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The cost of educating a child in Melbourne *Most expensive city for public education*

Melbourne is the most expensive city in Australia to educate a child in a government school according to exclusive research released today.

The ASG Planning for Education Index discovers for a child born in 2016 the forecast cost of a government education in Melbourne is \$75,193, 12 per cent above the national metropolitan average (\$66,862) and more expensive than Sydney (\$73,063), Brisbane (\$58,843) and Adelaide (\$57,459).

The survey also reveals the forecast cost of a private education in Melbourne is \$512,283, second only to Sydney (\$552,351) and \$43,886 more than the national metropolitan average (\$468,397). Brisbane (\$360,044) is estimated to be the most affordable city in Australia to educate a child in the private sector, a massive \$152,239 less than Melbourne.

Despite Melbourne being the most expensive capital city in Australia to educate a child in a government school, and the second most expensive for private education, the index discovers Melbourne is surprisingly one of the most affordable cities to send a child to a systemic¹ school (\$214,958). The forecast cost is \$15,423 less than the national metropolitan average (\$230,381) and well below the nation's most expensive capital city, Sydney (\$240,768).

The ASG Planning for Education Index, based on more than 12,500 responses, measures a range of variables including school fees, transport, uniforms, computers, school excursions and sporting trips to determine the cost of education.

The ASG Planning for Education Index also forecasts preschool or kindergarten in Melbourne will cost parents between \$2,774 and \$8,330 depending on the school type.

Interestingly, the cost of certain variables measured as part of the ASG Planning for Education Index have not increased over the past year. For example, the costs for computers and transport costs, including the price of fuel, have declined compared to last year, while the cost of books has remained stable.

Mother of one, Shoba Kalugasalam, first enrolled her daughter Kamalinee (now 12 years) with ASG when her family immigrated to Australia in 2011.

"When we moved from Malaysia, providing a well rounded education and more opportunities was the main motivation and reason that prompted us in to coming here.

"I feel here in Australia, there's a strong emphasis on the importance of holistic approach to education that focuses less on the traditional milestones of academic development, and more on the complete physical, emotional and psychological wellbeing of a child. As much as academic skills are fundamental to survive in this fast changing world, learning skills are just as essential to meet and deal with the demands and challenges of everyday life.

¹ A systemic education includes religious schools e.g. Catholic, Anglican, Uniting Church, Buddhist, Islamic or Hindu

We are feeling the pinch with Kamalinee going to Year 8 and in keeping up with the escalating education costs in state schools that does not cover the use of an iPad, uniforms, excursions etc.

Kamalinee who attends Mount Waverly Secondary College was an ICAS medal recipient for Spelling last year in November 2015. She not only emerged with a perfect score but was the only medal recipient in Victoria. ICAS (International Competition Assessment for Schools) is commonly referred to as the University of New South Wales competitions that are conducted annually in Australia and over 20 countries globally.

Kamalinee is planning on pursuing a career in medicine and is aspiring to be a gynaecologist.

ASG CEO John Velegrinis says the cost of education continued to rise at more than twice the rate of inflation over the past decade.

“Regardless of whether you send your children to a government, systemic or private school, the costs of that education will clearly increase which is why we advocate that parents start planning for education as early as possible, even from the moment their child is born.

“We’re very fortunate in Australia to have a variety of excellent government, systemic and private schools. If you have two or three children, the cost of a private education in Melbourne could be higher than the purchase price of the family home. We advocate parents use a disciplined approach by putting a little bit away each week so they financially can afford their children’s educational goals and aspirations.”

Independent statistician and Managing Director of foreseechange Charlie Nelson says the current economic climate is having an effect on education.

“A sudden increase in education costs would certainly be painful in the current low income growth environment.

“With school fees increasing faster than incomes, it has never been more important for parents to financially plan for their child’s future as early as possible.”

For more information about ASG call 131 ASG (131 274) or visit www.asg.com.au

Summary of total education costs for a child born in 2016

	Location	Public	Systemic	Private
National	Metropolitan	\$66,862	\$230,381	\$468,397
	Regional	\$50,920	\$172,331	\$328,981
Australian Capital Territory	Metropolitan	\$50,385	\$223,940	\$431,538
New South Wales	Metropolitan	\$73,063	\$240,768	\$552,351
	Regional	\$52,598	\$167,021	\$349,941

Queensland	Metropolitan	\$58,843	\$235,563	\$360,044
	Regional	\$50,478	\$193,262	\$326,762
South Australia	Metropolitan	\$57,459	\$239,053	\$365,976
	Regional	\$49,593	\$191,973	\$287,128
Tasmania	Metropolitan	\$45,114	\$196,089	\$421,309
	Regional	\$47,425	\$160,664	\$340,214
Victoria	Metropolitan	\$75,193	\$214,958	\$512,283
	Regional	\$53,245	\$154,703	\$353,857
Western Australia	Metropolitan	\$55,250	\$227,442	\$393,870
	Regional	\$43,594	\$143,139	\$308,323

A very small number of responses were received from the Northern Territory in the most recent survey. As such, the provision of cost estimates for the Northern Territory in isolation would be highly unreliable and therefore have not been included. It is recommended that those in the Northern Territory refer to the national figures or the figures for adjoining states as a basis for planning.

Further information

For comprehensive summary sheets detailing the cost of education in metropolitan and regional Australia visit: www.asg.com.au/edcosts

Editor's notes

ASG conducts the Planning for Education Index annually, asking parents to estimate education costs, which cover preschool, primary and secondary schools in Australia. This survey includes 12,500 responses relating to the number of responses acquired from a combination of the 2013 and 2015 surveys. Data from both surveys has been combined to increase the sample size and precision of the estimates. The 2015 estimates reported are an average of the data acquired in the 2015 survey and the 2013 data, adjusted for inflation using known ABS CPI increases.

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 520,000 children have been enrolled with ASG and more than \$2.3 billion in education benefits and scholarship payments returned to members. For more information visit: www.asg.com.au

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