

ST MICHAEL'S COLLEGE SENIOR SCHOOL PARENTS' ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION

(Approved by the Board of Management on 21 September 2023 and by the Parents' Association on 26 September 2023 and effective from then)



MISSION STATEMENT

We, the parents and guardians of pupils of St Michael's College Senior School acknowledge that:

St Michael's College is an Irish Catholic Spiritan School which strives to create an inclusive school community with a global vision. Inspired by Gospel values, each individual's wellbeing is nurtured and their spiritual, intellectual, emotional, cultural and physical potential is developed in a friendly, caring and supportive atmosphere; and

The role of the Parents' Association is to work with the Principal, Deputy Principal(s), staff, Board of Management and parent body to build effective partnerships to enhance and support the pupils during their time at St Michael's College.

TITLE AND MEMBERSHIP

The body shall be known as the St Michael's College Senior School Parents' Association.

All parents and guardians of pupils enrolled in St Michael's College Senior School are deemed to be members of the Parents' Association.

The Principal, Deputy Principal(s) and two Parent Nominees of St Michael's College Senior School Board of Management shall be ex-officio members of the Parents' Association. The Board of Management may from time to time also elect other members onto the Parents' Association on an ex-officio basis when it deems necessary.

The Parents' Association in discharging its functions recognises that problems relating to individual pupils or parents and/or teachers are matters for determination between the individual pupil and/or parents/guardians and the school authorities.

It is noted and agreed that in any discussion or meeting of the Parents' Association, no reference shall be made whether by name or otherwise to any specific pupil, parent, guardian, member of staff or member of the Board.

The Parents' Association will remain independent but may affiliate to other bodies and Associations (with the prior consent of the Board of Management) where such affiliation will be deemed to be of benefit to the Parents' Association.

OBJECTIVES

1. To support and initiate, where appropriate, activities which advance the aims and objectives of the College, as outlined in the Mission Statement, ensuring that such activities will not interfere with the process of management of the College.
2. To act as a forum for the expression of opinions, exchange of information and discussion of topics raised by parents and guardians including but not limited to:
 - a) exploring and bringing ideas, activities and proposals to enhance the experiences of the pupils to the Principal and Deputy Principal(s);
 - b) provision of feedback for the school;
 - c) enhance communication between school and parent body; and
 - d) supporting the Principal, Deputy Principal(s) and their colleagues in their roles.
3. To promote and support the role of parents and guardians as the prime educators of their children.
4. To promote good relations between parents, teachers, pupils and the school management and to proactively create a sense of community among parents and guardians to embody the Ethos of the College and its Spiritan influence so that all can advance in a spirit of co-operation and mutual support to the benefit of parents, guardians, pupils, teachers and the Community.
5. To submit as the Parents' Association deems fit, for consideration by the Board matters arising from such opinions, information and topics.
6. To consider matters of educational interest and general wellbeing.
7. Where deemed appropriate, to support or lead fundraising activities related to the enhancement of facilities within the school and/or related to school charities.
8. To facilitate the election of Parent Nominees to the Board.
9. To provide an Annual Report at the AGM including a financial statement summarising the year's events.
10. To maintain a file of minutes and key events of the Parents' Association activities in order to assist the following year's Parents' Association.

COMMITTEE

The affairs of the Parents' Association shall be conducted by a Committee ("the Committee") consisting of fourteen elected members who have a pupil in the school.

Twelve of these members (consisting of two duly elected representatives of each of the six class years in the Senior School) shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Any parent seeking election must have a pupil in the year they are volunteering to represent. No parent seeking election to the Committee shall present him/herself as a possible representative of more than one class year. Each of these members will serve for two consecutive years.

Each year the AGM notice will detail what vacancies exist on the Committee for the upcoming academic year. The Senior School will email a Parents' Association Nomination Form to parents in those years where vacancies exist. Any parent seeking election can inform the Committee of their wish to put their name forward for election. If more parents than needed put their names forward, the existing Committee members for that year shall have the deciding vote and the names of the unsuccessful candidates shall be retained in order to fill any vacancy which may arise during that period of office. In the event of any of these positions not being filled, the Committee shall have the power to fill the vacancy by co-option from within the year which has the vacancy. The parents who are elected need to be proposed and seconded by members of the Committee with a pupil in the same year.

If a vacancy arises during a period of office of the Committee (which shall be from AGM to AGM), the Committee members for that year will look for another parent to represent that year from their class year until the next AGM if there are no parents on that year's waiting list. In the event of this position not being filled, the Committee shall have the power to fill the vacancy by co-option from within the year which has the vacancy.

The remaining two members of the Committee will be the two Parent Nominees on the Board of Management. They will be deemed ex officio members and will have no voting rights at the Committee meetings.

A parent cannot be on the Board of Management and on the Parents' Association at the same time.

The Committee and any sub-committees set up by it remain under the authority of the Board of Management.

All members of the Committee shall be given a copy of the Parents' Association Constitution when elected.

CHAIRPERSON, SECRETARY AND TREASURER

The first business of each incoming Committee shall be to elect from its members a Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer by open ballot. In the event of more than one member seeking election for the same role, the election shall be by way of secret ballot by all the members of the Committee.

The Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer can hold the position for a maximum of two consecutive years but must be re-elected by the members of the Committee each year. If for any reason an officer is unable or unwilling to continue to act the Committee shall elect a replacement from amongst its Committee members at the next available opportunity.

The role of the Chairperson

The Chairperson will:

- assume responsibility for ensuring the business of the Parents' Association is conducted in accordance with the Parents' Association Constitution;
- support the work of the Parents' Association and the work and policies of the Senior School;
- conduct meetings in a timely fashion and in accordance with the Parents' Association Constitution;
- hold the deciding vote on matters of split-decision;
- together with the Secretary, liaise with the Principal and Deputy Principal(s) as necessary to ensure items needing their input from each meeting are actioned; and
- meet with the Principal, Deputy Principal(s) and/or Board of Management upon request by them.

The role of the Secretary

The Secretary will:

- keep minutes of all Committee meetings and General Meetings;
- ensure minutes of the previous Committee meeting are made available to the Principal, Deputy Principal(s) and the Committee before any subsequent meeting and communicate meeting dates, times and locations to them;
- include all proposals received for inclusion on the agenda ("the Agenda");
- distribute the Agenda for each meeting to all those invited at least one day before the meeting;
- get sign off on the last minutes at the start of each subsequent meeting;
- together with the Chairperson, liaise with the Principal and Deputy Principal(s) as necessary to ensure items needing their input from each meeting are actioned; and
- meet with the Principal, Deputy Principal(s) and /or Board of Management upon request by them.

The role of the Treasurer

The Treasurer will:

- keep detailed and accurate financial records of all funds raised, held and expended by the Parents' Association and pay invoices in a timely manner;
- meet with the Principal, Deputy Principal(s) and/or Board of Management upon request by them;
- prepare end of year financial statements for approval by the Committee; and
- present to the AGM as requested.

PARENT NOMINEES ON THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

There will be two Parent Nominees on the Board of Management at all time who will hold office for three consecutive years.

The election of the two Parent Nominees is open to all parents with a pupil in the school for the three years for which they wish to be elected to the Board of Management.

The Board of Management and the Parents' Association shall organise the election process at the AGM as necessary.

A nomination form will be sent by the Senior School to all parents, giving at least two weeks' notice of elections.

All nominations need to be proposed and seconded by a parent of the Senior School and then forwarded to the Administration Office or the Principal in a sealed envelope marked "Nominations" by the specified due date.

All those seeking nomination must be present at the AGM.

If only one nomination is received for each vacancy then each shall be deemed to be duly elected.

If there is more than one candidate for each vacancy, then each nominee will be given three minutes at the AGM to introduce themselves to the parent body and to outline why they would like to be the Parent Nominee on the Board of Management.

Following the introductions by the candidates a ballot will be held at the AGM. Only parents present at the AGM (whether in person or online) can vote. Each person voting is entitled to one non-transferable vote for each vacancy. The candidate(s) with the highest number of votes will be deemed elected.

The voting results from the ballot may be retained in order to fill any vacancies which may arise during the three year tenure of that Board of Management, should the Board of Management and the Parents' Association decide not to hold a by-election.

The Parent Nominees' role as ex-officio members of the Committee is to:

- participate at the Committee meetings and provide feedback and opinions;
- to act as a liaison between the Committee and the Board of Management;
- to keep the Committee updated on Board of Management decisions etc where appropriate; and
- ask for items for discussion to be added to the Agenda when required.

GENERAL MEETINGS

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be held as early as possible in the academic year. The Committee will report on its activities during the preceding year at the AGM.

Extraordinary General Meetings will be called by the Committee when it deems it desirable or when it receives a written request by parents of ten per cent or more of the pupils enrolled in the Senior School.

Members shall be entitled to not less than fourteen days' notice of any General Meeting.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Committee meetings shall be chaired by the Chairperson. In the absence of the Chairperson those members present shall elect a Chairperson for the meeting.

Committee members may suggest items for inclusion on the Agenda. All suggestions for inclusion should be made through the Secretary.

Committee resolutions shall be passed by a simple majority of those members present and voting. The Chairperson will have a casting vote.

Committee members are required to attend all Committee meetings unless prior notice is given to the Secretary via text/e-mail or phone call.

A quorum at meetings shall consist of five elected persons.

Ordinarily, Committee members shall be given seven days' notice or more in advance of meetings.

The Secretary shall keep minutes of all decisions passed at the meetings. In the absence of the Secretary those members present shall elect a member to act as Secretary for the meeting.

The Principal and Deputy Principal(s) will be invited to attend all meetings as ex-officio members. Should neither be able to attend a particular meeting, then they may nominate a member of the teaching staff to attend in their place. The role of the Principal and Deputy Principal(s) as ex-officio members of the Parents' Association is to:

- keep it updated on school developments etc;
- listen to suggestions, opinions, feedback, concerns etc of parents;
- use it as a "sounding board" for new ideas and new/amended practices, policies etc;
- keep the Board of Management informed of items from the Committee meetings when appropriate;
- use it to improve communication lines between the school and parents; and
- place items on the Agenda for discussion.

The Committee may invite to attend its meetings such persons as it wishes.

The Committee may, at its discretion, set up any sub-committees it deems necessary for specific purposes.

All members of the Committee shall have a right to be fully informed of all decisions of the Committee.

The Committee shall make its own standing orders consistent with the Constitution.

The Committee shall meet at least once during each of the Senior School's three academic terms.

The minutes of all the meetings will be sent to all Committee members and to the Principal and Deputy Principal(s) of the Senior School. The minutes from each meeting will be presented for approval before a subsequent meeting.

SUB-COMMITTEES

The Committee may, at its discretion, set up and dissolve any sub-committees it deems necessary for specific purposes.

A sub-committee cannot make decisions but can make recommendations to the Committee and is accountable to the Committee.

CONFIDENTIALITY/PUBLIC STATEMENTS

All business discussed at the Committee meetings is confidential. Any information from the Committee meetings to be shared with parents needs to have the approval of the Committee members and/or the Principal or Deputy Principal(s).

No official or public statements or representations can be made by any member of the Committee on behalf of the Parents' Association, without the prior written approval of the Principal or Deputy Principal(s) of the Senior School.

FINANCES

All Parents' Association subscription fees and all other funds raised by it will be used to further the aims of the Parents' Association. All spending by the Committee is subject to Board of Management approval and the Parents' Association's bank accounts are subject to Board of Management control and oversight.

Once prepared and approved by the Committee, the annual financial statements will be forwarded to the Board of Management and presented each year at the AGM as requested.

Any change in the amount of the annual Parents' Association subscription shall be decided between the Committee and the Board of Management.

CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION

The Parents' Association Constitution shall be reviewed by a sub-committee appointed by the Committee at least every five years, subject to the prior approval of the Board of Management. Changes to the Constitution shall be approved by the Board of Management and ratified by the Committee by a simple majority.

DISSOLUTION/WINDING UP

In the event of a dissolution or winding up of the Parents' Association all of its assets shall pass to St Michael's College Senior School. The Parents' Association can only be dissolved/wound up if accepted at a General Meeting.