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# Parent Engagement Group (PEG)

# GUIDELINES

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**CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE**

**Ratified by Bishop William Wright**

**Date: 4 December 2020**

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## 1. Application

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

## 2. Definitions

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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

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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

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- 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

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

## 6. Meetings

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- 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.
- 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 Constitution – DoMN (2020) applies.

## Appendix: Parent Engagement Group (PEG) Agenda Template

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### 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/carers 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