# Demographics and Mapping for Schools, Colleges and Universities

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Marketing, enrolment, advancement and investment strategies can be developed effectively if you know the facts and data of the school, college or university.

Quality demographics and mapping data, analysis and reporting can provide reliable information for the board and leadership team to make well-informed decisions.

As we know, there are known knowns; there are things we know we know. We also know there are known unknowns; that is to say we know there are some things we do not know. But there are also unknown unknowns—the ones we don't know we don't know.

Donald Rumsfeld

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# 1. Introduction to Demographics and Mapping

Schools, colleges and universities normally have a strategic plan to guide their long term future.

A good quality strategic plan outlines the expectations of the school, college or university based on facts and data, not just opinions and thoughts.

This guide to Demographics and Mapping for Schools, Colleges and Universities provides information on some of the components of a strategic plan, and more specifically, the demographics, mapping, facts, data and educational statistics available.







# 1.1 What is a Strategic Plan?

In a paper from the Australian Victorian Education Department

https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/principals/management/strategicplan.pdf

They quote as follows:

"A strategic plan is a 3-4 page document that tells people what the school wants to achieve in the future and how it plans to get there.

The plan lets people know:

- 1. Why your school exists (its purpose)
- 2. How staff and students are expected to behave (the values)
- 3. What is different or special about your school (the context)
- 4. What you are going to focus on over the next four years to improve students' experience at school, and how the school is going to do this
- 5. What actions you will undertake to implement your key improvement strategies and the milestones that will be used to identify progress in their implementation".

The development of accurately informed marketing, enrolment, advancement and investment strategies for future short and long term financial and capital investments is paramount to the success of a school, college or university.

This guide provides information that is available for the Strategic Plan, and focuses on points 4 and 5 above to help you decide what you are going to focus on for the next four years, how you are going to do it and help you select what actions you will take and how will you identify progress.





The guide will highlight what information is available (initially for Australia); however much of what we have available from the <u>Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)</u> is also available in other markets we support including New Zealand, the USA and the United Kingdom.

Whilst most of the information is available in tabular form, we have extensive knowledge and experience bringing all of the information together in an Online Mapping System.

This allows your school, college or university to see your facts and data at a glance and give you the power to make your own assessments. Your tailored Online Mapping System can include individual students being mapped to their home addresses, future students, alumni, plus all the relevant demographic layers for a school including student population forecasts and total population forecasts for areas, religion, information on what type of schools students attend and so much more.



An understanding of what is available can provide your leadership team and board the vital demographic information required to make informed decisions for the future of your school, college or university.







# 1.2 What operational areas should we be addressing using demographics?

Most schools, colleges or universities have individual people responsible for gaining new students and filling the enrolment funnel. Whether their title is Director or Manager of Marketing, Admissions, Advancement, Enrolments, Business Development or Registrar, the responsibility for new student acquisition lies partly or wholly within their roles.

#### Five key questions to be addressed:

- 1. Where do our current students come from?
- 2. Where are our future enrolments going to be coming from?
- 3. What areas show student growth around our school?
- 4. Which of these areas have suitable Socio Economics to consider your institution, and have similar religious beliefs?
- 5. What are the feeder schools, colleges and universities we rely on, and will we secure a good number of students from them?

Can your team confidently answer these questions?

If the answer is no, what tools do your team need?







# 1.3 Major investment decisions

Schools, colleges and universities are often in expansion mode, and may wish to consider a new campus or a major investment in the current campus for a variety of reasons:

- The current campus is not adequate for future needs
- An additional campus is required for a new area
- It may be financially attractive to close an old campus and open a newer, larger version.

Whatever opportunities are in front of you, by choice or by necessity, quality demographics can help make informed investment decisions.



# Which factors are important?

- Current student numbers available in the local area.
- Future student forecast numbers.
- Socio economics of the area and how that matches with fee expectations.
- Current and future competition in the area.
- Suitable land available for the expansion.







# 1.4 Strategic decisions for the future (post COVID-19)

The COVID-19 pandemic has created several short and long term issues that are likely to affect local areas both nationally and internationally.



Many schools, colleges and universities around the world have had to pause admissions for international students and convert in-person learning environments into online.

As we launch into a COVID-19 'normal' world, the immediate focus may be marketing for future enrolments, increasing student retention and ensuring that the admissions funnel remains as full as possible.

These decisions are critical to the long term success of a school, college or university and should NOT be made on opinions, thoughts and anecdotes when demographic analysis can help you answer these questions with reliable facts, data and reporting.

The sooner that well-informed decisions can be made, the sooner education providers can get back to educating students.







# 1.5 Post COVID-19 and the economy

Many futurists have discussed the post COVID-19 world. I believe:

- We will be far better at adapting to and using technology.
- We will make more online purchases and need less retail space.
- Many people will prefer flexible working arrangements including working from home or a combination of working from home and the workplace. This is likely to create an over-supply of office space and force commercial rental prices down.
- The overall economy will be somewhat poorer, especially as governments worldwide have generated trillions of dollars in debt.
   Australia has around \$300 billion of additional spending to address, and this could lead to higher taxes and inflation.









# 1.6 What do leaders need to be thinking about?



The financial consequences may not be apparent for a while.

Whilst educational goals may remain the same, revenues need to be maintained and hardship policies and procedures may need to be adjusted and applied.

The longer term question to ask is, "How will the pandemic affect future enrolments, and will we have a strong forward list for the next few years?"

Looking at next year's new enrolments and how many are still active and leading on to future years is a first step.

Older traditional schools, colleges and universities have spent the last few years as one Enrolment Director suggests, "Managing disappointments" with prospective parents unable to enroll their children. That number may be just as high and therefore no problem.

Other schools, colleges and universities will go from a full list of enrolments to having gaps and significant decreases in enrolments, particularly in higher intake years like the beginning of secondary school.

Some schools in new growth areas, lower socio-economic areas or simply without a significant history, brand or reputation may need to prepare for and manage a change in revenue if student enrolments decrease.







# 1.7 What's available to assist you in your decision-making?

Australia (and New Zealand) are very fortunate because we have a Population Census conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) every five years.

The Census costs around AUD\$500M and is normally seen as the largest regular peacetime spend undertaken in Australia (with the exception of the COVID-19 response).

It is planned well in advance to ensure that the answered questions provide the best data for understanding the current and future needs of the population. Forecasts are used to provide evidence for government spending decisions for new schools, hospitals, infrastructure etc.



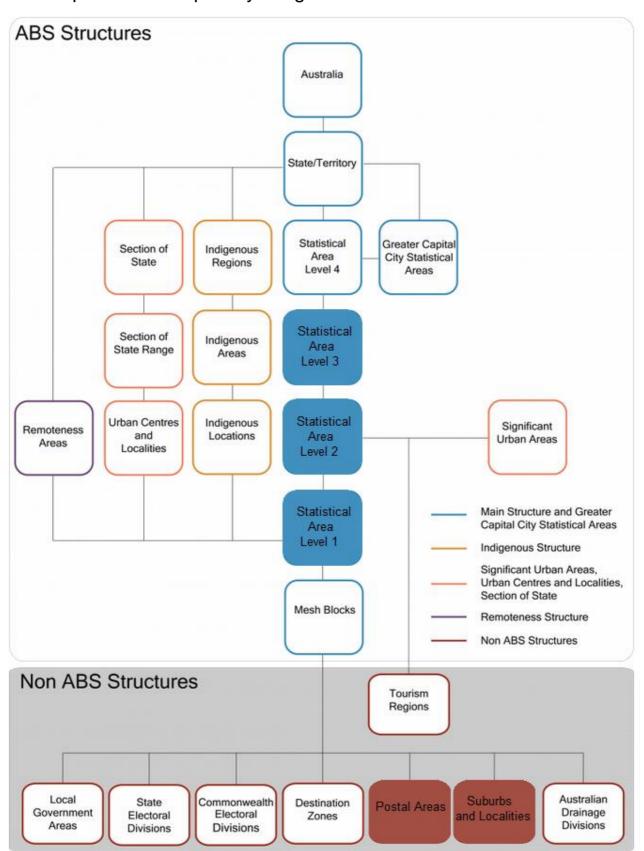
The Census data is released over a two to three year period after the census night in August. The top level information comes out a few months after census night and includes total population by state. The Statistical Area 1 (SA1) level data is released around 10 months after Census night (usually June of the following year) and can be used to prepare a detailed analysis for schools, colleges and universities.







The Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) provides a framework of statistical areas used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and other organisations to enable the publication of statistics that are comparable and spatially integrated.









Australia uses a system of Statistical Areas as the geographies in which we release information as follows:

SA1's – 57,523 across Australia

SA2's – 2,310 across Australia

SA3's – 360 across Australia

By comparison we have the following geographies you may be more familiar with:

Suburbs – 8,000 approximately

Postcodes - 2,630

ABS data at SA2 level can be used for population growth forecasts with Department of Health and Department of Education data.

SA2s are designed to reflect functional areas that represent a community. They consider Suburb and Locality boundaries. SA2s often reflect one or more related suburbs.

#### Description from the ABS's website:

Statistical Areas Level 2 (SA2s) are designed to reflect functional areas that represent a community that interacts together socially and economically. They consider Suburb and Locality boundaries to improve the geographic coding of data to these areas and in major urban areas SA2s often reflect one or more related suburbs. The SA2 is the smallest area for the release of many ABS statistics, including the Estimated Resident Population (ERP), Health & Vitals and Building Approvals data. SA2s generally have a population range of 3,000 to 25,000 persons and have an average population of about 10,000 persons. SA2s are aggregations of whole SA1s.

Whilst census data is released at SA1 level, many of the datasets we use are only released at SA2 level, specifically the ABS dataset - Population projections (2017 – 2032).







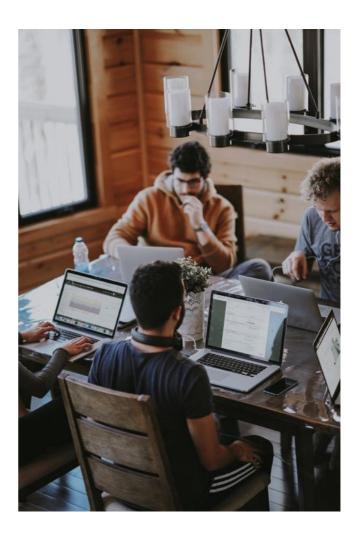
# 1.8 Census data most relevant to schools

The 2016 and anticipated 2021 Census will provide most of their data at SA1 level, which will then aggregate into SA2's.

The first census provides population by age and gender for each area. This can help schools, colleges and universities identify the number of student age children in any area.

The census also provides information on:

- Personal and Household income
- Ethnicity
- Religious Affiliations
- Marital Status
- Building Type
- Home Ownership
- Household Type
- Language spoken at home
- Birthplace
- Professions



Think of the census as a five yearly "stake in the ground" that can be used for comparisons against census data from other years.







The census asks families specific questions to identify if children are at:

- Pre School
- Primary School
- Secondary School

### and if they attend a

- Government School
- Catholic School
- Independent School

The data can be analysed to look at any specific SA2 and see what type of schools are attended and look at what has changed over a chosen time period including 2006, 2011 and 2016.

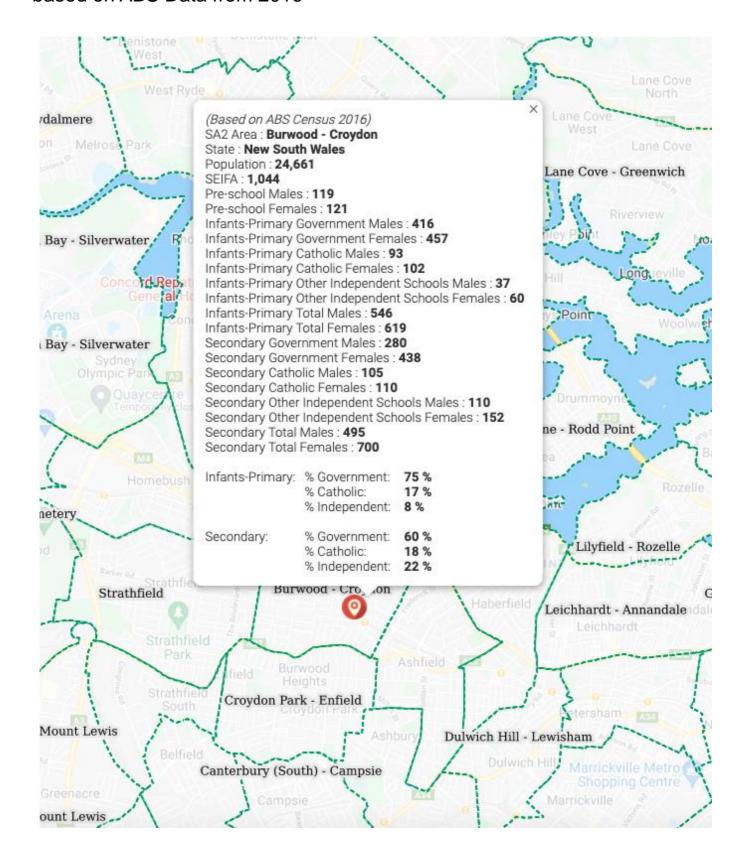








# Sample SA2 Area Report for Burwood – Croydon NSW based on ABS Data from 2016







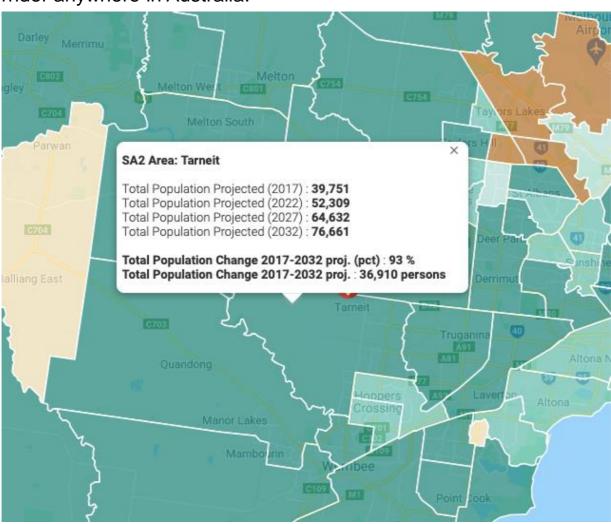


# 1.9 Population Forecasting

In October 2019, the ABS released new population growth forecasts from 2017 to 2032. This allows data analysis at any area level and the ability to identify the forecast number of people in age groups: 0 - 4, 5 - 9, 10 - 14, 15 - 19, 20 - 24 etc. by years.

By looking at Total Population Forecasts and the data of 5 - 19 year olds as typical of a school student age group, analysis will show if the area will have an increase or decrease in students over the time period.

The following examples look at Tarneit in the western suburbs of Melbourne, which has currently been identified as the biggest growth corridor anywhere in Australia.



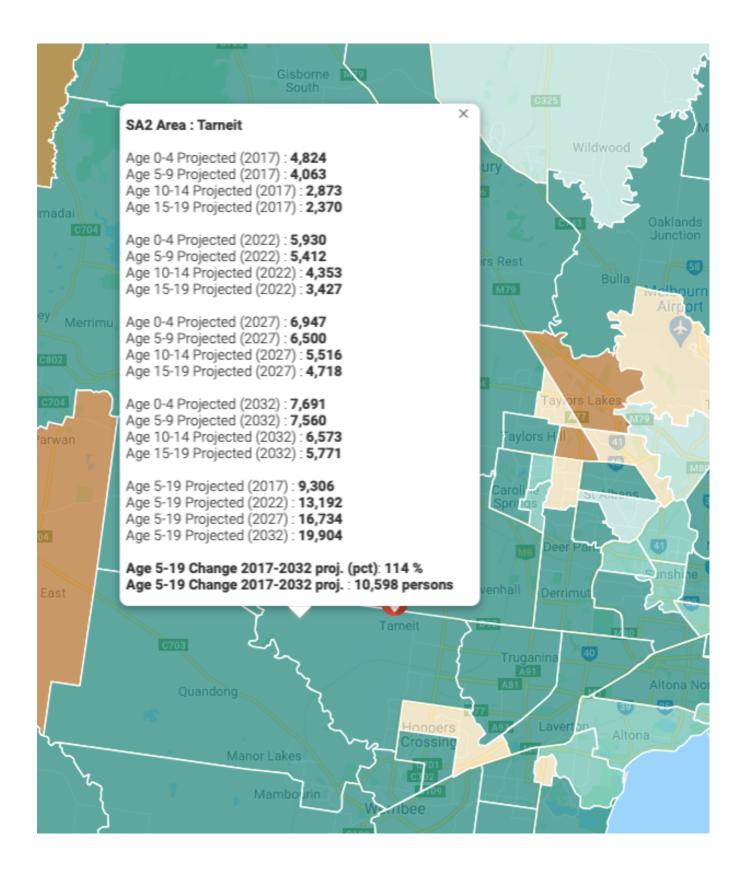






#### Sample SA2 Area Report for Tarneit VIC

#### based on ABS Data from 2016 - Forecast Student Numbers









**Data Set 1** shows the four age groups 0 - 4, 5 - 9, 10 - 14 and 15 - 19 as potential school students for the forecast years of 2017, 2022, 2027 and 2032.

**Data Set 2** (listed fifth) The 0-4 year old forecast is removed and potential school students are aged 5-19.

This could be disputed (and adjusted) for certain areas, especially with 18 or 19 year olds (often in regional areas) not all attending school, but it does give a point for comparison.



The last two lines show how many more school students are expected to be in the area from 2017 - 2032, and what percentage increase this represents. In this case, an extra 10,598 persons and a 114% increase.

Forecasts can provide information on years 2020 – 2032 if required. The data and projections from the ABS begin in 2017.







# 1.10 Socio Economic Index For Areas (SEIFA)

The Socio Economics of an area (also known as the Socio Economic Status (SES) score), is provided by the ABS to show areas of Advantage and Dis-Advantage.

The main product they produce is Socio Economic Index For Areas (SEIFA).

(https://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/censushome.nsf/home/seifa)

SEIFA offers four sets of scores and the one most commonly used is called the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage and Disadvantage (IRSAD).

The Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage (IRSD)

The Index of Education and Occupation (IEO)

The Index of
Relative SocioEconomic
Advantage and
Disadvantage
(IRSAD)

The Index of Economic Resources (IER)







IRSAD summarises variables that indicate either relative advantage or disadvantage.

The index ranks areas on a continuum of areas from most disadvantaged areas to most advantaged areas.

An area with a high score on this index has a relatively high incidence of advantage.

An area with a relatively low score on this index represents an incidence of disadvantage.

SEIFA indexes are available as different measures including a score, rank, decile and percentile.

A SEIFA score is created using information about people and households in a particular area. The score is standardised against a mean of 1000 with a standard deviation of 100.

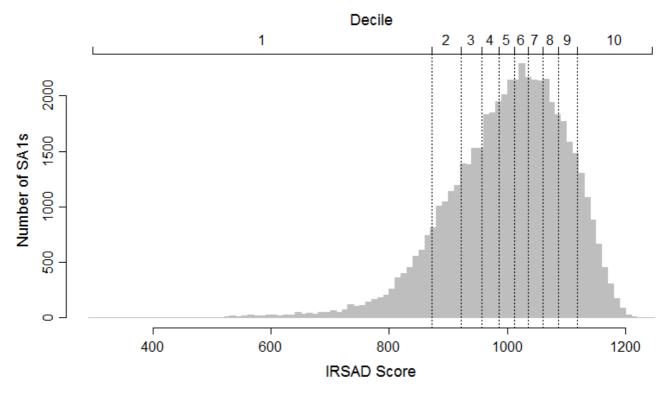
This means that the average SEIFA score will be 1000 and the middle two-thirds of SEIFA scores will fall between 900 and 1100 (approximately).











Source: ABS, SEIFA Technical Paper

Deciles divide a distribution into ten equal groups. In the case of SEIFA, the distribution of scores is divided into ten equal groups. The lowest scoring 10% of areas are given a decile number of 1; the second-lowest 10% of areas are given a decile number of 2 and so on, up to the highest 10% of areas which are given a decile number of 10.

Areas with a SEIFA score below 1,000 would have higher levels of disadvantage. Areas with a score above 1,000 would have a higher level of advantage, and would be attributed to higher income, education, employment, etc.

In assessing where potential students may come from, SEIFA is a good indication of the ability of the families in the area to pay school fees.

If a school has higher fees, a knowledge of the SEIFA score for that area is very important.







# 1.11 SWOT Analysis

Within a Strategic Plan, one of the most reliable and practical tools to create a plan is the Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis process.

## Strengths

Reputation, facilities, recent results and unique or valuable offerings.

#### ---- Weaknesses

Items that are not on offer and any other issues from the recent past that may have a detrimental effect on the school, college or university in the future (legal, media etc).

# Opportunities

Items that can provide an advantage if actioned. What will be happening with the student catchment population over the next 10 – 15 years? What long term planning is required for physical facilities and transport options? What will the student numbers be? What will the school need to teach the students either on campus or on a new campus?

### --- Threats

What could affect the long term survival of the school, college or university? Is a new school, college or university planned for the local area? Is the school, college or university currently managing its reputation or a legal matter? Is the main enrollment area losing numbers in the student age range?







Many school, college and university investment decisions are long term decisions requiring long lead times, especially if there is building and construction involved.

A Master Plan is required by most school, college and university boards, especially if acquisitions of a new campus or additional land, or major building projects are involved.

Major decisions need planning and need to be verified with demographics and statistical analysis.



Midleton College, Ireland - Established 1696 and still going strong.







# 2. Online Mapping for Schools

Understanding what demographics are available for providing evidence related to long term decisions for a school, college or university is the first step.

The second step is visualising the data in an accessible way for all leaders, executives and board members.

An online mapping tool can allow authorised individuals easy access to most of the data and the ability to dynamically view a school, college or university's population changes, sources of future enrolments, indicative patronage of non-government schools and other demographic attributes based on the level of access.









# 2.1 Data information available

Spectrum Analysis Australia works with many schools, colleges and universities, both large and small, using sophisticated GIS tools to complete the analysis and reporting.

Several layers and point data items have been described in Section 1.

Strategic Plan decisions can incorporate additional layers of data.

# A. Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA)

The ACARA data has around 9,000 Australian schools providing information to the government on an annual basis.

The schools are in listed three major categories:

- Government Schools
- Catholic Schools
- Independent Schools

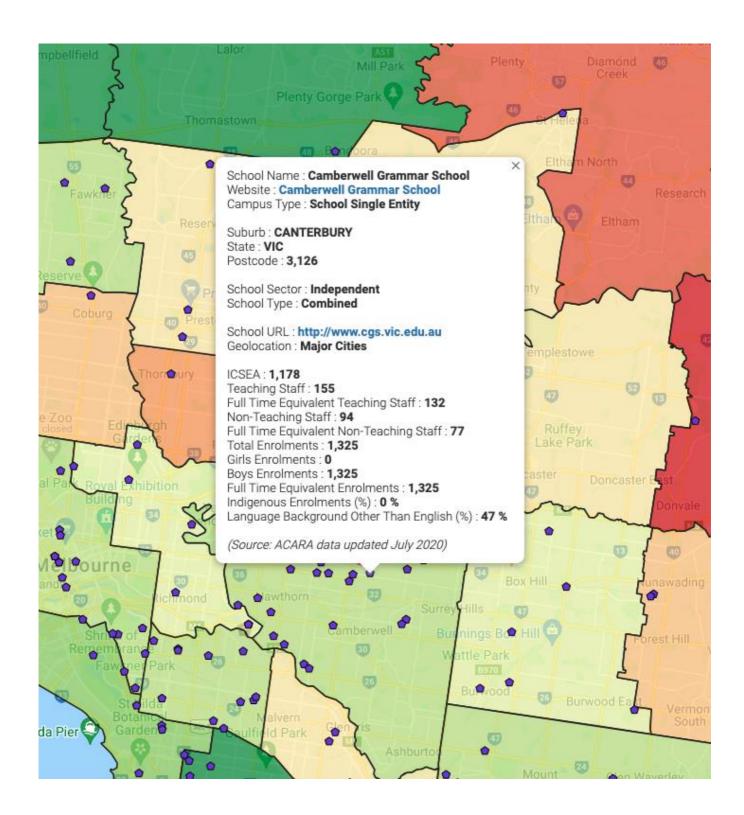
Each year every school provides information to ACARA and this data can be summarised and added to a layer of data to provide information for your school, college or university or a competitor.







# **Sample School Report** for Camberwell Grammar School VIC based on ACARA Data from 2020









#### B. Socio Economic Index For Areas (SEIFA) data at 4 levels

The SEIFA data is available at four levels and can be assigned to different layers that are 'best for purpose.' These include:

- Suburb
- SA1
- SA2
- SA3

#### C. School Data

The census also provides schools data as it asks families to identify if children are at:

- Pre school
- Primary School
- Secondary School

and if they attend

- Government School
- Catholic School
- Independent School

Analysis can be completed to look at any specific Suburb, SA2 or SA3 and see what type of schools are attended and what percentage of children attend each category of school.

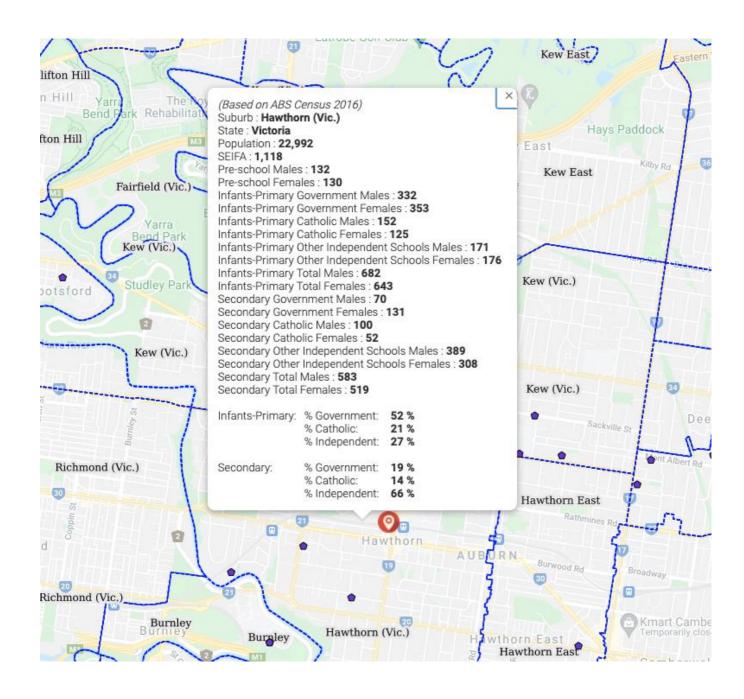






# Sample Suburb Report for Hawthorn VIC

#### based on ABS Data from 2016









#### D. Religious views

The census requests information on religions followed and these are reported at various levels.

SA1 and Suburb data can be layered to look at specific areas.

There are many categories, however most school analysis requests include:

- Christian Population
- Christianity Anglican
- Christianity Catholic
- Christianity Pentecostal
- Christianity other Protestant
- Islam
- Hinduism
- Buddhism
- Non-Religious
- Religion not stated

Whilst many people completing the census have different views on how they wish to be represented and are reluctant to answer the question in the census, there is still enough information available to produce meaningful data.







# 2.2 Examples of online mapping for Schools

**Spectrum Analysis Australia** provides a range of geodemographic modelling, analysis and reporting tools for schools, colleges and universities. The following is an example of the various Online Mapping offers available for **schools** and the benefits of this type of mapping for the decision-making processes of a school. All levels use Open Source online mapping and the same instructions. The only difference is the number of layers and information visible.

**Level 1** – Complimentary to all - Australia wide.

**Level 2** – <u>Complimentary to Somerset Education Survey</u> Subscribers.

**Level 3 – Annual Subscription** 

(includes Somerset Education Survey Subscribers via their web portal).

**Level 4** – <u>Annual Subscription and Tailored</u> for your school by Spectrum Analysis Australia.

**Level 5** – **Entirely Bespoke and Tailored** for your school by Spectrum Analysis Australia.







# **Level 1** – Complimentary to all - Australia wide.

### Level 1 Complimentary Example available by clicking on this link



Under the words "School Network Planning" you can see four tabs – Legend, Layers, Themes and Information. Try clicking on each of these and you can see what is available:

- Firstly, start with the information tab and you can watch an introductory video.
- Click on Themes to decide which map looks best for you.
- Click on Layers to turn on and off the various layers. Use the slide bar beside the Layers to move up and down – Blue = ON, Grey = OFF. This is the major tab you use when looking at your mapping.
- Click on Legend to have the Legends come ON (as required).
- Once you have opened a Layer, click on a site / location (or student if you have Level 4), and a data box will open displaying information.
- Other Layers such as Socio-Economic Index For Areas (SEIFA), and population forecasts can be viewed, depending on what Level you have subscribed to.
- Zoom in or out using your mouse, or the relevant + or − keys.
- Change to Satellite view if you wish.
- Streetview is also available with "the little man".







#### **Level 1 – Complimentary to All Example**

This layer is a free basic mapping that allows you to see:

- All schools across Australia with information from ACARA
- SEIFA scores at SA2 and Suburb level
- SA3 Score of Potential growth for Independent students rated 10 (high) to 1 (low). This is based on a formula of the additional number of student aged children according to the ABS from 2017 2032 X percentage attending Independent Schools (from 2016 Census).

Level 1 Complimentary to All Example available by clicking on this link









## **Level 2** – <u>Complimentary to Somerset Education Survey</u> Subscribers.

# Level 2 Complimentary to Somerset Education Survey Example available by clicking on this link

This level is complimentary to schools that participate in the <u>ASBA/Somerset Education Non-Government Schools' Financial</u> Performance Survey (FPS).

It provides all the information from Level 1, as well as:

- SEIFA at SA1 and SA3 levels as well
- % Christian population at SA1 and Suburb levels
- % Islamic population at SA1 and Suburb levels
- Total forecast population growth at SA3 level (2017 2032).

This allows you to see high growth areas across Australia.

Level 2 Complimentary to Somerset Education Survey Subscribers Example <u>available by clicking on this link</u>. It shows an example of the complimentary service received as an FPS subscriber.

If your school has a login to the <u>Somerset Education School Portal</u> you will find that the map covers all of Australia so you can focus on your catchment areas.









#### **Level 3 – Annual Subscription**

(includes Somerset Education Survey Subscribers via their web portal).

**Level 3 – Annual Subscription** (includes Somerset Education Survey Subscribers via their web portal for an additional amount)

Level 3 has been built to allow a school to start making their own decisions in terms of marketing, enrolment, advancement and investment strategies for future short and long term financial and capital investments. Whilst it will not answer every question, school staff can collect useful facts and data for effective decision-making.

Special layers are available at this level to show the forecast numbers of school age children expected in an area from 2017 – 2032.

This is the latest data provided by the ABS and replaces any earlier data, either from the ABS or from various State Government agencies.

This data is the most reliable for future investment decisions.

#### Level 3 also includes:

- schools data, including number of children at any specific area by Primary and Secondary levels
- attendance at Independent, Government or Catholic schools.

This information is available at Suburb, SA2 and SA3 levels.

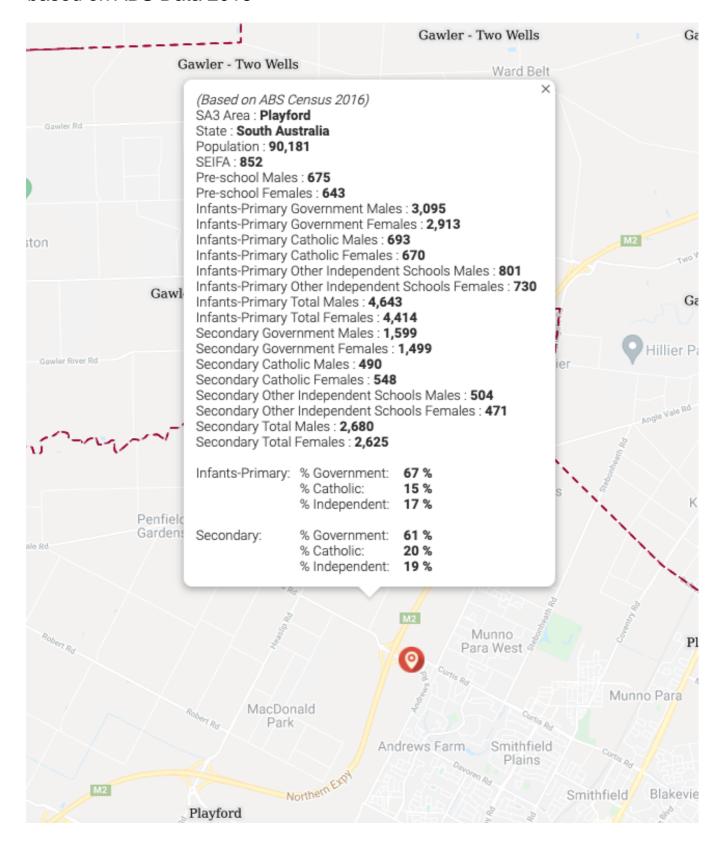






#### Sample SA3 Area Report for Playford SA

#### based on ABS Data 2016

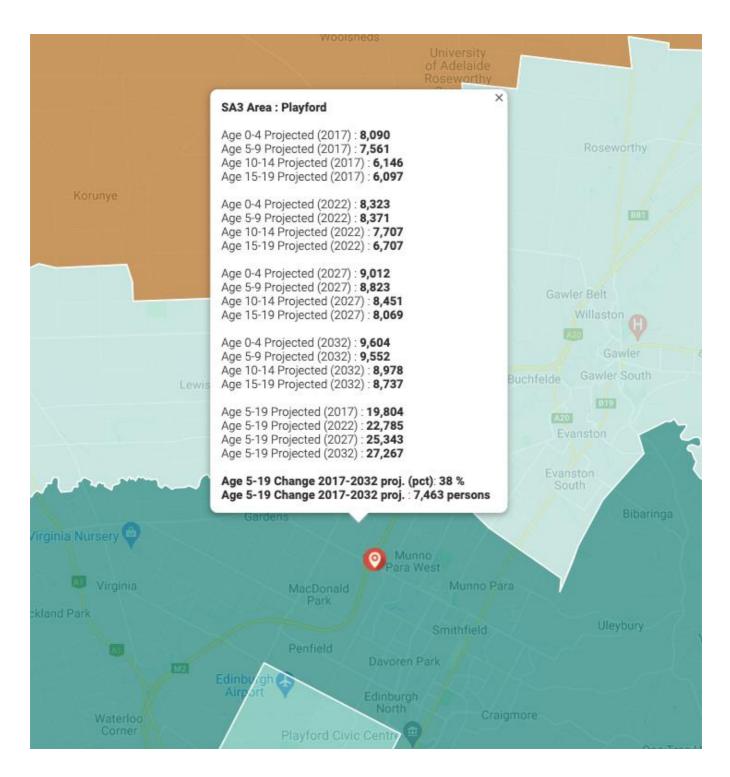








# Sample SA3 Area Report for Playford SA based on ABS Forecast Data 2017 - 2032



- Population density (school aged children per square kilometre at SA1 and suburb levels
- School aged population forecasts 2017 2032 at SA2 and SA3 levels







- % of population by various religions: Christian, Catholic, Pentecostal,
   Other Protestants, Islamic, Hindu, Buddhist and Non-Religious, all at SA1 and Suburb levels
- Contact <u>Somerset Education</u> to subscribe for this service for \$650 + GST, which will be active for the period of the current year's FPS reporting, generally August to July the next year.

**Level 3 – Annual Subscription** Example available by <u>clicking this link</u>









**Level 4** – <u>Annual Subscription and Tailored</u> for your school by Spectrum Analysis Australia.

**Level 4 – Annual Subscription and Tailored** to your school by Spectrum Analysis Australia

As well as all the information provided at Level 3, Spectrum Analysis Australia can map all school students and provide specific layers to look at the market share you have in any area and identify your Primary and Secondary catchment areas. This is provided in a secure password protected online environment.

Using geocoding software, we map all your current students (and past year's students if requested), your alumni, and all future enrolments.

Once a student is mapped, we can attach specific data such as name, address, age, year they started at the school, current year, if they use your bus network, are they a boarder or not and what school they came from, provided we receive this information from the school's admissions team.

We can also map all school bus routes and public transport, and you can see how well this is covering the existing students and future students.

This allows you to look at where your current students come from, and where future student populations are most likely to come from which provides you with the opportunity to market accordingly.

**Level 4 – Annual Subscription and Tailored** Example available by <u>clicking this link</u> – a demonstration of the fictitious Jells College









**Level 5** – **Entirely Bespoke and Tailored** for your school by Spectrum Analysis Australia.

**Level 5 – Entirely Bespoke and Tailored** for your school by Spectrum Analysis Australia

This offering can be adapted to the needs of your School, College or University as an entirely bespoke and tailored package depending on your specific needs and a more comprehensive demographic analysis.

We can collect, analyse and report on data and information that can be included in a strategic plan.

You can learn more about this offering by downloading our <u>Demographic</u> <u>Analysis Services Brochure here</u>.

If you would like to view a demonstration report for the fictitious Jells College to see a sample of what we can produce, download the <u>Jells College Demonstration Report here</u>.

To discuss your specific needs, we recommend that you contact us directly so that we can prepare an entirely bespoke and tailored offering.

Level 5 – Entirely Bespoke and Tailored brochure available by clicking this link and sample report available by clicking this link









# 3. Conclusion

The first step is understanding what demographics are available for providing evidence for long term decisions for a school, college or university.

<u>Spectrum Analysis Australia</u> offers schools, colleges and universities a variety of geodemographic modelling and analysis products to help you make well informed decisions.

The development of accurately informed marketing, enrolment, advancement and investment strategies for future short and long term financial and capital investments is paramount to the success of a school, college or university.

Please visit the <u>Spectrum Analysis Australia</u> website for more information and scroll down to the Geo Mapping section to watch a <u>short video</u> to see how our online mapping tool works.

You can subscribe to our free monthly <u>Strategy News for Schools email</u> <u>newsletter here</u>.

You can follow us on social media by clicking on the icons below.









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**Established in 1996, Spectrum Analysis Australia** has been providing facts, data, analysis and reports to clients across Australia and the world in multiple industries and sectors. Our clients rely on the reporting we provide for effective planning and decision-making.

We work with all staff levels and help our clients develop strategic plans based on verifiable information, and we do it well. You need facts and data. You need expert analysis. You need to understand the risks and opportunities.

At Spectrum Analysis, our team of expert data scientists and analysts can help you:

- ensure that your decisions provide accountability and due diligence
- improve your marketing, sales, business and enterprise results
- provide evidence-based suggestions
- secure evidence for multi-million dollar investments or grant applications
- understand your organisation's demographics
- answer your questions.

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