

NSW public school February census enrolment data

Based on February census enrolment figures, there were over 800,000 students in NSW public schools in 2020.

From 2016-2020, February census enrolment data has shown a year on year increase in total enrolments in NSW public schools.

Public primary school enrolments (including preschool and support enrolments) remain steady, with a marginal increase from 496,122 in 2019 to 497,074 in 2020.

However, enrolments for mainstream secondary schools (including support enrolments) have increased by 3 percentage points from 311,036 to 320,142 in 2020.

Enrolment trends, like other population dynamics, tend to be cyclical.

Factors affecting NSW public school enrolment trends include parent choice, retention rates between grades and overall population changes in the number of school aged children.

In metropolitan Sydney, total enrolments have increased in NSW public schools from 2019 – 2020.

NSW public school total enrolments by Executive Director, Public Schools NSW area*

Operational Area	2016 Total	2017 Total	2018 Total	2019 Total	2020 Total	Difference 2019-2020
Metropolitan North	187025.7	191916.3	196533.2	200698.8	206306.5	5607.8
Metropolitan South	163389.8	166117.4	167045.2	168067.5	170187.3	2119.8
Regional North	123225.2	123446.0	123982.8	124175.0	125385.9	1210.9
Regional South	134578.1	137437.9	138727.8	140119.5	142350.6	2231.1
Rural North	95305.2	94827.8	94485.0	94270.9	93455.2	-815.7
Rural South and West	86814.9	86500.7	86805.7	86282.8	86186.5	-96.3
All areas	790338.9	800246.1	807579.7	813614.4	823872.0	10257.6

Source: School Entitlement System

NSW public school primary enrolments (including support)*

Operational Area	Kindergarten						Primary (Preschool to Year 6 and support)					
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Difference 2019-2020	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Difference 2019-2020
Metropolitan North	17868.0	17951.0	18748.0	18268.0	18465.0	197.0	118317.9	122200.8	125559.5	128218.8	130463.7	2244.9
Metropolitan South	15542.0	15911.0	15920.0	15418.0	15375.0	-43.0	100623.0	103048.6	104284.8	104479.7	104529.3	49.6
Regional North	10244.0	10581.0	10588.0	10298.0	10369.0	71.0	73415.4	74179.4	74664.2	74498.0	74519.9	21.9
Regional South	10902.0	11282.0	11635.0	11476.0	11384.0	-92.0	78869.3	81017.4	82287.5	82776.1	83192.8	416.7
Rural North	7776.0	7607.0	7505.0	7312.0	6946.0	-366.0	55008.3	55331.5	55335.4	54938.8	53797.5	-1141.3
Rural South and West	7249.0	6986.0	7301.0	7215.0	6974.0	-241.0	51025.0	51173.5	51493.1	51211.0	50570.3	-640.7
All areas	69581.0	70318.0	71697.0	69987.0	69513.0	-474.0	477258.9	486951.2	493624.5	496122.4	497073.5	951.1

NSW public school secondary enrolments (including support)*

Operational Area	Year 7						Secondary (Year 7 to Year 12 and support)					
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Difference 2019-2020	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Difference 2019-2020
Metropolitan North	11012.0	11281.0	11810.0	12553.0	13278.0	725.0	66992.8	67944.5	69124.7	70636.0	73932.8	3296.9
Metropolitan South	9800.0	9987.0	10219.0	10672.0	10929.0	257.0	60980.8	61255.8	61044.4	61832.8	63858.0	2025.2
Regional North	8382.0	8578.0	8922.0	9159.0	9380.0	221.0	49090.8	48529.6	48592.6	48955.0	50151.0	1196.0
Regional South	8864.0	8888.0	9216.0	9922.0	10027.0	105.0	54562.8	55240.5	55257.3	56114.4	57826.8	1712.4
Rural North	6643.0	6409.0	6907.0	7067.0	6978.0	-89.0	40029.9	39230.3	38883.6	39066.1	39400.7	334.6
Rural South and West	5885.0	5916.0	6205.0	6423.0	6256.0	-167.0	35219.9	34737.2	34696.6	34431.8	34972.2	540.4
All areas	50586.0	51059.0	53279.0	55796.0	56848.0	1052.0	306877.0	306937.9	307599.2	311036.0	320141.5	9105.5

NSW public school total mainstream enrolments (including preschool, primary and secondary support)*

Operational Area	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Difference 2019-2020
Metropolitan North	185310.7	190145.3	194684.2	198854.8	204396.5	5541.8
Metropolitan South	161603.8	164304.4	165329.2	166312.5	168387.3	2074.8
Regional North	122506.2	122709.0	123256.8	123453.0	124670.9	1217.9
Regional South	133432.1	136257.9	137544.8	138890.5	141019.6	2129.1
Rural North	95038.2	94561.8	94219.0	94004.9	93198.2	-806.7
Rural South and West	86244.9	85910.7	86189.7	85642.8	85542.5	-100.3
All areas	784135.9	793889.1	801223.7	807158.4	817215.0	10056.6

NSW public school enrolments in schools for specific purposes*

Operational Area	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Difference 2019-2020
Metropolitan North	1715.0	1771.0	1849.0	1844.0	1910.0	66.0
Metropolitan South	1786.0	1813.0	1716.0	1755.0	1800.0	45.0
Regional North	719.0	737.0	726.0	722.0	715.0	-7.0
Regional South	1146.0	1180.0	1183.0	1229.0	1331.0	102.0
Rural North	267.0	266.0	266.0	266.0	257.0	-9.0
Rural South and West	570.0	590.0	616.0	640.0	644.0	4.0
All areas	6203.0	6357.0	6356.0	6456.0	6657.0	201.0

*As at February census

Source: School Entitlement System