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Australia's most affordable city for a private education - BRISBANE

Brisbane is the most affordable city in Australia to educate a child at a private school according to exclusive research released today.

The ASG Planning for Education Index discovered for a child born in 2017 the forecast cost of a private education in Brisbane is \$372,037¹, a massive 24 per cent or \$115,056 below the national metropolitan average (\$487,093). Sydney (\$575,140), Melbourne (\$536,515), and Canberra (\$447,307) are forecast to be Australia's most expensive cities for a private education.

The survey also revealed the estimated cost of a government education in Brisbane is \$60,135, 12 per cent below the national metropolitan average (\$68,613), but third only to Melbourne (\$77,371) and Sydney (\$75,080) as the country's most expensive.

However, the research discovered a different result for Brisbane parents considering a systemic² education for their children. The Queensland capital is forecast to be one of Australia's most expensive cities to educate a child at a systemic school, with Brisbane (\$243,964) \$4292 above the national metropolitan average (\$239,672) and third only to Sydney (\$250,862) and Adelaide (\$246,786).

The ASG Planning for Education Index also forecasts preschool or kindergarten in Australia could cost parents between \$2818 and \$8506 depending on the school type.

Based on more than 12,500 responses, the index calculates a range of variables including school fees, transport, uniforms, computers, school excursions and sporting trips to determine the cost of education.

School fees, the cost of extracurricular activities including excursions and uniforms have all risen in the past year, however computers and transport costs have fallen when compared to 2016.

ASG member mother of two Kerryn Hunt says she's spent approximately \$80,000 in school fees to send both her daughters to an Anglican primary and secondary school.

"The fees have increased so much that by the time Cambria (year 9) finishes school it'll probably be \$120,000 in fees for both girls. I have faith in the system and it was a conscious decision to send our daughters to a school where they not only delivered on academics, but have clear values and are provided with many opportunities in all areas of their education.

¹These figures are the average estimated costs and represent the highest amount parents and families could expect to pay.

² A systemic education includes religious schools e.g. Catholic, Anglican, Uniting Church, Buddhist, Islamic or Hindu

Sometimes it was difficult and we found ourselves living month to month to meet all of our obligations, and I remember a time when interest rates sky rocketed and it got quite tough, but we kept our girls in the school because it was a priority for us personally.”

The research also discovered that the estimated cost of a private education has skyrocketed by 64 per cent in the past decade across metropolitan Australia. For a child born in 2017 the forecast cost of a private education in metropolitan Australia is \$487,093, a jump of \$190,820 compared to a child born in 2007 (\$296,273).

The estimated cost of a systemic education has also soared by 57 per cent over the same period to \$239,672, while the estimated cost of a government education has climbed 25 per cent over the decade to \$68,613.

ASG CEO John Velegrinis says the cost of education has risen at two and a half times the rate of inflation over the past decade.

“Our research predicts the cost of education will increase, irrespective of whether you send your child to a government, systemic or private school.

The estimated cost of a government education across metropolitan Australia has jumped \$13,587 in the past decade. That is why we encourage parents to start planning for education as early as possible, even from the moment their child is born.”

Mr Velegrinis says Australians are fortunate to have excellent government, systemic and private schools to choose from, but costs can spiral out of control.

“If you have three children, the cost of educating them in Brisbane’s private education system could top \$1.1 million. That’s significantly more than the purchase price of the average family home.

We advocate parents use a disciplined approach by putting a little bit away each week so they can financially afford to meet their children’s educational goals and aspirations.”

Independent statistician and Managing Director of foreseexchange Charlie Nelson says a range of economic factors influence the cost of education.

“Employment growth, hourly wages and inflation all impact the cost of living, which puts extra strain on the family budget.

With school fees likely to rise further, it has never been more important for parents to financially plan for their child’s future.”

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

Summary of total forecast education costs for a child born in 2017

| | Location | Public | Systemic | Private |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| National | Metropolitan | \$68,613 | \$239,672 | \$487,093 |
| | Regional | \$51,948 | \$178,693 | \$341,811 |
| Australian Capital Territory | Metropolitan | \$52,012 | \$233,194 | \$447,307 |

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|--------------------------|--------------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| New South Wales | Metropolitan | \$75,080 | \$250,862 | \$575,140 |
| | Regional | \$53,806 | \$173,354 | \$364,230 |
| Queensland | Metropolitan | \$60,135 | \$243,964 | \$372,037 |
| | Regional | \$51,299 | \$199,328 | \$337,027 |
| South Australia | Metropolitan | \$58,587 | \$246,786 | \$377,131 |
| | Regional | \$50,079 | \$197,508 | \$295,924 |
| Tasmania | Metropolitan | \$45,832 | \$201,212 | \$433,990 |
| | Regional | \$48,064 | \$165,042 | \$350,211 |
| Victoria | Metropolitan | \$77,371 | \$224,548 | \$536,515 |
| | Regional | \$54,510 | \$161,757 | \$370,570 |
| Western Australia | Metropolitan | \$56,788 | \$235,800 | \$407,627 |
| | Regional | \$44,783 | \$147,522 | \$319,135 |

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. These figures are the average estimated costs and represent the highest amount parents and families could expect to pay. ASG cannot guarantee that they will represent the actual costs of education for a particular child.

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 ASG Planning for Education Index annually, asking parents to estimate education costs, which cover preschool, primary and secondary schools in Australia. Cost estimates are based on 12,500 responses collected by ASG.

To help with the costs of education, ASG Funding Solutions is an annual education costs payment service that takes the financial pressure off parents, families and guardians and allows you to pay for your child's school fees, uniforms, books and other education items in manageable instalments over the year.

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 530,000 children have been enrolled with ASG and more than \$2.5 billion in education benefits and scholarship payments returned to members. For more information visit: www.asg.com.au

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