POLICY

Title: Child Related Costs – Education Support
Policy No.: CPD 599-4

Policy Statement:

The Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services provides financial support for the care and protection of children and young people subject to statutory intervention, in accordance with the following requirements:

- for children in out-of-home care, reimbursement is for costs that are specific to the child’s individual needs; as recorded in the approved case plan and where applicable, Education Support Plan, and are in excess of financial support provided by the allowances provided (including the fortnightly caring allowance, high support needs allowance and complex support needs allowance)
- for children residing at home, reimbursement is for costs that will enhance the child’s safety and wellbeing and minimise the need for more intrusive child protection intervention
- all other avenues of financial support have been explored, for example other government allowances and benefits
- expenditure is in accordance with appropriate financial delegations and standards
- all transactions are substantiated, and substantiating documentation (for example, invoices and receipts) is filed to ensure an audit trail
- all items purchased under this category belong to the child.

Principles:

- The safety, wellbeing and best interests of the child or young person are paramount.
- Carers have the right to support that will contribute towards ensuring a safe and caring environment in which the needs of children and young people will be met.
- The child or young person has a right to be placed in a care environment that best meets their needs.

Objectives:

To inform Child Safety staff of the eligibility criteria for use of the child related costs accounts detailed in this policy to support decision making and case planning.

Scope:

Child Related Costs may be provided for children and young people subject to statutory intervention under the Child Protection Act 1999. Eligibility for each account category is outlined below.

Roles and Responsibilities:

The Child Safety Officer is responsible for responding to requests for support by a child or young person, their carer or their parents.
As part of the case planning process, the pre-approval of the financial delegate is required for any child related cost reimbursement or expenditure to proceed. Only these delegated officers, or above, where specified, can authorise the provision of child related costs for children and young people. This is obtained by submitting a Child Related Costs Approval Form to the Child Safety Service Centre Manager or the relevant financial delegate who can approve the child related costs.

The processing of approved child related costs expenditure or reimbursement is made by submitting the approved form with required payment documentation (for example, receipts and invoices) to a Child Safety Service Centre administrative officer who will process the payment or reimbursement according to the Financial Management Practice Manual (FMPM). Once processed, the form is placed on the client file.

Wherever practical, reimbursement of child related cost expenses should be processed when the accumulated total of the receipts is $50 in value or higher.

Carers must be advised by their Child Safety Officer that receipts for child related costs reimbursement should be submitted during the current financial year and therefore be less than 12 months old.

For young people subject to both child protection and youth justice orders, refer to the procedures for dual orders in the Child Safety Practice Manual.

**Education support plans**

The Department of Education and Training and Child Safety staff work in partnership to ensure that all children and young people in out-of-home care are enrolled and participating in an educational program that meets their individual learning needs. All children and young people in out-of-home care subject to a short term or long term Child Protection Order granting custody or guardianship to the chief executive of Child Safety are to have their education needs and goals detailed in an annual Education Support Plan.


Education Support Plans state the strategies and resources required to meet all educational goals and objectives for children. Any costs over and above the day to day school expenses covered by carer allowances may be covered by child related costs (CRC), once all other options have been explored.

For example, the Department of Education and Training provides assistance to carers of secondary school age students attending state and approved non-state schools by contributing towards the cost of textbooks and learning resources. Further information on these grants and allowances is available on the Department of Education and Training website.

**Cost items:**

The following account categories are part of the Education Support cost category:

- Education Support – Private (G/L Code 530434)
- Education Support – Public (G/L Code 530433)
- Education Support – School Uniforms (G/L Code 530422)
• Client support - Child and Vacation Care (G/L Code: 530420)
• Education Support – Tutoring (G/L Code 530431)
• Education Support – Vocational Training (G/L Code 530478)

1. Education Support – Private (G/L Code 530434)

The fortnightly caring allowance covers all general schooling and education costs including school lunches, travel to and from school, school excursions, school stationery, school uniforms and school related sporting activities.

This account category is primarily for the payment of private school fees and educational activities or elective subjects associated with a child or young person’s education in a private or boarding school. These costs must be for approved activities as part of a child or young person’s case plan and where applicable, Education Support Plan.

Although school excursion costs are included in the fortnightly caring allowance, one school camp per child per school year will be funded through this account category.

Generally, children and young people will attend public schools unless a private school has been assessed as the most appropriate response to the child or young person’s educational needs. Attendance at a private or boarding school may also be considered for a child or young person in a long-term placement where:

- the child or young person was attending the private school prior to entering out-of-home care and the child or young person is not changing schools with the placement and/or
- other children or young people residing in the same placement are attending a private school and/or
- educational facilities in remote communities do not extend beyond Grade 10 and attendance at boarding school is required in order to complete Grades 11 and 12.

Costs included under this category include:

- one school camp per child or young person per school year
- payment of compulsory fees (for example, library fees and educational costs)
- the gap between the Education contribution through the Textbook and Resource Allowance and full costs of the book levy
- the purchase of specific items that assist in meeting educational needs (for example, specified electives as per the Educational Support Plan, or teaching aids).

Approval for costs associated with attendance at a private school must be approved by the Regional Director. All submissions for attendance at a private or boarding school must demonstrate that this option is in the best interests of the child or young person and that the desired outcome cannot be achieved otherwise.

To be eligible for expenditure under this account category, a child or young person must be subject to:

- a signed assessment or child protection care agreement or
- an adoption care agreement or adoption consent or dispensation of consent or
- a child protection order granting custody or guardianship to the chief executive.

2. Education Support – Public (G/L Code 530433)

The fortnightly caring allowance covers all general schooling and education costs including school lunches, travel to and from school, school excursions, school stationery, school uniforms and school related sporting activities.
This account category is primarily for the payment of fees for educational activities or elective subjects associated with a child or young person’s education at a public school. For children in out-of-home care, these costs must be for approved activities as part of a child or young person’s case plan and where applicable, Education Support Plan. For children residing at home, support may be provided where it enhances their safety and wellbeing, and minimises the need for more intrusive child protection intervention.

Although school excursion costs are included in the fortnightly caring allowance, one school camp per child per school year will be funded through child related costs.

Costs covered under this account category may include:
- one school camp per child or young person per school year
- payment of compulsory fees and camp costs (for example, library fees and educational costs)
- the gap between the Education contribution through the Textbook and Resource Allowance and full costs of the book levy
- the purchase of specific items that assist in meeting educational needs (for example, specified electives as per the Education Support Plan, or teaching aids)

To be eligible for expenditure under this category, a child or young person must be subject to:
- statutory intervention under the Child Protection Act 1999 or
- an adoption care agreement or adoption consent or dispensation of consent.

3. Education Support – School Uniforms (G/L Code 530422)

The fortnightly caring allowance covers the costs of one school outfitting per school year. Access to financial support for school uniforms due to extraordinary circumstances will be determined on a case by case basis. For children residing at home, support may be provided where it enhances their safety and wellbeing, and minimises the need for more intrusive child protection intervention.

Support may be provided for (but not limited to):
- successive placement changes and/or exclusions necessitating changes of school within the school year
- damage or loss of school clothing
- circumstances where a carer has had a child or young person placed with them at the beginning of a school year but has had no capacity to budget and cover the expenditure.

This account category may be used for the payment of all costs associated with a child or young person’s standard school uniform, including:
- hat
- school shoes
- school bag (if stipulated by the school)
- graduation clothes hire
- school and sports uniform.

To be eligible for expenditure under this category, a child or young person must be subject to:
- statutory intervention under the Child Protection Act 1999 or
- an adoption care agreement or adoption consent or dispensation of consent.

4. Client Support – Child and Vacation Care (G/L Code: 530420)

This account category provides financial support to carers for the assessed gap for approved childcare fees, before/after school care and vacation care fees. This category can also be accessed for baby-sitting fees and other fees associated with child care/child minding incurred while the carer attends foster carer training, foster carer forums, and other carer-related activities.
The department will pay only the “gap” between the actual child care fees and the Child Care Benefit (CCB) including the Child Care Rebate (CCR). These two allowances must be accounted for in establishing the “gap”. It is the responsibility of the carer to establish their CCR & CCB entitlements.

Reimbursement under this category is at the discretion of the Child Safety Service Centre Manager and must be included as part of a child's case plan and where applicable, Education Support Plan. Access to child care is not an entitlement and these arrangements must have demonstrable benefits for the child recorded in the case plan and where applicable, the Education Support Plan. Child care arrangements are to be reviewed regularly.

For expenditure under this category, a child or young person must be subject to:
- a signed assessment or child protection care agreement or
- an adoption care agreement or adoption consent or dispensation of consent or
- a child protection order granting custody or guardianship to the chief executive.

For children under school age, refer to Operational Policy Early Childhood Education in Care Participation Minimum Gap Payment (640), which outlines the payment processes for early childhood education and care, and approved child care services.

5. **Education Support – Tutoring (G/L Code 530431)**

This account category may be used to provide financial support for a child or young person who requires additional tutoring outside school as part of an approved case plan and where applicable, Education Support Plan. Tutoring may also be arranged to assist a young person’s reintegration into mainstream education. For children residing at home, support may be provided where it enhances their safety and wellbeing, and minimises the need for more intrusive child protection intervention.

Children and young people must be assessed as being in need of additional educational tutoring by an Education specialist or other relevant qualified professional.

The qualifications of the proposed individual employed to tutor the child or young person must also be reviewed and assessed as appropriate.

The Child Safety Service Centre Manager may approve payment for periods of up to six months or as stipulated in an approved case plan and where applicable, Education Support Plan.

To be eligible for expenditure under this category, a child or young person must be subject to:
- statutory intervention under the *Child Protection Act 1999* or
- an adoption care agreement or adoption consent or dispensation of consent.

6. **Education Support – Vocational Training (G/L Code 530478)**

This account category provides financial support for the payment of case plan and where applicable, Education Support Plan approved fees and the cost of course-related items for a young person to attend a vocational course, TAFE course, university or other tertiary institution. Expenditure under this category may also be approved for a young person who has transitioned from care if they are still attending an educational institution.

Carers in receipt of the fortnightly caring allowance are to contribute towards general attendance fees and provide the day to day care costs, regardless of whether a young person placed with them is in receipt of the Youth Allowance, Abstudy or a wage.
The department may contribute towards other compulsory fees and the purchase of special uniforms, clothing and equipment necessary for a young person to attend the course (eg. knives and chefs uniforms for a catering course).

To be eligible for expenditure under this category, a child or young person must be subject to:
- statutory intervention under the Child Protection Act 1999 or
- an adoption care agreement or adoption consent or dispensation of consent.

**Authority:**

*Child Protection Act 1999*
*Financial Accountability Act 2009*

**Delegations:**

The use of child related costs will be in accordance with departmental financial delegations and standards.
**Records File No.:** CHS/12105  
**Date of approval:** 12 July 2012  
**Date of operation:** 17 July 2012  
**Date to be reviewed:** 12 July 2015

**Office:** Department of Child Safety, Youth and Disability Services  
**Help Contact:** Child Protection Development – 3235 9411

**Links:**

**Related policies and procedures:**
- Case planning (263)  
- Intervention with parental agreement (343)  
- Investigation and assessment (386)  
- Expenses – fortnightly caring allowance and interstate foster payments (365)  
- Expenses – fortnightly caring allowance and interstate foster payments (procedure 365)  
- High support needs allowance (296)  
- High support needs allowance (procedure 296)  
- Complex support needs allowance (612)  
- Complex support needs allowance (procedure 612)  
- Early childhood education and care participation minimum gap payment (640)  
- Child related costs – carer support (597)  
- Child related costs – client support and family contact (598)  
- Child related costs – long-term guardian support (608)  
- Child related costs – long-term guardian support (procedure 608)  
- Child related costs – medical (596)  
- Child related costs – outfitting (600)  
- Child related costs – travel (595)  
- Child related costs – early childhood education and care participation minimum gap payment (640)

**Related Legislation or Standard**
- Child Protection Act 1999  
- Child Protection Regulation 2011  
- Adoption Act 2009  
- Financial Accountability Act 2009

**Related Government Guidelines**
- Statement of Commitment Between the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services and the foster and kinship carers of Queensland 2012
Partnership agreement: educating children and young people in the care of the state (January 2004)
Financial Delegations Schedule
Child Safety Practice Manual
Financial Management Practice Manual

**Forms**
Child Related Costs Approval Form

**Rescinded Policies**
599-3 Child Related Costs – Education Support

Margaret Allison
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