

Committee to Consider the Capitation Grant for Orphanages, Crown Colony of Western Australia

29 March 1884 – 3 June 1884

Details

The Committee to Consider the Capitation Grant for Orphanages of the Legislative Council in Western Australia was appointed by the Governor in 1884. Its aim was to find out if the amount paid to Orphanages for each child should be increased. This involved asking Orphanages how much it cost to 'care' for children and how many children were housed there. The Committee's report includes responses from the Roman Catholic Boys' and Girls' Orphanages and the Middle Swan Boys' Protestant Orphanage. The Committee recommended increasing the government grant from 8 pence to 1 shilling per child.

The purpose of the Committee was to 'make an inquiry as to the desirability or otherwise of increasing the amount paid per head as a Grant to the Orphanages from Public Funds' (that is, a 'capitation grant'). In making recommendations to the Governor, the Committee asked orphanages how much it cost to 'care' for children, the amount of private donations received (and whether increased government payments would decrease donations), how they would spend extra monies and how many children in orphanages had all or part of their fees paid by 'parents or friends'.

The average 'daily cost' per child was reported as ranging between 11 ½ pence and 1 shilling and 2 pence, with the government paying 8 pence of that amount, so even in 1884 that was a very small amount of money spent on the upkeep of children in the orphanage.

In recommending an increase of the government grant to 1 shilling, the Committee noted that the managers of the orphanages were unable to provide children with what they considered to be 'absolute necessities, such as increased accommodation, more nutritious diet, lavatories' etc, which would 'materially add to the cleanliness, comfort and health of the children'. The Committee also stated that the increase of funds to 1 shilling would bring orphanage capitation grants equal to the capitation grants in Missions.

More info

Related Entries

Related Organisations

- [St Joseph's Catholic Orphanage for Girls \(1868 - 1901\)](#)
The cost of raising a child in the Catholic Girls' Orphanage was examined by a Committee in the Legislative Council.
- [Subiaco Boys' Orphanage \(1872 - 1901\)](#)
The cost of raising a child in the Catholic Boys' Orphanage was examined by a Committee in the Legislative Council.

- [Swan Boys' Orphanage \(1876 - 1942\)](#)

The cost of raising a child in the Swan Boys' Orphanage was examined by a Committee in the Legislative Council.

Resources

- Hetherington, Penelope, *Paupers, Poor Relief and Poor Housing in Western Australia 1829 to 1910*, 2009. *Relevance*: Chapter 5, especially p.106
- Committee Appointed by His Excellency the Governor, *Report of a Committee Appointed by His Excellency the Governor to Consider the Capitation Grant for Orphanages*, 3 June 1884

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