

Demographic Analysis Reports: Preschool children

Prepared for Penrith City Council



March 2023

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1. Executive Summary

- ❏ In Penrith City, 7.2% of the population is aged 0-4, with Jordan Springs, Oxley Park, Werrington, and St Marys having the highest preschool populations and Berkshire Park, Orchard Hills, and Mount Vernon-Kemps Creek-Badgerys Creek having the lowest.
- ❏ Most Penrith pre-schoolers (94%) are Australian-born or of Australian ancestry and speak English (77%), though other languages such as Punjabi and Arabic are increasing.
- ❏ Pre-schoolers tend to live in larger (four person) households, with only 10% in low-income households, and attend preschool at similar rates to Greater Sydney.
- ❏ Penrith pre-schoolers have lower levels of disability (1.8%) than the general population but a higher level than Greater Sydney (1.3%), with asthma being the most common long-term health condition (4%).
- ❏ Pre-schoolers mostly live in separate houses which are owned with mortgages.
- ❏ The 2021 Australian Early Development Census shows higher vulnerability in Penrith City's pre-schoolers than in New South Wales and Australia overall.

2. Introduction

Assessing the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of Penrith City's preschool children aged 0-4 years helps understand their spatial distribution, cultural diversity, household composition and trends, health, wellbeing and developmental vulnerability. Informed decisions can be made with this information to influence age-specific service and infrastructure provision in Penrith City.

In 2021, there were 15,640 pre-schoolers in Penrith City, representing 7.2% of the population. Since 2016, this age cohort has grown by 1,162 people but decreased in proportion from 7.4% of the total population. Penrith City's proportion of the population who are pre-schoolers is 1.2% higher than in Greater Sydney.

3. Where are our 0-4-year-olds?

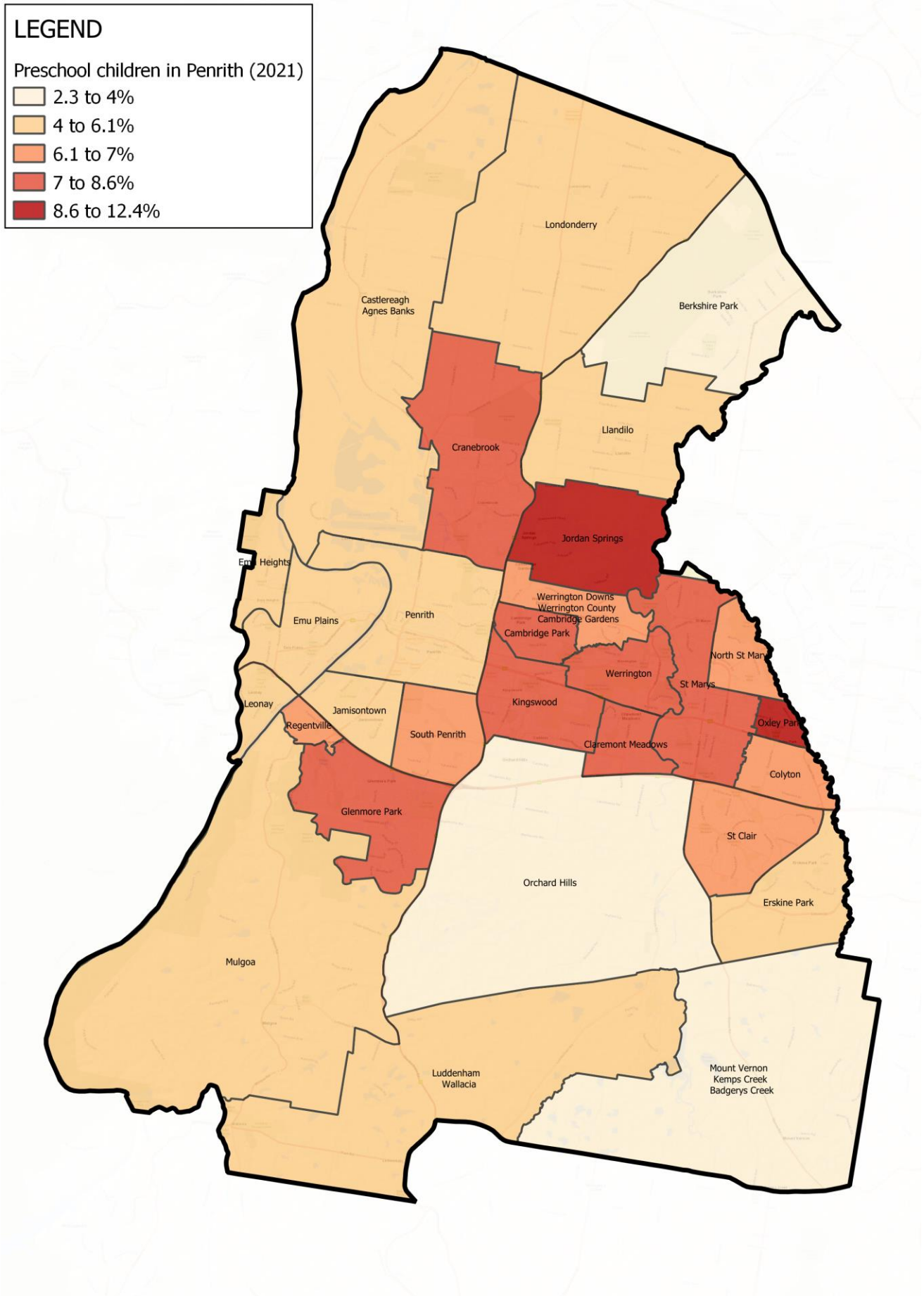
The City of Penrith has a more significant proportion of the population in the preschool age group than Greater Sydney. Within the City, suburbs such as Jordan Springs, Oxley Park, Werrington and St Marys had the largest proportions of pre-schoolers, whereas Berkshire Park, Orchard Hills and Mount Vernon - Kemps Creek - Badgerys Creek, the lowest.

Over time, pre-schoolers' proportion increased most in Oxley Park, Londonderry, Mulgoa and Regentville and decreased most in Berkshire Park, Jamisontown, Leonay and Claremont Meadows.

Area	Preschool residents (as % of total pop.), 2021	Preschool residents (as % of total pop.), 2016	Change 2016-2021
Berkshire Park	2.3%	4.0%	-1.7%
Cambridge Park	7.4%	7.5%	-0.1%
Castlereagh - Agnes Banks	6.1%	6.5%	-0.3%
Claremont Meadows	7.9%	9.2%	-1.3%
Colyton	6.9%	6.6%	0.3%
Cranebrook	7.7%	8.4%	-0.8%
Emu Heights	6.0%	6.2%	-0.2%
Emu Plains	5.4%	6.3%	-0.9%
Erskine Park	5.8%	6.0%	-0.2%
Glenmore Park	7.5%	8.0%	-0.5%
Jamisontown	5.6%	7.3%	-1.7%
Jordan Springs	12.4%	12.8%	-0.4%
Kingswood	8.0%	8.4%	-0.3%
Leonay	4.9%	6.2%	-1.3%
Llandilo	5.6%	6.4%	-0.8%
Londonderry	6.0%	4.9%	1.1%
Luddenham - Wallacia	6.1%	6.8%	-0.7%
Mount Vernon - Kemps Creek - Badgerys Creek	4.0%	3.8%	0.2%
Mulgoa	5.3%	4.3%	1.0%
North St Marys	6.7%	7.6%	-1.0%
Orchard Hills	3.5%	3.3%	0.2%
Area	Preschool residents (as % of total pop.), 2021	Preschool residents (as % of total pop.), 2016	Change 2016-2021
Oxley Park	10.4%	8.5%	1.9%

Penrith	5.8%	6.3%	-0.5%
Regentville	6.5%	5.5%	1.0%
South Penrith	6.4%	7.2%	-0.8%
St Clair	6.8%	6.9%	-0.2%
St Marys	8.2%	8.2%	-0.1%
Werrington	8.6%	9.0%	-0.3%
Werrington Downs - Werrington County - Cambridge Gardens	7.0%	7.4%	-0.4%
Penrith City	7.2%	7.4%	-0.2%

Preschool residents in City of Penrith suburbs, 2016-2021



Spatial distribution of preschool aged children in the City of Penrith (2021)

4. Who are our 0-4-year-olds?

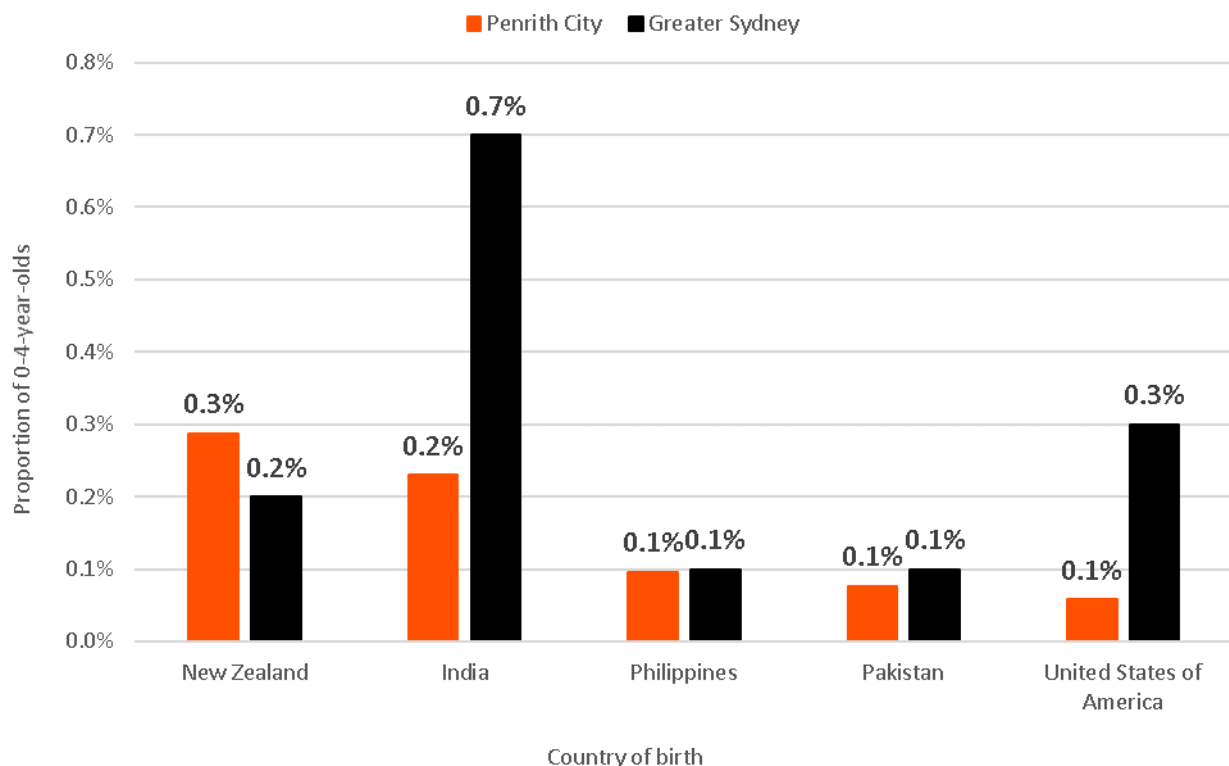
Understanding the cultural diversity of pre-schoolers in a local government planning context is essential. It helps identify the specific needs and challenges of different cultural groups and ensures that local government policies and services are inclusive and responsive to the needs of all community members. This can improve outcomes for pre-schoolers from diverse cultural backgrounds and help to reduce inequalities in early childhood education and care.

4.1 Birthplace

In 2021, 94% of Penrith's pre-schoolers were born in Australia, with 6% born overseas. Of those born overseas, these are the most common overseas birthplaces:

- ▣ New Zealand (0.3% of all pre-schoolers)
- ▣ India (0.2%)
- ▣ Philippines (0.1%)
- ▣ Pakistan (0.1%)
- ▣ United States of America (0.1%)

Compared to Greater Sydney, Penrith City had a larger proportion of overseas-born pre-schoolers from New Zealand but a smaller proportion born in India or the United States.



Top 5 countries of birth for overseas-born pre-schoolers in Penrith City (ex. Australia), 2021

Since 2016, these changes occurred to the top 5 birthplaces for Penrith's pre-schoolers:

- ▣ Australia (+0.7%)
- ▣ New Zealand (-0.1%)
- ▣ India (-0.1%)
- ▣ Philippines (-0.1%)
- ▣ Pakistan (no change)

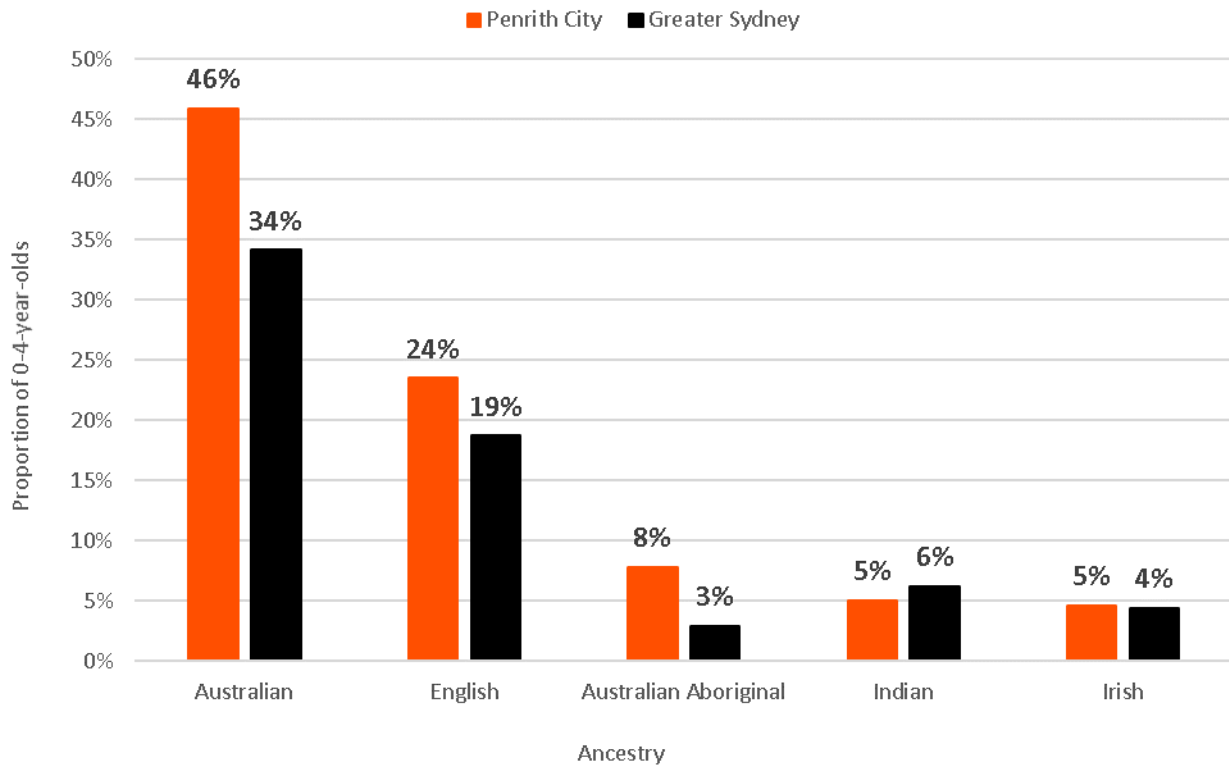
4.2 Ancestry

Ancestry is a more subjective cultural diversity metric in that respondents (or parents) choose which ancestry they identify with. For example, there are several birthplaces, such as those of migrants who arrived in Australia post-World War II (e.g. Italy, Greece), which are declining in number, but the ancestry numbers for those countries are increasing as second and third-generation Australian residents identify with those ancestries. Ancestry is a multi-response question in the Census, so totals can add up to above 100%.

In 2021, 54% of Penrith's pre-schoolers had no ancestry applicable to them. This is likely due to parents not adding an ancestry for their children yet. Of those who did have ancestries selected on their behalf:

- ▣ Australian (45.9%)
- ▣ English (23.5%)
- ▣ Australian Aboriginal (7.8%)
- ▣ Indian (5.0%)
- ▣ Irish (4.6%)

Compared to Greater Sydney, Penrith City had a larger proportion of pre-schoolers with an Australian, English or Australian Aboriginal ancestry, a smaller proportion with Indian ancestry and a similar proportion with Irish ancestry.



Top 5 ancestries of pre-schoolers in Penrith City, 2021

Since 2016, these changes occurred to the top 5 ancestries for Penrith's pre-schoolers:

- ▣ Australian (-4.4%)
- ▣ English (-3.4%)
- ▣ Australian Aboriginal (+6.9%)
- ▣ Indian (+1.3%)
- ▣ Irish (-2.4%).

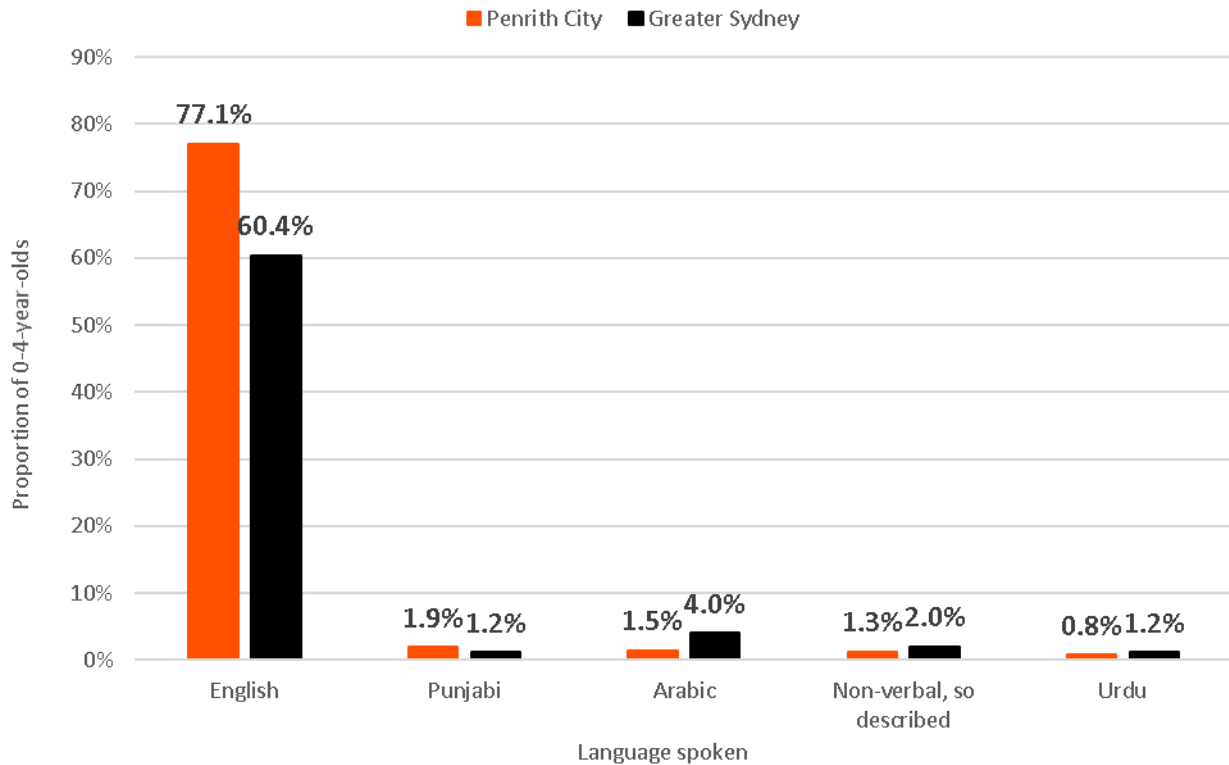
The proportion of pre-schoolers who had no ancestry applicable to them decreased by 4.4% since 2016.

4.3 Languages spoken

In 2021, 77% of Penrith's pre-schoolers spoke English, by far the most commonly spoken language by 0-4-year-olds in the City. Other languages spoken include:

- ▣ Punjabi (1.9%)
- ▣ Arabic (1.5%)
- ▣ Non-verbal/cannot speak yet (1.3%)
- ▣ Urdu (0.8%)

Compared to Greater Sydney, Penrith City had a more significant proportion of pre-schoolers who spoke English at home and a slightly larger proportion who spoke Punjabi. On the other hand, fewer pre-schoolers spoke Arabic and fewer were non-verbal. A similar proportion of Penrith City and Greater Sydney pre-schoolers spoke Urdu.



Top 5 languages spoken by pre-schoolers in Penrith City, 2021

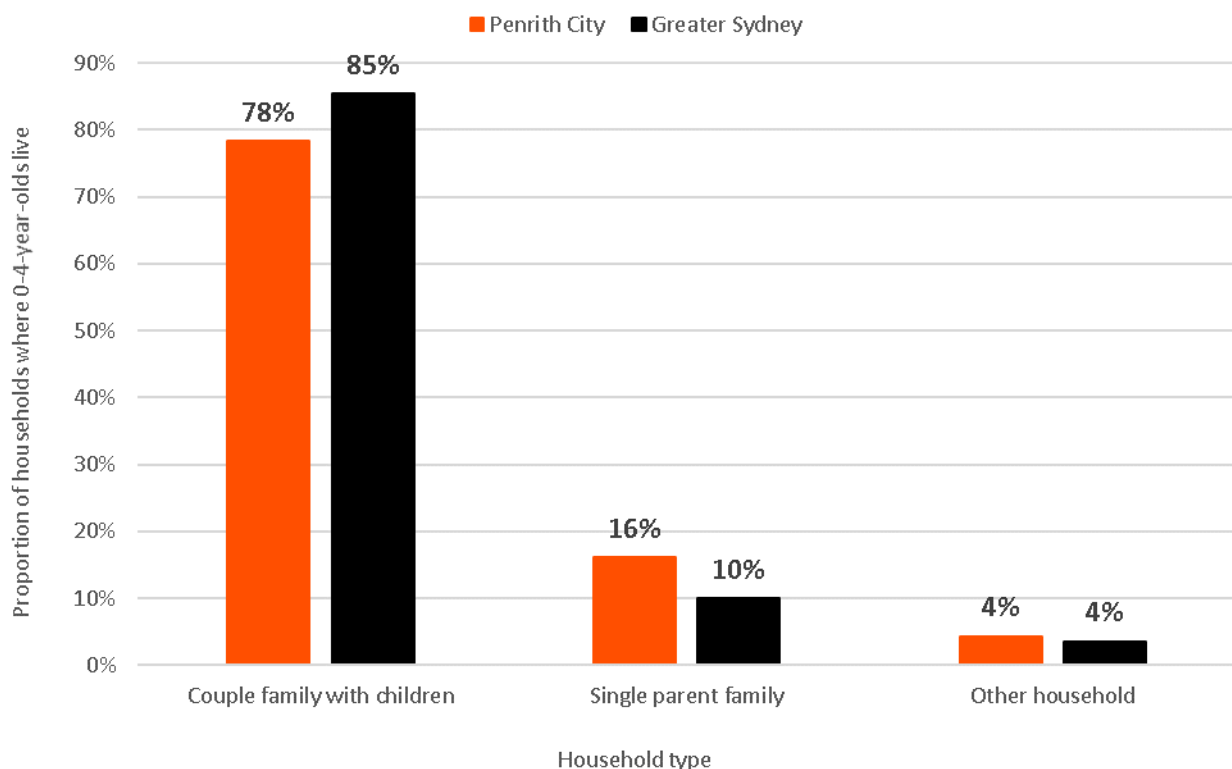
Since 2016, these changes occurred to the top 5 languages spoken by Penrith's pre-schoolers:

- ▣ English (-3.5%)
- ▣ Punjabi (+0.7%)
- ▣ Arabic (+0.4%)
- ▣ Non-verbal (-0.7%)
- ▣ Urdu (+0.3%).

5. How do our 0-4-year-olds live?

5.1 Household composition

In 2021, 78% of Penrith City's pre-schoolers lived in "couple family with children" households, 16% lived in "single parent family" households and 4% lived in "other" households. Compared to Greater Sydney, Penrith City had a smaller proportion of pre-schoolers who lived in "couple family with children" households and a larger proportion who lived in "single parent family" households.



Composition of households where 0-4-year-olds live, Penrith City, 2021

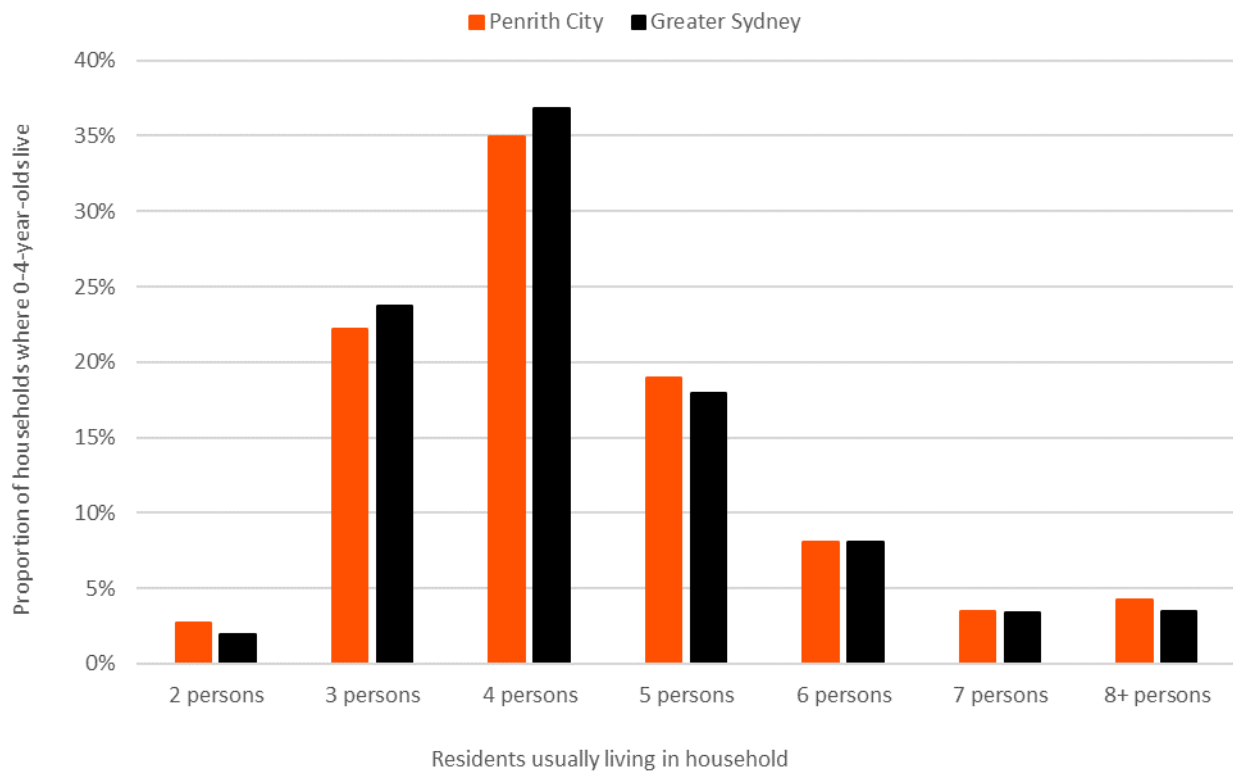
Since 2016, these changes occurred to the household types in which pre-schoolers lived in:

- ▣ Couple family with children (+1.2%)
- ▣ Single parent family (-0.1%)
- ▣ Other households (+0.4%).

5.2 Number of people in household

In 2021, a majority (35%) of Penrith City's pre-schoolers lived in four-person households. A smaller proportion (22%) lived in three-person households and 19% in five-person households. The average household size for households where pre-schoolers lived was 4.0 in Penrith City and 3.59 persons per household in Greater Sydney.

Compared to Greater Sydney, a smaller proportion of Penrith's pre-schoolers lived in three and four-person households, and a larger proportion lived in two or five-person households.



Number of people usually resident in households where pre-schoolers live, Penrith City, 2021

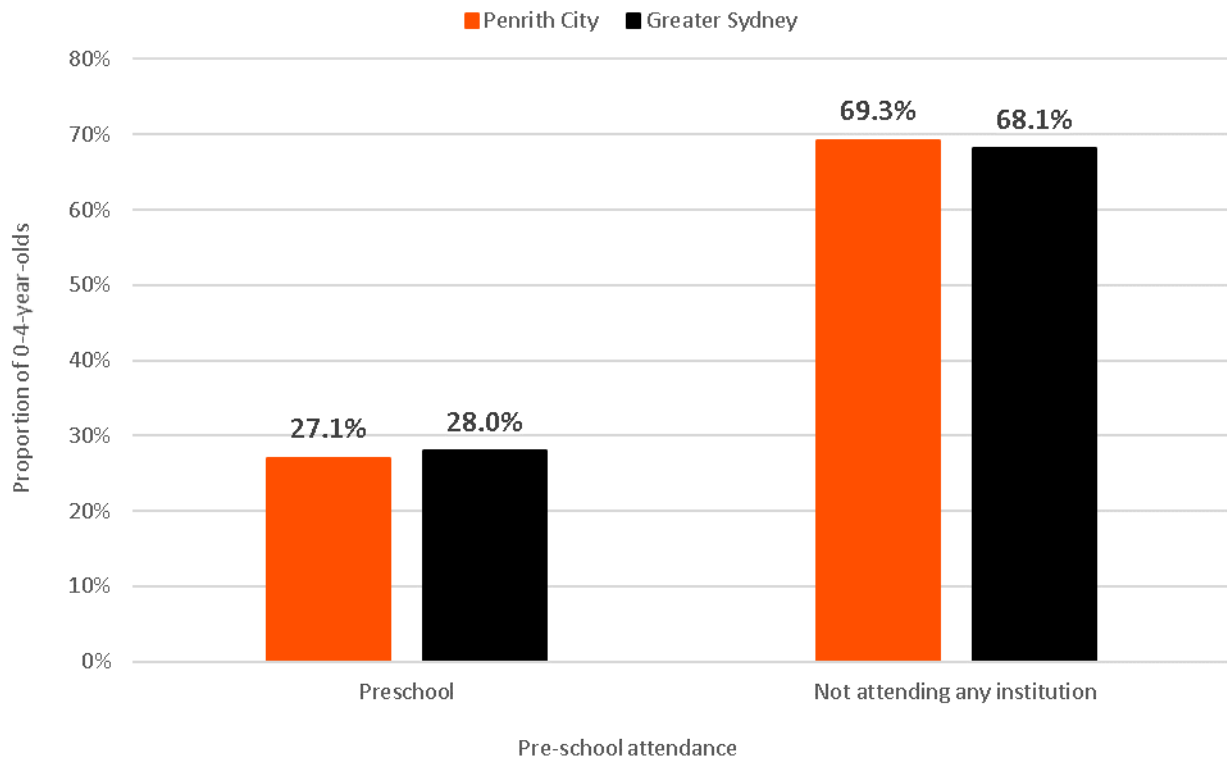
Since 2016, these changes occurred to the household sizes which pre-schoolers lived in:

- ▣ Two-person households (-0.2%)
- ▣ Three-person households (+1.0%)
- ▣ Four-person households (+0.1%)
- ▣ Five-person households (-0.1%)
- ▣ Six-person households (-1.7%)
- ▣ Eight-person households (+0.7%)

5.3 Preschool attendance

The Census defined “preschool” as any early childhood education program. This may be conducted in conjunction with a centre-based daycare provider. In 2021, the Census instructed that “any person currently studying at home because of lockdowns or other Covid-related reasons should select the type of education institution they usually attend or are enrolled in”.

In 2021, 27% of Penrith’s 0-4-year-olds attended preschool, and 69% did not participate in any educational institution. A small proportion (4%) stated “other” or “not stated”. Greater Sydney’s preschool attendance for 0-4-year-olds was slightly higher (28%) with 68% not attending any educational institution.



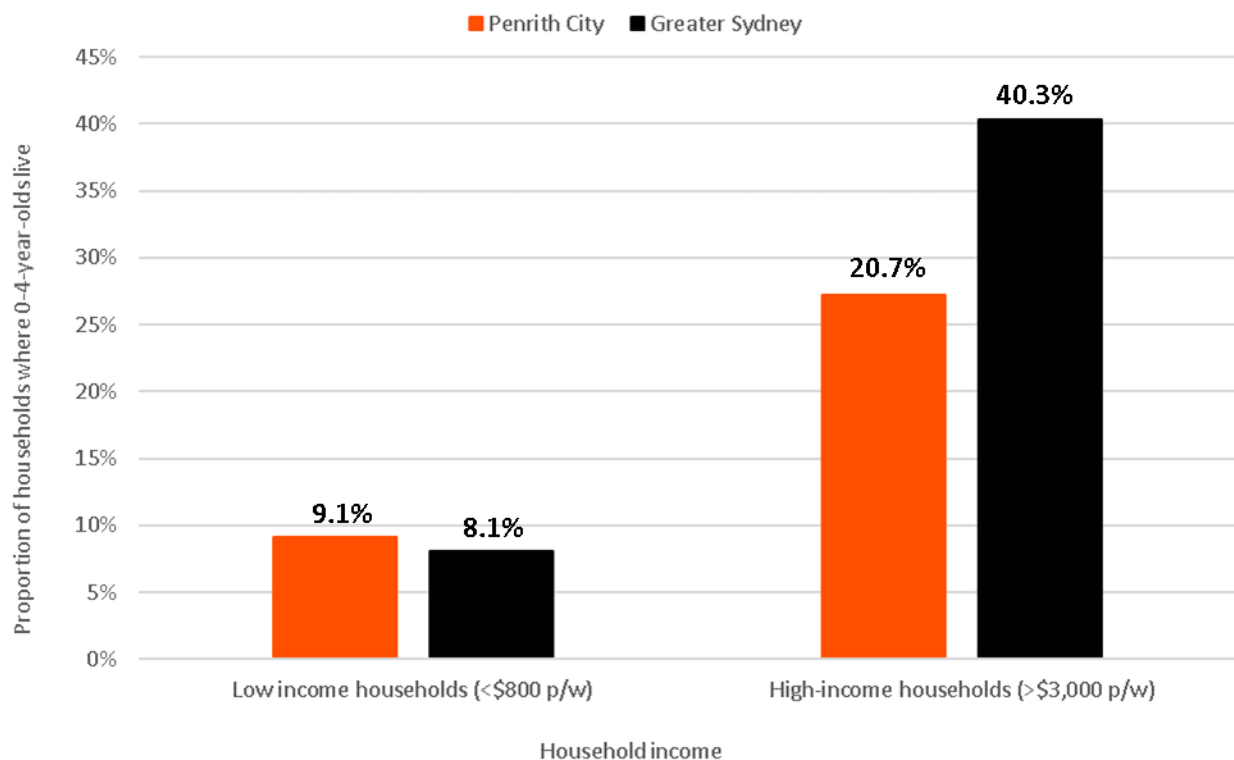
Preschool attendance for Penrith City’s 0-4-year-olds, 2021

Since 2016, the proportion of Penrith City’s 0-4-year-olds who attended preschool increased by 4.3%, whereas the proportion attending no educational institution decreased by 5.1%.

5.4 Household income

In 2021, the median household income for households where pre-schoolers lived was \$2,263. By comparison, in Greater Sydney, the median household income was 16% higher, \$2,635.

Low-income households, defined as those with \$800 of gross weekly income or less, accounted for 9.1% of Penrith City households where pre-schoolers lived. This was slightly higher than in Greater Sydney (8.1%). On the other hand, 27.2% of Penrith City households where pre-schoolers lived were in the high-income category (\$3,000 or more per week). This was considerably lower than in Greater Sydney, where 40.3% of pre-schoolers lived in high-income households.



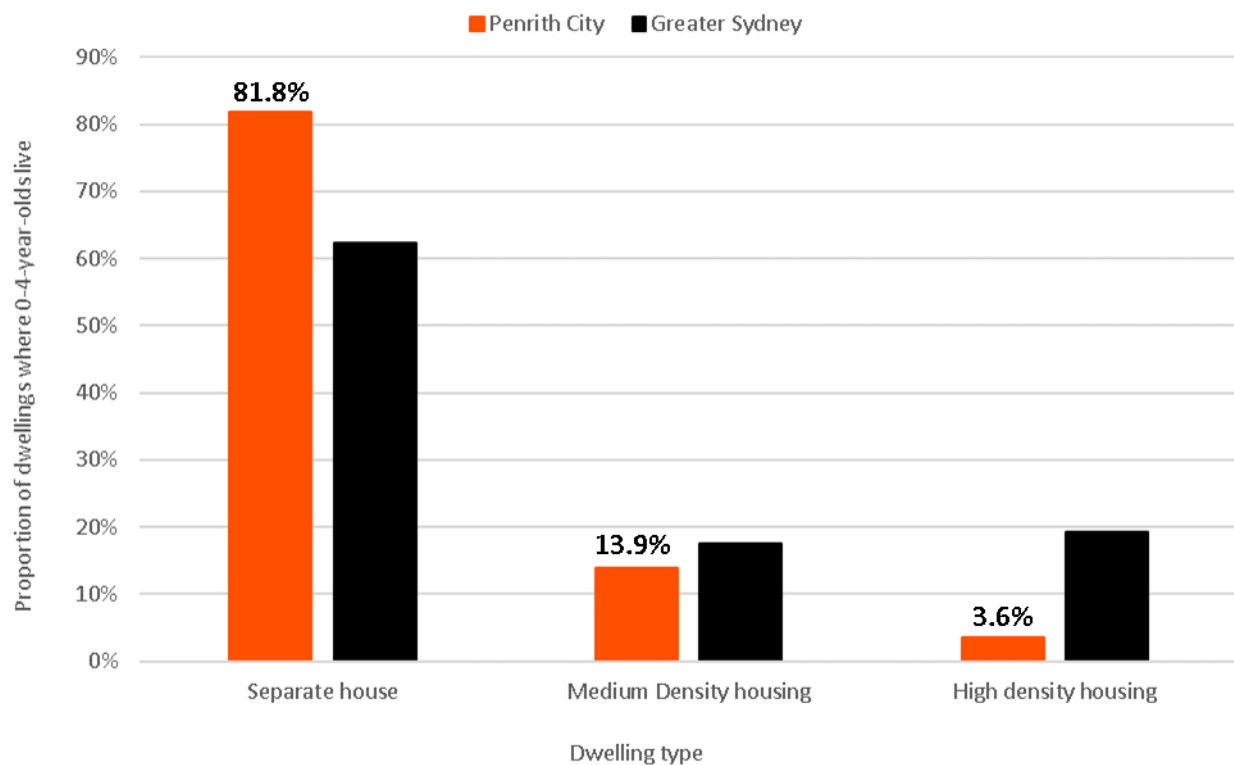
Proportion of pre-schoolers living in low and high-income households, Penrith City, 2021

5.5 Dwelling type

In 2021, most pre-schoolers in Penrith City (82%) lived in separate house dwellings. This is a reflection of the City's built form/dwelling type mix, where 76% of all dwellings are separate houses and the type of dwellings where families with preschool-aged children live. The breakdown of dwelling types where pre-schoolers lived were:

- ▣ Separate house (81.8%)
- ▣ Medium density (13.9%)
- ▣ High density (3.6%)

Compared to Greater Sydney, Penrith City had a larger proportion of pre-schoolers living in separate houses and lower proportions living in medium and high-density housing.



Types of dwellings where pre-schoolers live, Penrith City, 2021

Since 2016, these changes occurred to the dwelling types where pre-schoolers lived:

- ▣ Separate house (-2.1%)
- ▣ Medium-density (+1.4%)
- ▣ High-density (+0.9%)

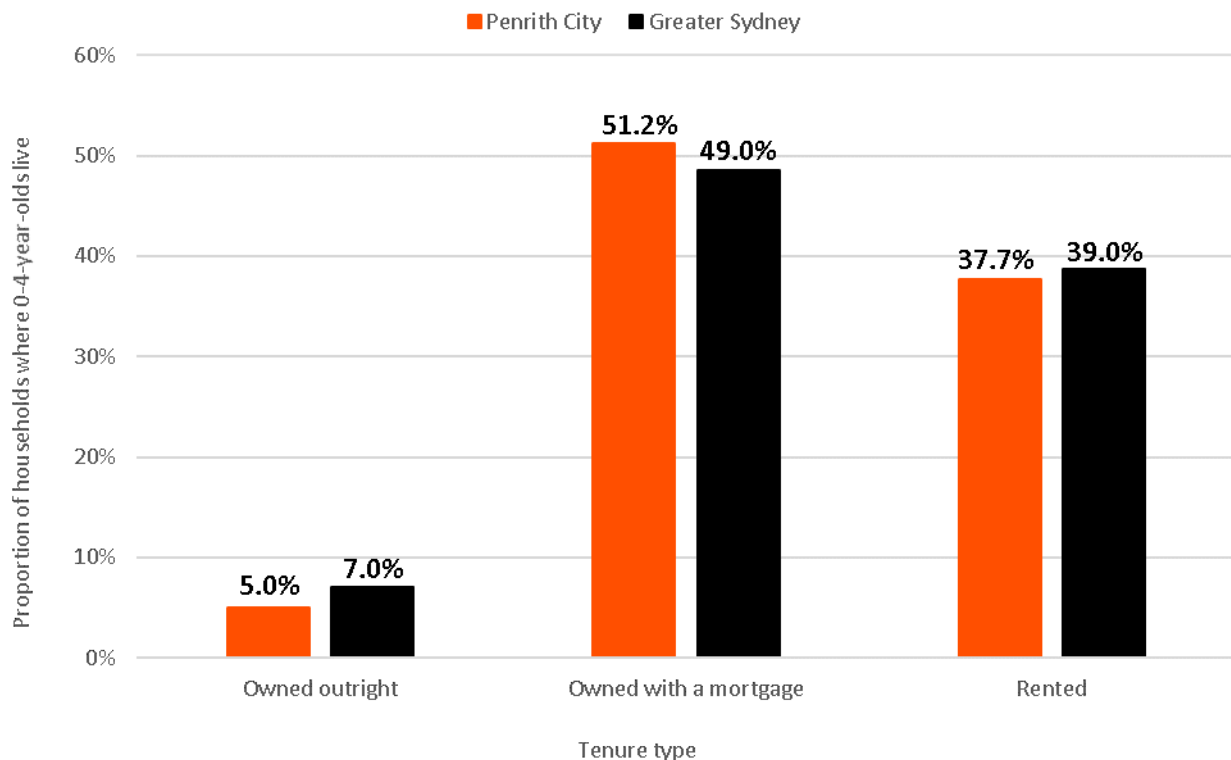
5.6 Tenure type

Most households where pre-schoolers lived were owned with a mortgage, suggesting younger families/households.

In 2021, the tenure type for households where pre-schoolers lived were:

- ▣ Owned with a mortgage (51.2%)
- ▣ Rented (37.7%)
- ▣ Owned outright (5.0%)

In Greater Sydney, the proportion of households owned with a mortgage was slightly lower (49%). In contrast, the proportions of rented households (39%) and households owned outright (7%), were slightly higher than in Penrith City.



Tenure type of households where pre-schoolers live, Penrith City, 2021

Since 2016, these changes occurred to the tenure types of households where pre-schoolers lived:

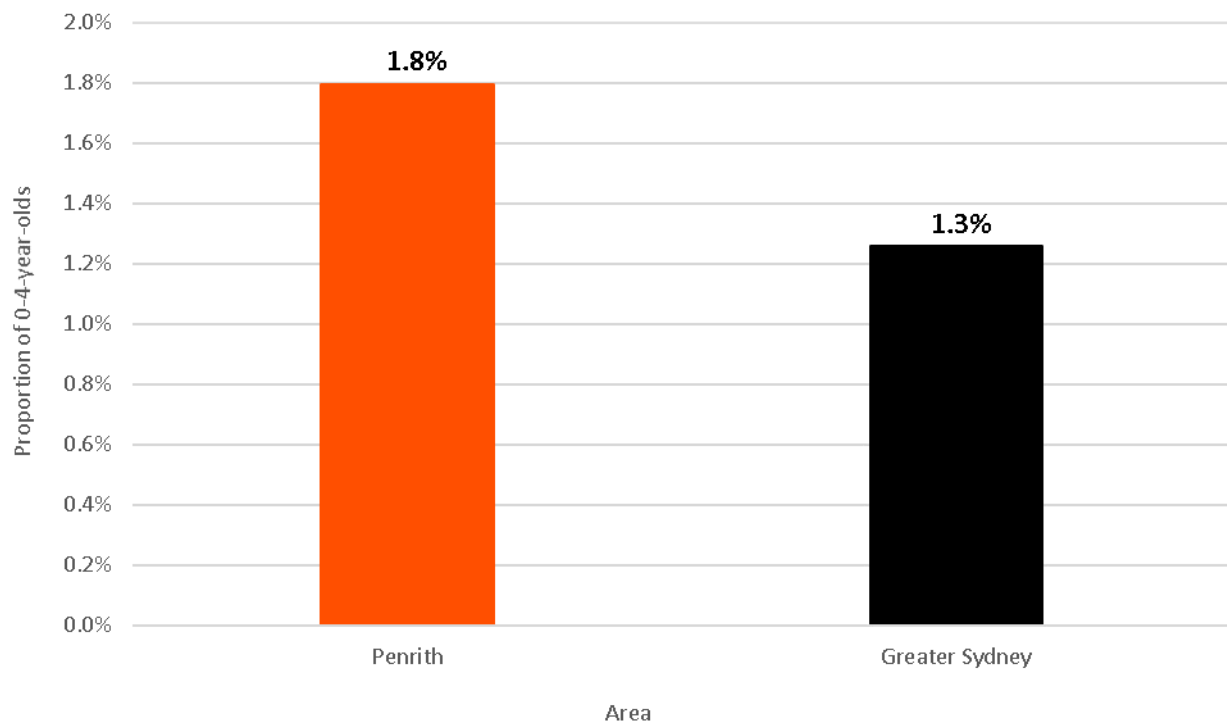
- ▣ Owned outright (-1.0% since 2016)
- ▣ Owned with a mortgage (-0.7%)
- ▣ Rented (+2.2%)

6. How well are our 0-4 years olds doing?

6.1 Need for assistance

Disability and need for assistance are strongly correlated with age. Therefore, a lower proportion of pre-schoolers required assistance due to disability than the overall population. For example, in 2021, 1.8% of pre-schoolers needed assistance, compared to 5.5% of the general population.

Compared to Greater Sydney, Penrith City had a more significant proportion of pre-schoolers with a need for assistance due to disability, 1.8% compared to 1.3% for Greater Sydney's pre-schoolers.



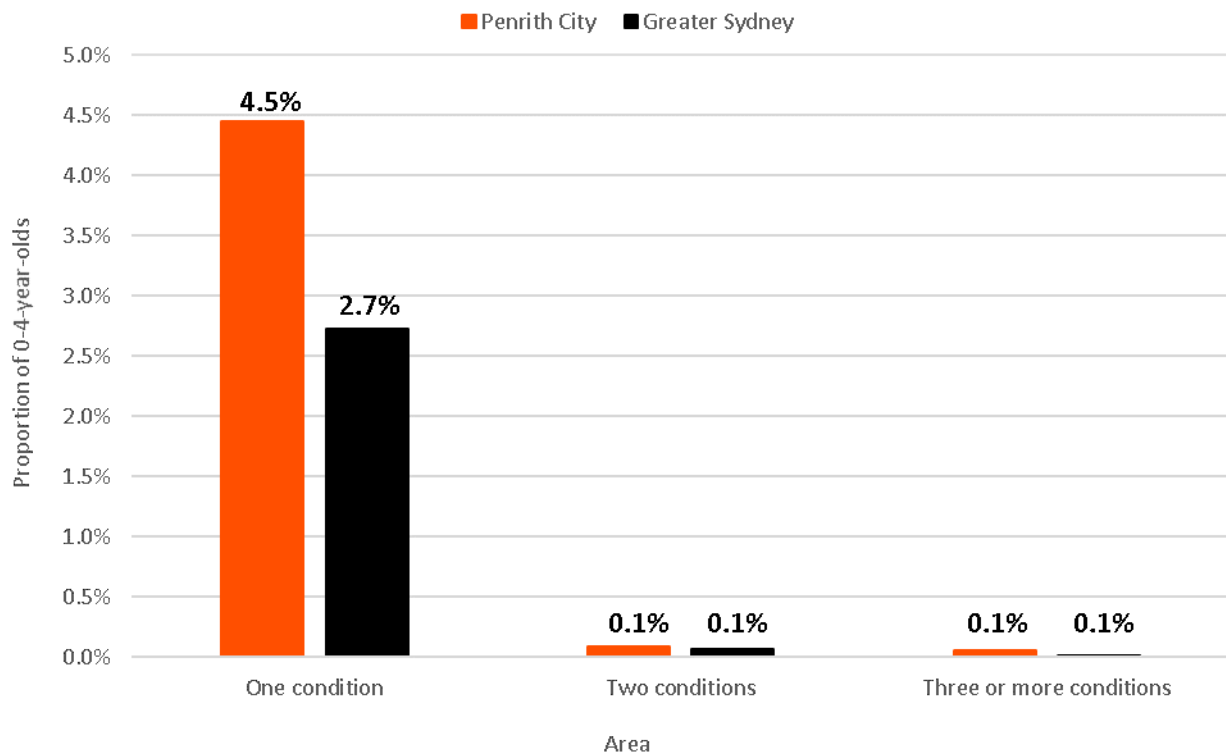
Need for assistance due to disability for pre-schoolers in Penrith City, 2021

Since 2016, the proportion of Penrith City's pre-schoolers with a need for assistance due to disability increased by 0.3%.

6.2 Long-term health conditions

Long-term health conditions are a new Census dataset, first collected in 2021. Long-term health conditions are defined as those an individual has had for 12 months or longer and which have been diagnosed by a doctor or medical professional.

In 2021, 87.2% of Penrith City's pre-schoolers had no long-term health conditions. A small proportion (4.5%) had one condition, with very small proportions of this cohort having two or more conditions. Compared to Greater Sydney, a larger proportion of Penrith City's pre-schoolers had one long-term health condition (4.5% compared to 2.7%).



Count of long-term health conditions for Penrith City's pre-schoolers, 2021

The most common long-term health condition for Penrith City's pre-schoolers was asthma, with 4% having this condition, higher than in Greater Sydney where 2.5% had asthma.

Condition	Penrith City	Greater Sydney
Asthma	4.0% (625 people)	2.3%
Other long-term condition(s)	2.5% (383 people)	1.9%
Heart disease	0.2% (27 people)	0.1%
Mental health condition	0.2% (24 people)	0.1%
Kidney disease	0.1% (21 people)	0.1%

Top 5 most prevalent long-term health conditions for Penrith City's pre-schoolers, 2021

6.3 The Australian Early Development Census

The Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) is a nationwide data collection of early childhood development **at the time children commence their first year of full-time school**. The AEDC highlights what is working well and what needs improvement or development to support children and their families by providing evidence to support health, education and community policy and planning.

The five areas of early childhood development that comprise the AEDC domains are further explained here: <https://www.aedc.gov.au/resources/detail/about-the-aedc-domains>

In 2021, 3,052 Penrith City children who were commencing their first year of full-time school were included in the AEDC. Compared to New South Wales and Australia, Penrith City had a larger proportion of vulnerable children in all the measured domains, with the largest gap in the “Communication skills and general knowledge” domain (+2.4% more vulnerable).

Domain	Penrith City	New South Wales	Australia
Number of children	3,052	---	---
Physical health and wellbeing	10.6%	9.4%	9.8%
Social competence	10.4%	9.4%	9.6%
Emotional maturity	8.5%	7.3%	8.5%
Language and cognitive skills (school-based)	7.4%	6.2%	7.3%
Communication skills and general knowledge	10.8%	8.4%	8.4%
Vulnerable on one or more domains of the AEDC	24.4%	21.2%	22%
Vulnerable on two or more domains of the AEDC	11.9%	10.5%	11.4%

Proportion of children developmentally vulnerable across AEDC domains, City of Penrith 2021

Since the last AEDC survey in 2018, there was no significant change in vulnerabilities of Penrith City’s children who were commencing their first year of full-time school except for in the “Communication skills and general knowledge” domain, where developmental vulnerability in Penrith City increased by 1.9%.

7. More reports in this series

Other age-related report is available in this series:

- ▾ Young people
- ▾ Older people

Other reports included in the Demographic Analysis report series are:

- ▾ First Nations peoples
- ▾ Health and Disability
- ▾ Gender
- ▾ People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- ▾ Housing density
- ▾ Equity
- ▾ Social disadvantage
- ▾ Digital access
- ▾ Penrith City Local Government Area Demographic Summary

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