



Strictly embargoed until 12:01am, 30 January 2019

## Darwin - Australia's most affordable city for education

Darwin is Australia's most affordable city for an education, irrespective of the school type according to exclusive research released today.

The ASG Planning for Education Index (developed in partnership with Monash University) estimates the total cost of a Government education in the Top End will be \$42,628 over a 13 period for a child starting school in 2019.

This is 38 per cent below the national average (\$68,727), and \$32,973 cheaper than Brisbane, home of Australia's most expensive Government education.

School fees (\$186) make up a small fraction of the estimated total cost of a Government education each year in Darwin, with sports equipment (\$226), external tuition (\$328), transport (\$359) and devices (\$819) all adding to the estimated total cost.

The Index discovered a similar result for parents considering a Catholic education for their son or daughter, with the estimated total cost of a Catholic education in Darwin (\$96,061), 24.4 per cent below the national average (\$127,027).

The ASG research discovered Darwin is Australia's most affordable city for a Catholic education, \$35,437 cheaper than Australia's most expensive city, Adelaide (\$131,498).

School fees (\$2,956) are easily the most expensive component of a Catholic education, well ahead of other annual expenses including external tuition (\$273), transport (\$403), devices (\$525) and uniforms (\$650).

The ASG Planning for Education Index also revealed Darwin (\$140,916) is home to the country's most affordable Independent education system, 52.8 per cent below the national average (\$298,689).

The estimated total cost of an Independent education in Darwin is \$321,083 cheaper than Sydney (\$461,999), Australia's most expensive capital for an Independent education.

School fees are the most expensive part of an Independent education in Darwin, costing parents approximately \$5,517 per child per year, well ahead of musical equipment (\$239), excursions (\$684) and devices (\$1,035).

The Index is based on data sourced from a survey of 2,300 members on ancillary costs conducted by ASG and public information on school fees – *The Good Schools Guide* and the *My School Website*. The data was consolidated and analysed by Monash University.

Juergen Zimmermann has two children about to start Year 8 and Year 10 at a Government school in Darwin.

"I've just heard the forecast costs and it appears very reasonable, Ms Robertson said.

"Living in Darwin can be very expensive, but it's great Darwin's Government schools are the most affordable in the country.



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"However, my family does get caught out occasionally by the hidden costs of education which take you by surprise, especially excursions, camps, devices, after school activities, sports equipment and transport."

ASG CEO Ross Higgins said irrespective of Australia's high or low inflationary environment, the cost of education has risen at more than double the rate of inflation over the past decade.

"Education costs, including tuition costs, uniforms, transport and devices are demanding a far greater share of the family budget than in the past," Mr Higgins said.

"More than ever, the costs associated with education are placing more of a burden on Australian families, who are already challenged by the rising cost of living.

"With less discretionary money to spend, it's going to be very hard to pay for education, which means parents who have saved will be in a better position in the long run.

"ASG advocates parents use a disciplined approach to saving by putting in place a dedicated savings plan, so they can financially afford to meet their children's educational goals and aspirations.

"ASG has also developed a Cost Calculator tool which may assist you looking at this data as it applies to your circumstances."

For more information about ASG call 131 ASG (131 274) or visit [www.asg.com.au](http://www.asg.com.au)

**Ends**

## Summary of total forecast education costs (median) for a child starting school in 2019\*\*

	Location	Government	Catholic	Independent
<b>National</b>	Metropolitan	\$68,727	\$127,027	\$298,689
	Regional	\$57,994	\$109,877	\$201,210
<b>Canberra</b>	Metropolitan	\$55,064	\$126,064	\$209,978
<b>NSW</b>	Metropolitan	\$66,470	\$114,531	\$461,999
	Regional	\$73,808	\$112,248	\$203,654
<b>QLD</b>	Metropolitan	\$75,601	\$115,034	\$209,608
	Regional	\$65,410	\$113,211	\$186,226
<b>SA</b>	Metropolitan	\$54,938	\$131,498	\$221,415
	Regional	\$51,615	\$95,349	\$159,009
<b>TAS</b>	Metropolitan	\$48,241	\$96,290	\$276,338
	Regional	\$40,489	\$86,694	\$131,673
<b>VIC</b>	Metropolitan	\$70,604	\$121,547	\$438,390
	Regional	\$47,224	\$88,581	\$248,543
<b>WA</b>	Metropolitan	\$54,134	\$109,097	\$208,080
	Regional	\$53,094	\$101,137	\$114,410
<b>Darwin</b>	Metropolitan	\$42,628	\$96,061	\$140,916

*\*\*These estimates are future long terms costs, projected over a 13-year period and are provided as a guide only. ASG cannot guarantee they will represent the actual costs of education for a particular child.*

### Definitions

Schools can be differentiated by their affiliation, ownership and management, and are presented as two broad categories:

- Government schools are owned and managed by State and Territory governments;
- Non-Government schools (including Catholic or Independent schools) that are owned and managed by non-government establishments. These schools have associations with religious (faith based) or secular bodies (philosophical beliefs), or are entirely independent and have values maintained by the school.

Sources: ABS Schools Australia, 2017, School education - Report on Government Services 2018 (ROGS Ch. 4)



# Media Release

## **Editor's notes**

ASG offers a range of education scholarship plans, which are designed to provide families with a tax effective means of saving for future education costs.

ASG is a member owned organisation, helping to create educational opportunities for children. ASG has been helping families and their children for more than 40 years. During this time, more than 551,000 children have been enrolled with ASG and more than \$3.1 billion in education benefits and scholarship payments returned to members. For more information visit: [www.asg.com.au](http://www.asg.com.au)

## **Media contact**

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