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## **Catholic education welcomes Federal Government funding for school upgrades and equipment**

The National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC) has welcomed today's Federal Government announcement of funding for school upgrades and new equipment.

"The funding provided under the School Upgrade Fund will assist schools with new or improved outdoor learning areas, air conditioning and ventilation facilities, tablets and laptops," National Catholic education executive director Jacinta Collins said.

Ms Collins said Catholic school parents and communities must raise the costs of capital projects privately, contributing more than 90 per cent of the costs required to support school buildings and other capital works in Catholic schools – the vast majority of which offer families a low-fee education.

"In 2021 alone, Catholic schools' contribution to Australia's capital infrastructure through the building of school and community infrastructure investment was around \$2 billion in capital projects, with federal and state governments contributing 4.4 per cent and 6.9 per cent respectively," Ms Collins said.

"In contrast, government school capital costs are mainly funded by state and territory governments with a small contribution from parents."

Ms Collins said grant support from federal and state governments is welcomed as it assists in relieving the economic strain on families.

"With nearly 40 per cent of Catholic schools outside of metropolitan areas, we also appreciate the government's decision to allocate over 50 per cent of the grant funding to schools in regional and remote areas, schools which traditionally experience additional challenges and hardship."

NCEC is the peak body for Catholic Education in Australia and is responsible for the national coordination and representation of Catholic schools and school authorities. There are 1,759 Catholic schools educating nearly 794,000 or one in five Australian students and employing over 104,500 staff.