

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Schools: InBrief Mid-Year Census 2017

Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation

InBrief summarises the results of the census of students in NSW government schools undertaken on Friday 4 August 2017, and the census of NSW non-government schools undertaken by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training on the same day.

Mid-year Census

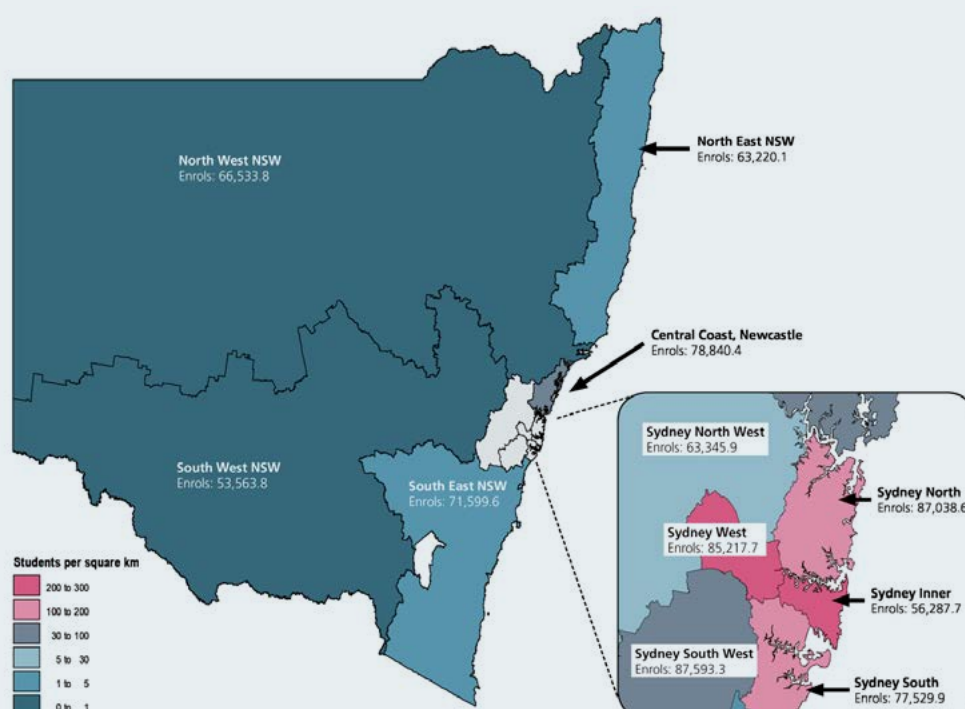
The Mid-Year Census includes data on NSW government schools (preschool, primary, secondary, central/community and schools for specific purposes) and students (age at 1 July, year level, full time/part time enrolment, gender, and Aboriginality).

Enrolments (FTE) by ABS Statistical Area Level 4 groups

Table 1 presents the NSW government schools' enrolment data using a geographical structure based on the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS). This is illustrated in Map 1. The ASGS is maintained by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and allows comparison of education statistics with other statistical data. ASGS Statistical Area Level 4 (SA4) boundaries in New South Wales have been combined into 11 groups for reporting and publication of Department data.

Map 1

Enrolments (FTE) by ABS Statistical Area Level 4 groupings in NSW government schools, mid-year 2017



2017 InBrief summary

NSW government

Full-time equivalent (FTE) enrolments

Primary enrolments	484,645.0
Secondary enrolments	300,832.8
SSP enrolments	5,562.0
Total enrolments	791,039.8

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students

Total Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander enrolments	59,214.2
Percent Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander enrolments	7.5%

Part-time students

Number of part-time students	1,930.0
FTE enrolments	1,206.8

NSW non-government

Full-time equivalent (FTE) enrolments

Primary enrolments	206,833.3
Secondary enrolments	210,597.0
Total enrolments	417,430.3

Preschool Students

Number of preschool students	4,442.0
FTE enrolments	2,407.4

NSW government schools

Primary and infants schools	1,606
Central/community schools	66
Secondary schools	401
Schools for specific purposes (SSPs)	113
Environmental education centres (EECs)	23

Total government schools

Preschools attached to primary/infants schools	99
Separate preschools	1

Total preschools

NSW non-government schools

Primary schools	495
Secondary schools	141
Primary/secondary schools	243
Special schools	57

Total non-government schools

In 2017, 57.8 per cent of government students were enrolled in schools within the Sydney area. The proportion of primary students enrolled in Sydney schools was 58.9 per cent.

All Statistical Area Level 4 groups experienced an increase in primary enrolments in 2017 from 2016. Sydney-West recorded the largest growth in primary enrolments for the third year in a row, with an increase of 2,432 enrolments between 2016 and 2017.

For secondary enrolments, four area groups recorded a marked increase in enrolments. Sydney-South West rose by 2.1 per cent or

739 students. Sydney-North increased by 1.8 per cent, Sydney-West increased by 1.6 per cent and Sydney-Inner increased by 1.1 per cent. All other area groups were stable or recorded a decline of between 0.6 and 2.5 per cent. The largest decrease was in North East NSW where secondary enrolments fell by 657 students (2.5 per cent).

As Map 1 shows, the areas of Sydney-South West and Sydney-North have the highest number of enrolments, with 87,593.3 and 87,038.6 enrolments respectively.

Table 1

Enrolments (FTE) by ABS Statistical Area Level 4 groupings and grade group in NSW government schools, mid-year 2017

Statistical Area Level 4 group	K-2	Y3-6	Primary Total	Y7-10	Y11-12	Secondary Total	SSP	Statistical Area Total	% of NSW
Sydney-North	26,052	31,333	57,385	19,830	9,363.6	29,193.6	460	87,038.6	11.0%
Sydney-Inner	16,663	18,891	35,554	13,958	6,473.7	20,431.7	302	56,287.7	7.1%
Sydney-South	20,528	26,092	46,620	20,922	9,228.9	30,150.9	759	77,529.9	9.8%
Sydney-South West	21,609	29,896	51,505	25,287	10,091.3	35,378.3	710	87,593.3	11.1%
Sydney-West	25,512	30,488	56,000	20,137	8,102.7	28,239.7	978	85,217.7	10.8%
Sydney-North West	16,526	21,945	38,471	17,141	7,384.9	24,525.9	349	63,345.9	8.0%
Sydney Total	126,890	158,645	285,535	117,275	50,645.1	167,920.1	3,558	457,013.1	57.8%
North East NSW	15,607	21,739	37,346	18,554	7,174.1	25,728.1	146	63,220.1	8.0%
North West NSW	16,963	23,328	40,291	19,568	6,457.8	26,025.8	217	66,533.8	8.4%
South West NSW	13,510	18,526	32,036	15,606	5,362.8	20,968.8	559	53,563.8	6.8%
South East NSW	18,232	25,150	43,382	20,540	7,258.6	27,798.6	419	71,599.6	9.1%
Central Coast, Newcastle	19,433	26,470	45,903	23,514	8,760.4	32,274.4	663	78,840.4	10.0%
Regional Total	83,807	115,303	199,110	97,861	35,051.7	132,912.7	2,004	334,026.7	42.2%
NSW	210,697	273,948	484,645	215,136	85,696.8	300,832.8	5,562	791,039.8	100.0%

Notes: Students in Distance Education are included with their appropriate grade levels.

Primary support students are included in Y3-6. Secondary support students are included in Y7-10.

Norfolk Island Central School (FTE of 290.4) is included in Regional Total and NSW, but does not have an ABS Statistical Area Level 4 code.

Aboriginal enrolments (FTE)

Map 2 shows the percentage of NSW government students in each Statistical Area Level 4 group who identify as Aboriginal. In North West NSW 22.8 per cent of students identified as Aboriginal, compared with five per cent or less in each statistical area group in Sydney.

All Sydney areas had less than 6 per cent of their student enrolments identified as Aboriginal. Other areas in NSW had Aboriginal enrolments between 9 and 14.6 per cent of their student enrolments.

Map 2

Percentage of enrolments (FTE) identified as Aboriginal by ABS Statistical Area Level 4 groupings in NSW government schools, mid-year 2017

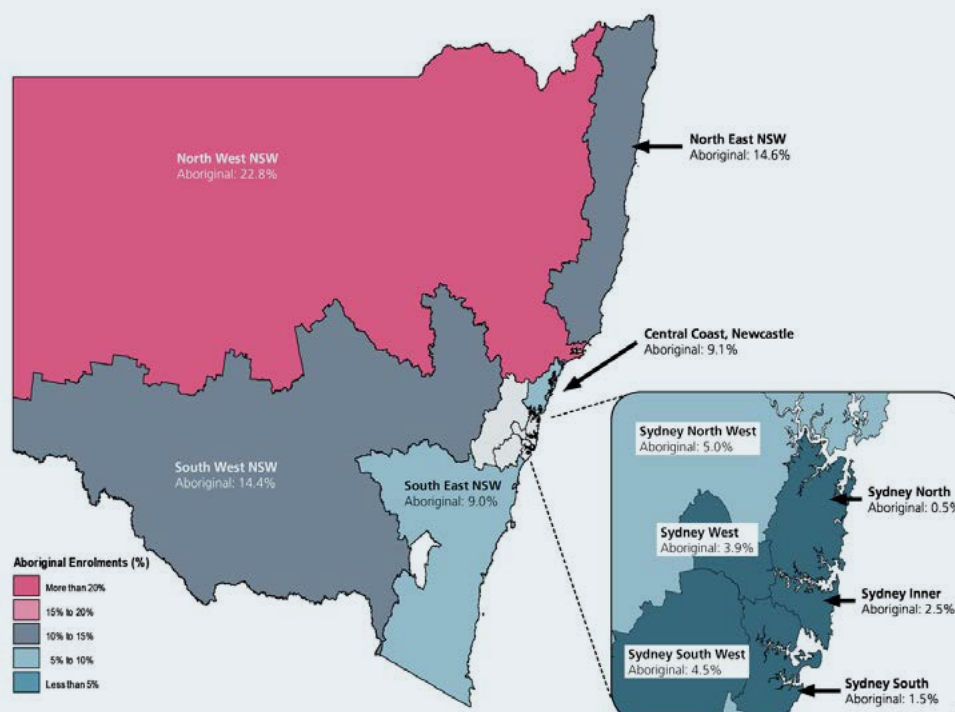


Table 2

Enrolments (FTE) of Aboriginal students by ABS Statistical Area Level 4 groupings and grade group in NSW government schools, mid-year 2017

Statistical Area Level 4 group	K-2	Y3-6	Primary Total	Y7-10	Y11-12	Secondary Total	Statistical Area Total	% of NSW
Sydney-North	111	146	257	146	51.1	197.1	466.1	0.8%
Sydney-Inner	389	481	870	398	123.3	521.3	1,429.3	2.4%
Sydney-South	269	384	653	361	117.4	478.4	1,154.4	1.9%
Sydney-South West	1,004	1,410	2,414	1,103	286.8	1,389.8	3,916.8	6.6%
Sydney-West	897	1,206	2,103	878	233.0	1,111.0	3,329.0	5.6%
Sydney-North West	848	1,112	1,960	979	219.8	1,198.8	3,196.8	5.4%
Sydney Total	3,518	4,739	8,257	3,865	1,031.4	4,896.4	13,492.4	22.8%
North East NSW	2,388	3,246	5,634	2,753	786.9	3,539.9	9,230.9	15.6%
North West NSW	4,042	5,321	9,363	4,609	1,115.1	5,724.1	15,175.1	25.6%
South West NSW	2,052	2,672	4,724	2,266	571.6	2,837.6	7,690.6	13.0%
South East NSW	1,629	2,279	3,908	2,023	467.2	2,490.2	6,459.2	10.9%
Central Coast, Newcastle	1,782	2,432	4,214	2,248	560.0	2,808.0	7,162.0	12.1%
Regional Total	11,894	15,951	27,845	13,901	3,500.8	17,401.8	45,721.8	77.2%
NSW	15,412	20,690	36,102	17,766	4,532.2	22,298.2	59,214.2	100.0%
Aboriginal total as a percentage of total NSW enrolments	7.3%	7.6%	7.4%	8.3%	5.3%	7.4%	7.5%	

Notes: Students in Distance Education are included with their appropriate grade levels.

Primary support students are included in Y3-6. Secondary support students are included in Y7-10.

There were 814 Aboriginal students enrolled in SSPs, representing 15% of total SSP enrolments. Aboriginal students in SSPs are not included in the grade group data but are included in the Statistical Area total column.

Norfolk Island Central School (FTE of 290.4) is included in Regional Total and NSW, but does not have an ABS Statistical Area Level 4 code.

Figure 1

Enrolments (FTE) of Aboriginal students by ABS Statistical Area Level 4 grouping and grade group in NSW government schools, mid-year 2017

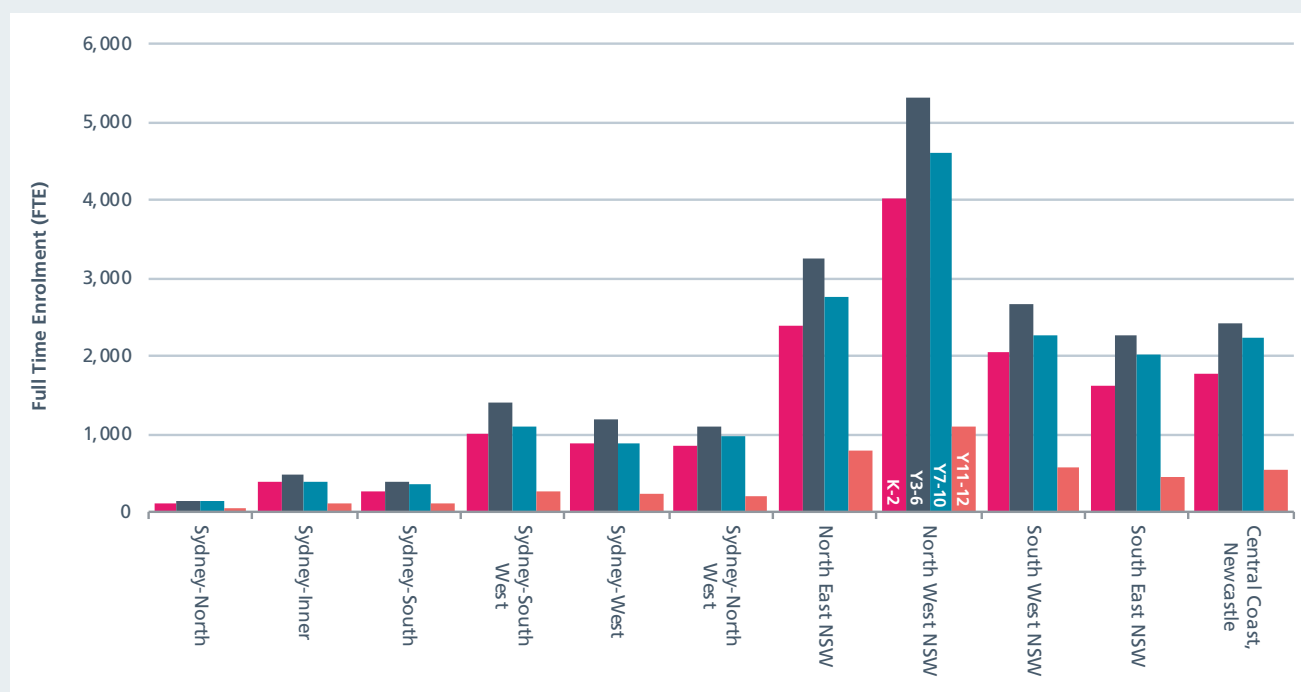


Table 2 shows NSW government student enrolments of Aboriginal students by statistical area groupings and grade groups, and Figure 1 illustrates this comparison.

The majority (77.2 per cent) of NSW government Aboriginal students are enrolled outside of Sydney. Although the six Sydney statistical area groupings account for 57.8 per cent of all enrolments in NSW, only 22.8 per cent of NSW Aboriginal students are enrolled in Sydney.

North West NSW and North East NSW had the highest Aboriginal enrolments at 25.6 and 15.6 per cent of total Aboriginal enrolments respectively. In Sydney, the statistical area groupings of Sydney-South West, Sydney-West and Sydney-North West had relatively higher Aboriginal students' enrolments, at 6.6 per cent, 5.6 per cent and 5.4 per cent of total Aboriginal enrolments respectively. In contrast, Sydney-North only had 0.8 per cent of Aboriginal enrolments, compared with 11.0 per cent of all students.

Overall, Aboriginal student enrolments have increased by 2,633.7 students or 4.7 per cent from 56,580.5 in 2016 to 59,214.2 in 2017. North West NSW recorded the largest increase of 735.9 Aboriginal students, from 14,439.2 in 2016 to 15,175.1 in 2017.

2017 enrolments (FTE)

Table 3 shows NSW government school enrolments by school level and Figure 2 shows government school enrolments as a proportion of 2001 enrolments.

The total number of full-time equivalent students in NSW government schools increased by 10,439.9 or 1.3 per cent, from 780,599.9 in 2016 to 791,039.8 in 2017. This is the ninth year in a row that total government school enrolments have increased, after a sustained downward trend between 1998 and 2008.

From 2012 to 2016 the increase in total number of full-time equivalent students in NSW government schools was driven by increasing primary enrolments, which was greater than the decrease in secondary enrolments. However in 2017, secondary enrolments increased by 762.9 students, the first increase since 2011. Primary enrolments also increased by 9,572 students and enrolments at schools for specific purposes (SSPs) increased by 105 students.

Figure 2 shows that enrolments in Years 11 and 12 rose from 2008 to 2014, largely as a result of the raising of the school leaving age in 2010. However Year 11 and 12 enrolments declined between 2014 and 2017 and now represent 107 per cent of 2001 enrolments.

Kindergarten to Year 2 enrolments have increased markedly since 2009 and now represent 110 per cent of 2001 enrolments. These additional enrolments are mostly the result of demographic changes, with larger numbers of children born in NSW since 2005.

Year 3 to 6 enrolments declined from 2001 to 2008 and remained at around 95 per cent of 2001 enrolments until 2013. However, since then enrolments have grown rapidly and are expected to keep rising, although at a slower rate. This is caused by the increased birth rate from 2005, with Kindergarten children from 2011 to 2014 now in Years 3 to 6.

Year 7 to 10 enrolments rose a little from 2001 to 2006 and then fell steadily for the next eight years, with a slight increase in 2010 when the school leaving age was raised. Between 2014 and 2016 enrolments remained steady at under 97 per cent of 2001 enrolments. However in 2017 Year 7 to 10 enrolments rose by 1,548 students as the 2010 Kindergarten children started high school.

Enrolments in NSW government schools are affected by a number of factors, including the school age population, the participation rate and the enrolment share between government and non-government schools. For students of compulsory school age (5 to 17 inclusive), the participation rate is close to 100 per cent; however, after this age it declines

noticeably (from 2010, all NSW students must complete Year 10. After Year 10 and until the age of 17 students must be in school and/or in approved education or training and/or in full-time paid employment).

Kindergarten enrolments increased by 756 students (1.1 per cent) in 2017, continuing the trend of increasing Kindergarten enrolments observed in most years since 2008. Kindergarten enrolments generally reflect the NSW birth rate five years' previously.

The largest increases in enrolments in 2017 were in Year 5 and Year 6. Year 5 enrolments rose by 4.4 per cent from 63,456 students in 2016 to 66,278 in 2017, while Year 6 enrolments rose by 4.7 per cent from 60,308 students in 2016 to 63,138 in 2017 (individual grade level data not presented in tables). This is due to the progression of large numbers of Kindergarten students enrolled in 2011 and 2012.

Table 3

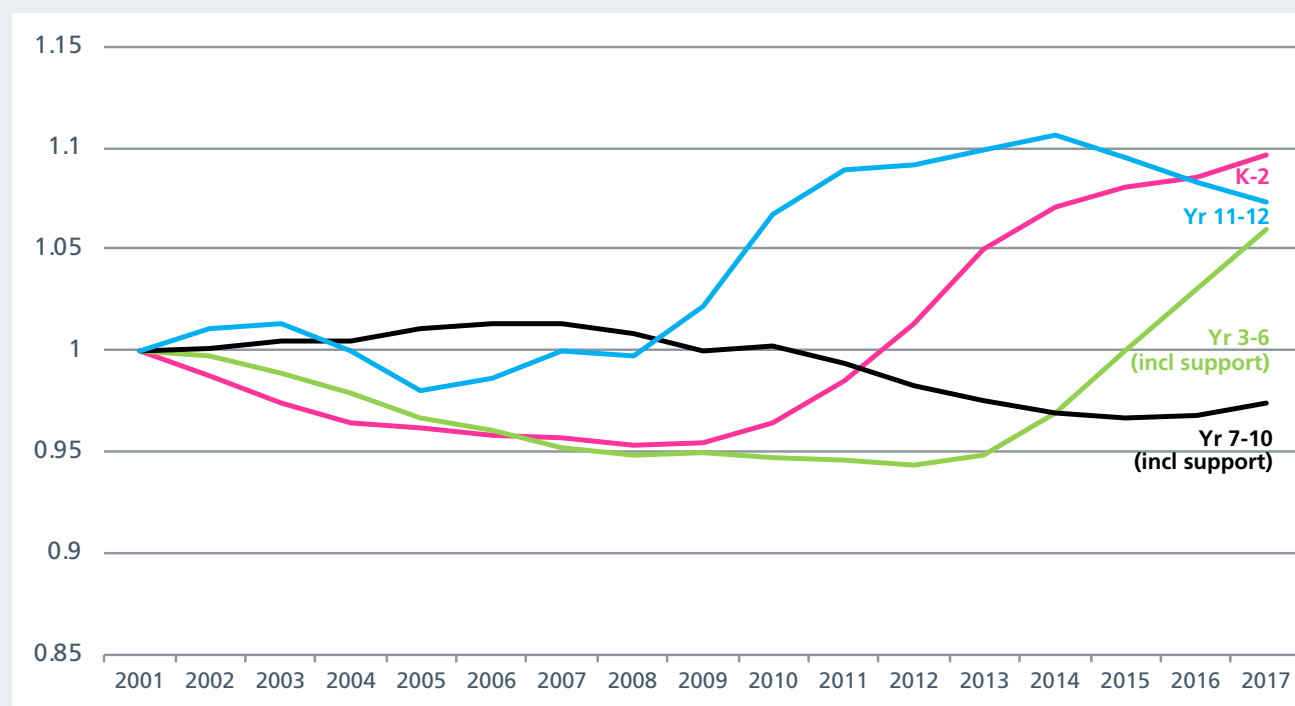
Enrolments (FTE) in NSW government schools by grade level and schools for specific purposes, 1996-2017

Year	Primary (K-6)	Secondary (7-12)	SSP	Total
1996	450,465	306,823.3	3,749	761,037.3
1997	451,560	308,922.7	3,690	764,172.7
1998	452,568	309,133.7	3,673	765,374.7
1999	453,454	308,116.1	3,762	765,332.1
2000	454,363	303,681.0	3,792	761,836.0
2001	451,093	301,774.4	3,873	756,740.4
2002	447,897	302,988.0	3,915	754,800.0
2003	443,213	304,034.0	3,938	751,185.0
2004	438,677	302,849.6	3,981	745,507.6
2005	434,876	302,578.3	4,124	741,578.3
2006	432,660	303,622.0	4,133	740,415.0
2007	429,900	304,457.7	4,278	738,635.7
2008	428,331	303,055.7	4,392	735,778.7
2009	429,000	303,180.7	4,466	736,646.7
2010	430,177	307,291.2	4,673	742,141.2
2011	433,873	306,893.2	4,774	745,540.2
2012	438,681	304,632.1	4,921	748,234.1
2013	446,848	303,433.6	5,064	755,345.6
2014	456,151	302,339.7	5,207	763,697.7
2015	465,767	300,871.1	5,340	771,978.1
2016	475,073	300,069.9	5,457	780,599.9
2017	484,645	300,832.8	5,562	791,039.8

Notes: Since 1993 some students have enrolled part-time. All enrolments are reported in full-time equivalent units (FTEs) and include full-time and part-time students.

Figure 2

NSW government school enrolments (FTE) as a proportion of total 2001 enrolments (FTE) by grade groups, 2001-2017



Government enrolment share (FTE)

School enrolment growth can be affected by parental choice in selecting non-government education, the base school population, the changing legal and policy framework in NSW and the ability of schools to respond to demographic changes. Figure 3 shows the change in enrolments of government and non-government schools in each year since 2006 and Table 4 provides data in selected years from 1901.

Overall enrolments in NSW have increased by more than 8,000 each year since 2010, and by more than 12,000 in each of the last five years. Since 2006, the total number of students enrolled

in education in NSW has increased by 98,153 students, driven by changes to the NSW school leaving age and higher birth rate.

For the last four years, government school enrolment growth has surpassed the enrolment growth of non-government schools. Government enrolments increased by 10,440 in 2017, compared with an increase of 3,842 for non-government schools. The growth in government enrolments from 2016 to 2017 is mostly driven by a large increase in government primary aged enrolments of 9,632 students. Secondary students increased by 808 students from 2016 to 2017, the first increase since 2010.



Table 4

Enrolments (FTE) and percentage of enrolment share in NSW government and non-government schools, 1901-2017

Year	Government Enrolment	Share	Non-government Enrolment	Share	Total
1901	210,588	77.6%	60,837	22.4%	271,425
1911	221,810	78.3%	61,550	21.7%	283,360
1921	315,228	80.1%	78,460	19.9%	393,688
1931	387,881	80.8%	92,285	19.2%	480,166
1941	337,073	76.2%	105,319	23.8%	442,392
1951	405,906	75.3%	133,019	24.7%	538,925
1961	610,883	75.2%	201,147	24.8%	812,030
1971	771,713	77.6%	222,195	22.4%	993,908
1981	790,575	76.9%	237,853	23.1%	1,028,428
1986	755,257	73.6%	270,745	26.4%	1,026,011
1991	746,417	72.0%	290,896	28.0%	1,037,313
1996	761,034	71.4%	305,373	28.6%	1,066,407
2001	756,738	68.7%	344,228	31.3%	1,100,966
2006	740,415	66.7%	369,902	33.3%	1,110,317
2011	745,540	66.0%	384,209	34.0%	1,129,749
2012	748,234	65.7%	390,756	34.3%	1,138,990
2013	755,346	65.4%	398,813	34.6%	1,154,159
2014	763,698	65.4%	404,623	34.6%	1,168,321
2015	771,978	65.3%	409,627	34.7%	1,181,605
2016	780,600	65.4%	413,588	34.6%	1,194,188
2017	791,040	65.5%	417,430	34.5%	1,208,470

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Schools Australia 2017

Notes: From 1993 the table includes full-time and part-time students, reported in full-time equivalent units (FTE).
Government and non-government school data for 1901-1961 include students in ACT schools.

Figure 3

Change in enrolments (FTE) from the previous year, NSW government and non-government schools, 2006-2017

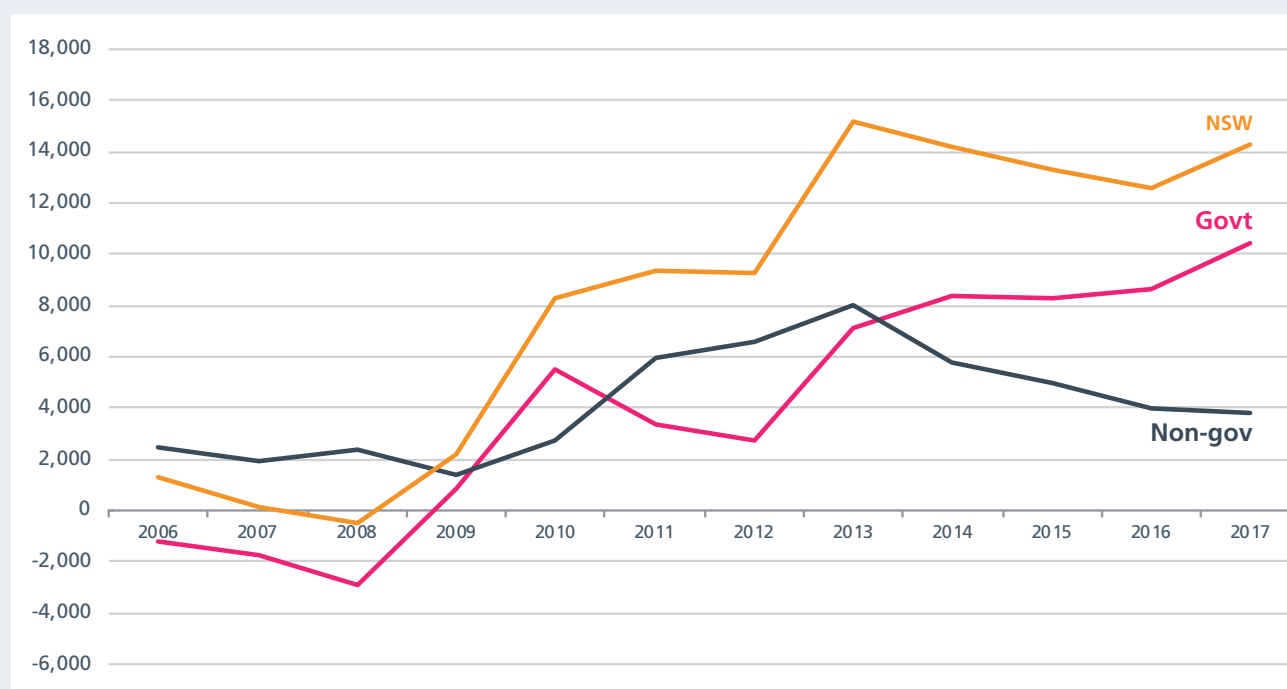


Table 4 shows the enrolment share for students at government and non-government schools in NSW. Total government enrolment share has fallen gradually over the last few years, reaching a low of 65.3 per cent in 2015. The enrolment share has increased slightly for the past two years and is now at 65.5 per cent.

Figure 4 shows NSW government enrolment share by education level. Enrolment share for primary students rose by 0.2 percentage points from 70.0 per cent in 2016 to 70.2 per cent in 2017. This was the fourth increase following over twenty years of falling primary enrolment share.

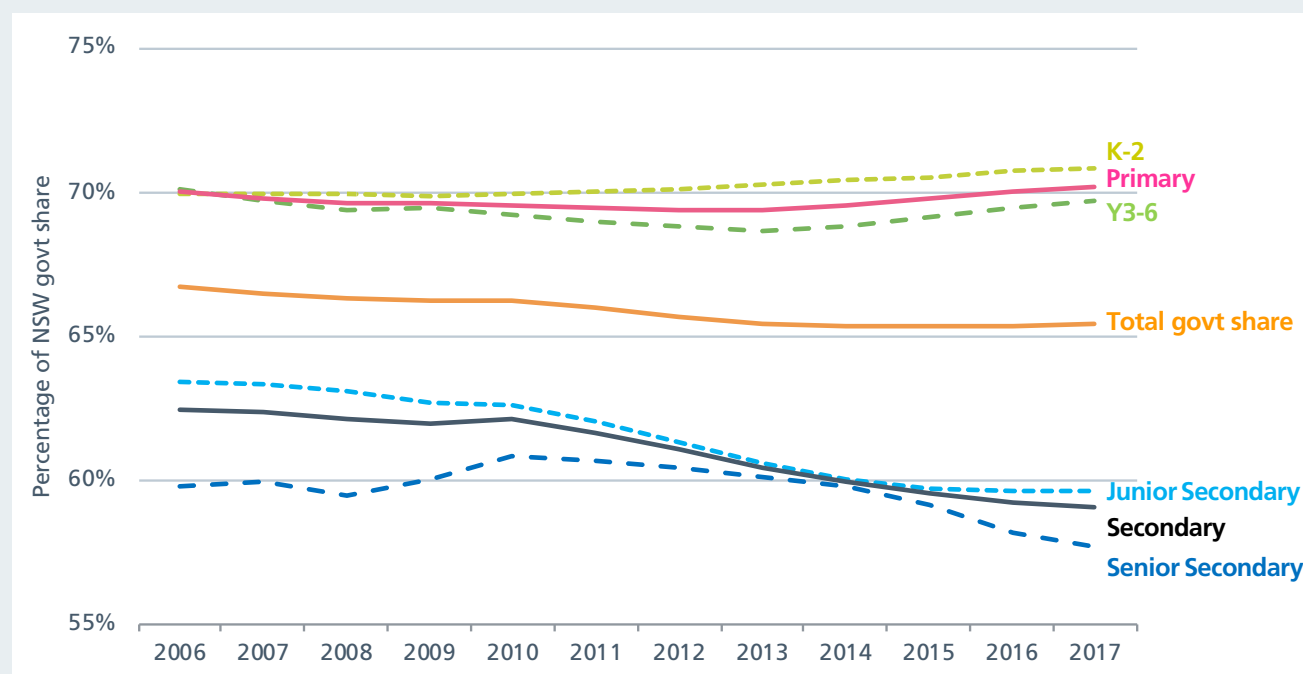
Despite increasing enrolments, the secondary enrolment share fell slightly from 59.2 per cent in 2016 to 59.1 per cent in 2017. This indicates that non-government secondary enrolments

increased by more than government secondary enrolments. Enrolment share for junior secondary students has stabilised at 59.7 per cent, while the senior secondary enrolment share has continued its long-term downward trend, falling 0.5 percentage points from 58.2 per cent in 2016 to 57.7 per cent in 2017.

Primary enrolment share was around 7 to 8 percentage points higher than secondary enrolment share until 2013, however the gap has widened to over 10 percentage points since 2015. Within primary education, Kindergarten to Year 2 enrolment share rose from 70.7 per cent in 2016 to 70.9 in 2017, and Year 3 to Year 6 increased from 69.4 per cent in 2016 to 69.7 in 2017.

Figure 4

Percentage of NSW government enrolments (FTE) share by grade group, 2006-2017



Government preschool

In NSW, most children receiving a preschool education are enrolled at a government funded community preschool or in a Long Day Care centre. The NSW government operates 100 preschools, providing a preschool education to over 4,000 children.

Table 5 shows that the number of children enrolled in government preschools decreased by four children from 4,446 in 2016 to 4,442 in 2017. However, FTE enrolments increased slightly, from 2,396.0 in 2016 to 2,407.4 in 2017, which indicates that some children were enrolled for more days in 2017.

Aboriginal preschool enrolments accounted for 15.0 per cent of FTE enrolments in 2017, an increase of 1.0 percentage point since 2016. Aboriginal preschool enrolments rose by 22 students or 3.8 per cent, from 577 in 2016 to 599 in 2017.

Table 5

Number of students and enrolment full-time equivalents (FTE) in NSW government preschools, 2007-2017

Year	All Students		Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students		
	Students	FTE	Students	FTE	% of Total FTE
2007	4,239	2,422.6	404	262.3	10.8%
2008	4,285	2,516.9	409	269.5	10.7%
2009	4,291	2,455.5	491	317.7	12.9%
2010	4,325	2,498.6	493	315.1	12.6%
2011	4,416	2,484.9	507	328.7	13.2%
2012	4,424	2,460.7	599	379.9	15.4%
2013	4,433	2,371.1	555	327.0	13.8%
2014	4,365	2,356.8	533	321.9	13.7%
2015	4,278	2,306.6	565	339.6	14.7%
2016	4,446	2,396.0	577	335.5	14.0%
2017	4,442	2,407.4	599	360.6	15.0%

Early intervention preschool children

Children enrolled in an early intervention class at a NSW government school were included in the government school census for the first time in 2012. Early intervention classes provide early childhood education in a preschool setting for children with a disability. Enrolments in early intervention classes

increased by seven students, from 707 in 2016 to 714 in 2017. The percentage of students enrolled in an early intervention program who were Aboriginal decreased from 13.9 per cent in 2016 to 11.0 per cent in 2017.

Table 6

Number of students and enrolment full-time equivalents (FTE) in NSW government early intervention programs, 2012-2017

Year	All Students		Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students		
	Students	FTE	Students	FTE	% of Total FTE
2012	743	151.9	68	13.0	8.6%
2013	684	147.7	76	14.8	10.0%
2014	720	168.1	91	16.7	9.9%
2015	710	162.2	102	20.1	12.4%
2016	707	146.3	105	20.4	13.9%
2017	716	154.1	106	20.1	13.0%

Apparent retention rate

Apparent retention measures the proportion of students who remain at school through to Year 10, 11 or 12 and is one measure of students' engagement with education. For example, the Year 7 to Year 10 apparent retention rate in 2017 is the percentage of Year 10 enrolments in 2017 compared to Year 7 enrolments in 2014. Retention is affected by legal and policy changes such as the school leaving age legislation which came into effect in 2010.

Table 7 and Figure 5 show that NSW government apparent retention rates generally decreased or were unchanged in 2017 compared with 2016, with the exception of a few cohort groupings.

Apparent retention for boys from Year 7 to 12 and Year 10 to 12, increased by 0.4 and 0.2 percentage points respectively. The apparent retention rate for girls from Year 7 to 12 and Year 10 to 12 increased by 1.8 and 1.2 percentage points respectively from 2016 to 2017.

Table 7

Apparent retention rates by retention period and gender and in NSW government schools, 2006-2017

Year	Years 7-10			Years 7-11			Years 7-12			Years 10-11			Years 10-12		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
2006	95.2	95.8	95.5	73.1	83.1	78.0	60.5	72.5	66.4	77.1	87.1	82.0	63.9	75.5	69.6
2007	96.0	96.6	96.3	73.9	83.8	78.7	60.0	71.5	65.7	77.6	87.5	82.4	63.3	75.0	69.1
2008	96.6	96.6	96.6	73.9	84.0	78.8	60.3	72.0	66.0	77.0	86.9	81.9	63.3	75.2	69.1
2009	95.6	97.4	96.5	77.3	85.1	81.1	61.5	73.9	67.6	80.0	88.1	84.0	64.1	76.5	70.2
2010	99.4	100.2	99.8	81.1	89.7	85.3	64.9	74.8	69.7	84.8	92.2	88.4	67.1	77.4	72.2
2011	102.2	102.4	102.3	83.3	91.3	87.2	66.1	77.6	71.7	83.7	91.1	87.3	69.1	79.7	74.3
2012	101.4	102.8	102.1	86.1	93.3	89.6	66.9	77.4	72.0	84.3	91.0	87.6	67.3	77.3	72.2
2013	102.0	102.1	102.0	88.1	94.6	91.3	69.0	79.7	74.3	86.9	92.0	89.4	67.6	77.8	72.6
2014	103.0	103.2	103.1	89.3	94.9	92.1	70.9	81.2	75.9	87.6	92.9	90.2	69.9	79.0	74.4
2015	103.3	103.9	103.6	90.2	95.9	93.0	71.3	80.7	75.9	87.6	93.0	90.2	70.0	79.0	74.4
2016	103.7	105.0	104.3	89.4	96.9	93.1	71.1	81.6	76.2	86.5	93.3	89.9	69.0	79.1	73.9
2017	103.7	104.4	104.0	88.8	96.0	92.4	71.5	83.4	77.4	85.6	91.5	88.5	69.2	80.3	74.7

Notes: All enrolments are reported in full-time equivalent units (FTEs), and include full-time and part-time students. Students enrolled in distance education classes are included with their appropriate grade levels. See explanatory note 2.

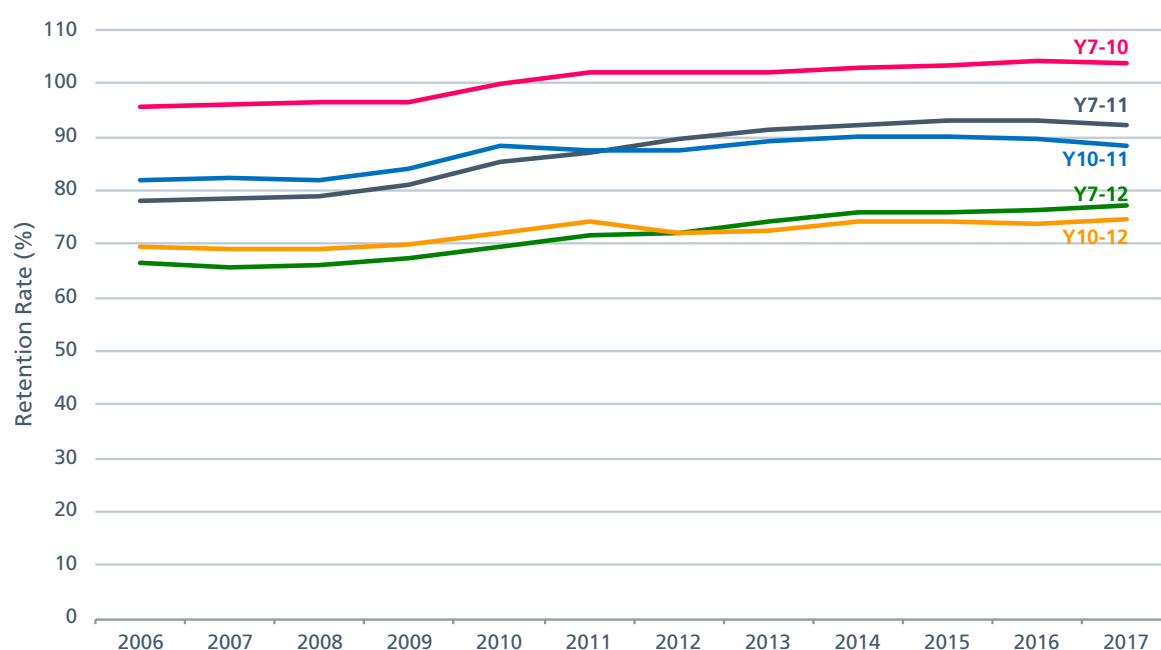
As seen in Figure 5, 2017 continues the highest retention rates since 2006 for Year 7 to 12 and Year 10 to 12 groupings. Apparent retention rates for all other cohorts decreased by between 0.3 percentage points and 1.4 percentage points.

The apparent retention rate from year 10 to year 12 in NSW government schools increased from 73.9 per cent in 2016 to 74.7 per cent in 2017, reversing the decline from 2015 (74.4 per cent). The 2017 rate is 5.6 percentage points higher than in 2008 (69.1 per cent), before the implementation of the new school leaving age legislation.

By gender, the apparent retention rates show a significant difference beyond Year 10. Girls are significantly more likely to remain at school until Year 11 or Year 12 than boys, with the Year 10 to 12 apparent retention rates for girls, 11.1 percentage points higher than that of boys in 2017. While the overall Year 7 to Year 12 apparent retention rate increased by 1.2 per cent from 76.2 per cent in 2016 to 77.4 per cent in 2017, the gap between girls and boys increased from 10.5 percentage points in 2016 to 11.9 percentage points in 2017.

Figure 5

Apparent retention rates by retention period in NSW government schools, 2006-2017



Explanatory Notes

1. Mid-year census

The Census is used for state and federal planning and accountability, including reporting requirements under the NSW Education Act 1990 and the National Education Agreement 2012. Data contribute to the National School Statistics Collection (NSSC) which is collated by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) from state and territory student, school and staffing data. Preschool and early intervention data contribute to the ABS National Early Childhood Education and Care (NECEC) collection.

2. Apparent retention rates

Retention rates are 'apparent' as they do not track individual students through their final years of secondary schooling. What they measure is the ratio of the total number of full-time school students in a designated year (e.g. Year 12 in 2017) divided by the total number of full-time students in a previous year (e.g. Year 7 in 2012). This would be the Year 7 to 12 apparent retention rate in 2017.

Care should be taken in the interpretation of apparent retention rates, which can exceed 100%, because the method of calculation does not take into account a range of factors such as migration, interstate movements of students, transfers to and from non-government schools, part-time schooling, students repeating a year of schooling, or students pursuing other education and training pathways.

3. Norfolk Island Central School

From 2016, the NSW Department of Education has provided school education services under an agreement with the Australian government. Norfolk Island Central School was included in NSW data for the first time in 2016. It has not been designated an SA4 group, so is included in regional and NSW totals, but not included in individual SA4 group data (tables 1 and 2).

Further information:

Each year the Australian Bureau of Statistics releases full publications and datacubes of government and non-government school enrolments for all states and territories.

www.abs.gov.au

ABS publication details:

- 4221.0 - Schools Australia, 2016
- 4240.0 - Preschool Education Australia, 2016

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