

19 November 2012

Survey results – Choosing schools and teachers

Methodology

The Australia Institute conducted an online survey of 1,422 Australians in March 2013. Survey respondents were representative by sex, age and state/territory. The survey included questions about survey respondents' awareness of employment practices that may be used by private schools. Respondents who had children (n=306) at school were also asked what they looked for in a school and whether they would consider a private school for their child(ren) if it was more affordable.

Respondents who completed the survey were provided with a small incentive by the panel provider in accordance with the panel provider's standard procedures.

The following data is from this survey.

In choosing a school for your child which of the following was most important:

	School child(ren) attend		All
	Government	Private	
Academic achievement	40	22	62
Teaching methods	27	8	35
Extracurricular activities	3	0	3
Location	77	7	84
The other children at the school	15	0	15
Cost	22	4	26
Religious beliefs	2	12	14
The values of the school	45	22	67
Total	231	75	306

This data shows that location (33 per cent) is the most important factor in choosing a school amongst parents who send their children to a government school. The values of the school (19 per cent) and academic achievement (17 per cent) are the next two highest priorities. These two factors are the first priority, and of equal importance (29 per cent) for parents who send their children to private schools.

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Were you aware that private schools are allowed to discriminate against teachers on the basis of marital status or sexuality?

	School child(ren) attend		All*
	Government	Private	
Yes, aware	172	47	1107
No, not aware	58	28	315
Total	230	75	1422

Include survey respondents without children attending school.

Do you think this school should have to disclose that preference up-front to potential job applicants or the parents of current or potential students?

	School child(ren) attend		All*
	Government	Private	
Yes, they should have to disclose this information	166	52	1009
No, that shouldn't be a requirement	64	23	413
Total	230	75	1422

Include survey respondents without children attending school.

Approximately one in five (22 per cent) Australians surveyed were not aware that private schools were allowed to discriminate against teachers on the basis of marital status or sexuality. This lack of awareness was higher amongst parents with children at private schools (37 per cent).

Seventy per cent of Australians indicated that they thought that private schools should have to disclose such a preference up-front to potential job applicants or the parents of current or potential students. There was only minor variation based on which type of school parents sent their children.