

# CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

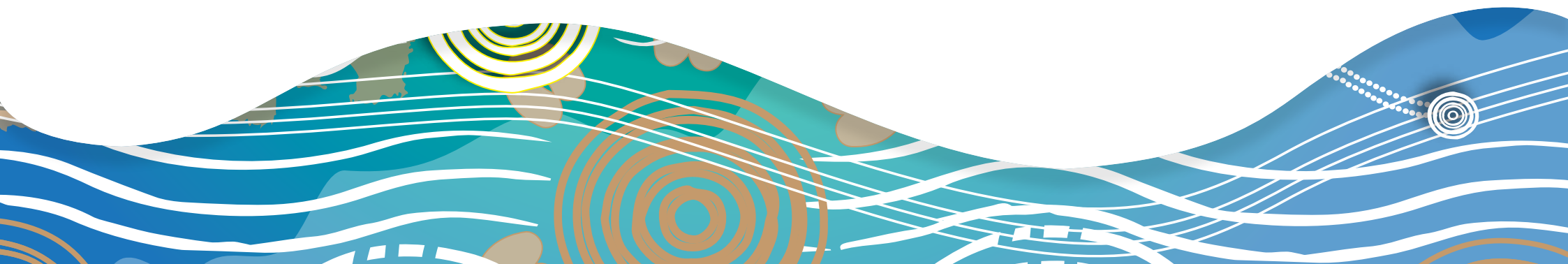
2024–2027

June 2024

## Acknowledgement of Country

Woollahra Council acknowledges the  
Gadigal and Birrabirragal people who are the  
Traditional Custodians of this land and we pay our  
respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

Artwork by Jordan Ardler (detail)



# Message from the Mayor and General Manager



Children, youth and families living in Woollahra make up a significant proportion of our local population, which is why having a strategy in place to make sure we meet the needs of these community sectors is important.

This *Children, Youth and Families Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2027* identifies the actions we can take to respond to top community priorities children, youth and families and local organisations and support groups have shared with us.

We have heard that children, youth and families expect to have their opinions heard and valued and that by working collaboratively we can build strong relationships. We understand the value the community holds in having places and spaces in Woollahra that connect people, make them feel safe and included and that we have a strong role to play in advocating on behalf of children, youth and families for improved mental health services and more affordable housing options.

I commend everyone who has participated in this Strategy and I look forward to working with my Councillor colleagues to take actions that make a positive contribution to our community now and well into the future.

**Councillor Richard Shields**  
Mayor of Woollahra



Thank you to the hundreds of members of our community who shared their feedback on issues, concerns and hopes for the future that has helped us prepare our first *Children, Youth and Families Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2027*.

Woollahra Council is committed to community engagement and using feedback to guide the decisions we make and the services and facilities we provide. As a result of the community feedback gathered during the development of this Strategy we now know more about children, youth and families and we are looking forward to working towards addressing key local issues for children, youth and families.

We know people want good access to parks, playgrounds and open spaces; we understand how important mental health and wellbeing are to everyone and we have a clear understanding of how access to affordable and good quality childcare is of key importance.

Through the actions outlined in this Strategy we will be able to work toward addressing these issues and aspirations and we will play an active role in lobbying and advocating on behalf of the Woollahra community to ensure our children, youth and families voices are heard.

We look forward to working collaboratively with you so that we can deliver on our vision for a thriving, inclusive and resilient community that benefits future generations.

**Craig Swift-McNair**  
General Manager

# Executive Summary

More than 500 people and organisations contributed to the development of the Woollahra Municipal Council *Children, Youth and Families Strategy and Action Plan 2024 – 2027*.

The aim of this Strategy is to ensure our community and places are inclusive and supportive of children (ages 0-11), youth (ages 12-24) and families. This Strategy establishes a clear focus for Council and identifies our role as an advocate, service provider, place-maker, enabler and partner.

Partnerships, collaboration and deep listening are at the heart of achieving positive outcomes for children, youth and families. It is by working across Council and with our community, businesses and other government and non-government agencies that we will create the greatest social and collective impact.

This Strategy sets out a strategic roadmap that builds upon our existing strengths, leverages our community assets and seeks new ways to support children, youth and families in our municipality to flourish. It also supports delivery of the *Woollahra 2032 Community Strategy and Action Plan*.

The Strategy is underpinned by four strategic pillars that we will focus on in the coming four years.

- 1. Voice:** Deep listening and action
- 2. Working Together:** Collaborative relationships
- 3. Places and Spaces:** Thriving environments that connect people
- 4. Advocacy:** Shaping the future

The process to develop this Strategy has been both extensive and diverse, with rich data and conversations uncovering a wealth of perspectives and insights. Our belief, purpose, strategic pillars, outcomes and actions have been informed through research and consultation with the community.

In summary, the development process included 13 focus groups, 9 community pop-ups, many face-to-face interviews and two significant surveys. We spoke to 537 participants including: children, youth, parents and carers, local services, Councillors, Council staff and community members.

## Four Strategic Pillars

2024



**1. Voice**  
Deep listening and action



**2. Working Together**  
Collaborative relationships



**3. Places & Spaces**  
Thriving environments that connect people



**4. Advocacy**  
Shaping the future

2027

# Executive Summary

We analysed more than 50 relevant strategies, plans and frameworks at a national, state and local level to ensure the Children, Youth and Families Strategy and Action Plan is aligned with broader policy settings, and we mapped the services available to children, youth and families in the Woollahra LGA to better understand how to continue to build a robust service system with our partners.

From the background research and engagement undertaken across the community, six key issues and opportunities emerged that have informed our strategic pillars and actions.

To help communicate and promote the work we will be doing and how we will do it, we have developed a 'Strategy on a Page' (Section 2.0). The remainder of this document explains the detail, how we got there (Section 1.0), and what actions we will be taking in the years ahead (Section 3.0).

Together with our partners, Council has a long history of supporting the quality of life for children, youth and families in our municipality. We have illustrated some of our recent and ongoing work within this document.

This Strategy and Action Plan builds on these initiatives. It serves to focus how we will work with the community and our partners over the coming four-year period and where we will invest our resources to enhance the lives of our youngest community members and their families.

## Six key issues and opportunities

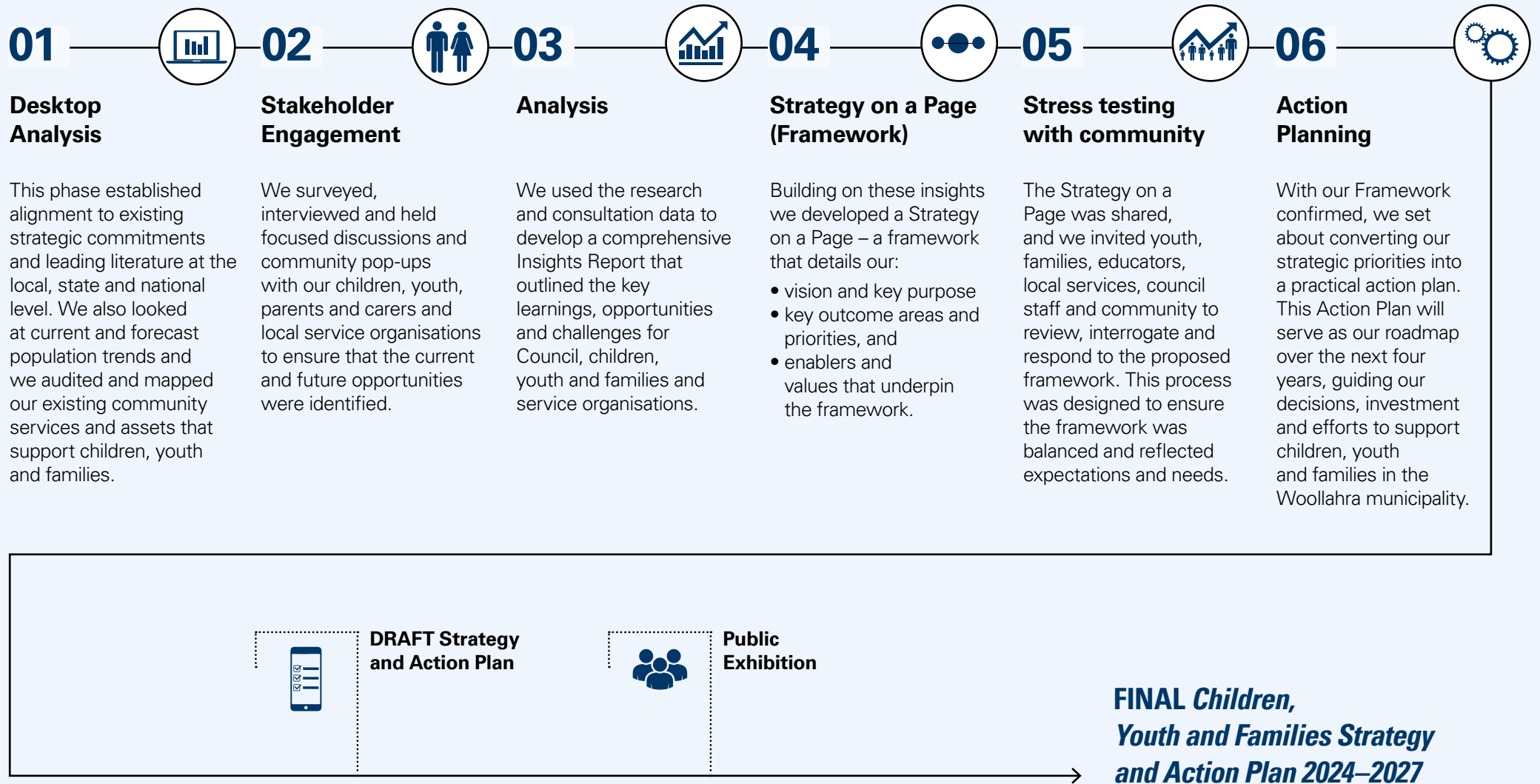


## What we did

The Children, Youth and Families Strategy and Action Plan builds on Council's existing strategies, plans and policies and is informed by research, evidence, and most importantly through consultation with the community and organisations that partner with Council. Its development involved six key phases. —>



# What we did



# How we engaged and who contributed

We engaged through surveys, focus groups, community pop-ups and interviews.

## 203 people engaged through 13 focus groups:

6 focus groups with Preschool children and staff

1 focus group with preschool parents

1 focus group with primary aged children

2 focus groups with youth

2 focus groups with service providers

1 focus group with school teachers

Community engagement pop-up, Rose Bay.





# How we engaged and who contributed

## 183 people spoke to us at 9 community pop-ups:

Christison Park

Double Bay Markets, Guilfoyle Park

Double Bay Public School Fair

Holdsworth Playgroup

Lyne Park

Paddington Library

Watsons Bay Library

Westfield Shopping Centre, Bondi Junction

Woollahra Library at Double Bay

## 151 people had their say through surveys and interviews:

Community survey

Service provider mapping survey

Survey to stress test our strategy on a page with the community and service providers

1:1 interviews with service providers, Council staff and Councillors



# How we engaged and who contributed

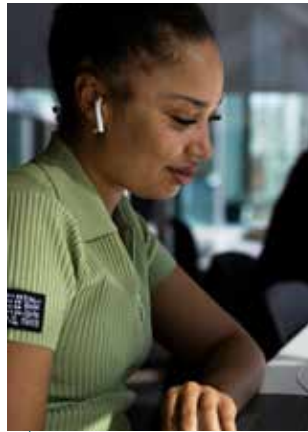
We engaged with **537** community members and partners



↓  
**140** Preschoolers



↓  
**22** Children primary aged, under 12 years.



↓  
**65** Youths 12–24 years



↓  
**199** Parents and carers



↓  
**58** Service providers and school staff



↓  
**53** Council staff, partners and other community members

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Bellevue Hill Public School students celebrating their Bellevue Hill 2023 artwork.



# 1.0 Background

# 1.1 Introduction

## **The Children, Youth and Families Strategy and Action Plan**

The *Woollahra Municipal Council, Children, Youth and Families Strategy and Action Plan 2024–2027* is a roadmap designed to empower and nurture the well-being of our community’s children, youth and families.

Council has a strong commitment to the wellbeing and development of children, youth and families. This Strategy represents a dedicated effort to provide them with safe, inclusive, and thriving environments in which to grow and flourish.

This Strategy, shaped by extensive research, community engagement, and collaboration with stakeholders, outlines a multifaceted approach to promote the physical, emotional and social well-being of our youngest residents and their families.

By addressing key areas such as access to childcare, participation in decision making, access to physical spaces, and promotion of mental health and wellbeing we aim to foster a community

where children, youth and families have a sense of belonging and ownership and are supported to reach their full potential.

Through partnerships, investments, and innovative initiatives, we envision a future where every child and youth can thrive, and where families are supported in their vital role as the building blocks of our community.

### **What we currently do**

Woollahra Municipal Council plays a multifaceted role in strategic planning for services to address the needs of children, youth and families. We assess needs, provide and fund services, engage the community, advocate for resources, and collaborate with other stakeholders to ensure that children, youth and families have access to quality services and opportunities for development and well-being. We use regular evaluation feedback from children, youth and families in the community through events, activities, programs and services to inform improvements in programming.

Council has a long and proud history in supporting children, youth and families including through:

#### **1. Preschool services**

Council currently owns and operates Woollahra Preschool, located in Double Bay. Woollahra Preschool provides 80 places to 160 families. The Woollahra Preschool has a dedicated inclusion support program that in 2024 supported up to 8 children with High Inclusion Support needs.

The Preschool is in high demand with up to 100 eligible children remaining on the waitlist after each intake. There is an unsatisfied demand for places for 3-year-old children.

Woollahra Preschool has opted into the NSW Start Strong Free Preschool and Fee Reduction Program offered to mobile and community-based preschools. The purpose of the program is to ensure all children can have access to 600 hours of quality preschool education in the year before entering school and allows Council to provide 2 days of preschool for all families, at a very low fee.

# 1.1 Introduction

## 2. Community and Cultural Development

Council supports a range of community and cultural development initiatives that target families with young children including the Starting School forum and other parenting education programs in collaboration with Woollahra Preschool, Woollahra Libraries and Waverley Council. The Community and Cultural Development team facilitates Youth Week activities each year and provides mental health first aid training to the community. Council has also coordinated the annual Woollahra Youth Photographic Award and Short Film Prize since 1994, encouraging year 7 to 12 high school students to engage through the competition and exhibition, or the related workshops, held during the October school holiday period.



Encouraging our community to have their say.



## 3. Funding

Council provides funding to Holdsworth Community to support play groups in Woollahra and Rose Bay. We also fund the Women’s Housing Company to provide up to 10 medium-term transitional accommodation units to local women and their families escaping domestic violence through the Woollahra Domestic and Family Violence Accommodation and Support Program. In addition, Council funds the annual School Citizenship Awards for primary school aged children.

# 1.1 Introduction

## 4. Woollahra Libraries

Woollahra Municipal Council operates three libraries in Paddington, Double Bay and Watsons Bay. The library team includes two Engagement Officers specialising in children and youth services. The Libraries provide welcoming spaces that includes dedicated children’s areas with a slide at Double Bay and has a specialised collection available for children and youth.

Programs include early literacy programs such as Rhyme Time and Story Time, science and technology programs, Higher School Certificate (HSC) support and tutoring, reading/book clubs, social activities aimed at youth (e.g. trivia and poetry slams), community workshops and school holiday activities. Woollahra Libraries also provide volunteering opportunities for Duke of Edinburgh candidates.



Study time at Woollahra Library Double Bay.

# 1.1 Introduction

## 5. Grants

Where there are identified gaps, we provide seeding grants for organisations, schools and individuals who want to start initiatives targeting children, youth and parents through the annual Woollahra Grants Program.

## 6. Rent subsidies

Council has had a partnership with the Department of Health, stretching back to the 1950s, to deliver Child and Family Health services. Currently these services are being delivered in Paddington and a new centre is being established in Vacluse. The Child and Family Health Services are funded and operated by South-Eastern Sydney Area Health, whilst Council provides the premises.

## 7. Facilities and playgrounds

Council owns and manages a range of community venues, playgrounds, walking paths, swimming areas, community, recreation and sporting facilities and open spaces that support the health, wellbeing and quality of life for children, youth and families. We design these in consultation with the community. Many of the Community venues are hired for birthday parties and other family focused celebrations.

## 8. Service provider networks

Council attends service network meetings and maintains relationships with local service providers and neighboring councils to understand emerging community needs and assets.



Playground fun, Double Bay.



Engaging our community through events.



## 1.1 Introduction



National Tree Day 2023, a popular event for local families.

### 9. Sustainability

Council provides opportunities for children and youth to protect and care for the natural environment through various sustainability and volunteering programs. We support sustainability initiatives in local schools and preschools, along with hosting family friendly environmental activities each year.

### 10. Website and social media

Council provides information to the community via our website and social media pages. The community can learn about relevant events and programs available to children, youth and families through these platforms. Council also provides information about local services and important psychoeducation (regarding topics like domestic violence, child protection and mental health support) through the website.

# 1.2 Our Community



Population (2023)  
**54,660**



Median age (2022)  
male **40 years**  
female **41 years**



Aged 0–24  
**25.3%**

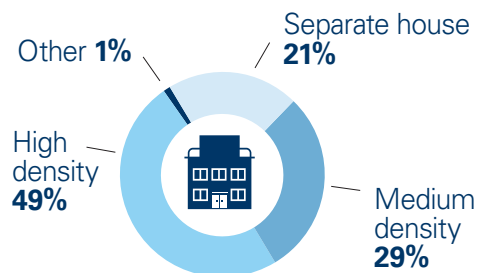


Families **13,761**  
Number of kids  
per family **1.8**



People per  
household **2.23**

## Housing type (2021)



**\*78%** of dwellings are medium or high density (2021)



Born Overseas  
(2021) **34.4%**



Speak English  
at home **79.5%**



Australian  
citizen **78.8%**



Employment  
status (2016)  
**96.7%**

Of these 69% were employed full time, 30% were employed part-time and 3.3% were unemployed.



University qualified  
residents (2016)  
**48.9%**

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics [dbr.abs.gov.au](https://dbr.abs.gov.au/profile.id.com.au/woollahra)  
[profile.id.com.au/woollahra](https://profile.id.com.au/woollahra)  
\*[profile.id.com.au/woollahra/dwellings](https://profile.id.com.au/woollahra/dwellings)

## 1.2 Our Community

In 2021, if the woollahra municipality was made up of 100 people\*:



<b>53.4</b>	Would be female
<b>34.4</b>	Would be born overseas
<b>16</b>	Would have arrived in Australia within 5 years prior to 2021
<b>15.5</b>	Would speak a language other than English at home
<b>0.3</b>	Would be Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
<b>14</b>	Would be Jewish
<b>30.3</b>	Would live by themselves
<b>48.6</b>	Would live in high-density housing
<b>31.5</b>	Of those people aged 15 years + would earn an income of less than \$1,000 per week
<b>24.7</b>	Of those people aged 15 years + would earn an income of more than \$3,000 per week

<b>2.9</b>	Would need assistance with core activities
<b>4.6</b>	Would be aged 0-4 years (Babies and preschoolers)
<b>7.1</b>	Would be aged 5-11 years (Primary schoolers)
<b>6.5</b>	Would be aged 12-17 years (Secondary schoolers)
<b>7.2</b>	Would be aged 18-24 years (Tertiary education and independence)
<b>15.7</b>	Would be aged 25-34 years (Young workforce)
<b>19.9</b>	Would be aged 35-49 years (Parents and homebuilders)
<b>12.6</b>	Would be aged 50-59 years (Older workers and pre-retirees)
<b>10.4</b>	Would be aged 60-69 years (Empty nesters and retirees)
<b>12.8</b>	Would be aged 70-84 years (Seniors)
<b>3.2</b>	Would be aged 85 years and over (Elderly aged)

\*Source: [profile.id.com.au/woollahra](https://profile.id.com.au/woollahra) (2016 and 2021 data)  
[planningportal.nsw.gov.au/populations](https://planningportal.nsw.gov.au/populations) (2041 Forecasts)

## 1.2 Our Community

### Forecast population changes 2021 to 2041

- Woollahra’s population is expected to grow modestly in the coming years – by 8,448 people (15.8%) between 2021 and 2041
- In 2021, there were 13,546 babies, children and youth aged 0–24 years living in Woollahra, representing one quarter (25.3%) of the total population
- People aged 25–49 years – our young workforce, parents and homebuilders – are expected to increase by 2,894 people by 2041.



2021\*

Estimated resident population **53,507**

2041†

Estimated resident population **61,954**

↑ **8,448**



Children & Youth (0–24yrs) **13,546**

Children & Youth (0–24yrs) **14,919**

↑ **1,373**



Young workforce, parents & homebuilders (25–49yrs) **19,073**

Young workforce, parents & homebuilders (25–49yrs) **21,967**

↑ **2,894**



Older workers, pre-retirees, empty nesters, retirees (50–69yrs) **12,332**

Older workers, pre-retirees, empty nesters, retirees (50–69yrs) **13,866**

↑ **1,534**



Older people (70+yrs) **8,556**

Older people (70+yrs) **11,203**

↑ **2,647**

\*Source: [profile.id.com.au/woollahra/five-year-age-groups](https://profile.id.com.au/woollahra/five-year-age-groups)

†Source: [planningportal.nsw.gov.au/populations](https://planningportal.nsw.gov.au/populations)

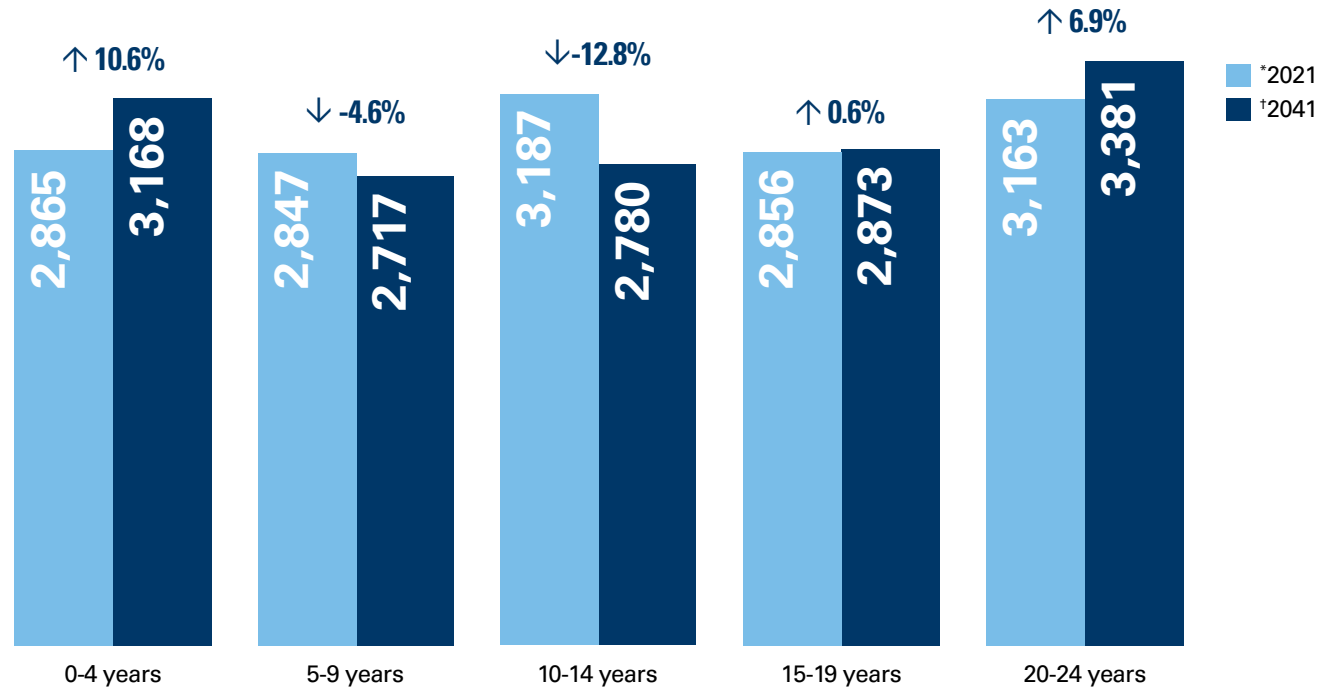
# 1.2 Our Community

## Our Children and Youth (2021–2041)

Through to 2041, the number of people aged 0–24 years is forecast to increase by 1,373 and there will also be roughly the same (+1 person), however there will be:

- An increase in babies and toddlers 0–4 years (+731)
- A slight increase in children and youth aged 5–9 years (+81)
- A slight decrease in children and youth aged 10–14 years (-105)
- In increase in youth aged 15–19 years (+203) and 20–24 years (+463).

Forecast population growth for children and youth by 5 year age groups (2021–2041).



\*Source: [profile.id.com.au/woollahra/five-year-age-groups](https://profile.id.com.au/woollahra/five-year-age-groups)

†Source: [planningportal.nsw.gov.au/populations](https://planningportal.nsw.gov.au/populations)

## 1.2 Our Community

### Our Households (2021)

The number of households with children has remained relatively stable between the five years from 2016 to 2021. In 2021, 24.0% of Woollahra Municipality's total families were couple families with children (compared to 34.4% in Greater Sydney). This varied across the municipality, ranging from a low of 14.1% in Edgecliff to a high of 42.9% in Vaucluse – Watsons Bay.

The five areas with the highest percentages were:

- Vaucluse – Watsons Bay (42.9%)
- Bellevue Hill (29.7%)
- Rose Bay (23.9%)
- Woollahra (22.2%)
- Paddington (19.9%).

In this same period, there was a 5.4% (n=83) increase in single parent households. In 2021, 7.1% of Woollahra Municipality's total families were one parent families (compared to 10.5% in Greater Sydney). This ranged from a low of 5.6% in Edgecliff to a high of 8.2% in Rose Bay and Vaucluse – Watsons Bay. The five areas with the highest percentages of single parent families were:

- Rose Bay (8.2%)
- Vaucluse – Watsons Bay (8.2%)
- Woollahra (7.8%)
- Double Bay – Point Piper (7.4%)
- Bellevue Hill (7.4%).

Council is interested to ensure that services and supports are available in areas where families are concentrated and to ensure targeted supports reach our growing number of single parent families who may experience greater financial and emotional pressures.

The number of lone households in Woollahra has also increased by 10.6% between 2016 and 2021. In 2021, there were 30.3% of lone person households (compared to 22.2% in Greater Sydney). Council is interested to ensure we design community programs, facilities and events where people can connect outside their homes and across generations.



Total Households  
**22,897**

↓ **2.1%**  
since 2016



Households with children  
**7,115**

↑ **0.4%**  
since 2016



Single parent households  
**1,629**

↑ **5.4%**  
since 2016



Lone people in households  
**6,949**

↑ **10.6%**  
since 2016

Source: [profile.id.com.au/woollahra/households](https://profile.id.com.au/woollahra/households)

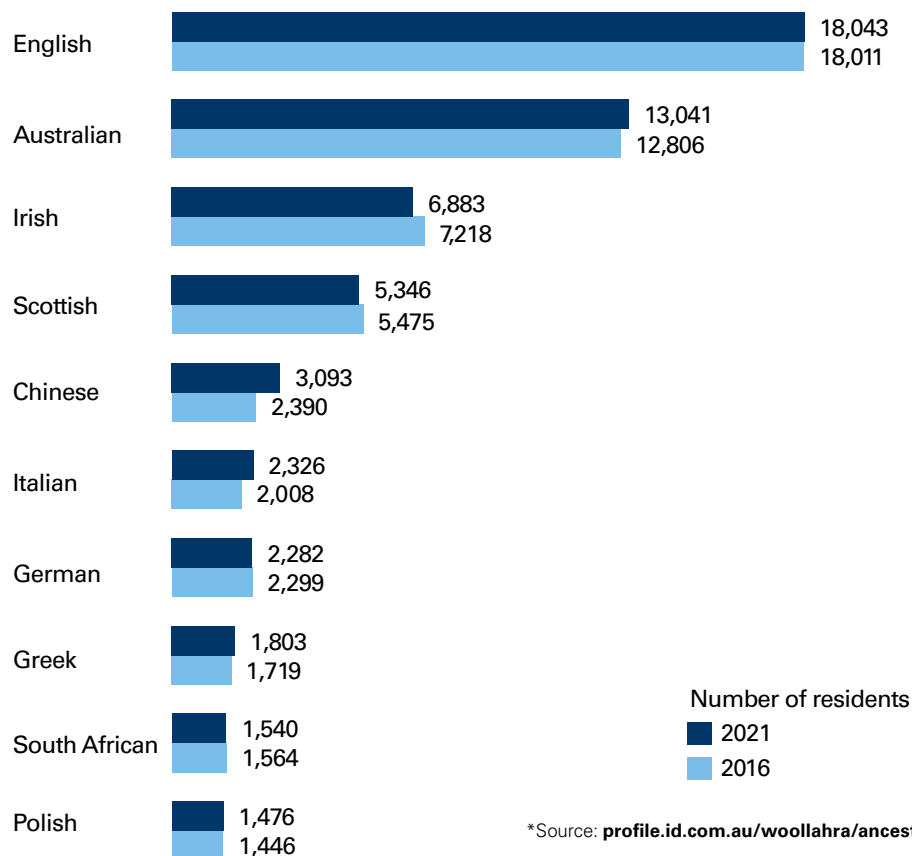


Visiting the Spark Truck outdoor traveling library in Lyne Park, Rose Bay.

## 1.2 Our Community

### Top 10 Ancestries (2016 – 2021)

In 2021, the top 5 ancestries of people living in the Woollahra Municipality were English, Australian, Irish, Scottish and Chinese. The top two ancestry growth rates in the LGA were Chinese (number of people increased by 29.41% since 2016) and Italian (number of people increased by 15.84% since 2016).



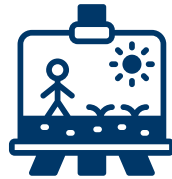
\*Source: [profile.id.com.au/woollahra/ancestry](https://profile.id.com.au/woollahra/ancestry)

# 1.2 Our Community

## Our Children, Youth and Families Service Provider Partners

As of April 2024, there were 49 Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) providers in the Woollahra LGA, providing 1,388 long day care (LDC) places, 182 Preschool places and 1,472 Outside School Hours Care (OSCH) services.

Whilst the number of places available has increased since we last mapped our services in 2018, with two new services opening in Double Bay (82 places) and one new service opening in Vaucluse (97 places) many parents we spoke with report they find it challenging to access quality, affordable childcare within the municipality.



**49**

Total number of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC).

**48** are listed on ACECQA national register.

**38** are privately owned organisations.

**10** are not-for-profit organisations.

**1** Government / Council owned organisation.



**26**

Long Day Care Services (1,388 places)



**18**

Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) Services (1,472 places)



**4**

Preschools (182 places)



**0**

Family Day Care (FDC) Services



**3**

Mix of Long Day Care (LDC) & Preschool (290 places)

Source: Woollahra Children's Services Service Mapping Report, Spark Strategy 2023)



# 1.3 Emerging issues and opportunities

## Housing availability and affordability

The availability and affordability of housing is a national crisis and Woollahra residents are not immune to its impacts.

### Why is this important?

Housing costs are a significant part of family finances, often limiting disposable income needed for essentials like food, clothing, healthcare and education. To offset rising living costs, families have voiced the need for access to affordable basic services including health, education and care services along with leisure and recreation services.

In 2021, 78% of the dwellings in the Woollahra Municipality were medium or high density, compared with 46% in Greater Sydney. This leads to demand for safe and affordable public spaces outside people's homes. Affordable housing is important for the community structure in Woollahra, as it helps in attracting and retaining a diverse community of different age groups and backgrounds. This enhances intergenerational and cultural ties whilst boosting our economy, stability, vitality and quality of life.

Youth and their supporters have shared that the prospect of young people moving out but being able to afford to continue living locally is a significant source of stress for them. Affordable housing is also essential to accommodate key workers such as medical professionals, teachers and childcare staff, who play a vital role in our community.

### What we're doing and will continue to do

Through our *Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020*, *Woollahra Local Housing Strategy 2021* and *Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022* we have recognised housing affordability is an issue in Woollahra, particularly for essential service workers, we are promoting diverse housing choices for people of all ages and capabilities and commit to a broad range of actions, including but not limited to:

- Increasing the supply of accessible and affordable housing, including for essential or key workers
- Collaborating with other Councils, state government and other stakeholders to advocate for the supply of affordable housing
- Promoting inclusive design that supports, families with young children and people with a disability

- Supporting a housing program through our Community & Customer Experience Directorate by funding a rental assistance program for women, children and youth escaping domestic violence
- Advocating to the Australian and NSW Governments for policy reforms that improve housing affordability.

“There are many kids in our school with parents that rent, and with high rental prices and cost of living there is often not much money left for other things than school.”

**Community member (Focus group)**

“We have limited apartment options compared to huge single dwellings limit the options for young people and people from culturally diverse background to live in the area.”

**Community member (Pop-up)**

## 1.3 Emerging issues and opportunities

### Access to physical spaces

Many families in Woollahra live in high density housing and, for those families, access to safe and affordable spaces outside the home is important. This is particularly true for youth who wish to connect with others and feel a sense of belonging in their community. As the cost of living continues to rise, the demand for accessible and cost-effective local spaces and activities is likely to grow.

The local Woollahra youth, and their supporters, emphasised the need for safe gathering spaces outside the home, where they can unwind and socialise, providing a respite from their busy lives filled with work, study, and family responsibilities.

### Why is this important?

Creating universally designed spaces ensures accessibility for individuals of all ages and abilities, promoting inclusivity. Accessible and affordable physical spaces serve as platforms for community engagement, social interaction and the provision

of support services and programs. Public parks, community centres, libraries and recreational areas bring residents together, fostering relationships and participation in various activities and events.

Used for exercise, relaxation and respite, green spaces like parks and nature reserves are vital for the physical and mental well-being of residents. For youth, outdoor spaces offer a much-needed break from the digital world. There is a well-documented link between nature and wellbeing, and it is important for all people to connect with nature to foster ownership and care for the natural environment.

Woollahra is known for its sporting, harbour and recreational facilities, which are highly valued by the community and add vibrancy to the area. Maintaining, enhancing and ensuring equity of access to these facilities is important to our children, youth and families. It's also great for our local economy, attracting many visitors to the area.

“I love sports. It would be good to have more sport & rec because kids are too much on their devices – so more things to do outside would help.”

**Young person, 12–17 years old (Pop-up)**

“Sports & rec is good for people with a psychosocial disability. Outings in local area so they build confidence and feel independent.”

**Service provider (Pop-up)**

“There is a lack of access to sporting facilities...and the private schools rent public spaces. Privilege takes up a lot of space.”

**Parent (Pop-up)**

## 1.3 Emerging issues and opportunities

### What we're doing and will continue to do

Through our *Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020*, *Social and Cultural Plan 2018 to 2030*, *Recreation Strategy 2023*, *Community Facilities Study 2019*, *Play Space Strategy 2023*, *Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022* and *Woollahra Libraries Strategic Plan 2021–2026* we have committed to a broad range of actions, including but not limited to:

- Providing places and spaces for people to connect and interact
- Exploring avenues for expansion and improvement of Community facilities across the municipality
- Providing a new multipurpose facility at Rose Bay
- Committing to exploring avenues to upgrade the community facility at Holdsworth Community Centre
- Providing areas for remote working and learning at our libraries
- Delivering library programming for all ages including options for youth
- Providing more cultural and creative spaces across the LGA
- Exploring more flexible and adaptable spaces, promoting active play, activating facilities day and night, and ensuring accessibility for all users



Local family enjoying a game of basketball at Lyne Park, Rose Bay.

- Investigating better amenity for play areas, such as shade options for playgrounds with high sun exposure and better provision of toilet facilities for playgrounds where appropriate
- Supporting youth facilities, including progressing the development of a new facility in Rushcutters Bay and undertaking a feasibility study for a complementary youth precinct at Lyne Park
- Advocating for shared use of public and private education, recreation and community facilities
- Protecting and enhancing walking and cycling access to public open space and foreshore areas
- Exploring avenues to improve access to harbour pools for people with disabilities
- Developing a local community directory on Council's website to assist in the promotion of active and passive open spaces.

## 1.3 Emerging issues and opportunities

### **Childcare availability, affordability and quality**

Childcare availability and affordability are concerns for Woollahra's families with many either traveling outside the community to access care or choosing not to return to work.

As of April 2024, there were 49 ECEC providers in the Woollahra LGA. Seventy eight percent (78%) of ECEC services located in the Woollahra LGA are privately owned. There are:

- 38 privately owned organisations
- 10 not-for-profit organisations
- 1 government / Council owned organisation

Together, these providers supply:

- 26 long day care services providing 1,388 places
- 4 preschool services providing 182 places
- A further 3 providers providing 290 places that combine preschool and LDC
- 18 out of school hours care services providing 1,472 places for before and after school hours and vacation care (note 2 services and 45 places overlap with the above).

The number of centre-based childcare places has increased in the past three years despite our population of preschool aged children declining by 12.1% (334 children) over the five-year period between 2016 and 2021. Despite this, the parents we spoke to told us they experience challenges accessing local and affordable childcare. Whilst there is sufficient childcare across the LGA, there are pockets of undersupply in Point Piper, Watsons Bay, Darling Point, Bellevue Hill and Edgecliff meaning that some parents need to travel further than they would like to access childcare. For others, the cost of childcare, coupled with other cost of living pressures, is a barrier to access.

### **Why is this important?**

Affordable, quality early childhood education and care provides both immediate and long-term advantages for families in Woollahra. It's a key factor in enabling workforce participation, especially among women, fostering gender equality and balancing care responsibilities. Preschools provide early education and care for children aged between 3 and 6, and usually operate during normal school terms and hours, with a strong emphasis on learning through play and preparation for transition to school.

“Many parents have problems with after school care, especially also during school holidays. After school care centres run expensive holiday programs, but many parents can't afford that – but they do have to work. Parents are stuck.”

**School staff member (Focus group)**

“I think better paid early childcare workers to ensure children are being cared for in as enriching a way as is possible and to build consistency and continuity in childcare organisations. Investing in children 5 and under delivers so much more long-term socio-economic indicators than any other intervention.”

**Community member (Survey)**

## 1.3 Emerging issues and opportunities

Long day care services offer early education and care for children from birth to 6 and are usually open for 48 weeks per year with extended hours to enable parental workforce participation. Parents and carers told us they found it challenging to access quality, affordable childcare in the municipality and many wanted more Preschool places to be made available.

Consistent access to childcare helps parents organise their work times more efficiently. Moreover, childcare centres can act as social hubs for parents and caregivers, fostering the creation of supportive networks and community ties.

High-calibre childcare acts as an early education foundation, aiding children in the development of crucial skills and readiness for formal schooling. Children in quality childcare programs reap the benefits of skilled providers who focus on their emotional and physical wellbeing, enabling early detection of any conditions or delays that could benefit from early intervention by specialised allied healthcare providers.



Quality childcare is our top priority at Woollahra Preschool.

### What we're doing and will continue to do

Through our *Social and Cultural Plan 2018–2030*, *Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022* and our Council provided services we have delivered and committed to a broad range of actions, including but not limited to:

- In 2020 we expanded Council owned Woollahra Preschool by an additional 20 places, now accommodating 160 families per week in either 2- or 3-day placements

- Continuing to implement the Preschool Inclusion Support Program, and the Priority of Access guidelines to target Council managed preschool to people who need it the most
- Continuing to meet or exceed the National Quality Standards for early childhood education and care at Woollahra Preschool
- Continuing to provide training for Woollahra Preschool staff in supporting inclusion
- Conducting needs assessments of childcare in the LGA to understand where there is misalignment in supply and demand for childcare.

## 1.3 Emerging issues and opportunities

### Mental Health and Positive Wellbeing

Service providers and the community have reported more people experiencing stress and anxiety, social isolation and loneliness, relationship stress, remote work challenges and disruptions to education and social interactions for children and adolescents. Covid-19 has exacerbated the upward trend in mental health presentations, with the long-term effects of the pandemic still to unfold. A reduction in stigma and increased awareness have also driven demand upward.

In parallel, the accelerated adoption of telehealth and online services has made it easier for people to access care remotely, including tapping into services outside the Woollahra area. Nonetheless, supply of mental health supports is insufficient to meet demand from people experiencing mental health concerns. In addition to waiting lists, the high cost of mental health services can be a barrier-to-access for many people.

Meanwhile there is significant reform and investment in mental health by state and federal governments. There are also increasing legislative requirements for employers to support the mental health of their employees through workplace programs and initiatives.

With demand for mental health services outstripping supply, there is an imperative to focus on preventative strategies that enable people to be proactive in maintaining mental health, fostering resilience and developing coping mechanisms that can lessen the emergence or intensity of mental health issues. This may include awareness, education about coping strategies, stress management techniques and promotion of lifestyle factors that improve resilience. It may also include creating supporting environments within communities, schools, workplaces and other settings by fostering inclusion, reducing stigma and promoting mental health-friendly policies and practices.

“I see many kids in school struggle with mental health, anxiety and ADHD. It would be good if counselling could be free for young people.”

**Young person, 12–17 years old (Pop-up)**

“Access to specialists and allied health practitioners is a problem, for example paediatrician waitlists. They are shrinking a little since how long they were after lockdown, but it is still a big hurdle.”

**School staff member (Focus Group)**

“If I could wave a magic wand I would create more healthcare, especially for young children. Mental health counselling. Free GP. Anxiety, depression, ADHD, focus issues.”

**Young person, 12–17 years old (Pop-up)**

## 1.3 Emerging issues and opportunities

### Youth specific issues

Transitioning from adolescence to adulthood can be challenging. Despite its affluence, Woollahra is not immune to challenges that affect youth. There is concern for the rising national youth suicide rates (the second leading cause of death for young people aged 15-24 years) and a desire to bolster preventative factors for youth in Woollahra. Some key health and psychosocial issues impacting youth's mental health in Woollahra include:

- **Academic pressure:** pressure to excel academically, socially and in extracurricular activities
- **Substance Abuse:** Some youth in Woollahra are experimenting with or develop substance abuse issues, including alcohol and drug use
- **Peer pressure:** social comparison and bullying and the pressure to conform to standards
- **Technology and cyberbullying:** use of technology and social media is exposing youth to cyberbullying, online harassment, and negative mental health effects
- **Relationships and Dating Violence:** youth are facing challenges in their romantic relationships, including issues related to consent, dating violence, unhealthy relationship dynamics and sexual health.

### What we're doing and will continue to do

Through our *Community Strategic Plan 2032*, *Social and Cultural Plan 2018-2030* and *Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022* we have committed to a broad range of actions, including but not limited to:

- Encouraging respect for diversity by planning and promoting inclusive multicultural events and activities, including activities that acknowledge First Nations peoples
- Enhancing Council provided community facilities to foster connections between people and place and enhance quality of life
- Funding Holdsworth Community to deliver Family Services, which includes two playgroups and associated programs, providing a safe place for families of young children to connect with others and to receive information to support a positive parenting experience
- Upskilling Council staff through the provision of accredited mental health training
- Continuing to provide mental health information and training sessions for the community
- Combating social isolation for youth through Youth Week activities
- Providing grant funding to mental health services and programs

- Supporting the delivery of Child and Family Health services by partnering with the South Eastern Sydney Area Health Service.



Creating engaging events for youth at Woollahra Library Double Bay.

## 1.3 Emerging issues and opportunities

### Giving voice to community

Across global, national, state and local settings, ensuring that all consumers and specifically children, youth and marginalised groups, have a voice in the decisions that impact them is a growing interest. Evidence supports that it is not just good practice, but is necessary for effective, equitable and sustainable governance.

### Why is this important?

**Informed decision-making:** Children, youth, and families have unique experiences and insights that, when considered, can lead to policies and initiatives that more effectively service and address genuine community needs.

**Inclusive decision-making:** Diverse voices lead to more equitable and inclusive policies. Recognising and respecting the diversity of our community, including the experiences of families and youth from various backgrounds, is essential for creating policies that work for all.

**Early and accurate intervention:** In a tight fiscal environment, it's important that we invest in solutions that are well defined and evidence

informed. When we actively listen to children, youth and families and service providers' concerns, we can identify issues with greater precision and provide timely support and resources, potentially preventing more significant problems in the future.

**Intergenerational equity:** Sustainable development principles underscore the importance of intergenerational equity. Engaging children and youth ensures that the decisions we make today consider the needs and rights of future generations.

### Youth specific issues

**Civic participation:** Engaging youth in civic activities, volunteering and decision-making fosters a sense of civic responsibility that lasts into adulthood. Youth we engaged with to develop this Strategy and Action Plan showed relatively higher interest in community wide and global issues, (compared with other participants) and they sought opportunities to engage and volunteer.

**Youth Empowerment:** When we engage youth in decision-making, they develop valuable life skills, self-confidence, and a sense of agency that benefits their personal development and the broader community.

“There is a lack of youth voice, whereas we should be setting children up for life.”  
**Nanny (Pop-up)**

“Choices are made on behalf of young people, rather than together with young people. I would like to have a say and be informed.”  
**Young person, 12–17 years old (Pop-up)**

“It would be good knowing that you are actually participating in something and that it matters.”  
**Young person, 12–17 years old (Pop-up)**

“Make it fun to participate, like with design competitions.”  
**Young person, 12–17 years old (Focus group)**



## 1.3 Emerging issues and opportunities

Our consultations with youth revealed they were engaged with social and global issues (e.g. Reconciliation, Climate Change) and sought opportunities to make a difference, including through volunteering.

### What we're doing and will continue to do

Through our *Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020*, *Social and Cultural Plan 2018–2032*, *Community Engagement Strategy 2023*, *Play Space Strategy 2023* and *Woollahra Libraries' Strategic Plan 2021–2026* we have committed to a broad range of actions, including but not limited to:

- Encouraging inclusive community participation and building respectful relationships through engagement and input into decision making
- Engaging with children, youth and families to support their voice on matters that are important to them
- Building and maintaining relationships with schools, local organisations, community groups and support services, and keeping them informed of engagement opportunities of interest to them



Celebrating our commitment to reconciliation with Council staff, community and the Gujaga Foundation. Blackburn Gardens, Double Bay.

- Tailoring consultations to target groups, including children, people with disabilities and other less represented groups by ensuring these groups are consulted on how they would like to be engaged
- Creating Library programming that is community-led, inclusive and celebrates diversity
- Engaging the community in decision making on play spaces
- Continuing to promote and support community involvement in protecting and enhancing our waterways such as Harbour Care volunteer groups
- Implementation of Council Child Safe policies and procedures.

## 1.3 Emerging issues and opportunities

### Market Stewardship

The roles and functions for local government include strategic planning, service planning partner, enabler, provider and strategic land use planner.

Service providers and other stakeholders have asked that Council plays a lead role in developing a deep understanding of the Woollahra Municipality so that we can identify current and emerging needs and gaps in services and work with them to develop joint responses to social issues.

### Why is this important?

Continuing to increase our understanding about children, youth, and families in Woollahra, and the services that support them, allows us to plan more effectively for the optimal use of resources. Building strong evidence will enable us to argue for increased investment and identify where Council can directly address service shortages and support gaps.

### What we're doing and will continue to do

Through our *Local Strategic Planning Statement 2022*, *Social and Cultural Plan 2018–2032* and *Community Strategic Plan 2032* we have committed to a broad range of actions, including but not limited to:

- Planning for the needs and aspirations of families
- Understanding the needs and aspirations of our community so that we can facilitate access to support and services
- Fostering relationships and strategic networks in collaboration with government agencies, non-government organisations, businesses and community groups
- Using a place-based approach to our planning
- Mapping our childcare and specialist services for children, youth and families
- Providing demographic data on Council's website.

“I expect council to know their community back to front, so that when you're sitting at the table, you can advocate for their needs. I've got 'X' amount of resources and have to pick what to invest in, and I would like Council to support what baskets to put it in, and where to put my energy.”

**Service provider (Focus group)**

“There is duplication too. Sometimes there are 3 people playing at A, and no one at B. (Council should be) steering the sector about the needs.”

**Service provider (Focus group)**

# 2.0 Our Strategy on a page



**2024**

## WE BELIEVE

All children, youth and families should have the opportunity and space to connect, create, play and grow. Their voices will be heard and will help inform our decisions and actions.

Our 4 pillars

**2027**

**OUR PURPOSE**

Through this strategy, we will use our connections and relationships to understand our evolving community needs and will advocate, provide resources and services, and create places and spaces for children, youth and families.



### VOICE Deep Listening and Action

- Children, youth and families will have a say in decisions that impact them.
- We will proactively engage with children, youth, parents and carers. We will value their insights, perspectives and creativity and empower them to shape their own futures.
- We will use those insights, alongside data and research, to deepen our understanding of the issues impacting our communities and to respond in ways that reflect their needs.
- We will engage and communicate outcomes transparently.



### WORKING TOGETHER Collaborative Relationships

- We will deepen our relationships and trust with organisations, businesses and community members to make Woollahra even better for children, youth and families.
- We will actively build mutually beneficial partnerships based on trust, integrity and fairness. We will share information, leverage our joint strengths, capabilities and capacities, and identify and solve problems collaboratively and efficiently.
- Together, we will achieve better outcomes for our children, youth and families.



### PLACES & SPACES Thriving Environments that Connect People

- We will create, maintain and activate places and spaces so that children, youth and families have safe and accessible places to meet, connect, celebrate and feel they belong.
- We will create and optimally use the natural and built assets in our community. We will help the community to activate and enliven those spaces in the way that is meaningful to them.
- We have a role in delivering high quality, relevant services and programs to meet the needs of children, youth and families.
- Woollahra will be a welcoming and safe place for all community members and visitors.



### ADVOCACY Shaping the Future

- We will be a dedicated advocate, championing the rights, needs and aspirations of children, youth, families and the organisations that support them.
- We will work with our stakeholders, community partners and government agencies, drawing on our collective insights to influence policies that directly impact the well-being of children, youth and families.
- We will advocate for the allocation of resources that ensure access to opportunities that promote the growth, development and quality of life for our communities.
- Our advocacy will be inclusive and respect the diversity of our community, ensuring we address issues of equity, diversity and inclusion.

**OUR VISION**

A thriving, inclusive, sustainable and resilient community that will benefit future generations.

## OUR PILLARS WILL BE ENABLED BY

Leadership & Governance

Resourcing & Expertise

Customer Experience

Innovation & Agility

## Our Values

Respect

Open

Accountable

Responsive

Excellence



# 3.0 Our detailed Strategy and Action Plan

## 3.1 Our belief and purpose

### Woollahra Council's Vision

A thriving, inclusive, sustainable and resilient community that will benefit future generations.

### We believe

All children, youth and families should have the opportunity and space to connect, create, play and grow. Their voices will be heard and will help inform our decisions and actions.

### Our purpose

Through this Strategy, we will use our connections and relationships to understand our evolving community needs and will advocate, provide resources and services, and create places and spaces for children, youth and families

# Pillar 1: Voice



**Children, youth and families will have a say in decisions that impact them.**

We will proactively engage with children, youth, parents and carers. We will value their insights, perspectives and creativity and empower them to shape their own futures.

We will use those insights, alongside data and research, to deepen our understanding of the issues impacting our communities and to respond in ways that reflect their needs. We will engage and communicate outcomes transparently.

Actions		Timeframe	Division
1.1	Actively prioritise the current needs of children, youth and families in our grants program themes.	<b>Short</b> 2024/25 (ongoing)	Community & Customer Experience
1.2	Ensure grant funding applications targeting children, youth and families demonstrate that their voice has been included in the planning and creation of the proposals.	<b>Medium</b> 2025/26	Community & Customer Experience
1.3	In recognising the challenges in engaging youth in Council matters, we will develop a practice guide and training on youth engagement.	<b>Medium</b> 2025/26	Community & Customer Experience
1.4	Investigate best practice programs to create a mechanism for a voice for youth to Council so that they can inform decisions that affect them.	<b>Short</b> 2024/25	Community & Customer Experience
	Trial a best practice model to influence Council's responses to youth in Woollahra.	<b>Medium</b> 2025/26	
	Evaluate the success of youth voice in improving outcomes for youth in Woollahra.	<b>Long</b> 2026/27	
1.5	Explore a Council traineeship/work placement program, to provide youth with opportunities to support pathways to local government employment.	<b>Medium</b> 2025/26	Corporate Performance

# Pillar 1: Voice



Children engaged in playground design and renaming, Gugara Park Paddington.

Actions	Timeframe	Division
1.6 Undertake deeper engagement and consultation to identify and co-produce practical local solutions and responses to address the following social issues identified in the consultations including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. responses to mental health and wellbeing for youth</li> <li>b. accessible and affordable places and spaces</li> <li>c. child care access and affordability</li> <li>d. affordable housing</li> </ul>	<p><b>Medium</b> 2025/26</p> <p><b>Medium</b> 2025/26</p> <p><b>Long</b> 2026/27</p> <p><b>Long</b> 2026/27</p>	Community & Customer Experience
1.7 Investigate the establishment of a mechanism to enable the voices of children and youth to be heard and influence the outcome of Council's places and spaces.	<p><b>Medium</b> 2025/26</p>	Community & Customer Experience Infrastructure & Sustainability



# Pillar 2: Working Together

**We will deepen our relationships and trust with organisations, businesses and community members to make Woollahra even better for children, youth and families.**

We will actively build mutually beneficial partnerships based on trust, integrity and fairness. We will share information, leverage our joint strengths, capabilities and capacities, and identify and solve problems collaboratively and efficiently.

Together, we will achieve better outcomes for our children, youth and families.

Actions		Timeframe	Division
2.1	Continue to consider the needs of children, youth and families in the planning for: a. development contributions b. Council-led projects and/or developments.	<b>Short</b> 2024/25 (ongoing)	Infrastructure & Sustainability Planning & Place Community & Customer Experience
2.2	Promote Council as a provider of affordable and accessible early childhood education.	<b>Short</b> 2024/25 (ongoing)	Community & Customer Experience
2.3	Work with the childcare sector and neighbouring Councils to explore new models of childcare services that better respond to the needs of families for greater flexibility and extended hours.	<b>Medium</b> 2025/26	Community & Customer Experience
2.4	Create an information resource to inform the community about Council- and partner-led initiatives which address major life transitions for children, youth and families.	<b>Medium</b> 2025/26	Community & Customer Experience
2.5	In response to the Strategy consultation feedback, Council will engage with service providers to work collaboratively to address the following social issues within the sphere of local government: a. responses to mental health and wellbeing for young people b. accessible and affordable places and spaces c. child care access and affordability d. affordable housing	<b>Medium</b> 2025/26 <b>Medium</b> 2025/26 <b>Long</b> 2026/27 <b>Long</b> 2026/27	Community & Customer Experience

# Pillar 3: Places and Spaces



**We will create, maintain and activate places and spaces so that children, youth and families have safe and accessible places to meet, connect, celebrate and feel they belong.**

We will create and optimally use the natural and built assets in our community.

We will help the community to activate and enliven those spaces in the way that is meaningful to them.

We have a role in delivering high quality, relevant services and programs to meet the needs of children, youth and families.

Woollahra will be a welcoming and safe place for all community members and visitors.

Actions		Timeframe	Division
3.1	Explore in the development of the working model and planning for the new Rose Bay community facility, opportunities for affordable and accessible activities for children, youth and families.	<b>Medium</b> 2025/26	Community & Customer Experience
3.2	Work with NSW Area Health, Woollahra Libraries and complementary services to offer opportunities for child, youth and family supports and services at Vaucluse Bowling Club & Community Facility.	<b>Medium</b> 2025/26	Community & Customer Experience
3.3	With community partners, explore the use of other Council community facilities as locations that activate services for children, youth and families.	<b>Long</b> 2026/27	Community & Customer Experience
3.4	Explore options for offering financial relief to community members experiencing economic hardship, through the provision of discounted access to Council-led facilities, events and activities. Also consider the review of fees and charges to improve affordability of the above.	<b>Long</b> 2026/27	Community & Customer Experience Infrastructure & Sustainability
3.5	Explore youth-specific options for accessible, affordable, safe places and spaces in the wider community (e.g. Council-led facilities, schools, churches, etc.).	<b>Long</b> 2026/27	Community & Customer Experience
3.6	Continue to explore public access to existing private indoor pools in the municipality.	<b>Long</b> 2026/27	Infrastructure & Sustainability

# Pillar 4: Advocacy

**We will be a dedicated advocate, championing the strengths, rights, needs and aspirations of children, youth, families and the organisations that support them.**

We will work with our stakeholders, community partners and government agencies, drawing on our collective insights and assets to influence policies that directly impact the well-being of children, youth and families.

We will advocate for the allocation of resources that ensure access to opportunities that promote the growth, development and quality of life for our communities.

Our advocacy will be inclusive and respect the diversity of our community, ensuring we address issues of equity, diversity and inclusion.

Actions		Timeframe	Division
4.1	Educate community service providers and networks of Council’s role in advocacy and scope of influence.	<b>Short</b> 2024/25 (ongoing)	Community & Customer Experience
4.2	Proactively share appropriate data regarding community assets and identified community needs with service providers and partners (grant recipients and funded organisations) to inform and support advocacy.	<b>Short</b> 2024/25 (ongoing)	Community & Customer Experience
4.3	Actively advocate on affordable housing for policy changes and resource allocation which will benefit Woollahra’s children, youth and families.	<b>Long</b> 2026/27	Planning & Place
4.4	Work with the childcare sector to explore options which respond to the need for further affordable and accessible childcare within our community.	<b>Short</b> 2024/25 (ongoing)	Community & Customer Experience
4.5	Actively advocate on mental health for policy changes and resource allocation which will benefit Woollahra’s children, youth and families.	<b>Medium</b> 2025/26 (ongoing)	Community & Customer Experience

# 3.3 What will enable us to achieve our Strategy?

## Leadership and Governance

We recognise that sound governance practices and inclusive decision-making processes are essential for effective and accountable service delivery. Our Strategy emphasises transparency, accountability, and community engagement in the decision-making processes that shape the policies and programs affecting children and families.

We are dedicated to fostering partnerships with stakeholders, including parents, community organisations, and experts, to ensure that diverse voices are heard and considered in the development, implementation, and evaluation of our initiatives.

Through collaborative governance and evidence-based decision-making, we aspire to create a nurturing and supportive environment where every child and youth can thrive, and families can access the resources and support they need to flourish.

## Resourcing and Expertise

We understand that providing comprehensive support to children and families requires adequate resources and a pool of expertise.

To ensure that our initiatives have a lasting impact, we are committed to allocating the necessary resources and leveraging external funding opportunities.

Additionally, we recognise the importance of building a skilled and diverse workforce with expertise in child development, community services, mental health, and education. This expertise will empower us to tailor our programs to meet the unique needs of our community's children, youth and families, fostering their growth and well-being in an ever-evolving social landscape.



Family enjoying a walk at Macquarie Lighthouse, Vaucluse.

## 3.3 What will enable us to achieve our strategy?



Welcoming HSC student study spaces at Woollahra Library Double Bay.

### Customer Experience

We view children, youth and families as our valued 'customers' within the context of the facilities, programs and services we provide.

Our commitment to customer experience means that we prioritise their needs, preferences, and feedback at every step of our initiatives. We aim to create a seamless and supportive journey for families seeking assistance, ensuring that they feel heard, respected, and empowered throughout their interactions with our facilities, programs and services.

Regular feedback mechanisms, user-friendly communication channels, and responsiveness to their concerns are integral to our approach. By focusing on customer experience, we not only enhance the quality of our support, but also build trust and engagement, ultimately contributing to the wellbeing and success of the children and families we serve.

### Innovation and Agility

We recognise that the needs and challenges faced by children, youth and families can evolve rapidly, and therefore, we are committed to staying at the forefront of innovative solutions and being agile in our approach. We encourage a culture of continuous improvement and creativity in our efforts to support children, youth and families.

By fostering innovation, we seek to develop new and more effective strategies, programs, and services that can adapt to changing circumstances and emerging needs. Our goal is to remain flexible and responsive, using data-driven insights and best practices to inform our decisions and actions.

Through innovation and agility, we aim to provide the highest quality of care and support to children, youth and families in our community, ensuring that they have the resources and opportunities they need to thrive in an ever-changing world.

## 4.0 Monitoring our progress

Progress against our Children, Youth and Families Strategy and Action Plan will be monitored and reported as part of Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework, with Council's Annual Report submitted to the NSW Office of Local Government.

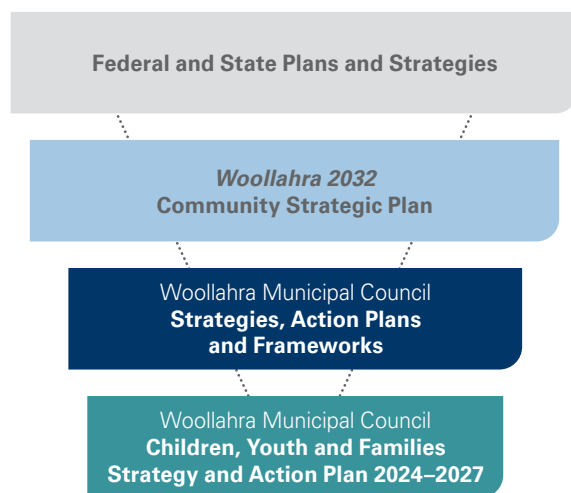
We will also monitor the success of this plan through ongoing consultation with key stakeholders who will be invited to provide feedback about satisfaction with Council's work towards improving the quality of life for children, youth and families in Woollahra.



Intergenerational event at Paddington Library.

# Appendix 1: Strategic context

Council's *Children, Youth and Families Strategy and Action Plan 2024–2027* aligns with the goals and objectives of relevant national, state and local policy settings. It also embeds Council's community vision and strategies as well as the key objectives and directions from a range of existing Council strategies, plans and policies.



## National

✓ The *National Strategy for Young Australians 2010* outlines the following vision: “The Australian Government’s vision is for all youth to grow up safe, healthy, happy and resilient and to have the opportunities and skills they need to learn, work, engage in community life and influence decisions that affect them.”

✓ *Australia’s Youth Policy Framework (2021)* outlines how Australian Government policies and programs are supporting and improving the lives of young Australians. It reflects on disruptions to education, employment and social opportunities for youth caused by COVID-19. Key focus areas are on the erosion of social and support networks and the increased mental ill health.

✓ The Australian Government has developed a *National Early Years Strategy 2023* to shape its vision for the future of Australia’s children and their families. Recognising how critical the early years are for children’s development and later outcomes in life, the Strategy seeks to support improved coordination between Commonwealth programs, funding and frameworks impacting early childhood development.

✓ *National Action Plan for the Health of Children and Young People 2020–2030* prioritises fostering health and wellbeing in response to emerging challenges. It recognises early childhood’s profound impact on future health outcomes. The document identifies key areas for action: health equity, empowering parents, mental health, chronic conditions, and workforce.

✓ *Australia Government Youth Engagement Strategy* (currently being developed) is seeking to develop a comprehensive Youth Engagement Model to formally engage youth in policy and program design. The model acknowledges the uniqueness and diversity of young Australians aged 12–25 years and recognises the significance of First Nations youth.

# Strategic context

## State

- ✓ *The NSW Strategic Plan for Children and Young People 2022–2024* prepared by the Advocate for Children and Young People seeks to elevate children and young people’s voices, identify issues they have articulated and give them the opportunity to influence solutions.
- ✓ *The NSW Government, Start Strong Program* supports preschool education for all children in NSW. It recognises that when children participate in structured, play-based learning before they start school, they build key social, emotional and cognitive skills necessary to support lifelong learning. This is especially important for children experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage.
- ✓ *NSW Disability Inclusion Plan 2016* focuses on four areas for action, including developing positive community attitudes and behaviours; creating liveable communities; supporting access to meaningful employment; and improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes.

## Local

- ✓ *The Woollahra 2032 Community Strategic Plan* aims to deliver a connected, harmonious, and engaged community for all ages and abilities, and a supported, enabled, and resilient community.
- ✓ *The Woollahra Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) 2020* sets out a 20-year vision and planning priorities for managing future land use and preserving our community’s values and the special characteristics of our area. It supports and guides Woollahra’s planning controls to help ensure our area continues to be a great place to live, work, play and visit.
- ✓ *The Woollahra Local Housing Strategy 2021* and the *Woollahra Affordable Housing Policy 2021* together outline Council’s commitment to protecting existing affordable housing and facilitating new affordable housing to meet the needs of the community. The policy will help to ensure Woollahra remains diverse, including the retention of children, youth and families as residents. The Policy also sets an objectives to increase the supply of affordable rental housing for key workers, which is key to our

supply of childcare workers, and to provide support to people experiencing vulnerability.

- ✓ *The Woollahra Community Engagement Strategy 2023* is designed to ensure Council decisions reflect the whole community by incorporating the community’s views, concerns and aspirations into the decision-making process. This includes capturing the voices and concerns of children, youth and families. The Strategy is underpinned by social justice principles; equity, access, participation and rights.
- ✓ *The Woollahra Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022–2026* outlines Council’s commitment to enabling all members of the community to participate fully in community life.
- ✓ *The Woollahra Active Transport Plan 2023* articulates Council’s vision to make walking and cycling (which we call ‘active transport’) the most convenient, comfortable and safe choice for short trips in Woollahra. The draft Plan sets out a long-term plan intended to guide investment and design decisions for the next 10-15 years for both walking and cycling.



## Strategic context

✓ In 2021 Woollahra Council began developing a *Reconciliation Action Plan 2022–2023 (RAP)* at the Reflect level to guide and drive our reconciliation efforts as a Council. It outlines the steps that Council would need to take to prepare itself for future reconciliation initiatives. Council is currently developing an Innovative RAP.

✓ The *Woollahra Communities Facilities Study 2019* identifies current and future gaps in Council’s supply of community facilities across the LGA and provides recommendations for existing and proposed Council community facilities, as well as opportunities for innovative delivery.

✓ The *Play Space Strategy 2023* aims to provide strategic direction for Council for the next 10 years in relation to play provision across the LGA.

✓ The *Woollahra Social and Cultural Plan 2018 to 2030* documents Council’s commitment to the residents of Woollahra. It outlines the goals, strategies and priorities that Council will implement over the next 12 years.

✓ The *Woollahra Libraries Strategic Plan 2021–2026* sets out how Woollahra Libraries defines and continues to provide a ‘state of the art’ library service for its community. It describes the priorities, sustainable strategies and initiatives the Library will undertake to achieve a dynamic and responsive public library service.

✓ The *Woollahra Municipal Council Recreation Strategy 2023* sets out strategic directions and recommendations to develop and manage a quality open space network with facilities that support the Woollahra community’s recreation and sporting preferences. It focuses on community wellbeing, quality spaces and places, healthy environments, community leadership and participation and local prosperity. Among its commitments is improved access to affordable, safe and appropriate recreation spaces for children, young people and families.



Diverse venues are available to hire for parties.

# Strategic context

## How national, state and local strategy and action plans map to the Woollahra Children, Youth and Families Strategic and Action Plan strategic pillars

Document	Voice	Working Together	Places and Spaces	Advocacy
National Strategy for Young Australians 2010	✓	✓		✓
Australia's Youth Policy Framework (2021)	✓	✓		✓
National Early Years Strategy (2023)		✓		✓
National Action Plan for the Health of Children and Young People 2020–2030	✓	✓	✓	✓
Australian Government Youth Engagement Strategy (currently being developed)	✓			✓
The NSW Strategic Plan for Children and Young People 2022-2024 (Advocate for Children and Young People)	✓			
The NSW Government Start Strong Program				✓
NSW Disability Inclusion Plan (2016)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Woollahra 2032 Community Strategic Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓

# Strategic context

Document	Voice	Working Together	Places and Spaces	Advocacy
Woollahra Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022	✓		✓	✓
Woollahra Community Engagement Strategy 2023	✓			
Woollahra Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) 2020			✓	✓
Woollahra Affordable Housing Policy 2021			✓	✓
Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (2022–2023)				✓
Active Transport Strategy 2023			✓	
Woollahra Community Facilities Study 2019			✓	
Play Space Strategy 2023			✓	
Woollahra Social and Cultural Plan 2018 to 2030	✓	✓	✓	✓
Woollahra Libraries Five Year Strategic Plan 2021-2026			✓	



536 New South Head Road,  
Double Bay NSW 2028

T: 02 9391 7000

E: [records@woollahra.nsw.gov.au](mailto:records@woollahra.nsw.gov.au)  
[woollahra.nsw.gov.au](http://woollahra.nsw.gov.au)

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