



A guide for implementing a **P&F Association** or a **PEG** in schools

FOR PRINCIPALS AND PARENTS/CARERS



Federation
of Parents & Friends
Associations

DIOCESE OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE



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Parents must cooperate closely with the teachers of the schools to which they entrust their children to be educated; moreover, teachers in fulfilling their duty are to collaborate very closely with parents, who are to be heard willingly and for whom associations or meetings are to be established and highly esteemed.

Canon 796–2



We acknowledge and pay our respects to the traditional custodians – the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, past, present, and emerging who long before us lived, loved and raised their children on this land.

We reflect on the millions of footprints that have travelled the Dreaming pathways and our own loved ones who have gone before us.

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About this handbook

This handbook is designed to help schools choose which parent group model – a P&F Association or a PEG – suits their school community best; clearly explains the differences between the two; and contains guidelines for running both.

You will find the following information in this document:

- ▶ **Parents & Friends Associations in Schools** – find out how to set up or continue running a P&F Association; P&Fs operate according to the Parents and Friends Association Constitution 2020 (see the appendices).
- ▶ **Parent Engagement Group (PEG) in Schools** – find out what a PEG is and how to dissolve a P&F and/or set up a PEG; PEGs operate according to the Parent Engagement Group Guidelines (see the appendices).
- ▶ **Choosing Between a P&F and a PEG** – use the flowchart to follow the applicable steps and set up the parent group that best suits your school.

Background

The importance of communication between parents and carers and the staff in their children's school cannot be understated.

Since 1981, parents in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle have had an active diocesan parent organisation to represent their voice.

The Federation of Parents and Friends Association (Federation) is the peak diocesan parent body and links our local Parents & Friends Associations (P&F Associations) in the Diocese. Its aim is to promote and foster school parent organisations.

Some of the activities of the Federation have included supporting parents and carers to engage in the education of their children, the development and provision of resources for students and parents and carers, the development of material to support families who have a child living with additional needs, the delivery of a variety of presentations by known experts on broad subjects that build parent and carer capacity to support their child's learning.

An elected delegate of the Federation represents the Diocese on the peak Catholic school parents group, the Council of Catholic School Parents.

Why Have Parent and Carer Groups in Our Catholic Schools?

Our Catholic schools are places that understand, respect and value the dignity of each child and their family. As part of their nature and purpose, Catholic schools in the Maitland-Newcastle Diocese commit to fostering partnership between parents and staff in the education of their children.

Catholic schools acknowledge and deeply support the role of parent and carers as first educators and seek to partner with families to ensure each child is nurtured to their potential.

Parent and carer groups established within schools offer an opportunity for families, school staff and Clergy to gather, explore, discuss, imagine, implement, support, encourage and journey together as we work in community for the benefit of the children and young people enrolled in our schools.

A New Constitution and Model

In 2020, the **P&F Associations Constitution** was reviewed to ensure it reflects the current needs and dynamics of family and school life, including a focus on family engagement in student learning to strengthen the partnership that exists between home and school.

Uppermost in discernment was ensuring any new Constitution and new model supported improved outcomes for students and allows parents and carers to be authentically engaged in their child's education.

As a result, an alternate model to a traditional P&F Association, called a Parent Engagement Group (PEG), was also developed as an option for school communities. Voting to endorse these changes took place at the 2020 AGM and were ratified by Bishop Bill in December 2020.

Our school communities now have a choice and can decide whether they have:

1. A formally constituted **Parents and Friends Association (P&F)**

OR

2. A **Parent Engagement Group (PEG)**

Both options allow for parents and carers to gather and work in partnership with their child's school to share the work and decision making in the education of their child.

What's the Difference Between a P&F and a PEG?

PARENTS AND FRIENDS ASSOCIATION (P&F)

P&F Associations are the formal, traditional model for parent groups in schools. In our Diocese, P&Fs are governed by the Parents & Friends Association Constitution, a 'rule book' which provides direction on how to run a P&F meeting and guidance for members who nominate and are elected to Executive roles.

Each P&F Association elects parent or carer members to act in the following roles:

- ▶ President
- ▶ Vice President
- ▶ Treasurer
- ▶ Secretary.

Each P&F Association also elects two (2) Federation Delegates to be their representatives at the diocesan peak parent body – the **Federation of P&F Associations**.

The **P&F Association Constitution 2020** is included in the Appendices of this handbook and can also be found on the CSO website:

<https://www.mn.catholic.edu.au/families-communities/pf/>

THIS CONSTITUTION REPLACES THE PREVIOUS CONSTITUTION AND IS TO BE USED BY ALL SCHOOL P&F ASSOCIATIONS.

PARENT ENGAGEMENT GROUP (PEG)

The **PEG** is a new option for schools where the P&F Association model is not regarded by the school community as a viable option.

Some schools may choose to adopt the Parent Engagement Group model (PEG) rather than have a constituted P&F Association. This may be because the formation or continuation of a P&F Association has been problematic, or the school community would prefer to adopt a model that does not include the election of Executive from its membership.

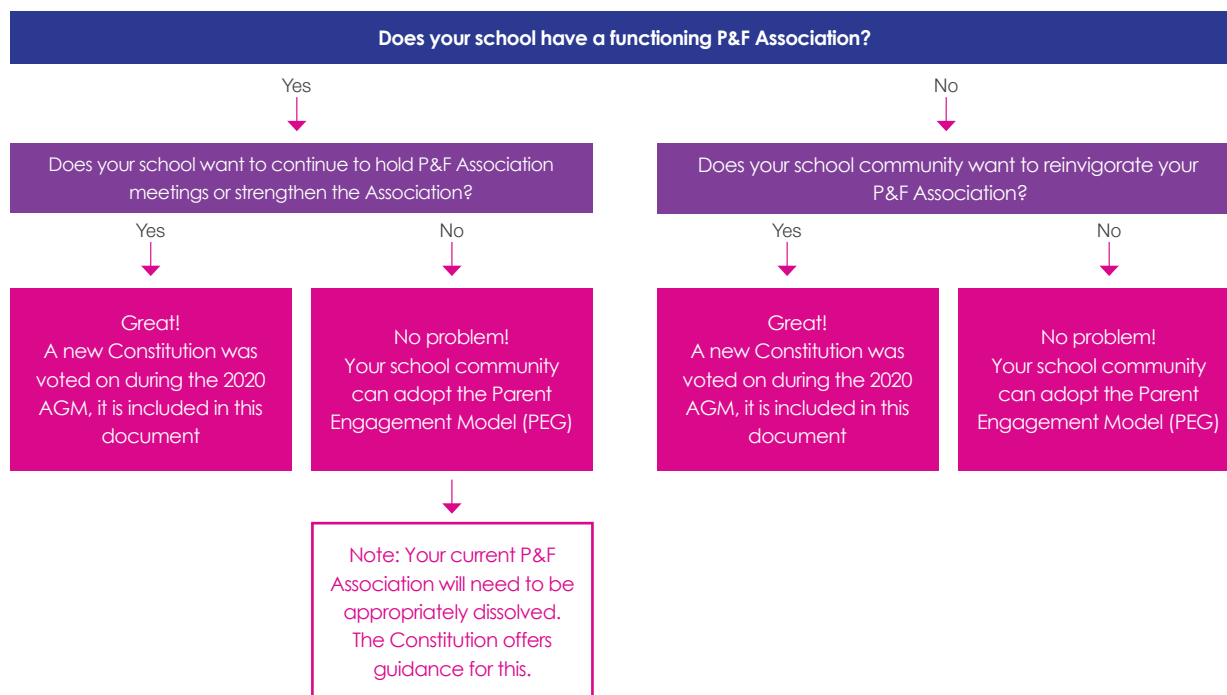
This model focuses on supporting authentic family engagement in student learning to strengthen the partnership that exists between home and school.

Choosing the Right Parent Group for Your School

The school community determines whether their needs are best served by implementing a **Parents & Friends Association (P&F)** or a **Parent Engagement Group (PEG)**.

This may be best achieved by arranging a meeting of parents and carers and inviting the parish priest so that together all stakeholders can identify the needs of the community and make a collaborative decision regarding the most appropriate group.

The following diagram is designed to assist the meeting decision-making process.



SETTING UP OR CONTINUING A P&F ASSOCIATION

If the school community decides to set up or continue with their P&F Association, they need to ensure they review the current Constitution at Appendix 1 and complete and return the Adoption of Constitution form following the first meeting in 2021 or the AGM – whichever meeting is first.

SETTING UP A PEG

If, following appropriate consultation, the community chooses to dissolve their P&F Association and establish a PEG, the following steps should be taken:

1. A resolution proposed at a P&F Association meeting by at least two members of the P&F Association should be circulated to the community with details of a Special General Meeting called for the purpose of dissolving the P&F Association and implementing a PEG. A period of 21 days' notice in writing (using the

school usual channels of communication) of this meeting should be given to the community. (Ref: Section 23 – Parents and Friends Constitution 2020).

2. Any funds remaining in the P&F Association account following the dissolution of the Association and the payment of any expenses or liabilities accrued by the P&F Association are normally transferred to the school account.

School communities may choose to adopt a **Memorandum of Understanding** allowing residual funds to be transferred to a separate school account for the purpose and use of the PEG.

These funds will be able to drawn down by the Principal following agreement at a PEG meeting and given they are only used for the purposes outlined in the P&F Association Constitution i.e. for the purposes outlined in Section 4 of the Parents and Friends Association Constitution 2020.



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Parents & Friends Association Constitution

RATIFIED BY BISHOP WILLIAM WRIGHT

Date: 4 December 2020



Federation
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DIOCESE OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE



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Parents and Friends Association

CONSTITUTION

Ratified by Bishop William Wright
Date: 4 December 2020

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1. APPLICATION

This Constitution is intended to apply to the Parents and Friends Associations in the schools in Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle.

2. DEFINITIONS

In this document, unless the context requires otherwise:

- (a) **Annual General Meeting** means a General Meeting held in accordance with **clause 8.2**.
- (b) **Association** means the unincorporated Association of ____ (Insert name of school) ____ Parents and Friends Association.
- (c) **Bishop** means the Roman Catholic Bishop or, if there is no Bishop the appointed representative, of the Diocese.
- (d) **Catholic Schools Office** means the Trustees of the Roman Catholic Church for the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle trading as the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle Catholic Schools Office (ABN 79 469 343 054).
- (e) **Conflict of interest** - occurs when a person's personal interests conflict with their responsibility to act in the best interests of the charity. Personal interests include direct interests, as well as those of family, friends, or other organisations a person may be involved with or have an interest in (for example, as a shareholder). It also includes a conflict between a board member's duty to [charity] and another duty that the board member has (for example, to another charity). A **conflict of interest** may be actual, potential or perceived and may be financial or non-financial. These situations present the risk that a person will make a decision based on, or affected by, these influences, rather than in the best interests of the charity. Therefore, these situations must be managed accordingly.
- (f) **Diocese** means the Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle (ABN 91 605 046 457).
- (g) **Minutes** means the written record of a meeting of the Association.
- (h) **Parents** means Parents, carers, guardians, kin **of the child in the Catholic school**.
- (i) **Parish** means the Catholic parish within which the School is located.
- (j) **Parish Priest** means the priest of the Parish or their appointed representative.
- (k) **President** means the President of the Association.
- (l) **Principal** means the principal of the School or their appointed representative.
- (m) **Review** means a review of a financial report conducted in accordance with the Australian Charities and Not-for profits Commission Act 2012.
- (n) **Reviewer** means an individual or entity who undertakes a review of a financial report in accordance with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012.
- (o) **School** means the school to which the Association relates.
- (p) **School plans** includes but is not limited to Strategic Plans, School Improvement Plans (SIP), School Action Plans.
- (q) **Secretary** means the Secretary of the Association.
- (r) **Special General Meeting** means a General Meeting held in accordance with **clause 8.3**
- (s) **Treasurer** means the Treasurer of the Association.

3. INTERPRETATION

In this Constitution, unless the context indicates a contrary intention:

- (a) **corresponding meanings** - a word that is derived from a defined word has a corresponding meaning.
- (b) **documents** - a reference to this Constitution or another document includes any document which varies, supplements, replaces, assigns or novates this Constitution or that other document.
- (c) **gender** - words importing one gender include all other genders.
- (d) **headings** - headings and the table of contents are inserted for convenience only and do not affect interpretation of this Constitution.
- (e) **legislation** - a reference to any legislation or provision of legislation includes all amendments, consolidations or replacements and all regulations or instruments issued under it.
- (f) **month** - a reference to a month is a reference to a calendar month.
- (g) **references** - a reference to the background, a party, clause, paragraph, schedule or annexure is a reference to the background, a party, clause, paragraph, schedule or annexure to or of this Constitution.
- (h) **replacement bodies** - a reference to a body (including an institute, association or authority) which ceases to exist or whose powers or functions are transferred to another body is a reference to the body which replaces it or which substantially succeeds to its power or functions.
- (i) **singular** - the singular includes the plural and vice-versa.
- (j) **year** - a reference to a year is a reference to twelve consecutive calendar months.

4. PURPOSES

4.1 Preamble

The Association recognises and values the primary role of Parents in the education of their children and their role in the school and parish community. The aim of the Association is to strengthen the partnership between family, school, parish and the wider community for the benefit of their children's full human development and learning, in the context of the vision statement for Catholic education in the Diocese.

4.2 Purposes

The purposes of the Association are:

- (a) promoting the interest of the School and Catholic education generally by bringing together Parents, students, clergy and teaching staff, both religious and lay, in a spirit of collaboration and close co-operation;
- (b) providing a forum for members to raise and discuss issues related to the spiritual, social and academic development of their children, at School, Diocesan, State and National levels;
- (c) use of funds raised by the Association which must be acquitted in accordance with section 83(c) of the *Education Act 1990 (NSW)*. Funds of the Association must be used:
 - (i) in consultation with school leadership to provide resources and opportunities for enriching the learning environment; and,
 - (ii) in consultation with school leadership for helping the school acquire materials and equipment which otherwise could not be provided.
- (d) reaching out to all associated with the School to build a friendly and welcoming community which seeks to involve all its members;
- (e) providing a parental perspective to assist the Principal, Parish Priest and School staff in furthering the educational endeavours of the school;

- (f) acting as a mechanism for representing Parents when it is appropriate to do so;
- (g) supporting Parents in their involvement in their children’s learning at home and School;
- (h) providing opportunities for Parents to gain insights into the life of the School, current developments in education and Catholic education in particular; and
- (i) undertaking any other activities in furtherance of the above.

5. LIMITATION

- (a) The Association has no legal identity separate from the School. It is a consultative body established under the auspices of the Principal, who is responsible for carrying out the policies and directives of the Bishop, the Diocese and the Catholic Schools Office.
- (b) The Association has no authority in the day-to-day operation or management of the School.
- (c) The Association must seek the consent of the Principal who may consult with the Parish Priest for activities of the Association. In circumstance where the activity impacts the property of the parish, the Principals must consult with the Parish Priest. Consent must be in writing or recorded in the Minutes.
- (d) The Association has no capacity whatsoever to enter into contracts in its own name.
- (e) The Association must not distribute any income or assets, directly or indirectly to its members.
- (f) Clause 4(e) does not prevent the Association from doing the following things, provided they are done in good faith (fairly and honestly), following a resolution of the members and recorded in the Minutes:

- (i) reimbursing a member for goods and services they have actually provided at fair and reasonable rates or rates more favourable to the Association;
- (ii) reimbursing a member for expenses they have properly incurred;
- (g) All expenditure must be in keeping with Diocesan procurement policies particularly with regard to, but not limited to, Modern Slavery.
- (h) Funds must only be used for the purposes of the Association as set out in clause 4.2.**
- (i) Fund raising must only be undertaken after consultation with the Principal. All correspondence regarding fundraising must be co-signed by the Principal.**

6. MEMBERSHIP

6.1 Ordinary Members

All Parents of students attending the School are the ordinary members of the Association.

6.2 Ex-officio Members

The Principal (or their delegate) and the Parish Priest/s (or his appointed representative) of designated “feeder” parishes are *ex-officio* members of the Association. Ex-officio members do not have voting rights.

6.3 Life Membership

The Association may resolve at an Annual General Meeting to confer the honour of life-membership on any person who has made an outstanding contribution to the Association over a period of at least 7 years. Life Members are entitled to attend and speak at ordinary association meetings but are not entitled to vote at the meetings unless they are also ordinary members of the Association.

7. QUORUM

- (a) The quorum for all meetings shall be determined by the student population. Refer to the following scale:

Student Population	Quorum
0–90	4 members including at least 2 Executive members
91–200	5 members including at least 2 Executive members
201+	6 members including at least 2 Executive members

- (b) Ex-officio members do not form part of the quorum.

8. ORDINARY ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

8.1 Ordinary Association Meetings

- (a) The Executive is to organise an ordinary association meeting at least once every school term.
- (b) (i) The Association may hold their ordinary association meetings by using technology (such as video or teleconferencing) that is agreed to by the Principal.
- (ii) Anyone using this technology to attend the ordinary association meeting is taken to be present in person at the meeting.
- (c) Notice of the meeting is to be given to all members and shall indicate the need for members to send agenda items in writing, to the Secretary before the date of the Ordinary Association meeting.
- (d) A quorum for all meetings shall be determined in accordance with clause 7.
- (e) A period of 15 minutes is to be allowed for the quorum to be present before an ordinary association meeting is cancelled.

- (f) All ordinary association meetings shall be conducted in accordance with standard meeting procedures. In the case of a tied vote, the President (or the President's nominee) is not entitled to a casting vote.

The recommended order of business is as follows,

- ▶ Acknowledgement of Country
- ▶ Opening prayer
- ▶ Record of attendance and apologies
- ▶ Declaration of conflicts of interest
- ▶ Confirmation and acceptance of the Minutes of the previous meeting
- ▶ Business arising from the Minutes of the previous meeting
- ▶ Correspondence: incoming & outgoing
- ▶ Business arising out of the Correspondence
- ▶ Reports including from the Principal (or their delegate), the President and a statement of accounts from the Treasurer
- ▶ Business deferred from the previous meeting
- ▶ Motions proposed
- ▶ Other general business
- ▶ Matters for future consideration
- ▶ Conclusion

8.2 Annual General Meeting

- (a) The first or the last ordinary Association meeting of the calendar year will be the Annual General Meeting of the Association. The date to be determined by the Principal.
- (b) (i) The Association may hold an Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting at two or more venues using any technology that is agreed to by the Principal and gives the members as a whole a reasonable opportunity to participate, including to hear and be heard.
- (ii) Anyone using this technology to attend the Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting is taken to be present in person at the meeting.
- (c) Notice of the Annual General Meeting and any

resolutions to be put to members must be given to members and the auditor or Reviewer no less than 21 days before the meeting.

- (d) Members cannot appoint proxies to vote at the Annual General Meeting.
- (e) The business of an Annual General Meeting may include, in addition to the ordinary business of an ordinary association meeting:
 - (i) the presentation of the annual report, the annual financial reports and the annual Auditor or Reviewer's report; and
 - (ii) the appointment or reappointment of auditors or Reviewers; and
 - (iii) discussion of and voting on any resolutions to be put to members; and
 - (iv) the office of executive members shall be declared vacant and the members shall elect members for the executive in accordance with **clause 9.3**.

8.3 Special General Meeting

- (a) A Special General Meeting can be called on the authority of the executive or on written request to the executive by at least 10 members.
- (b) A Special General Meeting must be held within 28 days of the request being appropriately given, if that 28-day period expires on a date which is not within a school term, within 14 days of the commencement of the next school term.
- (c) At least 7 days' notice of the Special General Meeting shall be given to all members of the Association including Ex-Officio members. The object of the meeting is to be clearly stated and only this agenda may be discussed at the meeting.

9. EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

9.1 Composition of Executive Members

- (a) There shall be a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 6 executive members.
- (b) *Ex-officio* members of the Association are also ex-officio members of the executive and have no voting rights

9.2 Executive Members

- (a) The Executive shall include:
 - (i) the President;
 - (ii) the Secretary;
 - (iii) the Treasurer; and
 - (iv) any other Executive Members as resolved by the Association at an Annual General Meeting from time to time.
- (b) Catholic Schools Office and other Diocesan officers, the Principal and the spouse of the Principal are not eligible to be elected as Executive Members.
- (c) **Conflicts of Interest** should be discussed and minuted prior to their election and at all ordinary association meetings.

9.3 Election of Executive Members

- (a) Executive Members are elected by the members of the Association at the Annual General Meeting.
- (b) Any candidate for the Executive must be nominated and seconded by the members of the Association. If there are a greater number of candidates than required for a particular position, an election is to be held by secret ballot and shall be decided by a simple majority.
- (c) The returning officer for any election is the Principal (or the Principal's delegate) or the Parish Priest.
- (d) Other than the Ex-officio Executive Members in **clauses 9.1(b)**, members of the Executive shall have a term of 1 year and retire at the following Annual General Meeting, but are eligible for re-election subject to **clause 9.3(e)**.

- (e) Other than the Ex-officio Executive Members in **clauses 9.1(b)**, members of the Executive must not serve in the same position for a consecutive period exceeding 3 years.
- (f) Any casual vacancy on the Executive shall be filled by an election by the members of the Association at any ordinary association meeting. The person elected to fill a casual vacancy shall retire at the following Annual General Meeting and is eligible for re-election. For the avoidance of doubt, the time the person fills in the casual vacancy will not be taken into account when the period in **clauses 0 or (e)** is calculated.
- (g) At the Annual General Meeting or one of the ordinary Association meetings or at a PEG meeting as appropriate, the members shall elect up to two (2) delegates to represent the Association at the meetings of the Federation of P&F Association.
- (h) The names, email address and telephone number of all Executive Members, including Federation Delegates of the Association shall be forwarded to the Family Engagement Officer at the Catholic Schools Office within fourteen (14) days of holding the election at the AGM and the holding of an election to fill a vacancy or elect a Federation Delegate as outlined in Clauses 9.3(f) and (g) above.

10. CESSATION OF OFFICE

A person ceases to be an Executive member when he or she:

- (a) gives written notice of resignation as an Executive member to the Secretary and Principal and the vacancy shall take effect at the time expressed in the notice (provided the time is not earlier than 14 days after the date of delivery of the written notice to the Secretary);
- (b) dies;

- (c) is absent from any 3 consecutive ordinary association meeting without reasonable cause and his or her position may be declared vacant; and
- (d) is removed from his or her position by a members' resolution at a Special General Meeting, provided that 1-month notice of the motion in writing specifying the grounds for removal has first been given to the members and the affected Executive member.

11. POWER AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE

11.1 Power of the Executive

The Executive has the power to make decisions at Executive Meetings on behalf of the Association only as set out in **clauses 17.1**.

11.2 Responsibilities of the Executive

The Executive is responsible for:

- (a) managing the Association's affairs;
- (b) organising an appropriate induction process for any new members of the Association and any new Executive members;
- (c) identifying and using opportunities that promote the objectives of the Association;
- (d) ensuring the Association works collaboratively and co-operatively with the Principal and the Parish and the Diocese;
- (e) ensuring the Association's ongoing financial accountability); and
- (f) organising ordinary association meetings.

11.3 Duties of Executive Members

Members of the Executive must:

- (i) adhere to the relevant policies and procedures of the School, Catholic Schools Office and Diocese, including but not limited to risk assessment and health and safety.
- (ii) exercise their powers and discharge their duties with the degree of care and diligence that a reasonable individual would exercise if they were an Executive member of the Association.
- (iii) act in good faith (fairly and honestly) in the best interests of the Association and to further the objectives of the Association;
- (iv) not misuse their position as an Executive member;
- (v) not misuse information they gain in their role as an Executive member;
- (vi) disclose any perceived or actual conflicts of interest;
- (vii) ensure that the financial affairs of the Association are managed responsibly; and
- (viii) not allow the Association to incur debts or enter obligations that it cannot meet, financially or otherwise.,

12. PRESIDENT

12.1 Duties of the President

- (a) The President is responsible for:
 - (i) providing leadership and direction for the Association by working co-operatively and collaboratively with the Principal, Parish Priest and other members of the Executive;
 - (ii) promoting the objectives of the Association in dealings with its members;
 - (iii) supporting the Executive members;

- (iv) presiding at all ordinary association meeting or, if absent, nominates another member of the Executive to preside;
- (v) ensuring the efficient running of ordinary association meeting;
- (vi) preparing the agenda for ordinary association meeting in consultation with the Executive and Principal or their delegate;
- (vii) ensuring that Minutes of the previous meetings are endorsed as being an accurate record of what took place; and
- (viii) preparing and presenting the Annual Report of the Association which includes the Auditor or Reviewer's report as well as reports from sub-committees and the President of major achievements from the preceding year.

13. SECRETARY

13.1 Duties of the Secretary

- (a) The Secretary is responsible for:
 - (i) managing the day-to-day communications and records of the Association;
 - (ii) organising meetings, records accurate Minutes in a style agreed upon by the Executive and formalising them as agreed to by the Executive;
 - (iii) receiving and dealing with correspondence in a manner agreed upon by the Executive;
 - (iv) maintaining copies of Minutes and all other relevant P&F correspondence which shall be filed at the School as soon as practicable, per the diocesan record keeping protocols;
 - (v) receiving proposed motions and agenda items from members of the Association;
 - (vi) passing on records, in good order, to the incoming Secretary within 21 days from vacating the role.

14. THE TREASURER

14.1 Duties of the Treasurer

- (a) The Treasurer is responsible for:
- (i) ensuring that all the financial dealings of the Association are carried out in accordance with this constitution;
 - (ii) receiving all monies, issuing receipts and keeping appropriate financial records which must be filed at the School and available for the review of the Principal (or the Principal's delegate) as soon as practicable upon request;
 - (iii) presenting, at each ordinary association meeting, a statement of accounts showing current receipts and expenditure, together with the outstanding balance;
 - (iv) cooperating with the annual audit or Review of accounts and presenting the annual financial report of the Association at the Annual General Meeting; and
 - (v) passing on records, in good order, to the incoming Treasurer within 21 days of vacating the position.

15. SUB-COMMITTEES

- (a) The Association may set up separate sub-committees at any time to carry out specific functions on its behalf. Where possible, they should include at least one member of the Executive.
- (b) Such sub-committees shall be accountable to the Association. Sub-committees shall not make decisions including expenditure of funds without the formal approval, authorisation or delegation, by resolution, of the Association. All sub-committees shall report their operations to an ordinary association meeting, and when the sub-committee has completed its task it shall account to the next ordinary association meeting for its operation and expenditure.

16. PLANNING

The Association should develop a calendar of activities that considers the school community's needs in consultation with the Principal. The calendar is to be discussed at an ordinary association meeting in order to seek approval from the members.

17. ASSOCIATION FUNDS AND FINANCIAL RECORDS

17.1 Funds Allocation

- (a) The Executive must consult with the Principal (or the Principal's delegate) to develop a list of needs and suggest some priorities for consideration at the first ordinary association meeting each year and seek subsequent approval by the Principal (or the Principal's delegate).
- (b) Funds raised by or on behalf of the Association are to be used solely for the purposes of the Association.
- (c) Fund expenditure must be approved by the Association and the Principal (or their delegate). The Principal can provide their prior written approval for major expenditure or approval can be recorded as a carried motion supported by the Principal (or their delegate) in the Minutes.

17.2 Funds Management

- (a) All funds raised by or on behalf of the Association must be banked promptly and fully intact into a School P&F Association account held with the Catholic Development Fund for the Diocese. All expenses shall be paid by cheque or EFT with a record of the transaction recorded in the Associations accounts ledger.
- (b) The authorised signatories for the Association's account will be any two of the following:
 - (i) the President,
 - (ii) the Treasurer; and
 - (iii) the Secretary.
- (c) To avoid there being any doubt, the Association

must not make any payments without the resolution of the members at an ordinary association meeting and recorded in a carried motion in the Minutes to approve such payments.

17.3 Financial Records

- (a) The Executive must ensure that financial records are properly maintained.
- (b) The Association shall, by resolution at the Annual General Meeting, appoint a certified accountant, who is not a member of the Executive or their immediate family member, to audit or Review the Association's financial records, including but not limited to books, accounts, receipts and income and expenditure statements.
- (c) A copy of the auditor or Reviewer's report and the annual financial reports will be presented at the Annual General Meeting.
- (d) The auditor or Reviewer's report will be filed at the School with other Association records as soon as practicable.
- (e) The Association's financial year will run from 1 January to 31 December each year.

18. DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

18.1 Dispute Resolution

- (a) The dispute resolution procedure in this clause applies to disputes (disagreements) under this constitution, in relation to Association business and between members of the Association.
- (b) Those involved in the dispute must try to resolve it between themselves within 14 days of knowing about it.
- (c) If those involved in the dispute do not resolve it under clause 18.1(b), they must within 10 days:
 - (i) tell the Executive about the dispute in writing;
 - (ii) agree or request that a mediator be appointed; and

- (iii) attempt in good faith to settle the dispute by mediation.
- (d) The mediator must be chosen by agreement of those involved or where those involved do not agree:
 - (i) for disputes between members not on the Executive, a person chosen by the executive, or
 - (ii) for disputes involving members of the Executive, a person chosen by the Bishop or the President of the Newcastle or New South Wales Law Societies.
- (e) A mediator chosen by the Executive under this clause:
 - (i) may be a member or former member of the Association;
 - (ii) must not have a personal interest in the dispute; and
 - (iii) must not be biased towards or against anyone involved in the dispute.
- (f) When conducting the mediation, the mediator must:
 - (i) allow those involved a reasonable chance to be heard;
 - (ii) allow those involved a reasonable chance to review any written statements;
 - (iii) ensure that those involved are given natural justice; and
 - (iv) not make a decision on the dispute.

18.2 Disciplining Members

- (a) In accordance with this clause, the Executive may resolve to warn or suspend a member from the Association if the Executive consider that:
 - (b) the member has breached this constitution; or
 - (c) the member has refused or neglected to comply with Association by-laws, School codes of conduct or policies and procedures; or

- (d) the member's behaviour is causing, has caused, or is likely to cause harm to the Association or another member of the Association.
- (e) At least 14 days before the Executive meeting at which a resolution under clause 18.2 will be considered, the Secretary must notify the member in writing:
 - (i) that the Executive are considering a resolution to warn or suspend the member;
 - (ii) that this resolution will be considered at an Executive meeting and the date of that meeting;
 - (iii) what the member is said to have done or not done;
 - (iv) the nature of the resolution that has been proposed; and
 - (v) that the member may provide an explanation to the Executive, and details of how to do so.
- (f) Before the Executive pass any resolution under clause 18.2, the member must be given a chance to explain or defend themselves by:
 - (i) sending the Executive a written explanation; and/or
 - (ii) speaking at the Executive meeting.
- (g) After considering any explanation the Executive may:
 - (i) take no further action;
 - (ii) warn the member;
 - (iii) suspend the member's rights as a member for a period of no more than 12 months;
- (h) refer the decision to the Bishop or another unbiased, independent person on conditions that the Executive consider appropriate (however, the person can only make a decision that the Executive could have made under this clause) or require the matter to be determined at a Special General Meeting.

- (i) The Executive cannot fine a member.
- (j) The Secretary must give written notice to the member of the decision within 7 days.
- (k) Disciplinary procedures must be completed as soon as reasonably practical.
- (l) There will be no liability for any loss or injury suffered by the member as a result of any decision made in good faith under this clause.

19. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

19.1 Disclose Conflicts of Interest

- (a) A member must disclose the nature and extent of any **conflict of interest** in a matter that is being considered at any meeting of the Association to the Executive; or
- (b) if the Executive have the same **conflict of interest**, to the Principal and the members at the earliest possible time to do so.
- (c) The disclosure of a **conflict of interest** by a member must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting and the schools **Conflict of Interest** register.

19.2 Personal Interest

- (a) A member who has a professional or business interest in a matter that is being considered at a meeting must not, except as provided below:
 - (i) be present at the meeting while the matter is being discussed; or
 - (ii) vote on the matter.

20. MEDIA AUTHORISATION AND CONDUCT

20.1 Media Authorisation

- (a) No Executive officer or any individual member of the Association may make media comment, issue media releases, participate in media interviews, or correspond with the media on behalf of the

Association without the written authorisation of the Principal or Diocese. This clause does not apply to the ex-officio members.

20.2 Conduct – Holding Out

- (a) Without written approval of the Principal or Diocese, an Executive officer or individual member of the Association may not hold out his or her views to be reflective of the views of the Association.

21. WHEN NOTICE IS TAKEN TO BE GIVEN

21.1 Notice is Given

- (a) A notice:
- (i) delivered in person, or left at the recipient's address, is taken to be given on the day it is delivered;
 - (ii) sent by post, is taken to be given on the seventh day after it is posted with the correct payment of postage costs;
 - (iii) sent by email, fax or other electronic method, is taken to be given on the business day it is sent.

22. AMENDMENT OF CONSTITUTION

This Constitution may only be amended by a special resolution that has been ratified by the Bishop and presented to the members at an Annual or Special General Meeting of the Federation of P&F Associations.

23. DISSOLUTION

- (a) The Association is automatically dissolved if the School closes down or is amalgamated.
- (b) The Association can be dissolved following a Special General Meeting specifically called for the purpose of providing an opportunity for the school community to discuss the dissolution of the Association, provided that 21-day notice in writing specifying the resolution proposed by at least 2 members to dissolve the Association

has been given for the Special General Meeting. At least three quarters of the members present and entitled to vote must vote in favour of the resolution to dissolve the Association for the motion to be carried.

- (c) Where it is judged that the actions or decisions of the Association are at variance with the vision and mission of Catholic education, the Bishop or the Director of Schools with the Bishop's approval may intervene and dissolve the Association.
- (d) After all expenses and liabilities are paid:
- (i) where the School is closed, the remaining assets, records and funds of the Association shall be handed over to the Federation of P&F Associations;
 - (ii) where the School is amalgamated, the remaining assets, records and funds of the Association shall be handed over to the principal of the amalgamated school for the purpose of the amalgamated school or establishing a P&F Association for the amalgamated school; and
 - (iii) where the Association is dissolved under clause 23(b) or (c), the remaining assets, records and funds of the Association shall be handed over to the Principal for the purposes of the School.

provided that recipient has charitable purposes, which are similar to, or inclusive of, the purposes of the Association and prohibits the distribution of any property or income to its members to at least the same extent as the Association. If the recipient does not meet the requirements, the funds shall be transferred to the Federation of P&F Associations.

24. PRECEDENT

In the event of any conflict between this Constitution and any policies and procedures of the Diocese, the policies and procedures of the Diocese will take precedence.

Adoption of Constitution

We the undersigned, hereby certify that this Constitution was adopted at an Annual/Special General Meeting of

the _____ Parents and Friends Association
(insert name of the Association)

held on: _____
(insert date of Association's Annual/Special General Meeting)

Chair of Meeting (print name)

Signature

Elected President (print name)

Signature

Ex-officio (Parish Priest (print name)

Signature

Ex-officio (Principal) (print name)

Signature

Date:



1. OPEN MEETING

- ▶ The President declares the meeting open and the Secretary records the time in the Minutes.
- ▶ The President welcomes all members present and introduces and acknowledges new members to the meeting.
- ▶ Attendance of all members present either in person or through the use of technology shall be recorded in an Attendance book. Apologies shall also be noted in the Attendance book.
- ▶ Call if there are changes/additions to the Agenda.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING TO BE ACCEPTED

- ▶ The Secretary reads or circulates the Minutes.
- ▶ Member moves that the Minutes be accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.
Moved by _____
Seconded by _____
All those in favour? _____
All those against? _____
Carried _____ Yes / No

3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS GENERAL MEETING

- ▶ Minor matters brought forward from previous meeting can be dealt with here, but if they require lengthy discussion they are best held over to General Business.

4. CORRESPONDENCE

- ▶ Inward and Outward Correspondence
- ▶ Have secretary read out or summarise correspondence.
- ▶ If further discussion is required on any of the correspondence suggest it be deferred to General Business.

- ▶ All inward/outward correspondence must be received by a motion.
Moved by _____
Seconded by _____
All those in favour? _____
All those against? _____
Carried _____ Yes / No

5. REPORTS

a) Principal's Report

b) Treasurer's Report

Moved by _____

Seconded by _____

All those in favour? _____

All those against? _____

Carried _____ Yes / No

c) Sub-committees: Fundraising / Canteen / Uniform etc.

d) Federation Delegate Report

Moved by _____

Seconded by _____

All those in favour? _____

All those against? _____

All reports must be received at the meeting. This can be done individually or all together except for the Treasurer's Report – this is to be moved separately.

6. AGENDA ITEMS

Items that have been listed on the Agenda for discussion are dealt with.

7. GENERAL BUSINESS

a) General Business arising from previous meeting.

b) Motions on notice.

c) General Business from correspondence or reports for discussion

d) Any other matters members request to be included.

Note: *It is preferable to include items of a substantial nature on the agenda for the next General Meeting so that adequate time is allowed for consideration.*

8. MEETING CLOSED

There being no further matters for discussion the Chairperson advises the date for the next meeting and declares the meeting closed.

Parent Engagement Group (PEG) Guidelines

RATIFIED BY BISHOP WILLIAM WRIGHT

Date: 4 December 2020



Federation
of Parents & Friends
Associations
DIOCESE OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE



mn.catholic.org.au

Parent Engagement Group (PEG)

GUIDELINES

Ratified by Bishop William Wright
Date: 4 December 2020

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1. APPLICATION

These guidelines apply to Parent Engagement Groups established in catholic schools in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle.

2. DEFINITIONS

In this document, unless the context requires otherwise:

- a) **Bishop** means the Roman Catholic Bishop or, if there is no Bishop the appointed representative, of the Diocese.
- b) **Catholic Schools Office** means the Trustees of the Roman Catholic Church for the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle trading as the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle Catholic Schools Office (ABN 79 469 343 054).



- c) **Diocese** means the Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle (ABN 91 605 046 457).
- d) **Minutes** means the written record of a meeting of the Association.
- e) **Parents** means parents, carers, guardians, kin **of the child in the Catholic school.**
- f) **Parish** means the Catholic parish within which the school is located.
- g) **Parish Priest** means the priest of the Parish or their appointed representative.
- h) **Principal** means the Principal of the school or their appointed representative.
- i) **School** means the school to which the PEG relates.

- 1. **School plans** includes but is not limited to the school's three-year Strategic Plan and the resultant annual School Improvement Plans (SIP).

3. PURPOSES

The purposes of the PEG are:

- a) promoting the interest of the school and Catholic education generally by bringing together parents, students, clergy and teaching staff, both religious and lay, in a spirit of collaboration and close co-operation;
- b) providing a forum for members to raise and discuss issues related to the spiritual, social and academic development of their children, at school, diocesan, state and national levels;



- c) ensuring funds raised by the PEG are acquitted in accordance with section 83(c) of the *Education Act 1990 (NSW)*. Funds of the PEG must be used:
 - I. in consultation with school leadership to provide resources and opportunities for enriching the learning environment; and,
 - II. in consultation with school leadership for helping the school acquire materials and equipment which otherwise could not be provided.
- d) reaching out to all associated with the school to build a friendly and welcoming community which seeks to involve all its members;
- e) providing a parental perspective to assist the Principal, Parish Priest and school staff in furthering the educational endeavours of the school;
- f) acting as a mechanism for representing parents when it is appropriate to do so;
- g) supporting parents in their involvement in their children's learning at home and school;
- h) providing opportunities for parents to gain insights into the life of the school, current developments in education and Catholic education in particular; and
- i) undertaking any other activities in furtherance of the above.

4. LIMITATION

- a) The PEG has no legal identity separate from the school. It is a consultative body established under the auspices of the Principal, who is responsible for carrying out the policies and directives of the Bishop, the Diocese and the Catholic Schools Office.
- b) The PEG has no authority in the day-to-day operation or management of the school.
- c) The PEG must seek the consent of the Principal, who may consult with the Parish Priest for activities of the PEG. In circumstances where the activity impacts the property of the parish, the Principals must consult with the Parish Priest.



Consent must be in writing or recorded in the Minutes.

- d) The PEG has no capacity whatsoever to enter into contracts in its own name.
- e) The PEG must not distribute any income or assets, directly or indirectly to its members.
- f) All expenditure must be in keeping with Diocesan procurement policies particularly with regard to, but not limited to, Modern Slavery.
- g) *Funds must only be used for the purposes of the PEG as set out in clause 4.2 of the Parents and Friends Association Constitution 2020.***
- h) *Fundraising must only be undertaken after consultation with the Principal. All correspondence regarding fundraising must be co-signed by the Principal.***

5. MEMBERSHIP

All parents of students attending the school are the ordinary members of the PEG.

6. MEETINGS

- a) The focus of the meeting group is to be on authentic community engagement and include an educative component that builds capacity amongst parents and carers.
- b) The educative component is to be determine in collaboration with the Principal and may reflect goals or implementation strategies articulated in School Plans or the **Annual School Improvement Plan (SIP)**.
- c) The group will allow the promotion and deeper understanding of policy and procedure within schools and offer an opportunity for collaboration and feedback regarding policy development and review as required.

- d) Meetings of the group should be held regularly. They may be held each month during the school term or once a Term. This decision should be made at the Inaugural PEG meeting and agreed to by the majority.
- e) The PEG operates using a structured meeting with a published agenda (see following agenda template).
- f) Note/Minute taking is to be managed by the Principal or a volunteer to be identified for this purpose. The Principal will maintain and store copies of Minutes. Copies of the Minutes shall be made available to the community.
- g) Notification of the meeting should be provided through the usual channels of school communication allowing at least 7 days' notice of the meeting. A yearly calendar may be produced to identify dates for PEG meetings.
- h) Meetings may be held using technology in circumstances where a face-to-face meeting is not possible, or it is the preference of the Principal and community. Anyone using this technology to attend the meeting is taken to be present in person at the meeting.
- i) At the first or Inaugural meeting, the group should co-construct group operating norms to ensure empowerment of all.
- j) The group will maintain an ability to fundraise if desired by the community. Subgroups can be formed for this purpose and will report directly to the Principal (or their delegate). A report will also be made available to the PEG.
- k) "Project groups" such as garden, craft, hospitality groups can be developed based on need and the interests of the school and parent body. These groups will report directly to the Principal (or their delegate). A report will also be made available to the PEG.
- l) For the purpose of funds management for the PEG, the school Principal will maintain and report on the financial records for the PEG with these records to be made available at PEG meetings.
- Auditing of the funds will be included as part of the routine auditing process by the CSO.
- m) The Principal will deposit all fundraising monies into the school Catholic Development Fund (CDF) account with use of any funds to be made following collaborative decision making and recording of such decisions at a PEG meeting.
- n) The Principal may seek the assistance of parent/carer volunteers to manage counting and recording of funds following a fundraising event. All funds are then to be held in the school safe until depositing into the school account coded as "PEG Fundraising".
- o) The Principal (or their Delegate) will provide to the PEG the balance of the account at each meeting as well as any expenditure in line with decisions made at previous meetings.
- p) If funds are to be used for the purpose of holding a fundraising event (such as a BBQ), the school can cover the cost of these expenses with the monies to be reimbursed following the event unless the PEG agree to monies being used for this purpose.
- q) For the purpose of funds management for the PEG, the school Principal will maintain and report on the financial records for the PEG with these records to be made available at PEG meetings. Auditing of these funds will occur as part of the normal routine auditing processes carried out by the diocese
- r) Any use of funds will need to be managed in accordance with Sections 4, 5 and 19 of the P&F Constitution to ensure s83c of the Education Act and appropriate governance requirements complied with.
- s) Up to two (2) Federation Delegates are to be elected at an ordinary PEG meeting to represent the group at the meetings of the Federation of P&F Association. Names and contact details of the Federation Delegates are to be forwarded to the Family Engagement Officer at the CSO.
- t) In the event of a dispute, Section 18 of the Parents and Friends Association Constitution – DoMN (2020) applies.

PARENT ENGAGEMENT GROUP (PEG) AGENDA TEMPLATE

1. OPEN MEETING

2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

3. PRAYER

*(INAUGURAL MEETING – CO-CONSTRUCT
GROUP OPERATING NORMS TO ENSURE
EMPOWERMENT OF ALL)*

4. APOLOGIES

5. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

6. PEG FINANCIAL REPORT

7. ANY PROJECT GROUP REPORTS

8. EDUCATIVE COMPONENT (INFORMED BY PARENT/CARER COMMUNITY)

The Educative Component is intended to be an opportunity for parents and carers to engage more deeply in their child's learning. A presentation about an aspect of the curriculum such as Stage 3 Math work, supporting early reading or what is happening in Stage 4 Science or an opportunity to review and discuss policy and procedures implemented at the school can be included based on the community's needs. This supports parents and carers to partner with the school regarding decisions impacting their child as well as learn more about outcomes taught and ways they can support their child's learning at home.

9. AGENDA ITEMS

10. QUESTIONS (SUBMITTED PRIOR TO THE MEETING TO THE PRINCIPAL)

11. DETAILS OF THE NEXT MEETING (WHAT DO WE WANT TO LEARN ABOUT?)

12. MEETING CLOSES



LEADERSHIP • ADVOCACY • SUPPORT

COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC SCHOOL PARENTS

PRAYERS FOR MEETINGS

Acknowledgement

Sydney Federation of Parents and Friends Associations of Catholic Schools.

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Opening Prayers for Parent Meetings

These prayers are offered as a practical way for members of the school community to come together in prayer, to reflect on their gifts and the mission of the Catholic School.

- ▶ Beginning
- ▶ Welcome
- ▶ Building Bridges
- ▶ Hope
- ▶ Respect
- ▶ Recognition
- ▶ Example
- ▶ Values
- ▶ Unity and Diversity
- ▶ Ending

Beginning

Leader

The beginning of a new school year is a good time for dreaming and planning. The Catholic school – that educating community of children, pastor, parents and teachers – has such great promise. It can be a marvellous place where people really belong, where the values of the Gospel can set children free to learn and grow, and to live a full and happy life. Let us pray that our association will play a vitally important role in creating this educating community.

All

Lord Jesus, you are with us as we commence our year's work. Help us to understand our importance in educating our children. And bless our partners - the teachers. Guide us in our decisions And open our hearts in friendship to each other. May we show particular care to those who are most in need. May we welcome, especially, those who are shy and uncomfortable. And may this meeting of ours result in many benefits for the children on whose behalf we gather. Amen

I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.

Revelations 22:13

Welcome

Leader

Our Schools need the support of all parents. Each one has his or her unique contribution to make; some special quality that can help build a community that really cares for children. Let us pray that all parents will experience a sense of warmth and welcome, and that there will be a rich sharing of ideas, talents and enthusiasm as together we go about our work of helping our children to grow and learn.

All

Lord Jesus, you are with us now.
 Help us recognise your presence in each other.
 May friendship flourish here.
 Fill us with a deep sense of peace.
 Inspire us to listen with attention and patience to each other,
 to share with courage and generosity, and to welcome the
 ideas of all.
 May this meeting of ours strengthen our friendship, build our
 community and increase our confidence in ourselves and our
 school.
 Amen.

Above all, hold unfailing your love for one another since love covers a multitude of sins. Practise hospitality ungrudgingly to one another.

1 Peter 4: 8-9.

Bridges

Leader

The Catholic school is at its best when it is a vital part of the parish community, sharing in the Church's work of spreading the Good News. Let us do all we can to strengthen the links between our parish, our school and our homes. Let us pray that our children will feel at home in the Catholic community and see their Faith as something that gives meaning to their lives.

All

Lord Jesus, help us to become builders of bridges.
 Bridges that will link our parish and our school, our teachers
 and our parents, our hopes for our children and the realisation
 of these hopes.
 And, above all, help our children to see the relevance of their
 Faith, and ours, to their everyday lives.
 May this meeting of ours unite us in our vision and strengthen
 us in our purpose.
 Amen.

Put on them, as God's chosen ones ... compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness and patience ... and above all these, put on love which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts.

Colossians 3: 12-15

Hope

Leader

At Easter we celebrate the resurrection of the Lord, the triumph of life over death. It is the great season of hope. Catholic schools should be places of hope – Easter places! Let us pray that our schools will be inspired by a view of life that is joyful and optimistic and that our own association might contribute to this.

All

Lord Jesus, fill us with the spirit of hope and joyful expectation.
You have shared your life with us and, if we allow it to happen, we can never be alone.
The future you have in store for us is beyond all human expectation.
May this meeting of ours reflect the promise we share, and may we strive to keep our schools places of hope.
Amen

**On the evening of that day, the first day of the week ...
Jesus came and stood among them and said to them,
“Peace be with you”.**

John 20:19

Respect

Leader

As parents we want our children to develop the quality of respect. Not a weak compliance but a genuine respect for themselves, for their companions, for their teachers – and for us! This sort of respect is a real valuing of God’s gifts. It looks for what is good in ourselves and others. It builds on strengths. Let us pray for a respectful community.

All

Lord Jesus, you showed the greatest respect for people - the poor, the sinners, the ill, the outsiders, and especially, the children who have a special place in the Kingdom.
Help us to value each other.
To value our pastor, our teachers and all those who work at our school.
But above all, help us to value our children.
May this meeting of ours deepen our respect for each other and give us the opportunity to help build up your Kingdom in our school..
Amen

.....and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God.

Micah 6:8

Recognition

Leader

We all know the power of praise and recognition in the building of self-esteem. Children, parents, teachers – we all flourish when our contributions are acknowledged. Let us begin this meeting by praying for the many generous people who help to build up and maintain our educating community.

All

Lord Jesus, we thank you for our children; they are your gift and a constant reminder of your love.

We thank you for our partners - the teachers - who, along with us, 'touch eternity'.

We thank you for the school secretaries whose very presence makes school more like a home.

And we thank you for each other and for the work each has done in building our community.

Bless this meeting of ours where we celebrate our many strengths and plan our continuing work in your service.

Amen

I have called you by your name,

You are mine.

Behold, I have carved you

in the palm of my hand.

Isaiah 43:1; 49:16

Example

Leader

Children learn so much from watching their parents and teachers. This can be a somewhat frightening thought, yet, when we think about it, they are learning many more good things than bad from being with us. Let us resolve to show them more clearly what our deepest beliefs and values look like when they are acted upon. And let us pray for the strength to teach our children, and each other, by example as well as words.

All

Lord Jesus, we have long seen you as offering the great example of how life should be lived.

Help us to be models for our children.

May they see us as people who are loving and forgiving, peaceful and just, compassionate and generous, prayerful, full of fun and full of hope.

May this meeting of ours be inspired by the ideals we hold and the hopes we have for the future of our school.

Amen

He took a child and put him in the midst of them, and taking him in his arms, he said to them: "Whoever receives one such child in my name, receives me; and whoever receives me receives not me, but him who sent me".

Mark 9:36-37

Values

Leader

Catholic schools are built on values. Through their lessons and programs, through the Religious Education they offer, and through the ways in which teachers and pupils relate to each other, Catholic schools continually teach certain values. But values are most effectively learnt in our homes. Let us pray then that our teachers and parents will teach the values of Jesus.

All

Lord Jesus, help us all become better teachers of values.
 Let us teach the value of love without which children cannot grow.
 Let us teach the value of justice which sets children free from the forces that hold and bind and limit their growth.
 Let us teach forgiveness that re-unites and makes us whole again
 And let us teach hope in a glorious future and in a God that has carved our name in the palm of His hand.
 And bless this meeting of ours. May it be energised by the values of your Kingdom.
 Amen

**Your ways, O Lord, make known to me; teach me your paths.
 Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Saviour.**

Psalm 25: 4-5

Unity-Diversity

Leader

Unity and diversity are two sides of the one coin, the coin that admits us to the world of problem-solving and creative work. There is a great richness in every group of people; fresh ideas, challenging thoughts, different talents, various experiences. All can contribute to building up the group. But the group must have unity; it must be able to bring things together, to find compromises, to set plans, to share tasks, to gain cooperation. Let us pray that our association can creatively balance these important elements in the interests of our children.

All

Lord Jesus, give us the courage to welcome new thoughts.
 Help us to have an open mind and confidence in the promptings of the Spirit.
 Guide us also towards harmony and help us trust the wisdom of our friends.
 Renew our confidence in Your presence as we seek to serve this community.
 And bless this meeting of ours where we have to make the decisions that will be in the best interests of our children.
 Amen

Jesus prayed, "May all be one, as you, Father, are one in me and I in you ... that the world may believe that you sent me".

John 17:21

Ending

Leader

The end of the year approaches and our work for the moment, is almost complete. Let us remember the many blessings we have received this year, the friendships we have made, the challenges we have met, the struggles we have endured, and the achievements we have celebrated. Let us be thankful for all the graces bestowed on our education community, on our school.

All

Lord Jesus, we thank you for your presence in the life of this association and our school.
 You have spoken to us through the events of the year.
 In our many discussions about Catholic schooling,
 In our shared plans and hopes and dreams,
 In the prayers and liturgies and celebration on special occasions,
 And, often enough,
 In the words of our children.
 Bless all of those who have been part of our community.
 Bless especially the teachers, children and parents who will not be here next year.
 And bless this meeting of ours where we gather to bring our year's work to completion.
 Amen

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endures forever; Give thanks to the God of Gods for his mercy endures forever; Give thanks to the Lord of Lords, for his mercy endures forever.

Psalm 136



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