

Australian Visit



Danske Skoleelever represents all Danish pupils from the ages of 6 to 16 to stakeholders in the educational area, such as other NGOs, municipalities, government agencies, and political parties.

A unique thing about our organisation is that **we are by and for pupils**. This means that we are completely led by democratically elected students in the form of a presidency and board, but have adults working in our organisation for us, taking care of tasks, such as accountancy, that require a specific educational skill.

We work for creating a better school life for all pupils in Denmark and make sure that all pupils are equipped with the skills to participate in a democratic society. To achieve that, we believe that pupils should be heard when solving the challenges in the education area on every level of decision making, right from local school boards to ministries.

In addition, we have in the last couple of years made several projects with partners such as the **Danish Ministry of Education**, TDC (the biggest telecommunications in Denmark) and **Danske Bank** (the largest bank in Denmark), all with the same objective of creating a better school life for the pupils and preparing them for taking part in society.

We are traveling to Australia

Every year, the leadership of our organisation – the Presidency, the HR-Manager, Deputy Head, Head of Secretariat and three Board members – travels abroad to gain inspiration and knowledge that we can bring back home,

and use to create a better school life for Danish pupils. In former years we have been to the USA, Scandinavia, China, and England.

This year we are traveling to southeast Australia, visiting Melbourne, Canberra, and Sydney in February. There are a lot of reasons behind our decision to pick Australia as this year's destination.



First of all, we think **we can learn a lot from Australia**. We believe Australia is a country with a strong tradition in teaching democratic values and making sure that students are listened to and engaged in their school day. This is also a common theme for most of our visits here in Australia: **how do we make sure pupils are involved in the decision-making processes?**

Additionally, we are also interested in **the differences between the Danish and the Australian educational system**.

One major difference is the variation of schools in Australia. In Australia, you have a way bigger share of religious and single-sex schools than in Denmark. We haven't had single-sex schools in Denmark since the 1950s. Besides this, inclusion is also going to be a political priority for our organisation in the coming year, and we believe Australia is a country with a strong inclusion effort, from which we think we can learn a lot.

In Denmark we also see a rising number of parents choosing to **move their children into private education**. We fear that this might harm the mix of students from different social classes; we think that this also is a concern for a lot of Australians and that we could learn a lot from how you solve the issue.

Planned meetings

Currently, we are planning to visit a whole lot of different schools, organisations and researchers among student voice. A common theme throughout our trip is that we are seeking schools and organisations that work with student voice practices, and make sure that students are involved in the decision making processes of the schools. To name a few examples, we are going to visit the **Victorian Student Representative Council (VicSRC)**, the **Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER)**, and **Social Ventures Australia (SVA)**.

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