PARENTS AND FRIENDS
ASSOCIATIONS
FOR THE DIOCESE OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE

CONSTITUTION

RATIFIED 28TH SEPTEMBER 1993 BY CATHOLIC EDUCATION
COUNCIL AND APPROVED BY BISHOP LEO CLARKE

1. NAME:

1.1 This Body shall be known as the ........................................
Parents and Friends Association. (Hereinafter referred to as the
Association).

2. OBJECTS AND FUNCTIONS:

2.1 The Association, in upholding the Vision Statement for Catholic
Education in the Diocese of Maitland, shall:-

(a) promote the interests of the Catholic School concerned and
Catholic Education generally by bringing together parents,
pupils, clergy and teaching staff, both religious and lay, in a
spirit of collaboration and close co-operation

(b) provide a forum for parents to raise and discuss issues related
to the spiritual, social and academic development of their
children, at school, Diocesan and State levels

(c) decide in consultation with the Principal, Priest(s) (see 4.2)
and staff how any funds raised by the Association are to be
spent, and help the school to acquire materials and equipment
which otherwise could not be provided. It may also assist with
minor repairs, selection of new sites and plans for any new
buildings.

2.2 The Association shall endeavour to foster a spirit of partnership with
the Principal and staff to assist them in the administration of the
school.

3. LIMITATION OF SCOPE

3.1 The Association shall not exercise control over the management of
the school, nor shall the school staff exercise control over the
management of the Association.
4. **MEMBERSHIP**

4.1 All parents and members of the Parish (in the case of Primary Schools) or members of Feeder parishes (in the case of Secondary Schools) are eligible, and in fact encouraged to be members of the Association.

4.2 The Parish Priest, Priests from Feeder Parishes and the Principal shall be members ex-officio of the Association and all its committees.

4.3 In addition to any membership rights exercised under Clause 4.1 above, full-time members of the school staff may become members of the Association of the school at which they are employed, but are ineligible to be office bearers of that school’s Association. It is also considered inappropriate for the spouse of a school Principal to be an office bearer at that school at which their spouse is Principal.

4.4 CEO and other Diocesan officers may become members of any Association where they qualify for membership by virtue of Clause 4.1 above, but are ineligible to be office bearers. This restriction shall also apply to school Principals.

5. **LIFE MEMBERSHIP**

5.1 The Association may confer the honor of life-membership on any member who has made an outstanding contribution to the Association over a period of at least seven (7) years. Life members may attend and speak at meetings of the Association but shall not be entitled to vote on any issue unless they are also eligible for membership under Clause 4.1.

6. **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

6.1 The Executive Committee, which shall consist of the officers of the Association and at least two (2), but no more than six (6) other members, shall carry out the decisions of the Association.

6.2 The executive officers shall consist of a
- President
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Other officers, as determined by a General Meeting of the Association, may also be appointed if required.

6.3 Terms of office for all office-bearers shall not exceed three (3) consecutive years in any one position.

6.4 A member of the Executive Committee may be removed from office by resolution of the Association carried out at a properly convened
General or Special Meeting providing one month’s notice of this motion, duly seconded, is given in writing.

6.5 If an officer is absent from three (3) consecutive General Meetings without notice, the position may be declared vacant, and an election held to fill the vacancy.

6.6 Any vacancy on the Executive Committee shall be filled by a vote of the members at any General Meeting within six (6) weeks of that vacancy occurring.

7. **DUTIES OF OFFICE BEARERS**

7.1 The President, if in attendance, shall preside at all meetings. In the absence of the President, a Vice President, if available, shall preside. In the absence of the President or Vice Presidents, the meeting shall elect a Chairperson.

7.2 The Secretary shall attend meetings and keep a record of business conducted, shall attend to all correspondence and shall hand over all relevant documents to his/ her successor on relinquishing office. Should the Treasurer be absent from a meeting, the Secretary may receive all monies, issue receipts and later hand the monies over to the Treasurer. These duties may be delegated to an Assistant or Minute Secretary on the authority of the meeting.

7.3 The Treasurer shall receive all monies and keep an up to date and accurate account of all monies received, issue receipts, and bank all monies in accordance with Rule 10.2 below. No money shall be withdrawn from the bank account without consent of the Association. The Treasurer shall present to each meeting a statement of receipts and expenditure during the current month, together with a bank balance statement for the current month for the signature by the President or Secretary. All books, receipts, vouchers and monthly statements of account shall be made available to the Auditors one (1) month before the Annual Meeting. The Treasurer shall hand over all relevant documents to his/ her successor on relinquishing office. If materials or equipment are to be purchased from the Associations funds for the school, a cheque for the amount \$, signed by two (2) members of the Executive, shall be paid into the school account and paid for through that account by the Principal so that a record of school expenditure funded by the Association can be maintained.

8. **SUB-COMMITTEES**

8.1 The Association may set up separate sub-committees at any time to carry out specific functions on its behalf. Such sub-committees shall be accountable to the main P&F body. Sub-committees shall not normally make decisions without the approval of the main body, but under some circumstances may be empowered by the main body to
have some decision-making role. All sub-committees shall report their operations to a General Meeting, and when the sub-committee has completed its task it shall account to the next General Meeting for its operation and expenditure.

9. MEETINGS

9.1 Five (5) members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum at all Executive Meetings, and seven (7) members, including at least two (2) Executive shall constitute a quorum at all other meetings.

9.2 The procedure at all meetings shall be governed by the usual rules relating to meetings. The Chairperson, in the case of a tied vote, shall exercise a casting vote.

9.3 General Meetings

9.3.1 A General Meeting of the Association shall be held on .....................
Of every month (except in ......................................)

9.3.2 A recommended order of business for all General Meetings is as follows:
- Opening Prayer
- Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting
- Business arising from Previous Minutes
- Correspondence
- Business arising out of Correspondence
- Accounts
- Reports: including Treasurer, Principal, Federation
- Business deferred from previous meeting
- Notice of Motions
- Motions of which due notice has been given
- General Business
- Agenda Items
- Close

9.3.3 At various times, as notified by the Secretary of the Federation of Parents and Friends Associations, the Association will be requested to nominate suitable parent representatives for Diocesan committees such as the Diocesan Education Council, Priorities Committee, Special Education Committee etc. Such nominees shall be elected from the P&F body at a General Meeting of the Association.

9.4 Annual General Meeting

9.4.1 An Annual General Meeting shall be held at the beginning or end of a school year when the annual report and balance sheet shall be presented. At such AGM all positions shall be declared vacant. The
members of the Association shall elect an Executive Committee as required by Section 6 above. Other positions and sub-committees as determined by the meeting may also be elected at this time. The Parish Priest or the Principal (of the School) or the Deputy Principal (of the school) shall conduct each election and declare the result. Any candidate for the Executive Committee shall be nominated and seconded by members of the Association, and if there is a greater number of candidates than required, the election shall be decided by ballot. Scrutineers shall be appointed by the Association prior to conducting such ballot. No member can be accepted unless he/ she accepts nomination in person or in writing.

9.4.2 At the AGM or one of the General Meetings as appropriate, the members shall elect up to two (2) delegates to represent the Association at the meetings of the Federation of Parents and Friends Associations. (These meetings are held once a term).

9.4.3 The names and addresses and where a telephone number is available, the telephone numbers of all officers of the Association shall be forwarded to the Secretary of the Federation of Parents and Friends Associations within fourteen (14) days of holding the election at the AGM and the holding of an election to fill a vacancy as outlined in Clause 6.6 above. The Secretary of the Federation of Parents and Friends Associations shall forward a copy of this information to the Director of Catholic Education.

9.5 **Special Meetings**

9.5.1 A Special Meeting of the Association shall be called at any time on a requisition signed by ten (10) members or on the authority of the Executive Committee, provided that members are given seven (7) days notice in writing of such Special Meeting and such notice shall clearly state the purpose for which the special meeting has been convened.

10. **FINANCES**

10.1 All funds raised are the responsibility of the Association, which will consult with the Priest(s), Principal and staff before any expenditure on major items is undertaken.

10.2 The funds of the Association may be banked with any reputable financial institution (bank, credit union or building society) provided interest is paid on the balance. The account can be operated by any two officers of the Executive. **NOTE:** It is strongly recommended that all P&F Association funds be deposited with the Catholic Development Fund for the Diocese of Maitland.
10.3 All accounts shall be submitted to a General Meeting for approval of payment. No commitment for expenditure of funds shall be entered into without resolution from a General Meeting.

10.4 Auditors shall be appointed at the AGM for the ensuing year. These auditors shall be qualified accountants and shall not be eligible to hold an Executive position in the Association or be immediate family of the Executive. They shall examine all books, accounts, vouchers and receipts and furnish a report which shall be presented to the AGM prior to the election of officers. A copy of the audited statement shall be filed in the school records as well as in the Association files.

11. AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION

11.1 The main body of this Constitution as presented shall be amended only by the procedure given in Clause 11.2 below. However BY-LAWS may be added to this Constitution to meet the local needs of individual Associations, provided that such additions do not detract from the Spirit of the main Constitution. These local by-laws may be added or amended only at a General Meeting, and only after due notice has been given at a previous General Meeting and circulated in writing at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting at which the proposed changes are to be decided.

11.2 Proposed amendments to this Constitution may be foreshadowed by the presentation of a Notice of Motion as a meeting of the Federation of Parents and Friends Associations. All P&F Associations shall then be notified of the proposed amendment by the Secretary of the Federation of Parents and Friends Associations, and at the next scheduled meeting of the Federation a vote in favour of the Motion shall be carried by two thirds majority of delegates attending. The agreed amendment shall then be submitted to the Diocesan Education Council for official ratification.

12. DISSOLUTION OF ASSOCIATION

12.1 The Association may be dissolved in terms of a resolution duly carried out as a General Meeting provided the Notice of Motion to that effect shall have been given to the Secretary, in writing, at least twenty one (21) days prior to such General Meeting and that such Notice of Motion shall have been signed by no less that two (2) members of the Association. Any monies held by the Association at the time of dissolution shall, after payment of all outstanding accounts, be transferred to the school account.