachers of the Deaf, we welcome the opportunity to participate in this survey. We gained valuable insight into different aspects of each caseload and the importance of having a flexible model based on the needs of students. It is important to remember that 'One size does not fit all', and in doing so, we respect the dignity and integrity of all.

Western Australian Department of Education School of Special Educational Needs: Sensory: Only in needing to change some ways on how we capture data so that we can answer the questions in this survey – however some of the data that we capture would be beneficial to our system in the long run.

Western Australian Department of Education Shenton College WA: Yes – this process generated discussion regarding data collection and future collation/arrangements of fields as a useful overview of service provision

Part F: Reflections and Future Improvement

The information provided in Table 8 indicates the time taken and the number of personnel involved in the completion of the survey.

Table 8: Time taken to complete the survey and number of personnel involved

State	Service	Time taken (hrs)	Personnel involved
New South Wales	Department of Education	3	2
	Independent: NextSense Schools	5	7
Northern Territory	Department of Education (including Catholic Education and Independent Education)	30	3
Queensland	Department of Education	2	2
South Australia	Department of Education	16	5
Tasmania	Department of Education, Children and Young People (including Catholic Education and Independent Education)	2	2
Victoria	Department of Education	Significant	30
	Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools St Mary's College for the Deaf	2	4
	Student Engagement	10	2
Western Australia	Western Australian Department of Education School of Special Educational Needs: Sensory	5	6
	Shenton College Deaf Education Centre	2	3

Feedback and Areas for Consideration for the 2026 CODE Survey

Conclusion and Acknowledgements

Data Integrity and Significance

This report presents data based on responses from the education sectors listed in Table 1 for the 2025 school year. While CODE has collated this data, it has not been independently verified. Nevertheless, the dataset generated from the CODE survey responses currently represents the most comprehensive source of information available in Australia on the characteristics of deaf children and young people, and their educational supports. The Consortium recognises that many students with temporary, transient, and potentially recurring hearing loss associated with conditions such as otitis media may not be currently well represented in these data. This will be a priority area for future surveys. In addition, the Consortium will be seeking representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community groups.

Future Improvements

To enhance the accuracy and comparability of future surveys, CODE will provide more precise definitions for key terms used in the questions. This refinement will ensure that information from different education systems can be compared and analysed more accurately.

Based on feedback and CODE members' observations during the 2025 survey, the following changes are under consideration for future iterations:

- Differentiate data according to education sector: early intervention, primary, secondary
- Define how each service/ sector identifies eligibility/ criteria for support

Future Participation

We extend our sincere gratitude to the state and territory education systems that participated in the 2025 survey. We look forward to increased engagement in future iterations of the CODE survey. Ongoing and expanded participation will ensure that the CODE survey continues to provide a robust annual overview of the educational experiences of deaf children and young people across Australia.

Long-term Impact

This sustained commitment to data collection and analysis will be critical in improving our understanding of deaf students' needs and, ultimately, in informing the development of effective educational practices tailored to support this diverse group of learners.

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