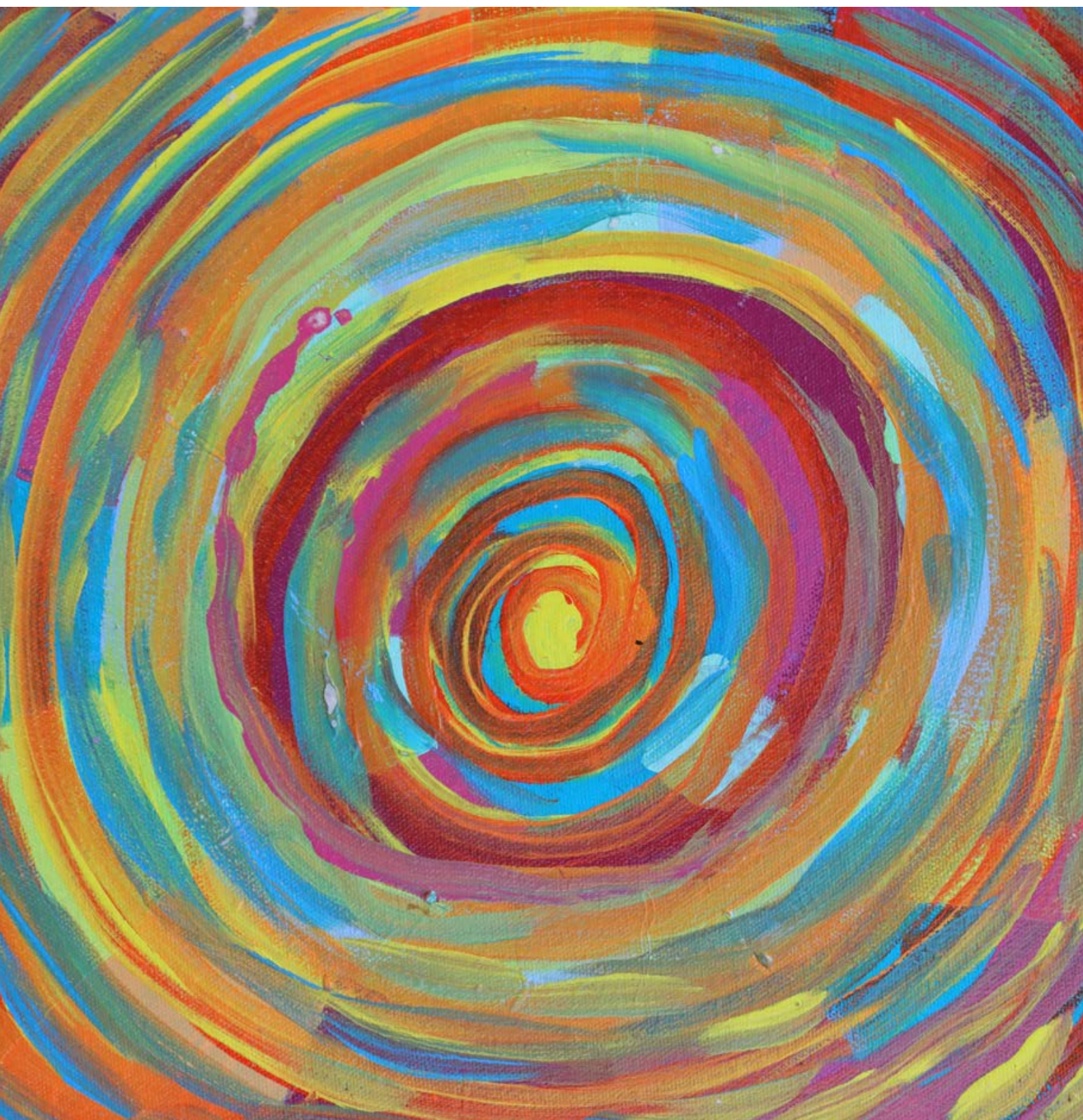


Wollongong State of the Children Report 2020



Acknowledgement

Wollongong City Council would like to acknowledge and pay respect to the Traditional Custodians of the Land, to Elders past and present, and extend that respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living within the Wollongong Local Government Area.

Thank you

We would like to acknowledge and thank students from Austinmer Public School, Balgownie Public School and Mount Brown Public School who shared their thoughts, ideas and artwork for this report.

Cover image: *In The Dreaming*, Lorshae Brown, 14 years old, Coomaditchie United Aboriginal Corporation

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Lord Mayor message

I am proud to present the first State of the Children report for the City of Wollongong. This report provides our community with information on how the children of Wollongong are developing, across all areas of their lives. The report presents a snapshot of the experiences of children and families living in the Wollongong Local Government Area. It shows in what aspects of life children are developing well and where we can focus on improving.

At Wollongong City Council, we aim to continue progress towards improving the lives, opportunities and wellbeing of children. In 2008, Council made a commitment to becoming a Child Friendly City, which is a UNICEF initiative that recognises the voices, needs, priorities and rights of children as an integral part of public policy, programming and decision making. We believe that a City that is good for children is good for everyone. We have a focus on increasing children's participation, ensuring their voices are heard and their needs and wishes are respected and captured in our plans.

We encourage local organisations and groups to use this document to inform their planning, programs and services for children. By focusing on building on our children's strengths and responding to challenges faced by them and their families, we can continue to create a city where children are safe, can thrive and are supported to reach their full potential.

Wollongong City Lord Mayor
Councillor

Gordon Bradbery AM



Purpose

This is Wollongong's first State of the Children report. The report has been developed as a resource for our community and to support local organisations to plan services and programs for children across the Wollongong Local Government Area. The report uses data to tell the story of how children are developing across Wollongong LGA, compared to New South Wales (NSW) benchmarks.

This report presents data in areas that contribute to a child's overall development and wellbeing. Being the first State of the Children report for Wollongong, the data presented here provides a baseline and starting point from which areas of growth and change can be identified and monitored in future years.



Image: Evie, 11, Austinmer Public School

Engagement with children

In 2017, 80 children aged between five and 12 from Austinmer, Balgownie and Mount Brown Public School's participated in engagement activities to inform this report. Children shared their thoughts on the important things that contribute to their development, health, safety and wellbeing by drawing a picture and finishing the following sentences:

Their thoughts, ideas and artworks have been included throughout this report.



How to read this report

In this report, children have been defined as aged 0-14 years while data has been presented based on the geographic footprint of the Wollongong LGA, unless otherwise stated.

Some data gaps have been identified to highlight the importance of collecting or sourcing this data in the future. This would help gain a better understanding of children and family's experiences and enable better monitoring of progress over time.

This report presents a combination of publicly available data, data sourced independently from government agencies and collected data by Wollongong City Council. Major data sources include:

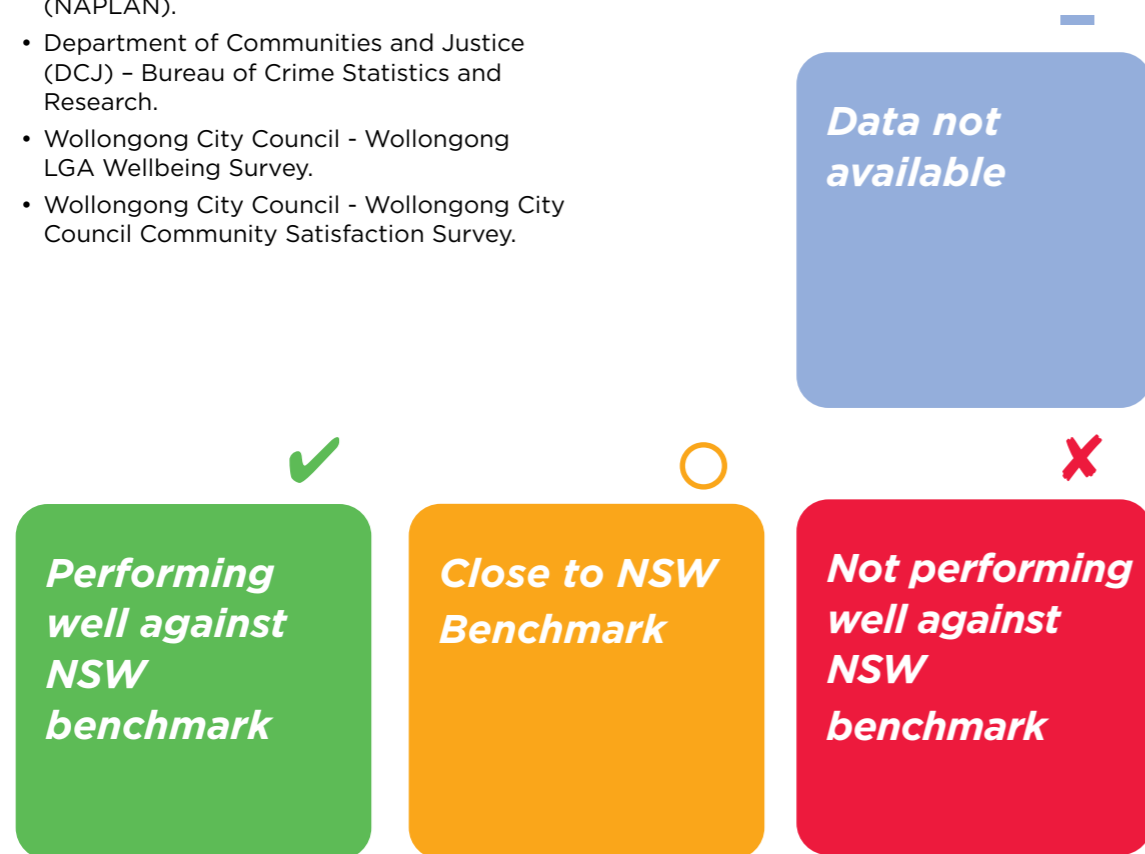
- Australian Bureau of Statistics - Census of Population and Housing.
- NSW Health - HealthStats NSW.
- Australian Early Development Census - Australian Early Development Census (AEDC).
- Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority - National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN).
- Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) - Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research.
- Wollongong City Council - Wollongong LGA Wellbeing Survey.
- Wollongong City Council - Wollongong City Council Community Satisfaction Survey.

The information has been presented under five areas:

- Health
- Learning
- Family
- Home
- Participation

Data has been grouped in this way to help identify areas of focus to make Wollongong a better place for children to live, grow and play. Introductory information is provided for each area to outline their importance to children's development.

Throughout the document, data has been presented in comparison to NSW benchmarks. Results have been colour-coded to make the data easier to understand and compare:



Summary of indicators

Health

Indicator	Comparison to NSW Benchmark	Page
Maternal smoking during pregnancy	Not performing well against NSW benchmark	12
Maternal overweight and obesity - Healthy Weight	Close to NSW Benchmark	12
Maternal overweight and obesity - Overweight or Obese	Not performing well against NSW benchmark	12
First antenatal visit by gestational age - 14 weeks	Not performing well against NSW benchmark	12
First antenatal visit by gestational age - 20 weeks	Close to NSW Benchmark	12
Pre-term births	Close to NSW Benchmark	13
Low birth weight babies	Close to NSW Benchmark	13
Full immunisation in children - 1 year	Close to NSW Benchmark	13
Full immunisation in children - 2 years	Performing well against NSW benchmark	13
Full immunisation in children - 5 years	Performing well against NSW benchmark	13
Asthma status in children aged 2-15 years - ever had asthma	Performing well against NSW benchmark	13
Asthma status in children aged 2-15 years - currently have asthma	Performing well against NSW benchmark	13
Overweight and obesity in children aged 5-16 years	Close to NSW Benchmark	14
Fruit and vegetables: Recommended daily consumption by children - vegetables	Not performing well against NSW benchmark	14
Fruit and vegetables: Recommended daily consumption by children - Fruit	Not performing well against NSW benchmark	14
Physical activity by behaviour type - adequate physical activity - children aged 5-15 years	Close to NSW Benchmark	15
Physical activity by behaviour type - sedentary behaviours - children aged 5-15 years	Not performing well against NSW benchmark	15

Summary of indicators

Learning

Indicator	Comparison to NSW Benchmark	Page
*Parent/Caregiver engagement with school	Close to NSW Benchmark	18
*Physical health and wellbeing - AEDC	Not performing well against NSW Benchmark	19
*Social competence - AEDC	Close to NSW Benchmark	20
*Emotional maturity - AEDC	Close to NSW Benchmark	21
*Language and cognitive skills (school-based) - AEDC	Close to NSW Benchmark	22
*Communication skills and general knowledge - AEDC	Not performing well against NSW Benchmark	23
*Developmentally vulnerable in one or more domains - AEDC	Performing well against NSW Benchmark	25
*Developmentally vulnerable in two or more domains - AEDC	Close to NSW Benchmark	25
Households with an internet connection	Not performing well against NSW Benchmark	25
National assessment program - literacy and numeracy (NAPLAN)	No data	28

*AEDC indicators have been compared to NSW average



Image: Coniston Public School students, Stuart Park playground artwork

Family

Indicator	Comparison to NSW Benchmark	Page
Children in out of home care	Not performing well against NSW Benchmark	38
Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander children in out of home care	Not performing well against NSW Benchmark	38
Children placed by Non-Government Organisations - predominantly foster care	Not performing well against NSW Benchmark	39
Children placed by DCJ - predominantly in relative or kinship care	Close to NSW Benchmark	39
Home ownership	Performing well against NSW Benchmark	40
Labour force participation rate	Not performing well against NSW Benchmark	40
Unemployment	Close to NSW Benchmark	41
Median household income	Not performing well against NSW Benchmark	42
Low income households	Not performing well against NSW Benchmark	42
Households without a car	Close to NSW Benchmark	45

Home

Indicator	Comparison to NSW Benchmark	Page
Housing stress	Not performing well against NSW Benchmark	48
Households renting in social housing	Not performing well against NSW Benchmark	49
SEIFA index of advantage and disadvantage	Not performing well against NSW Benchmark	50
Domestic violence related assault incidents	Performing well against NSW Benchmark	51
Domestic violence related assault victim reports 0-17 years	Performing well against NSW Benchmark	51
Sexual offences victim reports 0-17 years	Close to NSW Benchmark	52

Participation

Indicator	Comparison to NSW Benchmark	Page
Active Kids voucher uptake	Performing well against NSW Benchmark	56
Creative Kids voucher uptake	No data	56
Volunteer work	Close to NSW Benchmark	57

The estimated
**RESIDENT
POPULATION**
for 2018 was
216,071¹

17%
of the people living
in Wollongong
**ARE AGED
0 - 14¹**

2,100
children aged
0-14 were
**BORN
OVERSEAS¹**

33.4%
of households
fully **OWN THEIR
HOME** compared
to 30.7% for NSW.¹

By 2036 the number of children aged 0-14
is predicted to increase by 20%¹

	2016		2026		2036		Predicted change 2016 - 2036
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
0 - 4	13,052	6.2	13,849	5.9	14,836	5.8	+1,784
5 - 9	13,232	6.3	14,322	6.1	15,607	6.1	+2,375
10 - 14	12,227	5.8	14,194	6.1	15,726	6.2	+3,499

Wollongong Demographics

1,791
Children aged
0-14 identify as
**ABORIGINAL
AND/OR
TORRES STRAIT
ISLANDER²**

926
**CHILDREN AGED
0-14 HAD A NEED
FOR ASSISTANCE,**
meaning they need
help with their day
to day lives due to
DISABILITY¹

**MEDIAN WEEKLY
HOUSEHOLD INCOME**
in Wollongong is
\$1,335
compared to \$1,481
for NSW.¹

(1) .id Community Demographic Resources 2019, 2016 Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, compiled and presented by .id

This material is a derivative of ABS Data that can be accessed from the website of the Australian Bureau of Statistics at www.abs.gov.au, and which data can be licensed on terms published on the ABS website.

(2) Australian Bureau of Statistics 2019, 2016 Census of Population and Housing, TableBuilder. Findings based on use of ABS TableBuilder data.



Health



A healthy lifestyle and access to appropriate services helps to protect children from the onset of disease and improves their quality of life. Children are more likely to be healthy when they:

- are active and have their physical, developmental, psychosocial and mental health needs met.
- have access to the appropriate services which support their growth and development, including preventative measures to address any health or developmental concerns (Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth 2018, p.24).

The first 2000 days (from conception to five years) is a critical time for physical, cognitive, social and emotional health (NSW Ministry of Health 2019, p.4). Exposure to stressors before birth, and in the early years of

childhood, increases the probability of experiencing poor health later in life. The greater the number and significance of stressors experienced before birth, the greater the risk to long term health and wellbeing (NSW Ministry of Health 2019, p.9).

Additionally, it is important for mothers to maintain a healthy lifestyle during their pregnancy and attend routine antenatal health checks, as this contributes to better outcomes for both mother and baby (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2020).

The majority of the indicators in this section of the report were sourced and reproduced by permission, NSW Health © 2021.

I feel healthy when I eat healthy stuff like apples and all kinds of fruits

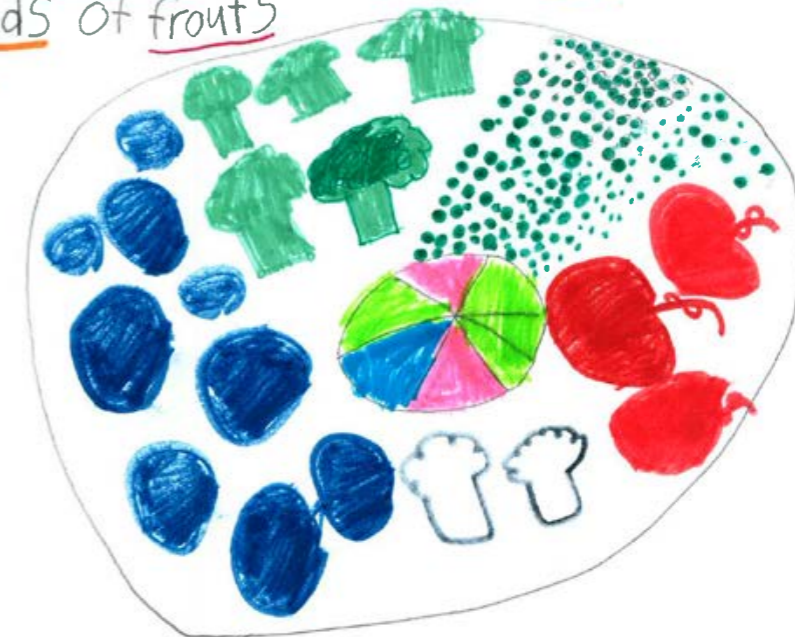


Illustration: Zali, 7, Mount Brown Public School

Maternal smoking during pregnancy 2018

Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District	NSW
12.1%	9.1%

HealthStats NSW 2019

In 2018, 12.1% of local mothers said they smoked at some point during their pregnancy. This statistic is considered significantly higher than the NSW benchmark. Some groups of mothers were more likely than others to smoke in the first 20 weeks of pregnancy. Those groups are:

- young mothers (aged under 20)
- mothers living in low socio-economic areas
- mothers born in Australia or other English-speaking countries
- Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander mothers

(Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2019, p.10).

Maternal overweight and obesity 2018

	Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District	NSW
Healthy weight	55.7%	56.6%
Overweight or obese	40.6%	39.6%

HealthStats NSW 2019

Obesity in pregnancy contributes to increased risks of complication, illness and death for both mother and baby (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2019). In 2018, the proportion of local expectant mothers who were either overweight or obese during pregnancy was higher than the NSW benchmark.

First antenatal visit by gestational age 2018

	Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District	NSW
14 Weeks	69.8%	77.6%
20 Weeks	91.3%	92%

HealthStats NSW 2019

Women living in the lowest socio-economic status areas and Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander women are more likely to begin antenatal care later in their pregnancy (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2019, p.7). In 2018, the proportion of local expectant mothers attending their first antenatal visit before 14 weeks of pregnancy was substantially below the NSW benchmark. The proportion at 20 weeks of pregnancy was slightly below the NSW benchmark (HealthStats NSW 2019).

Pre-term births 2018

Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District	NSW
8.4%	7.7%

HealthStats NSW 2019

Babies born with a gestational age of less than 37 weeks are considered pre-term.

Characteristics associated with pre-term births include:

- multiple births e.g. twins, triplets etc
- smoking during pregnancy
- babies of Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander mothers
- younger (under 20) and older (over 40) mothers (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2019, p.23)

In 2018, the rate of pre-term births locally was slightly higher than the NSW benchmark (HealthStats 2019).

Low birth weight babies 2018

Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District	NSW
6.5%	6.4%

HealthStats NSW 2019

Birth weight is a key determinant of a baby's health and chance of survival. Newborn babies weighing less than 2,500 grams are considered low birth weight (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2019, p.25). In 2018, the rate of local babies considered to have a low birth weight was slightly higher than the NSW benchmark (HealthStats NSW 2019).

Full immunisation in children 2019

	Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District	NSW
1 Year	95.1%	94.2%
2 Years	92.7%	91.3%
5 Years	96.7%	94.7%

HealthStats NSW 2020

Local immunisation rates are above NSW benchmark across the three age categories. NSW data indicates that immunisation rates in Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander children at all ages were higher than the rates in non-Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander children in the same year.

Asthma status in children aged 2-15 years 2017-18

	Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District	NSW
Ever had asthma	16.1%	21.3%
Currently have asthma	9%	13.4%

HealthStats NSW 2019

The proportion of local children having ever experienced asthma and currently living with asthma is considered significantly less when compared to the state benchmark.

Overweight and obesity in children aged 5-16 years 2018

Illawarra Shoalhaven local health district	NSW
Data gap	24%

HealthStats NSW 2019

Overweight and obesity in children is typically caused by unhealthy eating, a lack of regular physical activity, a combination of these two, and in some cases genetic predisposition (Department of Health 2015). There is currently no data available for the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District for this indicator.

Fruit and vegetables: recommended daily consumption by children 2018-2019

	Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District	NSW
Vegetables	2.7%	5.5%
Fruit	61.7%	62.7%

HealthStats NSW 2020

The daily minimum recommended number of serves ranges from 2.5-5.5 for vegetables and one to two for fruit, depending on a child's age (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2018). Local rates for the daily consumption of fruit and vegetables are below the NSW benchmark across both categories.

COUNCIL SURVEY

Wollongong LGA wellbeing survey 2018 – Access to services – Access to affordable fresh food

Aspect	Dissatisfied (1-2)	Neutral (3)	Satisfied (4-5)
Access to affordable fresh food	2%	8%	69%

IRIS Research 2018, p. 32

Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction regarding access to services using a five-point scale where one (1) meant 'very dissatisfied' and five meant 'very satisfied'. 69% of respondents were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their level of access to affordable fresh food.

Physical activity by behaviour type - Adequate physical activity - children aged 5-15 years 2017-18

Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District	NSW
24.4%	24.2%

HealthStats NSW 2019

Australian guidelines recommend children aged two to five participate in at least 180 minutes of physical activity every day and children aged five to 14 participate in at least 60 minutes every day (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2018, p.3). The proportion of local children with adequate levels of physical activity is slightly higher than the NSW benchmark.

Physical activity by behaviour type - Sedentary behaviours - Children aged 5-15 years 2017-18

Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District	NSW
54.1%	44.9%

HealthStats NSW 2019

Being sedentary is different from being physically inactive. Children who are sedentary may still meet the recommended requirements for moderate physical activity, however they spend long periods of time sitting or lying down throughout the day (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2018, p.2). The proportion of local children with sedentary behaviours is significantly higher than the state benchmark.

COUNCIL SURVEY

Wollongong LGA wellbeing survey 2018 – Access to services – Availability and access to health services

Aspect	Dissatisfied (1-2)	Neutral (3)	Satisfied (4-5)
Availability and access to health services	6%	16%	78%

IRIS Research 2018, p. 32

Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction regarding access to services using a five-point scale where one meant 'very dissatisfied' and five meant 'very satisfied'. 78% of respondents were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the availability and their level of access to health services.



Learning



Image: Cringila Childrens House, Cringila Hills playground engagement

Children learn through a range of formal and informal experiences in the classroom, at home and in their community. The benefits of investing in childhood learning last beyond a child's schooling years and are strongly linked to family wellbeing, stronger social connections and future financial stability (Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth 2018, p. 34).

Early engagement and participation in learning and education is fundamental to the development of children (Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth 2018, p. 34). The early years are critical for establishing self-esteem, resilience, healthy growth and capacity to learn. Quality education and care shapes every child's future and lays the foundation for development and learning (Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority n.d.).



Illustration: student, KU Preschool, Gwynville

Australian Early Development Census (AEDC)

The AEDC is conducted every three years and measures children’s development on five developmental domains by the time they start their first year of full-time school. The data provides information about where children are doing well and where they need more support. The five domains are:

- Physical health and wellbeing
- Social competence
- Emotional maturity
- Language and cognitive skills (school-based)
- Communication skills and general knowledge.

Understanding the data:

The AEDC uses the following terms to describe how children are developing:

Developmentally on track

Children are developing well

Developmentally at risk

Children are experiencing some challenges that are interfering with their development

Developmentally vulnerable

Children are experiencing significant challenges that are impacting their development

2,571 children across Wollongong LGA were surveyed as part of the 2018 AEDC. The AEDC does not collect data on all children locally, though it is a representative proportion of the population. Below are the results for children living in the Wollongong LGA, regardless of where they go to school (Australian Early Development Census 2019, p.2-6). More information is available on the Australian Early Development Census website www.aedc.gov.au

Parent/caregiver engagement with school 2018

Wollongong LGA	NSW
93.3%	94.1%

Teachers completing the AEDC are asked to indicate the rate at which they see parents/ caregivers actively engage with the school in supporting the child’s learning. Examples of engagement include:

- reading with their child and marking they have read the readers taken home with their child
- speaking to the teacher about their child’s learning
- speaking to the teacher about concerns they may have about their child
- attending parent/teacher information nights and interviews at the school.

Wollongong LGA performs below the state average, with 93.3% of parents reported as being actively engaged with their child’s school (Australian Early Development Census, pers. comm., 18 August 2020)

Physical health and wellbeing 2018

This domain measures children’s physical readiness for the school day, physical independence, and gross and fine motor skills (Australian Early Development Census 2019, p.13).

Developmentally on track:

Wollongong LGA	NSW
75.5%	78.5%

Five areas with highest proportion of children developmentally on track		Five areas with highest proportion of children developmentally vulnerable	
Area	%	Area	%
Austinmer	97.4%	Cringila	40.7%
West Wollongong	95.3%	Koonawarra	28.8%
Mount Kembla and surrounds	95%	Berkeley	24.0%
Stanwell Park – Stanwell Tops – Coalcliff	93.8%	Mount Pleasant	21.1%
Woonona	93%	Warrawong	19.7%

The proportion of children who were developmentally on track in Wollongong LGA is below the NSW average.

Children who are developmentally at risk (15.3%) or developmentally vulnerable (9.2%) may:

- be dressed inappropriately
- be frequently late, hungry or tired
- have poor coordination and/or poor gross and fine motor skills
- demonstrate average to low energy levels during the school day (Australian Early Development Census 2019, p.13).

The data collected under this domain of physical health and wellbeing has been presented in three sub-domains, outlined below. This has been done to help the community better understand the types of challenges children may experience in the development of their physical health and wellbeing.

Physical readiness for the school day:

- 10% of children were considered developmentally vulnerable as, on several occasions, they came to school unprepared by being inappropriately dressed, late, tired and/or hungry.

Physical independence:

- 7.8% of children were considered developmentally vulnerable as they have not developed either one or more of the following – independence, handedness or coordination.

Gross and fine motor skills:

- 8.7% of children were considered developmentally vulnerable as they could have poor fine and gross motor skills and/or poor overall energy levels during the day (Australian Early Development Census 2019, p.14).

Social competence 2018

This domain measures children’s overall social competence, responsibility and respect, approach to learning and readiness to explore new things (Australian Early Development Census 2019, p.15).

Developmentally on track:

Wollongong LGA	NSW
77.6%	77.1%

Five areas with highest proportion of children developmentally on track		Five areas with highest proportion of children developmentally vulnerable	
Area	%	Area	%
Stanwell Park - Stanwell Tops - Coalcliff	93.8%	Berkeley	23.3%
Coniston	90.9%	Koonawarra	23.1%
Mangerton	90.7%	Horsley - Wongawilli	16.2%
Farmborough Heights	89.7%	Haywards Bay	15.4%
Cordeaux Heights	87.0%	Cringila	14.8%

Wollongong LGA is performing slightly above the NSW average. Children who are developmentally at risk (13.4%) or developmentally vulnerable (9%) may demonstrate:

- poor social skills
- lack of respect for other people and their things
- difficulties cooperating and working independently
- challenges with following instructions, rules and routines and adapting to change

(Australian Early Development Census 2019, p.15).



Illustration: Laura, 8, Mount Brown Public School

Emotional maturity 2018

This domain measures children’s pro-social and helping behaviours and the absence of anxious and fearful behaviour, aggressive behaviour and hyperactivity and inattention (Australian Early Development Census 2019, p.16).

Developmentally on track:

Wollongong LGA	NSW
79.5%	80.2%

Five areas with highest proportion of children developmentally on track		Five areas with highest proportion of children developmentally vulnerable	
Area	%	Area	%
Mount Kembla and surrounds	95%	Lake Heights	19.1%
Stanwell Park - Stanwell Tops - Coalcliff	93.8%	Berkeley	17.2%
Coniston	90.9%	Russell Vale	16.0%
Coledale	90.5%	Cringila	14.8%
West Wollongong	89.1%	East Corrimal	13.0%

The proportion of local children who are developmentally on track on this domain is slightly below the NSW average. Children who are developmentally at risk (13.5%) or developmentally vulnerable (7.1%) may demonstrate:

- difficulty helping others
- anxious behaviours
- challenges regulating their emotions e.g. temper tantrums
- aggressive behaviour
- inattention and/or hyperactivity

(Australian Early Development Census 2019, p.16).



Language and cognitive skills (school-based) 2018

This domain measures children’s basic literacy, advanced literacy, basic numeracy, and interest in literacy, numeracy and memory (Australian Early Development Census 2019, p.17).

Developmentally on track:

Wollongong LGA	NSW
87.5%	87.2%

Five areas with highest proportion of children developmentally on track		Five areas with highest proportion of children developmentally vulnerable	
Area	%	Area	%
Mount Kembla and surrounds	100%	Koonawarra	19.2
Stanwell Park - Stanwell Tops - Coalcliff	100%	Berkeley	14.1
Austinmer	97.4%	Windang - Primbee	12
Gwynneville	96.9%	Wollongong	8.8
Mount Keira	96.2%	Bellambi	8.3

Wollongong LGA is performing slightly above the NSW average on this domain.

Children who are developmentally at risk (7.6%) or developmentally vulnerable (4.9%) may demonstrate:

- difficulty reading, identifying some letters and the sounds attached to them
- challenges writing their name, simple words or sentences
- an inability to recognise shapes, numbers or count to 20
- a lack of interest in books, reading, maths and numbers

(Australian Early Development Census 2019, p.17).



Image: Fairy Meadow Demonstration School, Lukes Place playground

Communication skills and general knowledge 2018

This domain measures children’s communication skills and general knowledge, based on broad developmental competencies and skills measured in the school context (Australian Early Development Census 2019, p.18).

Developmentally on track:

Wollongong LGA	NSW
74.7%	76.8%

Five areas with highest proportion of children developmentally on track		Five areas with highest proportion of children developmentally vulnerable	
Area	%	Area	%
Stanwell Park - Stanwell Tops - Coalcliff	100%	Mount Pleasant	21.1%
Austinmer	97.4%	Berkeley	20.2%
Mount Kembla and surrounds	95.0%	Koonawarra	19.2%
Keiraville	92.9%	Cringila	18.5%
Farmborough Heights	92.3%	Lake Heights	14.9%

The proportion of children who were developmentally on track in Wollongong LGA is below the NSW average.

Children who are developmentally at risk (17.5%) or developmentally vulnerable (7.7%) may demonstrate:

- difficulties listening, understanding and talking to others
- poor communication and articulation
- challenges telling a story or participating in imaginative play
- poor general knowledge

(Australian Early Development Census 2019, p.18)

Children developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains 2018

Wollongong LGA	NSW
18.9%	19.9%

Australian Early Development Census 2019, p.19

The proportion of local children developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains is below the NSW average.

Children developmentally vulnerable on two or more domains 2018

Wollongong LGA	NSW
10.2%	9.6%

Australian Early Development Census 2019, p.19

In 2018, 255 (10.2%) local children were developmentally vulnerable on two or more domains, slightly above the NSW average.

Households with an internet connection 2016

Wollongong LGA	NSW
76.6%	78.2%

.id Community Demographic Resources 2019

In 2016, the proportion of local households with an internet connection was below the NSW benchmark.



Image: Holy Cross Catholic School Helensburgh, Town Centre Plan
Image below left: Fairy Meadow Demonstration School support unit, Lukes Place playground opening





■ Performing well against NSW Benchmark ■ Close to NSW Benchmark ■ Not performing well against NSW Benchmark ■ No data

Areas with the highest and lowest proportion of households with an internet connection:

Highest		Lowest	
Area	%	Area	%
Cordeaux Heights - Mount Kembla - Kembla Heights	91.3%	Warrawong	55%
Horsley	89.9%	Cringila	62.5%
Stanwell Park - Stanwell Tops - Coalcliff and surrounds	88.7%	Port Kembla - Spring Hill	62.9 %
Austinmer	88.4%	Windang - Primbee	64.1%
Helensburgh - Lilyvale - Otford	87.5%	Unanderra - Kembla Grange	67.7%

id Community Demographic Resources 2019



Access to the internet enables children and young people to read, research and complete their homework. Many children from disadvantaged backgrounds don't have access to a computer or the internet at home, meaning it can be more challenging for them to stay up-to-date with their schoolwork.

The Smith Family 2020



Illustration: student, KU Preschool, Gwynville



National assessment program – Literacy and numeracy (NAPLAN)

NAPLAN is an annual assessment of the literacy and numeracy proficiency of students in years three, five, seven and nine across focus areas, known as content strands:

- reading
- writing
- spelling
- grammar
- numeracy.

NAPLAN results provide a snapshot of how students are performing in these areas at the time the test is administered. This information is used to help governments, education authorities, schools, teachers and parents understand how education programs are working and which areas need to be prioritised for improvement (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority 2020).

The tables following present the 2018 NAPLAN results of year three and five students attending schools located within the Wollongong LGA. Below are the results of the selected schools' average scores, when compared to all Australian students. The data has been grouped and presented using Wollongong's 10 planning areas.

*When making comparisons across planning areas it is important to consider other demographic factors i.e. SEIFA index of advantage and disadvantage as there is a strong correlation between these demographic factors and NAPLAN scores.

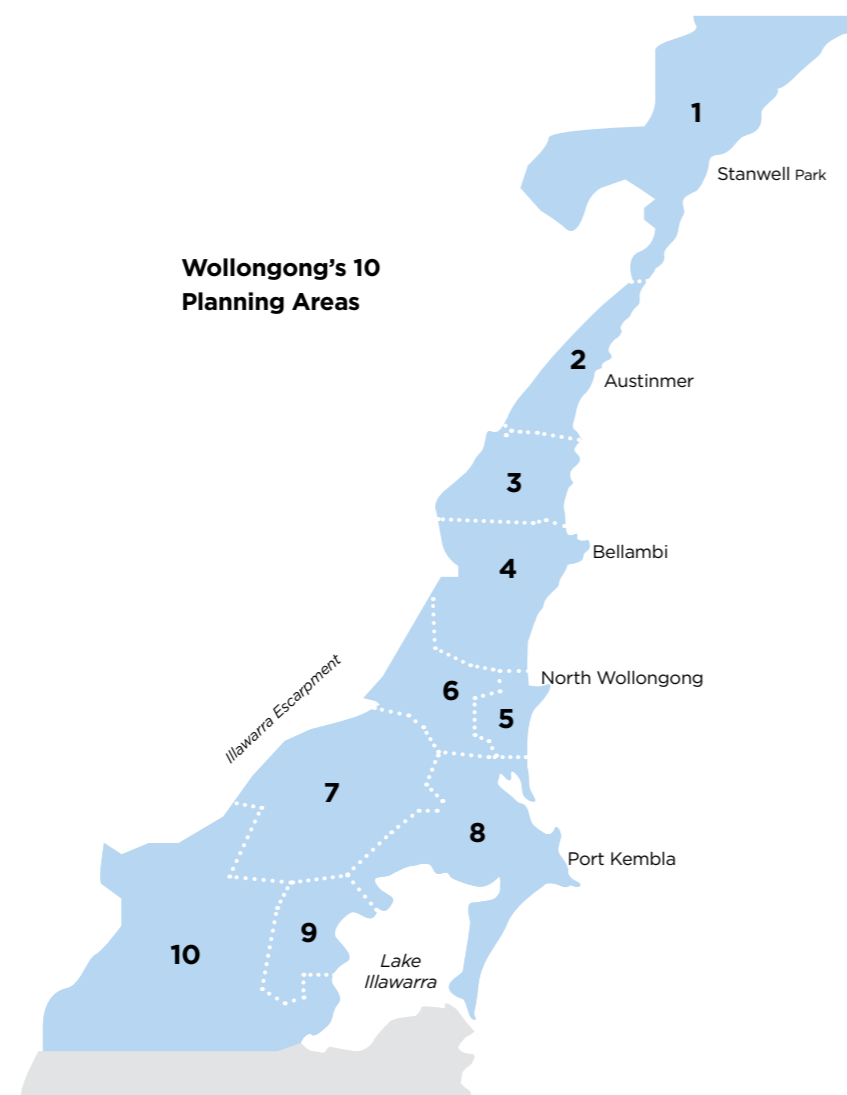
More information is available on the My School Website myschool.edu.au

Above or substantially above Australian average scores

Close to Australian average scores*

**the difference in result is not considered statistically significant to the Australian average score*

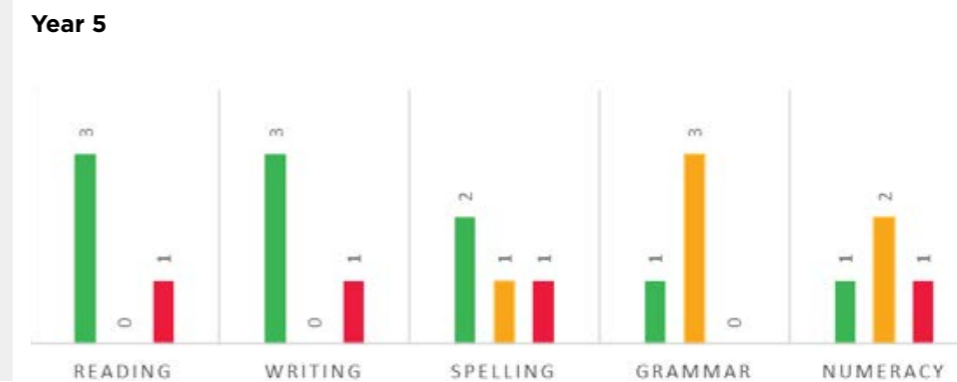
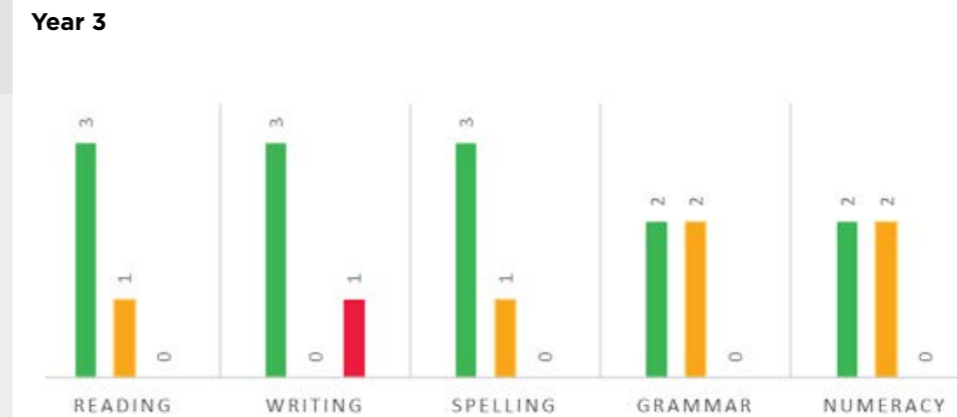
Below or substantially below Australian average scores



Planning Area / 1

Suburbs: Coalcliff, Darkes Forrest, Helensburgh, Lilyvale, Maddens Plains, Otford, Stanwell Park and Stanwell Tops

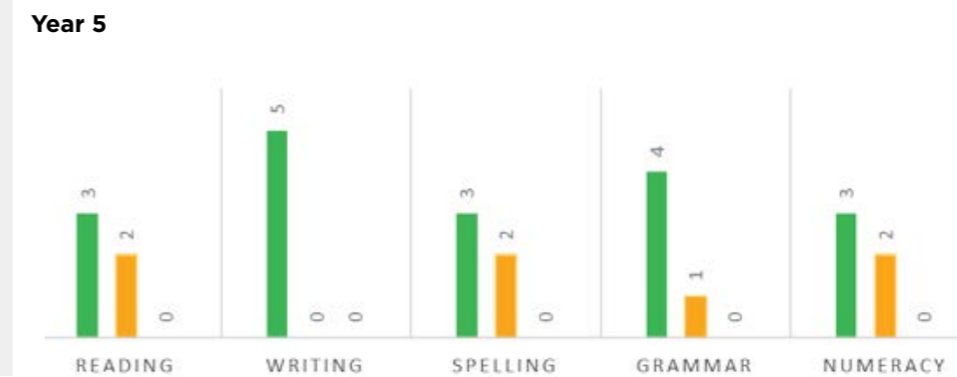
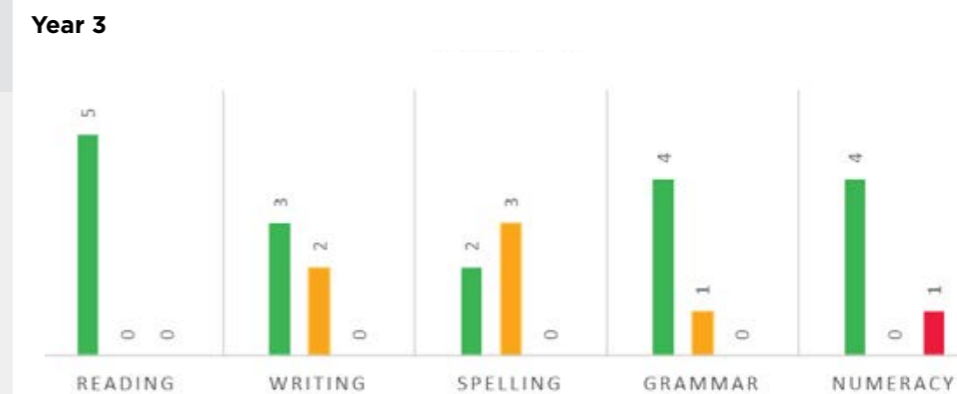
Government Schools: **3**
 Non-Government Schools: **1**
 Total number of students: **840**



Planning Area / 2

Suburbs: Austinmer, Clifton, Coledale, Scarborough, Thirroul and Wombarra

Government Schools: **4**
 Non-Government Schools: **1**
 Total number of students: **1,266**





Planning Area / **3**

Suburbs:
Bulli, Reidtown,
Russell Vale and
Woonona

Government Schools: **5**
Non-Government
Schools: **1**
Total number of
students: **1,982**

Year 3



Year 5



Planning Area / **4**

Suburbs:
Balgownie, Bellambi,
Corrimal, East Corrimal,
Fairy Meadow, Fernhill,
Mount Ousley, Mount
Pleasant, Tarrawanna
and Towradgi

Government Schools: **10**
Non-Government
Schools: **3**
Total number of
students: **3,328**

*One of the schools in this
planning area only participated
in the NAPLAN testing for year
three students.

Year 3



Year 5



■ Above or substantially above Australian average scores ■ Close to Australian average scores ■ Below or substantially below Australian average scores

Planning Area / **5 & 6**

*combined due to the small
number of schools in Planning
Area Five

Suburbs:
Wollongong CBD,
Coniston, Gwynneville,
Keiraville, Mount Keira,
Mangerton, Mount
St Thomas, North
Wollongong and
West Wollongong

Government Schools: **9**
Non-Government
Schools: **3**
Total number of
students: **3,804**

*One of the schools in this
planning area only participated
in the NAPLAN testing for year
three students.

Year 3



Year 5



Planning Area / **7**

Suburbs:
Cordeaux Heights,
Farmborough Heights,
Figtree, Kembla Grange,
Kembla Heights,
Mount Kembla,
Nareena Hills and
Unanderra

Government Schools: **6**
Non-Government
Schools: **3**
Total number of
students: **2,956**

Year 3



Year 5



Planning Area / 8

Suburbs:
Berkeley, Cringila, Kemblawarra, Lake Heights, Port Kembla, Primbee, Springhill, Warrawong and Windang

Government Schools: **9**
Non-Government Schools: **2**
Total number of students: **2,193**

Year 3



Year 5



Planning Area / 9

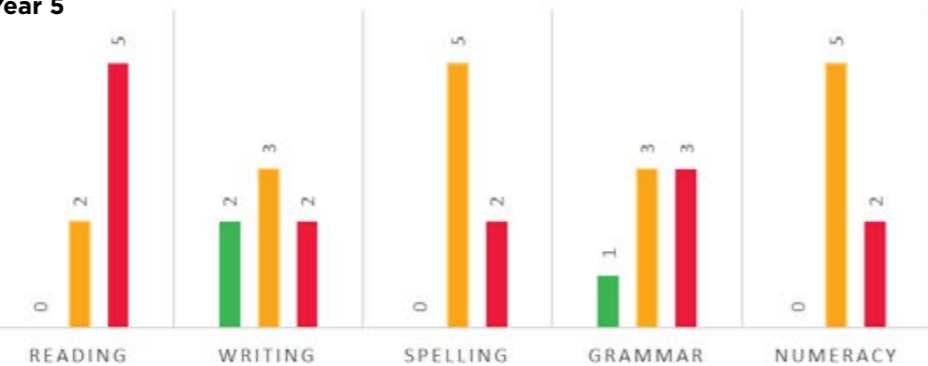
Suburbs:
Brownsville, Dapto, Kanahooka and Koonawarra

Government Schools: **6**
Non-Government Schools: **1**
Total number of students: **3,008**

Year 3



Year 5



Planning Area / 10

No schools in this planning area



Image: Lord Mayor's school starter picnic



Image: Coniston and Wollongong Public School students, Stuart Park playground opening



Family



Healthy family relationships are essential to the wellbeing of children, individuals, families and communities. Every family is unique and family structures and caring responsibilities have the potential to change over time. It is important for children to maintain strong, positive relationships with their parents/carers and other close family members. These relationships are often indicative of the relationships they will have later in life (Australian Institute of Family Studies 2016).

A family's economic situation also has the potential to change over time. The availability of job opportunities, family income and employment status are closely linked to child development.

Work and income-related stressors have negative effects on parents and can impact the quality of their parent-child relationships (Health Engine 2010).

Families experiencing financial stability are better placed to access essential services and provide a healthy lifestyle for their children. They often live in adequate and stable housing, have access to healthy food options and the means to participate in educational and recreational activities. Children from less financially secure families are more likely to experience lifelong disadvantage. (Australian Research Alliance for Children and Young People 2018, p.16)



Illustration: Hugh 6, Austinmer Public School



Couples with children 2016

Couples with children include registered or de-facto marriages, opposite or same sex couples, with at least one child living in the family household. The children can be of any age and include stepchildren, adopted and foster children. When compared to the NSW benchmark, there was a smaller proportion of couples with children living in the Wollongong LGA (.id community).

Number	Wollongong LGA %	NSW %
23,454	30.2%	31.5%

Areas with the highest number of couples with children

Area	Number
Woonona - Russell Vale	1,703
Figtree	1,526
Dapto - Brownsville	1,320
Horsley	1,222
Wollongong	1,079

Areas with the highest proportion of couples with children

Area	%
Cordeaux Heights - Mount Kembla - Kembla Heights	54.9%
Stanwell Park - Stanwell Tops - Coalcliff and surrounds	49.5%
Helensburgh - Lilyvale - Otford	49.1%
Horsley	48.2%
Farmborough Heights	43.5%

.id Community Demographic Resources 2019



One parent families with children 2016

One parent families are a single parent with at least one child who is usually living in the family household. The family may also include other adults related to the lone parent. The dependent children can be of any age and include stepchildren, adopted and foster children. Compared to the NSW benchmark, there is a larger proportion of one parent families living in the Wollongong LGA.

Number	Wollongong LGA %	NSW %
8,938	11.5%	10.7%

Areas with the highest number of one parent families with children

Area	Number
Wollongong	600
Dapto - Brownsville	598
Woonona - Russell Vale	554
Berkeley	500
Figtree	402

Areas with the highest proportion of one parent families with children

Area	%
Koonawarra	23.1%
Bellambi	20.1%
Cringila	19.7%
Warrawong	18.7%
Berkeley	17.8%

.id Community Demographic Resources 2019

COUNCIL SURVEY

Wollongong LGA wellbeing survey 2018 - Personal wellbeing index - Personal relationships

Aspect	Dissatisfied (1-2)	Neutral (3)	Satisfied (4-5)
Your personal relationships	4%	7%	89%

IRIS Research 2018, p. 16

Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the following aspect of their life using a five-point scale where one meant 'very dissatisfied' and five meant 'very satisfied'. 89% of respondents were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their personal relationships.

Aspect	Wollongong LGA	Australia
Your personal relationships	84.7*	78.6

IRIS Research 2018, p. 19

* Mean scores of Wollongong City Council has been benchmarked out of 100 for comparative purposes. Wollongong LGA outperforms the national benchmark for this personal wellbeing indicator.



Children in out of home care 2019

Out of home care services are designed to provide a safe environment, contribute to improving developmental outcomes and assist in addressing issues that led to the out of home care placement. Foster carers take on the responsibilities of a parent and provide care until children can safely return home. Children placed in out of home care are likely to have experienced a significant life disruption and loss and will require support to catch up on some developmental stages (Family Matters 2016).

The length of time children spend in out of home care can vary. Where children are unable to live with their birth parents, the DCJ will try in the first instance to locate the child with a member of their extended family. The proportion of local children in out of home care is significantly higher than the NSW benchmark (Department of Communities and Justice 2019).

These indicators reflect figures for Illawarra (Wollongong and Shellharbour LGA's).

Children in out of home care 2019 **

	Illawarra	NSW
Number of Children	902	16,791
Rate per 100,000*	307.3	208.7

Compared to NSW, locally there was a higher proportion of children in out of home care.

Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander children in out of home care 2019**

	Illawarra	NSW
Number of Children	320	6,735
Rate per 100,000*	109.0	83.7

Compared to NSW, locally there was a higher proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander children in out of home care.

*rate per 100,000 was calculated using population figures sourced from ABS where 293,494 was the population for Illawarra and 8,046,100 for NSW.

** Data provided as a snapshot and was accurate as at 31/8/2019.



Illustration: Sophie, 10, Mount Brown Public School



Children placed by non-government organisations - Predominantly foster care 2019 **

	Illawarra	NSW
Number of Children	582	7,898
Rate per 100,000*	198.3	98.2

Compared to NSW, locally there was a significantly higher proportion of children placed by non-government organisations - predominantly foster care.

Children placed by DCJ - Predominantly in relative or kinship care 2019**

	Illawarra	NSW
Number of Children	320	8446
Rate per 100,000*	109	105

(Department of Communities and Justice, pers. comm., 8 October 2019)

Compared to NSW, locally there was a slightly higher proportion of children placed by DCJ - predominantly in relative or kinship care.

*rate per 100,000 was calculated using population figures sourced from ABS where 293,494 was the population for Illawarra and 8,046,100 for NSW.

** Data provided as a snapshot and was accurate as at 31/8/2019.



Illustration: Jack, 7, Mount Brown Public School



Home ownership 2016

Wollongong LGA	NSW
33.4%	30.7%

In 2016, the proportion of households that fully owned their dwellings was higher than the NSW benchmark.

Areas with the highest rates of home ownership		Areas with the lowest rates of home ownership	
Area	%	Area	%
Kanahooka	49.9%	North Wollongong	18%
Windang - Primbee	48.3%	Bellambi	19.7%
Mount Ousley - Mount Pleasant	47%	Wollongong	21.4%
Cordeaux Heights - Mount Kembla - Kembla Heights	44.5%	Gwynneville	24.6%
Cringila	44.3%	Koonawarra	24.9%

(.id Community Demographic Resources 2019)

Labour force participation rate 2016

Labour force participants are aged 15 and over who, in the week before the Census night, were either working full-time or part-time, or who did not have a job but were actively looking for and available to start work. High labour force participation rates indicate areas with good access to jobs and a high working age population. The proportion of people participating in the labour force in the Wollongong LGA is below the NSW benchmark.

Wollongong LGA	NSW
56.9%	59.2%

Areas with the highest labour force participation rate		Areas with the lowest labour force participation rate	
Area	%	Area	%
Helensburgh - Lilyvale - Otford	72.4%	Warrawong	37.4%
Cordeaux Heights - Mount Kembla - Kembla Heights	70.1%	Cringila	41.6%
Horsley	68.6%	Windang - Primbee	47.3%
Wombarra - Coledale - Scarborough - Clifton	66.4%	Unanderra - Kembla Grange	48.1%
Stanwell Park - Stanwell Tops - Coalcliff and surrounds	66.1%	Port Kembla - Spring Hill	48.6%

.id Community Demographic Resources 2019



Unemployment 2016

Unemployed people are those who are aged 15 and over who, in the week before Census night, did not have a job but were actively looking for and available to start work. The proportion of people who were unemployed was slightly higher than the NSW benchmark.

Wollongong LGA	NSW
7.2%	6.3%

Areas with the highest unemployment rate		Areas with the lowest unemployment rate	
Area	%	Area	%
Gwynneville*	16.0%	Wombarra - Coledale - Scarborough - Clifton	3.3%
North Wollongong*	14.7%	Helensburgh - Lilyvale - Otford	3.5%
Warrawong	14.7%	Mount Ousley - Mount Pleasant	3.5%
Koonawarra	12.4%	Stanwell Park - Stanwell Tops - Coalcliff and surrounds	3.6%
Bellambi	11.1%	Towradgi	3.8%

.id Community Demographic Resources 2019

*Note: these areas have high student populations.

Median household income 2016

Wollongong LGA %	NSW %
\$1,335	\$1,481

In 2016, the median household income for the LGA was \$1,335, which was below the NSW benchmark.

Areas with the highest median household income.		Areas with the lowest median household income.	
Area	\$	Area	\$
Stanwell Park - Stanwell Tops - Coalcliff and surrounds	\$ 2,299	Warrawong	\$750
Cordeaux Heights Mount Kembla - Kembla Heights	\$ 2,235	Cringila	\$888
Helensburgh - Lilyvale - Otford	\$ 2,132	Windang - Primbee	\$906
Wombarra - Coledale - Scarborough - Clifton	\$ 2,115	Bellambi	\$923
Mount Ousley - Mount Pleasant	\$ 2,059	Gwynneville	\$982

id Community Demographic Resources 2019

Low income households 2016

In 2016, low income households were households with a combined income of less than \$650 per week before tax. When compared to the NSW benchmark, the proportion of low income households in Wollongong LGA was higher.

Wollongong LGA %	NSW %
20.8%	17.8%

Areas with the highest proportion of low-income households		Areas with the lowest proportion of low-income households	
Area	%	Area	%
Warrawong	36.5%	Stanwell Park - Stanwell Tops - Coalcliff and surrounds	6.1%
Bellambi	30.6%	Cordeaux Heights - Mount Kembla - Kembla Heights	7.6%
Cringila	30.1%	Helensburgh - Lilyvale - Otford	8.4%
Windang - Primbee	30%	Austinmer	8.7%
Gwynneville	29.3%	Wombarra - Coledale Scarborough - Clifton	9.3%

id Community Demographic Resources 2019



COUNCIL SURVEY

Wollongong LGA wellbeing survey 2018

- Access to services - Availability and access to community services

Aspect	Dissatisfied (1-2)	Neutral (3)	Satisfied (4-5)
Availability and access to community services	4%	25%	70%

IRIS Research 2018, p. 32

Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction regarding access to services using a five-point scale where one meant 'very dissatisfied' and five meant 'very satisfied'. 70% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the availability and their level of access to community services.



Access to private transport is strongly linked with child development. Families who don't have access to their own car and rely on walking and public transport to get around are considered transport disadvantaged. These families often face difficulties accessing services, doing their grocery shopping, and participating in child related activities such as playgroups, school and after school activities. Parents and children who experience transport disadvantage tend to have fewer relationships and a poor sense of connection and belonging to their community.

Australian Institute of Family Studies 2011.



■ Performing well against NSW Benchmark ■ Close to NSW Benchmark
 ■ Not performing well against NSW Benchmark ■ No data

Households without a car 2016

The Australian Bureau of Statistics Census asks respondents how many motor vehicles are owned or used by the household, this includes company vehicles and those used or owned by visitors to the household who were staying there on Census night. The data below shows the proportion of houses which indicated they had no motor vehicles falling into these categories on Census night. The proportion of local households without a car is the same as the NSW benchmark.

Wollongong LGA	NSW
8.8%	8.8%

Areas with the highest proportion of households without a car		Areas with the lowest proportion of households without a car	
Area	%	Area	%
Warrawong	20.4%	Cordeaux Heights - Mount Kembla - Kembla Heights	0.5%
Gwynneville*	16.8%	Helensburgh - Lilyvale - Otford	1.9%
Bellambi	14.5%	Stanwell Park - Stanwell Tops - Coalcliff and surrounds	2.0%
Wollongong	14%	Horsley	2.1%
Cringila	13.5%	Farmborough Heights	2.5%

(id Community Demographic Resources 2019)
 *Note: This area has a high student population.

COUNCIL SURVEY

Wollongong LGA wellbeing survey 2018 - Public transport - Satisfaction

Aspect	Dissatisfied (1-2)	Neutral (3)	Satisfied (4-5)
Satisfaction with public transport	17%	26%	58%

(IRIS Research 2018, p. 40)

Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with public transport in Wollongong LGA using a five-point scale where one meant 'very dissatisfied' and five meant 'very satisfied'. 58% of respondents were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with public transport.





Home



The social and environmental conditions in which families are conceiving and raising children have a direct impact on child development (NSW Ministry of Health 2019, p.9). Children from a loving and safe home environment tend to be confident, have a strong sense of self-identity, and high self-esteem. They have positive adult role models, a greater capacity to form secure attachments and are more resilient (Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth 2018, p.10).

The home environment can also be a source of harm for children. In the absence of safety and security, social services may deem an intervention

is required to ensure a child's safety. A family home that is consistently nurturing and loving can provide the most important source of protection for children (Department of Social Services 2014, p.2).

The nature of physical surroundings can also influence the quality of parenting and ultimately the health and wellbeing of children within that environment. Children living in clean neighbourhoods, with access to quality public open space, tend to have better social behaviours than those living in areas with poor physical surroundings (Health Engine 2010).

I feel safe when I am with my family.



Illustration: Grace, 7, Balgownie Public School



Having a home is a fundamental need of all children. Access to stable housing provides children with a greater sense of consistency and steadiness in their lives. Housing stability is associated with positive physical and emotional wellbeing and better health. Children who don't have access to stable housing and who move often can find it difficult to develop a sense of routine. These children are more likely to experience behavioural problems and as a result can face challenges performing at school and making new friends.

Australian Institute of Family Studies 2012

Housing stress 2016

Housing stress is defined as households in the lowest 40% of incomes, who are spending more than 30% of their gross household income on housing costs (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2019). Locally, the proportion of households experiencing housing stress is higher than the NSW benchmark.

Wollongong LGA	NSW
12.7%	11.7%

Areas with the highest proportion of households experiencing housing stress		Areas with the lowest proportion of households experiencing housing stress	
Area	%	Area	%
Gwynneville	28.1%	Stanwell Park - Stanwell Tops - Coalcliff and surrounds	4%
Warrawong	21.3%	Cordeaux Heights - Mount Kembla - Kembla Heights	4.2%
Cringila	19.7%	Mount Ousley - Mount Pleasant	5%
Fairy Meadow	18.4%	Wombarra - Coledale - Scarborough - Clifton	5.4%
Bellambi	18.3%	Austinmer	5.5%

.id Community Demographic Resources 2019
 *Note: This area has a high student population.



Households renting in social housing 2016

Social housing is rental housing that is funded or partly funded by government. It is owned or managed by the government or a community organisation and available for eligible people to rent. This includes public housing, state owned and managed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing, community housing and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community housing (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2020). When compared to the NSW benchmark the proportion of households renting in social housing is significantly higher.

Wollongong LGA	NSW
7.4%	4.4%

Areas with the highest proportion of households renting in social housing		Areas with the lowest proportion of households renting in social housing	
Area	%	Area	%
Bellambi	31.5%	Mount Ousley - Mount Pleasant	0%
Koonawarra	23%	Wombarra - Coledale - Scarborough - Clifton	0%
Berkeley	21.2%	Cringila	0.4%
Unanderra - Kembla Grange	20.4%	Stanwell Park - Stanwell Tops - Coalcliff and surrounds	0.4%
Warrawong	20.2%	Austinmer	0.7%

.id Community Demographic Resources 2019

COUNCIL SURVEY

Wollongong LGA wellbeing survey 2018

- Access to Services - Access to housing to rent or buy

Aspect	Dissatisfied (1-2)	Neutral (3)	Satisfied (4-5)
Access to housing that you can afford to rent or buy	40%	22%	39%

IRIS Research 2018, p. 32

Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction regarding access to services using a five-point scale where one meant 'very dissatisfied' and five meant 'very satisfied'. 40% of respondents were 'dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied' with their level of access to housing that they could afford to rent or buy.



Socio-economic indexes for areas (SEIFA) index of advantage and disadvantage 2016

The SEIFA index of advantage and disadvantage ranks areas in Australia according to relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage. Relatively disadvantaged areas have low SEIFA index values while relatively advantaged areas have high index values.

Disadvantage scores are derived using attributes that broadly reflect disadvantage, such as:

- households with low income
- low educational attainment
- high unemployment
- jobs in relatively unskilled occupations.

Advantage scores are derived using attributes that broadly reflect advantage, such as:

- households with high income
- high levels of educational attainment
- large dwellings
- high number of motor vehicles
- households with spare bedrooms
- professional occupations.

In 2016, the SEIFA index of advantage and disadvantage score for Wollongong LGA was below the NSW benchmark.

Wollongong LGA	NSW
989.0	1,001.0

Areas with the highest SEIFA index scores		Areas with the lowest SEIFA index scores	
Area	Score	Area	Score
Austinmer	1,128.8	Warrawong	787.5
Stanwell Park - Stanwell Tops - Coalcliff and surrounds	1,115.0	Cringila	827.8
Wombarra - Coledale - Scarborough - Clifton	1,113.9	Bellambi	855.2
Mount Ousley - Mount Pleasant	1,099.2	Koonawarra	859.5
Thirroul	1,087.5	Berkeley	880.5

id Community Demographic Resources 2019



Exposure to crime and violence during a child's formative years can have a significant impact on their personal safety, health and development. Children can witness or be the victim of crime and/or violence in their home, or in the broader community. Living with domestic and family violence can have a significant impact on children, and often affect them for the rest of their lives. The following impacts have been closely linked with children who experienced domestic or family violence:

- ongoing anxiety, depression and emotional distress
- eating and sleeping disturbances
- low self-esteem and tendencies to self-harm
- difficulties forming positive relationships and displaying empathy
- difficulties with concentrating and problem solving often resulting
- in poor performance at school.

Department of Communities and Justice 2019.

Domestic violence related assault incidents January-December 2019

	Wollongong LGA	NSW
Number of Reports	686	31,187
Rate per 100,000*	317.5	390.4

NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research 2020

The rates of domestic of violence related assault incidents are substantially lower when compared to the NSW benchmark. The rates of incidents have remained stable in Wollongong LGA over both a 24 and 60-month period, while the number of incidents reported in NSW have seen a 5% increase during the last 24 months.

Domestic Violence Related Assault Victim Reports 0-17 Years January-December 2019

	Wollongong LGA		NSW	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Number of Reports	29	46	1,686	2,184
Rate per 100,000*	34.7		48.1	

NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research 2020



I feel healthy when I eat healthy food.

Illustration: Layla, 9, Mt Brown Public School

Sexual offences victim reports 0-17 years January-December 2019

	Wollongong LGA		NSW	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Number of Reports	68	201	2,490	7,626
Rate per 100,000*	124.5		125.7	

NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research 2020
*rate per 100,000 was calculated using population figures sourced from ABS where 216,071 was the population for Wollongong LGA and 8,046,100 for NSW.



COUNCIL SURVEY

Wollongong LGA wellbeing survey 2018 - Personal wellbeing index - Safety

Aspect	Dissatisfied (1-2)	Neutral (3)	Satisfied (4-5)
How safe you feel	3%	9%	87%

IRIS Research 2018, p. 16

Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the following aspect of their life using a five-point scale where one meant 'very dissatisfied' and five meant 'very satisfied'. 87% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with how safe they felt.

Aspect	Wollongong LGA	Australia
How safe you feel	82.5*	80.3

IRIS Research 2018, p. 19

* Mean scores of Wollongong City Council has been benchmarked out of 100 for comparative purposes.

Wollongong LGA outperforms the national benchmark for this personal wellbeing indicator.



Participation



Children who are actively involved with their family, friends and broader community tend to have a stronger connection to their community. Through participation in sports, activities and community decision making, children learn self-expression, empowerment and ultimately develop greater self-esteem (Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth 2018, p. 2).

Participating in after school activities aids child development, as extracurricular activities are found to have a positive impact on a child's physical, psychological and social development. Participating in these activities on a regular basis helps children develop their unique personalities, reduce stress and build their social and academic skills (School Specialty 2017).

Parents who are actively engaged in their community model positive behaviours and contribute to building a better community for their children. While it is important for parents to be involved in building their communities, it is equally as important to provide opportunities for children to voice their opinions and be involved in making decisions that affect them. Capturing the thoughts, ideas and experiences of both parents and children is vital in creating a community where children feel safe, valued and have a sense of belonging (Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth 2007, p.2).

I feel involved in my community when
I do nippers with my friends.



Illustration: Isla, 8, Austinmer Public School



■ Performing well against NSW Benchmark ■ Close to NSW Benchmark ■ Not performing well against NSW Benchmark ■ No data



Engaging in sport has many benefits for children as it provides a safe environment to increase their physical fitness, build strong social networks and learn how to work as part of a team. Team sports also foster the development of important life skills such as cooperation, sharing, resilience, goal setting and good sportsmanship. Children who participate in organised sporting activities are more likely to live active, healthy lives as they age. (Team Kids 2018.)

Active kids voucher uptake 2019

Wollongong LGA	NSW
69%	64%

Office of Sport 2020

Launched in 2018, the Active Kids program aims to increase participation of children in sport and physical activity. Eligible families can access two separate \$100 vouchers for each school-enrolled child to help cover the cost of sport registration and membership fees (Office of Sport 2020). The proportion of local children accessing these vouchers is higher than the NSW benchmark.



Creative arts can include a range of activities such as music, visual arts, dance, drama, puppetry and circus. Each art form has their own unique set of skills and concepts and provides a different opportunity for learning and creative expression (NSW Government). Participating in creative activities enhances many aspects of a child's learning and development. Creating art is a great way for children to develop their fine and gross motor skills, process and express their emotions, make decisions, solve problems and further develop their imagination and ability to think creatively. (Child Development Institute.)

Creative kids voucher uptake 2019

Wollongong LGA	NSW
Data Gap	Data Gap

The Creative Kids program, launched in 2019, helps NSW families with the cost of enrolling their kids in creative and cultural activities. Parents, guardians and carers can claim a \$100 voucher to put towards the cost of registration, participation and tuition costs (NSW Government 2020). Currently there is no data publicly available for this initiative.



Image: Lord Mayor's school starter picnic



Levels of volunteering provide an indication of the cohesiveness of the community and how readily individuals contribute to that community (id Community Demographic Resources 2019). Volunteering builds social capital and communities with higher levels of social capital are healthier and more resilient. These communities also tend to experience lower levels of child abuse and improved developmental outcomes for children. (Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth 2007, p.1)

When parents volunteer, they model positive behaviours and traits such as teamwork, empathy and pride in their community to their children. The children of volunteers are more likely to volunteer through family volunteering activities during childhood, or volunteer as an adult later in life. (Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth 2007, p.12)

Volunteer work 2016

Wollongong LGA	NSW
18.6%	18.1%

.id Community Demographic Resources 2020

The Census asks respondents to indicate if they spent any time doing formal voluntary work through an organisation or group in the last 12 months. This includes assisting at events or with sports organisations, assisting at schools, churches, hospitals, nursing homes and emergency services (.id Community Demographic Resources 2020). Local rates of volunteering are slightly above the NSW benchmark.



Image: Lord Mayor's School starter picnic, Wollongong TAFE Children's Centre

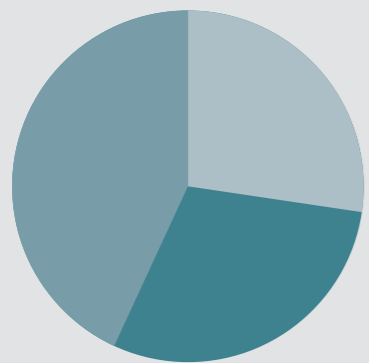
COUNCIL SURVEY

Wollongong LGA wellbeing survey 2018
- Community participation - Volunteering

	Yes	No
Volunteered in the last 12 months	36%	64%

IRIS Research 2018, p. 22

Volunteering Activities



- Welfare or community groups
- Parenting, children or youth groups
- Other

IRIS Research 2018, pp. 22-23

Respondents were asked to indicate if they had undertaken any volunteer work in the last 12 months, 36% of Wollongong LGA residents indicated they had volunteered in the last 12 months. 28% of volunteers indicated they undertook work for 'welfare or community groups' and 28% for 'parenting, children or youth groups'.



Illustration: Korey, 10, Mount Brown Public School

COUNCIL SURVEY

Wollongong LGA wellbeing survey 2018 - Personal wellbeing index - Feeling part of the community

Aspect	Dissatisfied (1-2)	Neutral (3)	Satisfied (4-5)
Feeling part of your community	9%	23%	68%

IRIS Research 2018, p. 16

Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the following aspect of their life using a five-point scale where one meant 'very dissatisfied' and five meant 'very satisfied'. 68% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with this aspect of their life.

Aspect	Wollongong LGA	Australia
Feeling part of your community	72*	72.4

IRIS Research 2018, p. 19

* Mean scores of Wollongong City Council has been benchmarked out of 100 for comparative purposes.

Wollongong LGA performs slightly below the national benchmark for this personal wellbeing indicator.



Children have their say in their community

In 2008, Council made a commitment to becoming a Child Friendly City. A Child Friendly City commits to implementing the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child. We continue to include the Child Friendly Cities guidelines and principles in our work and promote these to the community. This guarantees that children in Wollongong LGA are given the opportunity to:

- influence decisions about where they live
- express their opinion on the city they want
- participate in family, community and social life
- be an equal citizen of their city, with access to every service, regardless of ethnic origin, religion, income, gender or disability (Harris & Manatakis 2013, p.11).

Local Councils are in a unique position to directly impact the lives of children in their community. Councils can raise community awareness about issues important to children's development and assist in developing a culture that recognises children as equal citizens. Councils can ensure children's rights are considered and their voices are sought and listened to, when making important decisions that impact them. Giving children a voice to influence the world around them is an important way to foster active citizenship.

At Wollongong City Council, we believe the healthy development, active participation and inclusion of children is crucial to the future of

our city. Council believes that to create a city that is 'child friendly' it is critical that children have a voice in the decisions that affect their lives. Council seeks to create a city where the needs, rights and active participation of children is paramount. To achieve this, a 'whole of Council' approach is utilised to ensure that child-friendly principles are embedded across our practices and decision-making processes.

By including their voices in decision-making processes, children are:

- empowered to speak up for their rights and the rights of others in a positive way
- engaged and connected with their community
- heard and valued by participating in the civic process
- encouraged to be active and engaged citizens that understand how government (and the world) works.

Over the past 10 years, Council has engaged 5,547 children to support decision making, policy development, town centre planning, art installations and the design of playgrounds, skate parks and other facilities. When working with children, Council uses age-appropriate engagement strategies to ensure meaningful engagement.

Further details and age breakdowns of Council's engagement activities with children are provided at Appendix 1.

Case study

Wollongong City Council engagement with children

Council engages children to give them a voice in the decisions that impact them, from playground design to Council's governing document, the Community Strategic Plan. Council's largest engagement with children was undertaken for the development of Wollongong 2022 - Community Strategic Plan. 390 children aged 3-12 years were involved in this engagement across a period of weeks. Questions asked as part of the engagement include:

What do you like the most about living in Wollongong?

What are the things that worry you most about living in Wollongong?

What things would you change to make Wollongong a better place

to live?

Following the initial engagement period, children from Mount Saint Thomas and Towradgi Public Schools collated and presented the information to the Wollongong Community Summit, for the development of the Wollongong 2022 - Community Strategic



COUNCIL SURVEY

Plan.

Wollongong City Council Community Satisfaction Survey 2019 - Children's playgrounds - Satisfaction

Can't Say	Dissatisfied (1-2)	Neutral (3)	Satisfied (4-5)
4%	4%	23%	69%

IRIS Research 2019, p. 17

Respondents who indicated they had used children's playgrounds in the last 12 months were asked to rate their satisfaction with this facility. The level of satisfaction was measured using a five-point scale where one meant 'not at all satisfied' and five meant 'very satisfied'. 69% of respondents said they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with children's playgrounds.

Wollongong City Council	Comparable Councils
77*	68

IRIS Research 2019, p. 20

* Mean scores of Wollongong City Council has been benchmarked out of 100 for comparative purposes.

Children's playgrounds provided by Wollongong City Council are outperforming the average of comparable NSW metropolitan councils.

COUNCIL SURVEY

Wollongong City Council community satisfaction survey 2019 - Children services - Satisfaction

Can't Say	Dissatisfied (1-2)	Neutral (3)	Satisfied (4-5)
47%	5%	17%	30%

IRIS Research 2019, p. 25

Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction of Council children services using a five-point scale where one meant 'not at all satisfied' and five meant 'very satisfied'. 47% indicated they couldn't say, while 30% of respondents indicated they were 'satisfied' with children services provided by Council.

Wollongong City Council	Comparable Councils
68*	65

IRIS Research 2019, p. 28

* Mean scores of Wollongong City Council has been benchmarked out of 100 for comparative purposes.

Council's children services in Wollongong LGA are performing above the average of compared NSW metropolitan councils.

What's next?

This report has been developed as a resource for Council, our community, and local organisations. Council will use this report to inform the planning and delivery of the programs and services we deliver for children and young people. We will share the findings of this report with local organisations and encourage them to do the same.

The major data sources, such as, the Australian Census of Population and Housing and the Australian Early Development Census, are expected to release new data in 2021. Council intends to utilise this data and develop another State of the Children report by 2023 which will highlight and compare the changes in these important indicators over time.



feel Happy when I play soccer



Illustration: Indy, 8, Balgownie Public School

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Appendix 1

Council Engagement Total: 5,547

Council Recreation Spaces – 3,544 Children

Parks, Playgrounds, Stake parks, Public Art

- Allan Street Playground, Port Kembla
- Bellambi Point Playgroud, Bellambi
- Belmore Basin Playground, Wollongong
- Botanic Garden All-Abilities Playground, Keiraville
- Bruce Park Playground, Warrawong
- Bulli Park Playground, Bulli
- Charles Harper Park Playground, Helensburgh
- Charles Stimpson Park Playground, Farmborough Heights
- Corrimal All-Abilities Play Space – Luke’s Place Playground, Corrimal
- Dimond Brothers Reserve Playground, Horsley
- Grandview Parade Playground, Lake Heights
- Happy Valley Reserve Playground, East Corrimal
- Harry Baggot Park Playground, Port Kembla
- Holborn Park Skate Park, Berkeley
- Kanahooka Park Playground, Kanahooka
- MacCabe Park Playground, Wollongong
- Nicholson Park Playground, Woonona
- Primrose Place Reserve Playground – Farmborough Heights
- Ray Crump Oval Playground, Primbee
- Stuart Park Playground, Wollongong
- Thirroul Beach Reserve Playground, Thirroul
- Towradgi Beach Park Playground, Towradgi
- William Beach Reserve Playground, Brownsville
- Early Childhood (2 - 5 years) – 746 children
- Primary School (5 - 12 years) – 2,798 children
- Onsite engagement (est. 2-8 years) – 173 children

*This table includes Council reported numbers of children who have participated in Wollongong City Council engagement activities.

Council Planning and Policy – 2,003 Children

Town Centre Plans, Council Policy, Strategic Plans, Master Plans, Designs for Social Infrastructure (i.e Libraries, Community Centres etc.)

- A City for People – Public Spaces Public Life Wollongong
- City of Wollongong Bike Plan 2014-2018
- Community Engagement Policy
- Wollongong 2022 – Community Strategic Plan
- Corrimal Town Centre Plan 2015-2025
- Cringila Hills Recreation Master Plan
- Dapto Town Centre Plan 2017
- Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2020-2025
- Fairy Creek Corridor Master Plan
- Figtree Town Centre Plan 2014-2020
- Helensburgh Town Centre 2020-2045
- MacCabe Park Revitalisation Master Plan
- Our Wollongong 2028 – Community Strategic Plan
- Play Wollongong Strategy 2014-2024
- Port Kembla 2505 Revitalisation Plan
- Presentation at Parliament House for Commission for Children & Young People
- Unanderra Town Centre 2014-2024
- Urban Greening Strategy 2017-2037
- Warrawong District Community Centre and Library
- Warrawong Town Centre 2013-2023
- Wollongong City Libraries Strategy 2017-2022
- Wollongong: State of the Children Report
- Early Childhood (2-5 years) – 115 children
- Primary School (5-12 years) – 1,888 children

Illustration: *Little guys of our ocean*, Toeweakia Hughes-Thomas, 18 years old
Coomaditchie United Aboriginal Corporation



