

# Schools: Language Diversity in NSW, 2016

Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation

This bulletin summarises the diversity of students with a language background other than English (LBOTE) who are enrolled in NSW government schools in 2016.

## Introduction

In 2016, 66.9 per cent of students who are enrolled in NSW government schools come from homes where English is the only language (see Figure 1). The 2016 collection of language background data shows that about one third (33.1 per cent) of students in NSW government schools come from homes where languages other than English are spoken.

The proportion of LBOTE (see definition on page 11) students rose by 0.8 percentage points from 2015 and 1.6 percentage point from 2014.

Figure 1

Language background of students in NSW government schools in 2016

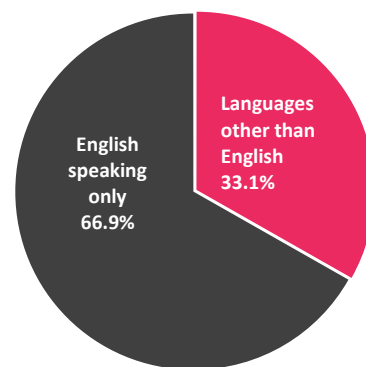
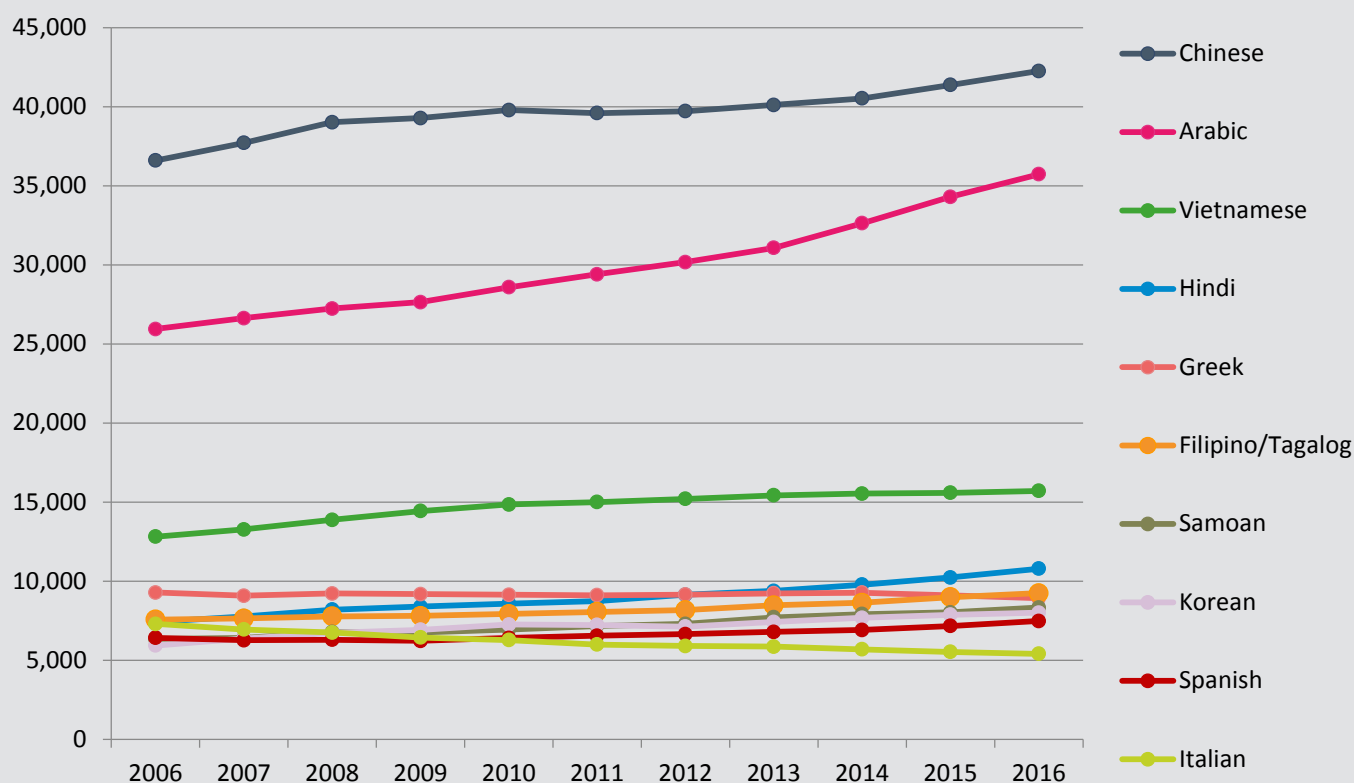


Figure 2

Top ten language background other than English, 2006-2016



## Top ten language backgrounds of LBOTE students in NSW government schools

The largest single language group of LBOTE students in 2016 is Arabic (35,732 students) and the largest combined language group is Chinese, which comprises Mandarin, Cantonese and Other Chinese language backgrounds (42,259), see Figures 2 and 3.

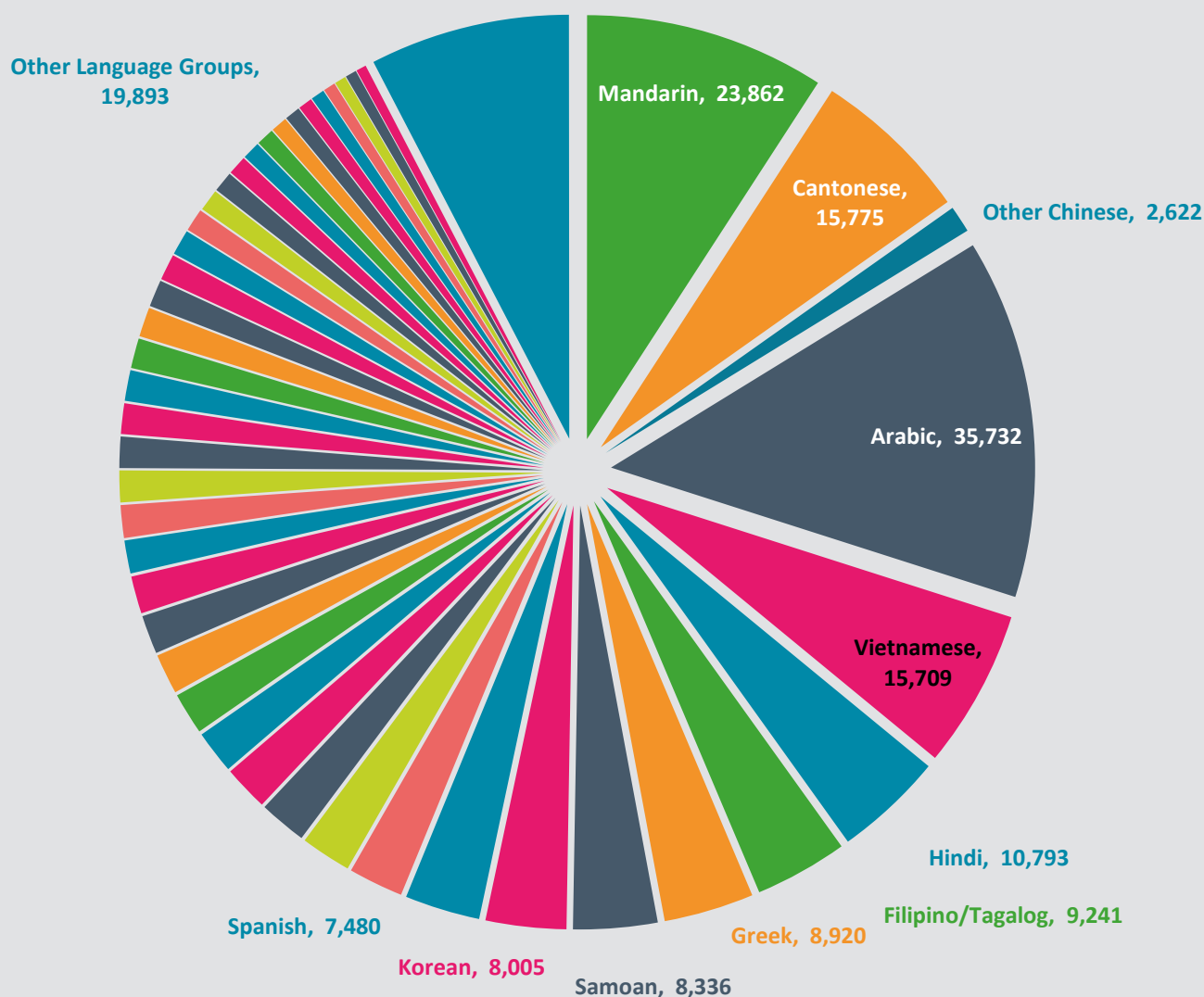
In 2016 the top ten languages represent nearly 60 per cent of all LBOTE students.

Since 2006, the top three language groups have grown significantly, with Chinese growing 15.5 per cent, while Arabic and Vietnamese have grown 37.7 per cent and 22.6 per cent respectively over that period. Hindi has had the largest percentage growth over the period of 45.5 per cent.

Figure 2 shows that the top 10 languages in NSW have not changed since 2006, however the order of the largest language groups has changed. Italian has slipped from the seventh largest language in 2006 to the tenth in 2016, while Hindi has moved from sixth to fourth position.

**Figure 3**

Language background diversity in NSW government schools, 2016



## What are the language backgrounds of our students?

There are 226 different language backgrounds of LBOTE students at NSW government schools but only 43 languages have more than 1,000 LBOTE students enrolled. 183 languages are included in the 'Other Language Groups'.

After Chinese and Arabic the next largest language background is Vietnamese, followed by Hindi and Filipino/Tagalog. Three European language backgrounds, Greek, Spanish and Italian, also feature in the top ten language backgrounds.

In March 2016, there were 260,599 NSW government primary and secondary students identified as having a language background other than English, which comprises 33.1 per cent of the 786,248 NSW government school students overall.

**Table 1**

**Enrolments of students of language background other than English by language - 2015 and 2016 (by largest language groups in 2016).**

| Language                 | 2015           |                  | 2016           |                  |
|--------------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|
|                          | Students       | % of Total LBOTE | Students       | % of Total LBOTE |
| Chinese:                 | 41,379         | 16.5%            | 42,259         | 16.2%            |
| <i>Mandarin</i>          | 22,696         | 9.0%             | 23,862         | 9.2%             |
| <i>Cantonese</i>         | 16,339         | 6.5%             | 15,775         | 6.1%             |
| <i>Other Chinese</i>     | 2,344          | 0.9%             | 2,622          | 1.0%             |
| Arabic                   | 34,302         | 13.6%            | 35,732         | 13.7%            |
| Vietnamese               | 15,593         | 6.2%             | 15,709         | 6.0%             |
| Hindi                    | 10,240         | 4.1%             | 10,793         | 4.1%             |
| Filipino/Tagalog         | 8,991          | 3.6%             | 9,241          | 3.5%             |
| Greek                    | 9,111          | 3.6%             | 8,920          | 3.4%             |
| Samoan                   | 8,034          | 3.2%             | 8,336          | 3.2%             |
| Korean                   | 7,878          | 3.1%             | 8,005          | 3.1%             |
| Spanish                  | 7,166          | 2.9%             | 7,480          | 2.9%             |
| Italian                  | 5,530          | 2.2%             | 5,408          | 2.1%             |
| Urdu                     | 4,467          | 1.8%             | 5,006          | 1.9%             |
| Tamil                    | 4,366          | 1.7%             | 4,696          | 1.8%             |
| Bengali                  | 3,950          | 1.6%             | 4,451          | 1.7%             |
| Tongan                   | 4,207          | 1.7%             | 4,264          | 1.6%             |
| Indonesian               | 4,055          | 1.6%             | 4,164          | 1.6%             |
| Punjabi                  | 3,579          | 1.4%             | 3,992          | 1.5%             |
| Macedonian               | 3,913          | 1.6%             | 3,846          | 1.5%             |
| Turkish                  | 3,761          | 1.5%             | 3,717          | 1.4%             |
| Japanese                 | 3,118          | 1.2%             | 3,273          | 1.3%             |
| Assyrian & Chaldean      | 3,139          | 1.2%             | 3,229          | 1.2%             |
| Thai                     | 2,968          | 1.2%             | 3,140          | 1.2%             |
| German                   | 3,046          | 1.2%             | 3,096          | 1.2%             |
| French                   | 2,880          | 1.1%             | 3,037          | 1.2%             |
| Serbian                  | 3,074          | 1.2%             | 3,029          | 1.2%             |
| Gujarati                 | 2,570          | 1.0%             | 2,968          | 1.1%             |
| Persian (Excluding Dari) | 2,862          | 1.1%             | 2,908          | 1.1%             |
| Dari                     | 2,529          | 1.0%             | 2,646          | 1.0%             |
| Russian                  | 2,396          | 1.0%             | 2,577          | 1.0%             |
| Khmer                    | 2,427          | 1.0%             | 2,501          | 1.0%             |
| Nepali                   | 1,971          | 0.8%             | 2,279          | 0.9%             |
| Maori (New Zealand)      | 2,149          | 0.9%             | 2,163          | 0.8%             |
| Portugese                | 1,876          | 0.7%             | 2,047          | 0.8%             |
| Telugu                   | 1,587          | 0.6%             | 1,904          | 0.7%             |
| Malayalam                | 1,604          | 0.6%             | 1,783          | 0.7%             |
| Sinhalese                | 1,773          | 0.7%             | 1,761          | 0.7%             |
| Croatian                 | 1,598          | 0.6%             | 1,616          | 0.6%             |
| Fijian                   | 1,519          | 0.6%             | 1,529          | 0.6%             |
| Dutch                    | 1,366          | 0.5%             | 1,401          | 0.5%             |
| Afrikaans                | 1,299          | 0.5%             | 1,356          | 0.5%             |
| Maori (Cook Island)      | 1,205          | 0.5%             | 1,194          | 0.5%             |
| Marathi                  | 1,023          | 0.4%             | 1,130          | 0.4%             |
| Polish                   | 1,010          | 0.4%             | 1,111          | 0.4%             |
| Lao                      | 1,024          | 0.4%             | 1,009          | 0.4%             |
| Other Language Groups    | 18,801         | 7.5%             | 19,893         | 7.6%             |
| <b>Total</b>             | <b>251,336</b> | <b>100%</b>      | <b>260,599</b> | <b>100%</b>      |

**Notes:**

1. The table is ordered by the largest language groups for language groups with 1,000 or more students in 2016. Language groups with fewer than 1,000 students in 2016 are included in 'Other Language Groups'.
2. See the definition of LBOTE on page 11 for the reporting rule used to determine the language background for students from households where multiple languages are spoken.
3. See page 11 for other explanatory notes.

## Where are LBOTE students in NSW?

Map 1 shows the concentration of LBOTE students across NSW, using a geographical structure based on the ABS Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS). ASGS Statistical Area 4 (SA4) boundaries in New South Wales have been combined into 11 groups for reporting and publication of department data.

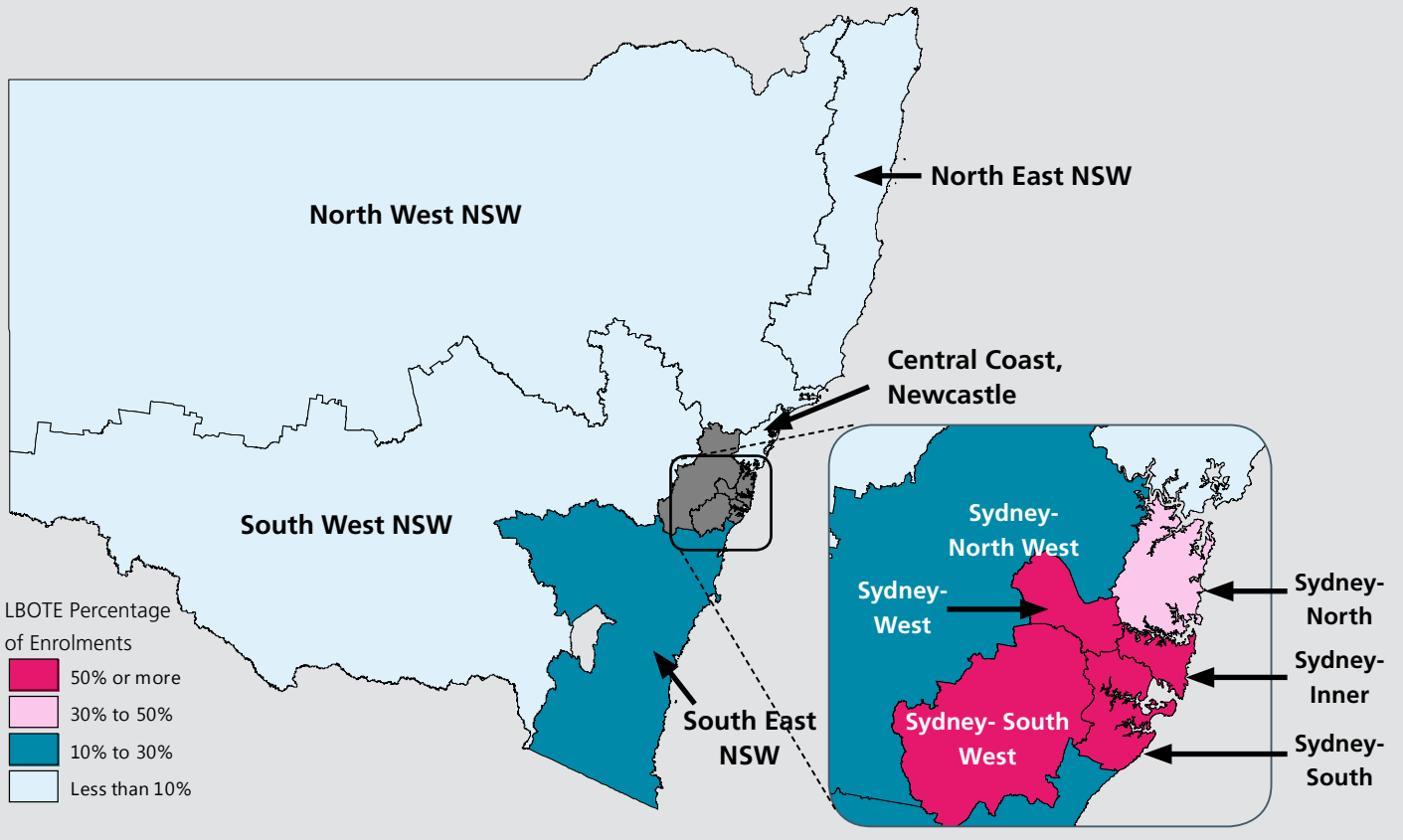
As Map 1 illustrates the concentration of students from LBOTE backgrounds is greater in the Sydney metropolitan area than in

other parts of NSW. Across all Sydney schools 52 per cent of the students have a language background other than English.

Sydney-West has the highest LBOTE student enrolment of 53,926 representing 65.5 per cent of all students enrolled. North West NSW has the lowest LBOTE student enrolment of 2,914 representing 4.3 per cent of all students enrolled.

**Map 1**

**LBOTE Percentage of enrolments in a Statistical Area (SA4) grouping, March 2016**



## Location of LBOTE students from different language backgrounds

Nearly 60 per cent of all LBOTE students are located in Sydney-West, Sydney-South or Sydney-South West. However, there are significant pockets of students from various language backgrounds located in other areas as shown in Table 2. For example, students from Chinese, Korean, Japanese, German, and French language backgrounds are more likely to be located in Sydney-North, whereas students from Italian, Thai and Russian language backgrounds are more likely to be located in Sydney-Inner.

Many students from Indian language backgrounds are located in Sydney-West, which has the largest proportions of students from Hindi (35.9%), Urdu (35.5%), Tamil (49.5%), Punjabi

(48.5%), and Gujarati (67.5%) language backgrounds. Sydney-West also has the largest proportion of students from Persian (excluding Dari) and Dari language backgrounds.

Sydney-South West contains almost all students from Assyrian and Chaldean (89.7%), Khmer (83.8%) and Lao (79.6%) language backgrounds, plus the largest concentrations of students with Vietnamese (54.3%), Serbian (49.4%) and Samoan (47.9%) language backgrounds.

Sydney-South has the largest proportions of students from Arabic (38.1%), Greek (46.6%), Bengali (28.7%), Indonesian (24.2%) and Macedonian (41.0%) language backgrounds.

The only language background with a significant concentration of students outside the Sydney metropolitan area is Macedonian with 27.2 per cent of these students located in South East NSW.

Table 2

## LBOTE enrolments by language and Statistical Area 4 Groupings and number of language groups - March 2016

| Language                                | Sydney-North  | Sydney-Inner  | Sydney-South  | Sydney-South West | Sydney-West   | Sydney-North West | North East NSW | North West NSW | South West NSW | South East NSW | Central Coast, Newcastle | Total State LBOTE | As % of Total LBOTE |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Chinese:                                | 12,139        | 7,403         | 7,657         | 3,826             | 6,380         | 3,323             | 129            | 133            | 145            | 454            | 670                      | 42,259            | 16.2%               |
| Mandarin                                | 7,759         | 4,354         | 4,016         | 1,076             | 3,664         | 2,171             | 54             | 62             | 62             | 266            | 378                      | 23,862            | 9.2%                |
| Cantonese                               | 3,989         | 2,711         | 3,385         | 1,779             | 2,371         | 1,021             | 52             | 61             | 55             | 122            | 229                      | 15,775            | 6.1%                |
| Other Chinese                           | 391           | 338           | 256           | 971               | 345           | 131               | 23             | 10             | 28             | 66             | 63                       | 2,622             | 1.0%                |
| Arabic                                  | 718           | 1,599         | 13,601        | 8,447             | 9,052         | 928               | 65             | 114            | 125            | 836            | 247                      | 35,732            | 13.7%               |
| Vietnamese                              | 573           | 1,747         | 2,688         | 8,534             | 1,363         | 272               | 51             | 60             | 35             | 211            | 175                      | 15,709            | 6.0%                |
| Hindi                                   | 1,314         | 684           | 727           | 2,431             | 3,874         | 1,269             | 45             | 61             | 85             | 119            | 184                      | 10,793            | 4.1%                |
| Filipino/Tagalog                        | 890           | 736           | 936           | 1,143             | 2,682         | 992               | 276            | 376            | 280            | 436            | 494                      | 9,241             | 3.5%                |
| Greek                                   | 589           | 1,692         | 4,161         | 786               | 489           | 407               | 65             | 48             | 63             | 378            | 242                      | 8,920             | 3.4%                |
| Samoaan                                 | 68            | 114           | 760           | 3,993             | 2,246         | 531               | 37             | 55             | 239            | 100            | 193                      | 8,336             | 3.2%                |
| Korean                                  | 3,075         | 1,615         | 401           | 67                | 1,620         | 866               | 21             | 15             | 14             | 81             | 230                      | 8,005             | 3.1%                |
| Spanish                                 | 1,022         | 1,090         | 868           | 1,949             | 683           | 610               | 233            | 73             | 100            | 432            | 420                      | 7,480             | 2.9%                |
| Italian                                 | 773           | 1,230         | 616           | 1,012             | 313           | 406               | 110            | 67             | 226            | 377            | 278                      | 5,408             | 2.1%                |
| Urdu                                    | 281           | 324           | 1,115         | 669               | 1,777         | 569               | 15             | 47             | 69             | 73             | 67                       | 5,006             | 1.9%                |
| Tamil                                   | 473           | 644           | 148           | 279               | 2,324         | 678               | 8              | 37             | 28             | 19             | 58                       | 4,696             | 1.8%                |
| Bengali                                 | 240           | 651           | 1,276         | 942               | 894           | 249               | 9              | 37             | 43             | 44             | 66                       | 4,451             | 1.7%                |
| Tongan                                  | 238           | 370           | 550           | 1,073             | 1,343         | 223               | 26             | 28             | 131            | 113            | 169                      | 4,264             | 1.6%                |
| Indonesian                              | 604           | 913           | 1,006         | 368               | 523           | 282               | 96             | 23             | 20             | 143            | 186                      | 4,164             | 1.6%                |
| Punjabi                                 | 256           | 138           | 214           | 343               | 1,936         | 536               | 264            | 37             | 164            | 60             | 44                       | 3,992             | 1.5%                |
| Macedonian                              | 78            | 121           | 1,578         | 600               | 84            | 43                | 5              | 3              | 10             | 1,048          | 276                      | 3,846             | 1.5%                |
| Turkish                                 | 163           | 561           | 362           | 490               | 1,586         | 236               | 23             | 16             | 37             | 203            | 40                       | 3,717             | 1.4%                |
| Japanese                                | 1,380         | 593           | 351           | 79                | 176           | 150               | 189            | 40             | 36             | 114            | 165                      | 3,273             | 1.3%                |
| Assyrian & Chaldean                     | 16            | 91            | 70            | 2,898             | 85            | 57                | 1              | 4              |                | 4              | 3                        | 3,229             | 1.2%                |
| Thai                                    | 512           | 554           | 430           | 392               | 263           | 152               | 196            | 91             | 101            | 235            | 214                      | 3,140             | 1.2%                |
| German                                  | 861           | 517           | 224           | 114               | 85            | 227               | 325            | 89             | 74             | 306            | 274                      | 3,096             | 1.2%                |
| French                                  | 1,041         | 572           | 269           | 130               | 191           | 152               | 197            | 65             | 56             | 164            | 200                      | 3,037             | 1.2%                |
| Serbian                                 | 279           | 217           | 266           | 1,495             | 199           | 143               | 7              | 14             | 22             | 315            | 72                       | 3,029             | 1.2%                |
| Gujarati                                | 217           | 135           | 138           | 93                | 2,004         | 250               | 11             | 18             | 41             | 27             | 34                       | 2,968             | 1.1%                |
| Persian Excluding Dari                  | 741           | 140           | 136           | 228               | 1,051         | 445               | 12             | 7              | 35             | 74             | 39                       | 2,908             | 1.1%                |
| Dari                                    | 114           | 90            | 100           | 168               | 1,847         | 151               | 69             | 11             | 32             | 11             | 53                       | 2,646             | 1.0%                |
| Russian                                 | 548           | 740           | 396           | 142               | 235           | 202               | 42             | 39             | 42             | 69             | 122                      | 2,577             | 1.0%                |
| Khmer                                   | 49            | 44            | 72            | 2,097             | 106           | 46                | 10             | 1              | 13             | 19             | 44                       | 2,501             | 1.0%                |
| Nepali                                  | 237           | 340           | 607           | 204               | 534           | 111               | 6              | 39             | 141            | 32             | 28                       | 2,279             | 0.9%                |
| Maori (New Zealand)                     | 82            | 133           | 410           | 373               | 425           | 157               | 100            | 88             | 97             | 165            | 133                      | 2,163             | 0.8%                |
| Portuguese                              | 455           | 414           | 345           | 216               | 143           | 90                | 74             | 47             | 16             | 157            | 90                       | 2,047             | 0.8%                |
| Telugu                                  | 235           | 255           | 73            | 115               | 947           | 201               | 1              | 13             | 17             | 19             | 28                       | 1,904             | 0.7%                |
| Malayalam                               | 239           | 158           | 135           | 274               | 548           | 258               | 12             | 26             | 20             | 56             | 57                       | 1,783             | 0.7%                |
| Sinhalese                               | 348           | 79            | 59            | 117               | 488           | 503               | 13             | 23             | 38             | 49             | 44                       | 1,761             | 0.7%                |
| Croatian                                | 195           | 119           | 227           | 397               | 192           | 183               | 21             | 17             | 23             | 162            | 80                       | 1,616             | 0.6%                |
| Fijian                                  | 56            | 120           | 288           | 325               | 359           | 54                | 32             | 38             | 137            | 42             | 78                       | 1,529             | 0.6%                |
| Dutch                                   | 477           | 190           | 104           | 28                | 55            | 132               | 99             | 51             | 40             | 121            | 104                      | 1,401             | 0.5%                |
| Afrikaans                               | 331           | 55            | 96            | 97                | 67            | 251               | 44             | 113            | 99             | 85             | 118                      | 1,356             | 0.5%                |
| Maori (Cook Island)                     | 24            | 88            | 289           | 204               | 321           | 49                | 6              | 22             | 78             | 94             | 19                       | 1,194             | 0.5%                |
| Marathi                                 | 182           | 75            | 66            | 278               | 361           | 127               | 7              | 7              | 7              | 5              | 15                       | 1,130             | 0.4%                |
| Polish                                  | 237           | 137           | 126           | 137               | 114           | 124               | 35             | 22             | 8              | 73             | 98                       | 1,111             | 0.4%                |
| Lao                                     | 30            | 17            | 43            | 803               | 28            | 16                | 8              | 7              | 25             | 21             | 11                       | 1,009             | 0.4%                |
| Other Language Groups                   | 2,621         | 2,381         | 2,245         | 2,744             | 3,933         | 1,623             | 887            | 792            | 584            | 1,086          | 997                      | 19,893            | 7.6%                |
| <b>Total LBOTE</b>                      | <b>35,001</b> | <b>29,886</b> | <b>46,229</b> | <b>51,100</b>     | <b>53,926</b> | <b>18,274</b>     | <b>3,882</b>   | <b>2,914</b>   | <b>3,596</b>   | <b>8,632</b>   | <b>7,159</b>             | <b>260,599</b>    | <b>100%</b>         |
| <b>No. of different language groups</b> | <b>151</b>    | <b>164</b>    | <b>165</b>    | <b>165</b>        | <b>172</b>    | <b>159</b>        | <b>131</b>     | <b>127</b>     | <b>132</b>     | <b>152</b>     | <b>144</b>               | <b>226</b>        |                     |

## Notes:

1. The table is ordered by the largest language groups for languages with 1,000 or more students in 2016.
2. See page 11 for other explanatory notes.

**Table 3**

**Enrolments of students of language background other than English, by Statistical Area 4 groupings and level of schooling, March 2016**

| SA4 Groupings            | Primary        |                |                      | Secondary      |                |                      | SSP            |              |                      | All Students   |                |                      |
|--------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------------|----------------|--------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------------|
|                          | LBOTE students | All students   | LBOTE as % of enrols | LBOTE students | All students   | LBOTE as % of enrols | LBOTE students | All students | LBOTE as % of enrols | LBOTE students | All students   | LBOTE as % of enrols |
| Sydney-North             | 21,166         | 55,985         | 37.8%                | 13,699         | 28,683         | 47.8%                | 136            | 380          | 35.8%                | 35,001         | 85,048         | 41.2%                |
| Sydney-Inner             | 16,306         | 35,056         | 46.5%                | 13,470         | 20,633         | 65.3%                | 110            | 196          | 56.1%                | 29,886         | 55,885         | 53.5%                |
| Sydney-South             | 27,535         | 46,133         | 59.7%                | 18,303         | 30,353         | 60.3%                | 391            | 700          | 55.9%                | 46,229         | 77,186         | 59.9%                |
| Sydney-South West        | 28,719         | 49,295         | 58.3%                | 22,129         | 35,206         | 62.9%                | 252            | 594          | 42.4%                | 51,100         | 85,095         | 60.1%                |
| Sydney-West              | 35,361         | 53,325         | 66.3%                | 18,153         | 28,240         | 64.3%                | 412            | 776          | 53.1%                | 53,926         | 82,341         | 65.5%                |
| Sydney-North West        | 10,141         | 37,485         | 27.1%                | 8,067          | 25,118         | 32.1%                | 66             | 241          | 27.4%                | 18,274         | 62,844         | 29.1%                |
| North East NSW           | 2,334          | 36,649         | 6.4%                 | 1,541          | 27,472         | 5.6%                 | 7              | 125          | 5.6%                 | 3,882          | 64,246         | 6.0%                 |
| North West NSW           | 1,760          | 39,909         | 4.4%                 | 1,149          | 27,419         | 4.2%                 | 5              | 175          | 2.9%                 | 2,914          | 67,503         | 4.3%                 |
| South West NSW           | 2,232          | 31,829         | 7.0%                 | 1,343          | 22,048         | 6.1%                 | 21             | 462          | 4.5%                 | 3,596          | 54,339         | 6.6%                 |
| South East NSW           | 5,150          | 43,036         | 12.0%                | 3,444          | 28,775         | 12.0%                | 38             | 374          | 10.2%                | 8,632          | 72,185         | 12.0%                |
| Central Coast, Newcastle | 4,150          | 45,304         | 9.2%                 | 2,969          | 33,765         | 8.8%                 | 40             | 507          | 7.9%                 | 7,159          | 79,576         | 9.0%                 |
| <b>Total</b>             | <b>154,854</b> | <b>474,006</b> | <b>32.7%</b>         | <b>104,267</b> | <b>307,712</b> | <b>33.9%</b>         | <b>1,478</b>   | <b>4,530</b> | <b>32.6%</b>         | <b>260,599</b> | <b>786,248</b> | <b>33.1%</b>         |

**Notes:**

1. LBOTE enrolments for 2016 are compared to enrolments (headcount) in March 2016.
2. Previous publications of the LBOTE bulletin have compared DEC regions. From 2015 these geographies have been discontinued and replaced with a new geographical structure by the ABS. See page 11 for further information.

## Location of LBOTE students by level of schooling

For schools in Sydney-North and Sydney-Inner the proportion of LBOTE students as a percentage of enrolments is more than 10 percentage points higher for secondary schools than for primary schools (see Table 4). Contributing factors are likely to include: full fee paying international students who are predominantly Year 10-12 students enrolling in schools in these

two areas; a relatively large number of selective schools (which have very high LBOTE enrolments) in these two areas drawing some of their students from other areas; and the slightly higher rate of retention of LBOTE students to Year 12 relative to English speaking students.



Table 4

Enrolments of students of language background other than English by language and level of schooling,  
March 2016 (by largest language groups)

| Language                 | Primary        |                    | Secondary      |                    | All LBOTE Students |                  |            |
|--------------------------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------|
|                          | Students       | % of Primary LBOTE | Students       | % of Primary LBOTE | Students           | % of Total LBOTE | Cumulative |
| Chinese:                 | 22,616         | 14.6%              | 19,522         | 18.7%              | 42,259             | 16.2%            | 16.2%      |
| <i>Mandarin</i>          | 13,371         | 8.6%               | 10,445         | 10.0%              | 23,862             | 9.2%             | <i>n/a</i> |
| <i>Cantonese</i>         | 7,650          | 4.9%               | 8,065          | 7.7%               | 15,775             | 6.1%             | <i>n/a</i> |
| <i>Other Chinese</i>     | 1,595          | 1.0%               | 1,012          | 1.0%               | 2,622              | 1.0%             | <i>n/a</i> |
| Arabic                   | 21,537         | 13.9%              | 13,827         | 13.3%              | 35,732             | 13.7%            | 29.9%      |
| Vietnamese               | 7,931          | 5.1%               | 7,656          | 7.3%               | 15,709             | 6.0%             | 36.0%      |
| Hindi                    | 6,977          | 4.5%               | 3,760          | 3.6%               | 10,793             | 4.1%             | 40.1%      |
| Filipino/Tagalog         | 4,829          | 3.1%               | 4,336          | 4.2%               | 9,241              | 3.5%             | 43.6%      |
| Greek                    | 5,631          | 3.6%               | 3,233          | 3.1%               | 8,920              | 3.4%             | 47.1%      |
| Samoaan                  | 4,697          | 3.0%               | 3,597          | 3.4%               | 8,336              | 3.2%             | 50.3%      |
| Korean                   | 4,664          | 3.0%               | 3,321          | 3.2%               | 8,005              | 3.1%             | 53.3%      |
| Spanish                  | 4,752          | 3.1%               | 2,683          | 2.6%               | 7,480              | 2.9%             | 56.2%      |
| Italian                  | 3,236          | 2.1%               | 2,136          | 2.0%               | 5,408              | 2.1%             | 58.3%      |
| Urdu                     | 3,363          | 2.2%               | 1,614          | 1.5%               | 5,006              | 1.9%             | 60.2%      |
| Tamil                    | 2,948          | 1.9%               | 1,729          | 1.7%               | 4,696              | 1.8%             | 62.0%      |
| Bengali                  | 2,943          | 1.9%               | 1,461          | 1.4%               | 4,451              | 1.7%             | 63.7%      |
| Tongan                   | 2,453          | 1.6%               | 1,783          | 1.7%               | 4,264              | 1.6%             | 65.3%      |
| Indonesian               | 2,490          | 1.6%               | 1,660          | 1.6%               | 4,164              | 1.6%             | 66.9%      |
| Punjabi                  | 2,839          | 1.8%               | 1,138          | 1.1%               | 3,992              | 1.5%             | 68.5%      |
| Macedonian               | 2,230          | 1.4%               | 1,598          | 1.5%               | 3,846              | 1.5%             | 70.0%      |
| Turkish                  | 2,049          | 1.3%               | 1,641          | 1.6%               | 3,717              | 1.4%             | 71.4%      |
| Japanese                 | 2,061          | 1.3%               | 1,197          | 1.1%               | 3,273              | 1.3%             | 72.6%      |
| Assyrian & Chaldean      | 1,889          | 1.2%               | 1,324          | 1.3%               | 3,229              | 1.2%             | 73.9%      |
| Thai                     | 1,911          | 1.2%               | 1,218          | 1.2%               | 3,140              | 1.2%             | 75.1%      |
| German                   | 1,913          | 1.2%               | 1,177          | 1.1%               | 3,096              | 1.2%             | 76.3%      |
| French                   | 2,006          | 1.3%               | 1,020          | 1.0%               | 3,037              | 1.2%             | 77.4%      |
| Serbian                  | 1,612          | 1.0%               | 1,404          | 1.3%               | 3,029              | 1.2%             | 78.6%      |
| Gujarati                 | 2,243          | 1.4%               | 724            | 0.7%               | 2,968              | 1.1%             | 79.7%      |
| Persian (Excluding Dari) | 1,621          | 1.0%               | 1,272          | 1.2%               | 2,908              | 1.1%             | 80.9%      |
| Dari                     | 1,577          | 1.0%               | 1,056          | 1.0%               | 2,646              | 1.0%             | 81.9%      |
| Russian                  | 1,743          | 1.1%               | 828            | 0.8%               | 2,577              | 1.0%             | 82.9%      |
| Khmer                    | 1,418          | 0.9%               | 1,073          | 1.0%               | 2,501              | 1.0%             | 83.8%      |
| Nepali                   | 1,557          | 1.0%               | 717            | 0.7%               | 2,279              | 0.9%             | 84.7%      |
| Maori (New Zealand)      | 1,231          | 0.8%               | 923            | 0.9%               | 2,163              | 0.8%             | 85.5%      |
| Portugese                | 1,387          | 0.9%               | 650            | 0.6%               | 2,047              | 0.8%             | 86.3%      |
| Telugu                   | 1,498          | 1.0%               | 406            | 0.4%               | 1,904              | 0.7%             | 87.0%      |
| Malayalam                | 1,269          | 0.8%               | 510            | 0.5%               | 1,783              | 0.7%             | 87.7%      |
| Sinhalese                | 1,053          | 0.7%               | 697            | 0.7%               | 1,761              | 0.7%             | 88.4%      |
| Croatian                 | 943            | 0.6%               | 657            | 0.6%               | 1,616              | 0.6%             | 89.0%      |
| Fijian                   | 851            | 0.5%               | 669            | 0.6%               | 1,529              | 0.6%             | 89.6%      |
| Dutch                    | 898            | 0.6%               | 497            | 0.5%               | 1,401              | 0.5%             | 90.1%      |
| Afrikaans                | 819            | 0.5%               | 535            | 0.5%               | 1,356              | 0.5%             | 90.7%      |
| Maori (Cook Island)      | 659            | 0.4%               | 530            | 0.5%               | 1,194              | 0.5%             | 91.1%      |
| Marathi                  | 762            | 0.5%               | 362            | 0.3%               | 1,130              | 0.4%             | 91.6%      |
| Polish                   | 761            | 0.5%               | 349            | 0.3%               | 1,111              | 0.4%             | 92.0%      |
| Lao                      | 556            | 0.4%               | 447            | 0.4%               | 1,009              | 0.4%             | 92.4%      |
| Other Language Groups    | 12,431         | 8.0%               | 7,330          | 7.0%               | 19,893             | 7.6%             | 100.0%     |
| <b>Total</b>             | <b>154,854</b> | <b>100.0%</b>      | <b>104,267</b> | <b>100.0%</b>      | <b>260,599</b>     | <b>100.0%</b>    |            |

## Notes:

1. All LBOTE students includes SSP students, which are not included in primary or secondary student numbers.
2. See page 11 for other explanatory notes.

## LBOTE students Kindergarten to Year 12

As a percentage of enrolments in any particular academic year up to Year 10, the percentage of LBOTE students in NSW government schools is highest in Kindergarten at 34.3 per cent. This percentage is higher for the senior years with 35.3 per cent for Year 11 and 38.3 per cent for Year 12 students (see Table 5). This is indicative of higher rates of retention to Year 12 of LBOTE students compared to English speaking

students, as well as the increased number of full fee paying international students in these years.

There is a higher proportion of LBOTE students enrolled in NSW government secondary schools than in primary schools. LBOTE student enrolments represented 32.7 per cent of all primary enrolments and 33.9 per cent of all secondary enrolments in NSW government schools.

**Table 5**

**Enrolments of students of language background other than English, by Statistical Area (SA4) grouping and scholastic year, March 2016**

| SA4 Groupings                 | Primary       |               |               |               |               |               |               |              |                | SSP          |
|-------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|
|                               | Kinder        | Year 1        | Year 2        | Year 3        | Year 4        | Year 5        | Year 6        | Support      | Total          |              |
| Sydney-North                  | 3,528         | 3,427         | 3,178         | 3,144         | 2,753         | 2,587         | 2,464         | 85           | 21,166         | 136          |
| Sydney-Inner                  | 2,537         | 2,529         | 2,471         | 2,342         | 2,236         | 2,023         | 2,025         | 143          | 16,306         | 110          |
| Sydney-South                  | 4,089         | 4,056         | 3,991         | 3,967         | 3,808         | 3,687         | 3,623         | 314          | 27,535         | 391          |
| Sydney-South West             | 3,965         | 3,963         | 4,063         | 4,098         | 4,249         | 3,941         | 3,880         | 560          | 28,719         | 252          |
| Sydney-West                   | 5,879         | 5,420         | 5,172         | 5,084         | 4,740         | 4,423         | 4,211         | 432          | 35,361         | 412          |
| Sydney-North West             | 1,568         | 1,476         | 1,435         | 1,491         | 1,410         | 1,378         | 1,279         | 104          | 10,141         | 66           |
| North East NSW                | 378           | 365           | 328           | 316           | 326           | 310           | 293           | 18           | 2,334          | 7            |
| North West NSW                | 265           | 266           | 241           | 265           | 244           | 230           | 217           | 32           | 1,760          | 5            |
| South West NSW                | 314           | 337           | 351           | 316           | 328           | 293           | 278           | 15           | 2,232          | 21           |
| South East NSW                | 766           | 779           | 738           | 704           | 693           | 724           | 677           | 69           | 5,150          | 38           |
| Central Coast, Newcastle      | 636           | 646           | 592           | 571           | 586           | 561           | 519           | 39           | 4,150          | 40           |
| <b>State Total</b>            | <b>23,925</b> | <b>23,264</b> | <b>22,560</b> | <b>22,298</b> | <b>21,373</b> | <b>20,157</b> | <b>19,466</b> | <b>1,811</b> | <b>154,854</b> | <b>1,478</b> |
| <b>As % of All Enrolments</b> | <b>34.3%</b>  | <b>33.6%</b>  | <b>32.8%</b>  | <b>32.4%</b>  | <b>32.0%</b>  | <b>31.7%</b>  | <b>32.2%</b>  | <b>27.5%</b> | <b>32.7%</b>   | <b>32.6%</b> |

| SA4 Groupings                 | Secondary     |               |               |               |               |               |              |                | Primary and Secondary |                |                   |
|-------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------|-------------------|
|                               | Year 7        | Year 8        | Year 9        | Year 10       | Year 11       | Year 12       | Support      | Total          | LBOTE Enrols          | All Enrols     | As % SA4 Grouping |
| Sydney-North                  | 2,095         | 2,073         | 2,078         | 2,209         | 2,546         | 2,240         | 458          | 13,699         | 35,001                | 85,048         | 41.2%             |
| Sydney-Inner                  | 1,971         | 1,974         | 2,033         | 2,311         | 2,475         | 2,252         | 454          | 13,470         | 29,886                | 55,885         | 53.5%             |
| Sydney-South                  | 2,797         | 2,825         | 2,795         | 3,220         | 3,187         | 2,783         | 696          | 18,303         | 46,229                | 77,186         | 59.9%             |
| Sydney-South West             | 3,443         | 3,652         | 3,435         | 3,696         | 3,743         | 3,211         | 949          | 22,129         | 51,100                | 85,095         | 60.1%             |
| Sydney-West                   | 2,904         | 2,870         | 2,789         | 3,021         | 3,056         | 2,792         | 721          | 18,153         | 53,926                | 82,341         | 65.5%             |
| Sydney-North West             | 1,217         | 1,230         | 1,204         | 1,279         | 1,605         | 1,395         | 137          | 8,067          | 18,274                | 62,844         | 29.1%             |
| North East NSW                | 233           | 238           | 250           | 260           | 303           | 232           | 25           | 1,541          | 3,882                 | 64,246         | 6.0%              |
| North West NSW                | 186           | 198           | 193           | 194           | 185           | 156           | 37           | 1,149          | 2,914                 | 67,503         | 4.3%              |
| South West NSW                | 236           | 233           | 206           | 209           | 220           | 211           | 28           | 1,343          | 3,596                 | 54,339         | 6.6%              |
| South East NSW                | 552           | 501           | 580           | 593           | 553           | 526           | 139          | 3,444          | 8,632                 | 72,185         | 12.0%             |
| Central Coast, Newcastle      | 510           | 480           | 481           | 510           | 501           | 429           | 58           | 2,969          | 7,159                 | 79,576         | 9.0%              |
| <b>State Total</b>            | <b>16,144</b> | <b>16,274</b> | <b>16,044</b> | <b>17,502</b> | <b>18,374</b> | <b>16,227</b> | <b>3,702</b> | <b>104,267</b> | <b>260,599</b>        | <b>786,248</b> |                   |
| <b>As % of All Enrolments</b> | <b>32.0%</b>  | <b>32.5%</b>  | <b>31.8%</b>  | <b>33.4%</b>  | <b>35.3%</b>  | <b>38.3%</b>  | <b>37.2%</b> | <b>33.9%</b>   | <b>33.1%</b>          |                |                   |

**Notes:**

1. All LBOTE students includes SSP students, which are not included in primary or secondary student numbers.
2. See page 11 for other explanatory notes.



## What languages do newly arrived students speak?

Languages spoken by 'new arrival' students are counted on a different basis than LBOTE. The students in this table are counted based on the main languages spoken by the students themselves, while the LBOTE count includes students who speak another language and those with a parent/carer who

speaks another language. The total number of new arrival students in 2015 was 7,992. This is almost unchanged from last year's total of 7,958.

**Table 6**

**Main languages spoken by new arrival students 2011 to 2015**

| 2011                         |              | 2012                         |              | 2013                         |              | 2014                         |              | 2015                 |              |
|------------------------------|--------------|------------------------------|--------------|------------------------------|--------------|------------------------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|
| Language                     | Total        | Language                     | Total        | Language                     | Total        | Language                     | Total        | Language             | Total        |
| Mandarin                     | 940          | Mandarin                     | 981          | Arabic                       | 1,054        | Arabic                       | 1,108        | Arabic               | 1,198        |
| Arabic                       | 746          | Arabic                       | 574          | Mandarin                     | 810          | Mandarin                     | 1,019        | Mandarin             | 991          |
| Korean                       | 352          | Korean                       | 371          | Samoan                       | 313          | Hindi                        | 309          | Filipino/Tagalog     | 355          |
| Filipino/Tagalog             | 334          | Filipino/Tagalog             | 362          | Korean                       | 312          | Samoan                       | 308          | Hindi                | 348          |
| Cantonese                    | 296          | Vietnamese                   | 349          | Filipino/Tagalog             | 307          | Korean                       | 304          | Urdu                 | 294          |
| Vietnamese                   | 251          | Samoan                       | 305          | Persian excluding Dari/Farsi | 282          | Cantonese                    | 302          | Samoan               | 281          |
| Samoan                       | 235          | Cantonese                    | 279          | Hindi                        | 234          | Urdu                         | 295          | Vietnamese           | 276          |
| Hindi                        | 208          | Hindi                        | 220          | Cantonese                    | 225          | Vietnamese                   | 265          | Korean               | 247          |
| Tamil                        | 159          | Urdu                         | 192          | Vietnamese                   | 218          | Filipino/Tagalog             | 363          | Cantonese            | 225          |
| Persian excluding Dari/Farsi | 151          | Persian excluding Dari/Farsi | 165          | Urdu                         | 186          | Dari                         | 201          | Assyrian Neo-Aramaic | 190          |
| Spanish                      | 142          | Nepalese                     | 149          | Dari                         | 183          | Nepali                       | 164          | Dari                 | 187          |
| Nepalese                     | 140          | Spanish                      | 149          | Tamil                        | 171          | Bengali                      | 152          | Spanish              | 157          |
| Indonesian                   | 140          | Thai                         | 133          | Nepalese                     | 171          | Tamil                        | 147          | Tamil                | 156          |
| Urdu                         | 132          | Japanese                     | 119          | Chaldean Neo-Aramaic         | 165          | Spanish                      | 142          | Bengali              | 135          |
| Thai                         | 116          | Indonesian                   | 118          | Spanish                      | 123          | Persian excluding Dari/Farsi | 142          | Thai                 | 134          |
| Japanese                     | 115          | Tamil                        | 97           | Assyrian Neo-Aramaic         | 123          | Assyrian Neo-Aramaic         | 133          | Nepali               | 120          |
| Dari                         | 105          | Greek                        | 92           | Hazaraghi                    | 121          | Thai                         | 129          | Indonesian           | 120          |
| Bengali                      | 93           | Bengali                      | 91           | Malayalam                    | 117          | Indonesian                   | 122          | Malayalam            | 117          |
| Others                       | 1,919        | Others                       | 1,971        | Others                       | 2,159        | Others                       | 2,353        | Others               | 2,461        |
| <b>Total</b>                 | <b>6,574</b> | <b>Total</b>                 | <b>6,717</b> | <b>Total</b>                 | <b>7,274</b> | <b>Total</b>                 | <b>7,958</b> | <b>Total</b>         | <b>7,992</b> |

### Notes:

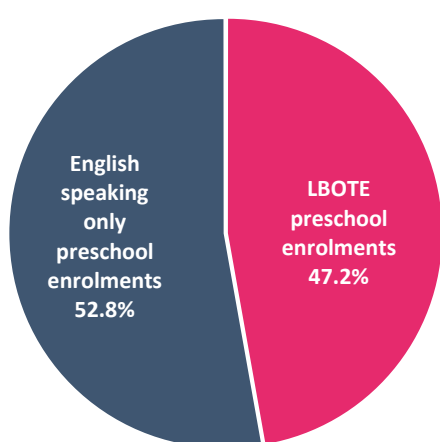
1. New The New Arrivals Program (NAP) survey is conducted twice per year (March and October up to end 2015) and includes only new enrolments in the 6 months prior to the NAP survey. Before 2012, the NAP survey was conducted three times per year (also included June).
2. In 2016 NAP data was collected through the EAL/D annual census conducted in June. The data is not collected and recorded in a way that is consistent with the way it was previously done in the NAP surveys, and therefore it is not included in this table. 2016 NAP data will be reported in future LBOTE bulletins as the start of a new time series report for new arrivals.
3. New arrival students include only those who have enrolled in school in the 6 months prior to the NAP survey, speak a language other than English as their first language, are enrolling in an Australian school for the first time, are in need of initial ESL instruction, and have been in Australia less than 6 months (or for Kindergarten students less than 18 months).
4. The student count in this table is based on main languages spoken by the students themselves. This differs from LBOTE student counts which include languages spoken by the student and/or their parents or carers.
5. With the move in official reporting from Multicultural Education Unit to Statistics Unit in 2013, counting rules used for 2013 and beyond slightly differ from previously published data.

## What language backgrounds do preschool students come from?

Government preschools enrolled 1,961 students of language background other than English in 2016, representing 47.2 per cent (see Figure 4) of all government preschool enrolments.

Preschool LBOTE enrolments are reported in Table 7 by largest language groups. LBOTE enrolments less than 10 (approximately 0.5%) are included in 'Other Language Groups'.

**Figure 4**  
Language background of preschool students in NSW government schools, March 2016



**Table 7**

### Enrolments of government preschool students of language background other than English – largest language groups – March 2016

| Language                                   | Students     | As a % of LBOTE |
|--|--------------|-----------------|
| Arabic                                     | 320          | 16.3%           |
| Vietnamese                                 | 295          | 15.0%           |
| Chinese                                    | 176          | 9.0%            |
| Cantonese                                  | 80           | 4.1%            |
| Mandarin                                   | 69           | 3.5%            |
| Other Chinese                              | 27           | 1.4%            |
| Bengali                                    | 86           | 4.4%            |
| Urdu                                       | 86           | 4.4%            |
| Hindi                                      | 76           | 3.9%            |
| Samoan                                     | 65           | 3.3%            |
| Khmer                                      | 58           | 3.0%            |
| Filipino/Tagalog                           | 54           | 2.8%            |
| Punjabi                                    | 53           | 2.7%            |
| Spanish                                    | 42           | 2.1%            |
| Indonesian                                 | 41           | 2.1%            |
| Tongan                                     | 39           | 2.0%            |
| Gujarati                                   | 39           | 2.0%            |
| Korean                                     | 37           | 1.9%            |
| Assyrian & Chaldean                        | 30           | 1.5%            |
| Greek                                      | 27           | 1.4%            |
| Tamil                                      | 26           | 1.3%            |
| Italian                                    | 21           | 1.1%            |
| Dari                                       | 20           | 1.0%            |
| Aboriginal English                         | 20           | 1.0%            |
| Malayalam                                  | 20           | 1.0%            |
| Thai                                       | 19           | 1.0%            |
| Nepali                                     | 19           | 1.0%            |
| Telugu                                     | 16           | 0.8%            |
| Turkish                                    | 16           | 0.8%            |
| Macedonian                                 | 14           | 0.7%            |
| German                                     | 13           | 0.7%            |
| Persian (Excluding Dari)                   | 13           | 0.7%            |
| Russian                                    | 13           | 0.7%            |
| <b>Total</b>                               | <b>1,961</b> | <b>100.0%</b>   |
| <b>LBOTE as a % of preschool enrolment</b> | <b>47.2%</b> |                 |
| <b>Other Language Groups</b>               | <b>184</b>   | <b>9.4%</b>     |

**Notes:**

1. Preschools include the 99 preschools attached to government primary/infant schools and the John Brothie Nursery School. Not included are the government funded community preschools and long day centres that provide a preschool program, which provide the majority of preschool education in NSW.
2. Students include children enrolled in a preschool or an Early Intervention program that is run by a NSW government school. These government preschool classes provide full-time or part-time schooling at pre-primary level.
3. LBOTE as a percentage of preschool enrolment uses March 2016 enrolment data.
4. Other language groups includes 65 language groups.

## Definitions

### 1. LBOTE

**Language background other than English:** students from language backgrounds other than English are those in whose home a language other than English is spoken by the student, parents, or other primary caregivers.

For students where multiple languages are spoken at home, priority is given first to the primary language spoken by the student and then to that spoken by those caregivers recorded on enrolment forms and in ERN as parent 1 and parent 2 in that order.

### 2. New arrivals

New arrival students include only those who have enrolled in school in the 6 months prior to the survey.

New arrival students:

- speak a language other than English as their first language
- are enrolling in an Australian school for the first time
- are in need of initial ESL instruction
- have been in Australia less than 6 months (or for Kindergarten students less than 18 months).

The student count of new arrivals is based on main languages spoken by the students themselves. This differs from LBOTE student count which includes languages spoken by the student and/or their parents or carers.

## Explanatory Notes

The census of students from language backgrounds other than English (LBOTE) was taken on 4 March 2016 in all NSW government schools, including preschools, intensive English centres and distance education centres.

Since 1996, information on LBOTE students has been collected in the first half of the school year. Until 2012 comparative enrolment information for all students was extracted from the School Entitlement System (February enrolment data). From 2013, comparative enrolment information for all students was extracted from the Enrolment Registration Number (ERN) system during March, at the time the LBOTE data was collected.

### 1. New arrivals data

Table 6 (main languages spoken by newly arriving students (2011 to 2015)) is a table sourced from the Statistics Unit analysis of data collected in the LBOTE data collections undertaken each year. The table notes that the student count is based on languages spoken by the students themselves and is therefore different from other LBOTE student counts in the bulletin.

### 2. Australian Standard Classification of Languages (ASCL)

For information on languages, refer to Australian Standard Classification of Languages, Australian Bureau of Statistics (ASCL catalogue 1267.0).

### 3. Language groups reported

Tables are reported using the 'largest language groups'. The 'standard reporting groups' tables, which had been used up until 2010, have become out of date.

### 4. Combined language groups

The 'Other Chinese' language group includes Chinese nec (ASCL 7199), Hakka (ASCL 1027), Min Nan (ASCL 7107) and Wu (ASCL 7106).

Filipino (ASCL 6512) and Tagalog (ASCL 6511) have been combined into one language group.

The 'Assyrian & Chaldean' language group includes Assyrian Neo-Aramaic (ASCL 4206), Chaldean Neo-Aramaic (ASCL 4207) and Assyrian (ASCL 4203).

Other Language Groups are those languages with fewer than 1,000 students in 2016.

### 5. Statistical Area 4 Groupings

Previous publications of the LBOTE bulletin compared enrolments in DoE regions. From 2014 these geographies have been discontinued and replaced with a geographical structure based on the ABS Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS). A combination of ASGS Statistical Area 4 (SA4) boundaries in New South Wales have been combined into 11 groups for reporting and publication of department data.

| Name of SA4 Groupings    | SA4 Name   |
|--------------------------|--|
| Sydney-North             | Sydney - North Sydney and Hornsby, Sydney - Northern Beaches, Sydney - Ryde    |
| Sydney-Inner             | Sydney - City and Inner South, Sydney - Eastern Suburbs, Sydney - Inner West   |
| Sydney-South             | Sydney-Inner South West, Sydney - Sutherland                                   |
| Sydney-South West        | Sydney - Outer South West, Sydney - South West                                 |
| Sydney-West              | Sydney - Blacktown, Sydney - Parramatta  |
| Sydney-North West        | Sydney - Baulkham Hills and Hawkesbury, Sydney - Outer West and Blue Mountains |
| North East NSW           | Coffs Harbour - Grafton, Mid North Coast, Richmond - Tweed                     |
| North West NSW           | Hunter Valley exc Newcastle, Far West and Orana, New England and North West    |
| South West NSW           | Central West, Murray, Riverina   |
| South East NSW           | Capital Region, Illawarra, Southern Highlands and Shoalhaven                   |
| Central Coast, Newcastle | Central Coast, Newcastle and Lake Macquarie                                    |

## Contact Details

For more information about the Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation, please contact us:

02 9561 1211

[cese@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:cese@det.nsw.edu.au)

[www.cese.nsw.gov.au](http://www.cese.nsw.gov.au)