



St Andrew's Catholic Primary School Parents Association Terms of Reference

The purpose of the Terms of Reference is to assist the group or any working groups to operate efficiently and effectively and to record any actions and ensure those involved are accountable.

VISION STATEMENT

At St. Andrew's School, we believe that we are a community centered in Christ, working in partnership in the education of each child.

The school strives to develop within the child the fundamental beliefs and values of the Catholic Church in a Gospel based environment.

St. Andrew's is a school of rich history immersed in the culture of the school, parish and wider community. The school endeavours to provide opportunities for the children to be part of this tradition, so they embrace it as part of their heritage.

We believe that the years in primary school should be happy, allowing each child to feel successful and develop skills and talents supported by the pastoral care of the staff and parish community.

We believe that primary school education helps prepare the child for challenges in life. This preparation will enrich the spiritual, intellectual, physical and emotional growth of each individual.

Statement of Purpose

The role of the association is to promote the interest of and facilitate the development and further improvement of St Andrew's Primary School, by fundraising, promoting close co-operation between parents of St Andrew's Primary School and promoting a positive catholic community spirit.

Aims of the Parents Association

The aims of the Parent Association are to:

- Foster community interest in St Andrew's Primary School
- To provide, or assist in the provision of, financial or other resources or services for the benefit of the students of St Andrew's Primary School.
- Work collaboratively with the Principal or delegate(s) and assist whenever possible in any manner to further the interests of St Andrew's Primary School and its students
- Encourage close co-operation between the parents and caregivers of students attending St Andrew's Primary School and other members of the catholic community
- Enhance school, family and community partnerships.

Parent Association Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Parent Association are to:

- Promote the Catholic ethos and Catholic identity of the school
- Assist in the maintenance, upgrade and development of school facilities
- Assist in the conduct of functions organised for the benefit of schools
- Be familiar with and comply with the school's child safe policy and code of conduct, and any other policies or procedures relating to child safety.

Principles

The association will operate according to the following principles:

- Respectful partnerships.
- Clear and honest two-way communication.
- Transparent processes.
- Democratic, informed decision-making.
- Personal and professional integrity.

Parent Association Structure

Membership of the Association is automatically granted to parents, or primary caregivers of students attending St Andrew's Primary School. A committee is appointed each year to manage the work of the Parent Association.

PA Committee

The membership of the committee or working groups is to be determined, however it is good practice to have approx. 6-12 members, including school staff, school community members (parents and carers) and anyone else deemed relevant to have an input into the school community ie. Parish Priest

Membership Application

All positions are considered vacant until an Annual General Meeting can be held each year. All office bearers are eligible for re-election.

The election of officers and other members of the management committee shall take place via nomination. Nominations must be in writing, in the form of an email to the secretary and must be lodged prior to the AGM.

Should, at the commencement of such meeting, there be insufficient number of candidates nominated, nominations may be taken from the floor of the meeting.

In the case of more than one nomination for one position, a secret ballot shall take place; the applicant with the most votes will be considered the winner.

Membership Resignation

A member may resign from the Association at any time by giving notice in writing to the Secretary of the Association.

Such resignation shall take effect at the time such notice is received by the Secretary unless a later date is specified in the notice or mutually agreed upon by the Secretary and the resigning member.

In the case that the Secretary is resigning, their resignation must be given to the President.

Role of Committee Members

PRESIDENT

The key task of the president is to ensure that the needs and wishes of the parent body are given a voice and that good relationships are established and maintained with the principal and school staff. The president is a guide and example to all parents.

Duties and Responsibilities

A President leads the Parents Association by:

- Distribute Parents Association Meeting agenda no less than 7 days prior to a scheduled meeting
- Plan and chair meetings in consultation with the secretary and principal.
- Ensure meetings run according to the agenda.
- Ensure fair discussion - give all an opportunity to speak.
- Ensure activities are sanctioned by principal.
- Work with the treasurer to ensure financial accountability.
- Payments have final sign off by the President.
- Ensure decisions are carried out – follow up.
- Encouraging parents to get involved.
- Make clear voting procedures.
- Represents the association when necessary.

VICE PRESIDENT & TREASURER

The Vice President will support the President by:

- Chairing the meeting in his/her absence.
- Sharing duties and responsibilities as agreed e.g. being responsible for coordinating the activities of sub-committees.
- Being supportive and attending meetings.
- Playing a constructive role – not just an understudy.

The Treasurer accounts for and reports on the finances of the Parents Association. The Treasurer needs to be a person of trust and responsibility.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Must keep accurate financial records of all receipts and expenditure;
- Liaise with the Principal/President/Business Manager/Financial Officer regarding financial processes and procedures required for the management of Parents Association funds.
- Present the monthly financial report and an annual financial report for the Annual General Meeting;

SECRETARY

The Secretary is very important to the efficient operation of any organization. A secretary needs initiative and an ability to work with the President.

The Secretary's main functions are:

- Communication and correspondence
- Maintaining effective records of meetings
- Ensuring meetings are effectively organised and minuted

Duties and Responsibilities

- Prepare the agenda in consultation with the president and principal.
- Notify members of meetings (date, time, venue).
- Keep good records.
- Receive and manage the correspondence from fundraising and other organisations.
- Obtain reports from sub-committees.
- After the meeting, minutes should be written up promptly and actions taken on any decisions.
- Write letters in accordance with the instructions of the meeting or the President.

- With the President, prepare minutes.
- Confirm attendance of the committee and other appropriate people.
- Maintain a collaborative approach at all times.
- Monitor of social media groups/accounts

WORKING PARTIES/SUB-COMMITTEES/SPECIAL PROJECT MEMBERS

Sub-committees can save time and ease the workload of the regular Parents Association meetings by dealing with particular projects and reporting back. Sub-committees must be set up by the decision of a Parents Association meeting and their task should be clearly defined in writing as part of the minutes of that meeting.

- Meet with your colleagues and focus on the task
- Attend meetings as regularly as possible.
- Be prepared to report to Parents Association meetings;
- Send apologies if unable to attend;
- Be cooperative at all times;
- Responsibility for what has been agreed should be shared by all group members.
- Attend to business of particular sub-committee to obtain outcome
- Ensure Terms of Reference for committee is adhered to

PRINCIPAL

The Parents Association can only work well if it has a positive relationship with the Principal. The Principal is the manager of the school. He/she is an ex-officio member of the Parents Association so the connection with the Parents Association is strong.

This connection is even more important when we recognise that the school and the family are partners in the education of our children. Connections between families and school that promote student learning contribute to students' success at school.

While the Principal has the final decision making role, parents expect that they will be based on good consultation. Also decisions made at Parents Association meetings must have the support of the Principal as he/she has ultimate responsibility for the school.

Activities of the P & F must be, under the constitution, carried out as agents of the school thereby needing the support of the Principal. The association is considered to be under the umbrella of the church entities act for legal and insurance reasons and the Principal is charged with responsibility for the school.

Key aspects of the Relationship

- Provides leadership, guidance and support
- Collaborative and cooperative approach

- Works with President and executive (as well as all parents)
- Provides information to the community
- Accessible to parents
- Develops the school profile - enrolment trends, demographics, mission statement, priorities, facilities, resources, parish links

PARISH PRIEST

In Parish Schools, the Parish Priest has overall responsibility under Canon Law for the whole parish community including the school. He is an ex-officio member of the Parents Association. Where possible and practical parents and the Parents Association should support and encourage the involvement of the Parish Priest with the life of the children at school.

Procedures

Meeting Schedule

The wider school community will be invited to attend each meeting. The Executive Committee will meet monthly on Monday evenings. All meetings will commence at 7.00pm and will finish no later than 8.30pm unless agreed by the group. If additional time is required, the Leader (or all those that agree) will request an extension of no more than 15 minutes in order to finalise the meeting. All members present must vote and be in agreement for this to occur.

Sub committees will organise their own schedule in consultation

Governance

Absence of the President and other members from a meeting:
If the President is unable to preside at a meeting, the Vice President will preside.

If a member is unable to attend a meeting, an apology should be submitted to the Secretary prior to the meeting.

Conflict of Interest

If a group member or a member of his or her immediate family has any perceived or actual conflict of interest (either financial or non-financial) in a subject or matter under discussion at a meeting - the declaration of interest will be included in the minutes of the meeting.

Quorum

All committee members will reply to the invitation to the next meeting (sent one week prior to scheduled meeting) indicating whether they will be in attendance or not.

Should it become apparent close to the time of the scheduled meeting that a quorum will not be able to be formed, the Secretary will contact members via phone or email to inform all members that the meeting is cancelled.

Unless the number of meetings to be held for the remainder of the year looks like falling under the minimum required for the year, a meeting will not be rescheduled, and all the business will be carried forward to the next meeting.

If there is the possibility that the quota of meetings required for the year will not be met, the Principal will canvas members of the group for another suitable meeting. The school community will be notified that the meeting is cancelled.

Agenda

The President or delegate shall ensure an agenda is prepared for each scheduled meeting and distribute the agenda, draft minutes from the previous meeting and meeting papers such as the reports and any other documents, no less than five days before the meeting.

Decisions

Decisions of the committee will be by a majority of those eligible to vote and who are present at the meeting. A vote by proxy is not valid.

Members will vote on a matter and the number of votes for and against will be recorded in the minutes.

Voting will normally be by show of hands, but a secret ballot may be used for issues.

Open and closed meetings

Meetings will generally be open to the school community, but the President and group may decide that only members may be present at a meeting or part of a meeting.

If the meeting is open, visitors may only speak by invitation of the presiding member and has no voting rights.

Minutes

The Secretary will ensure a record of each meeting is kept and draft minutes are prepared after each meeting and distributed to members prior to the next meeting.

The minutes will record the date, time, venue of meeting, names of attendees and apologies received from members, name of presiding officer, a record of the business of the meeting including the decision on the minutes of the previous meeting; inward and outward correspondence and reports of any sub-committees tabled at the meeting; and decisions of the meeting including motions and any amendments.

When minutes are submitted for confirmation, only questions regarding their accuracy as a record of the meeting are to be raised.

Once the minutes have been accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting, they are to be signed by the President or the person who presided at the meeting and the Principal.

Business arising from the minutes is dealt with after the minutes have been confirmed.

Meeting Etiquette

In the conduct of meetings, the following etiquette will be observed by members:

- Only one person talks at a time.
- All speakers are listened to in respectful silence.
- No 'side conversations' are held.
- Members shall listen to the discussion carefully in order to avoid making points that have already been made or asking questions which have already been answered.
- When the presiding member indicates that the topic of discussion is closed, no further comments are made.
- Members shall not use jargon or indecent language.
- Members will ensure that all electronic devices (such as mobile phones) are silent and no calls are taken during the meeting unless declared prior to beginning of meeting
- Members shall stay calm regardless of how difficult or challenging the topic.