



Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents Council

Guidelines for Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Associations

**A Voice for Tasmanian
Catholic School Parents**

An affiliate **member** of
Catholic Schools Parents Australia (CSPA)
Version 4/2022

Message from Archbishop of Hobart

Most Rev Julian C Porteous DD



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Archbishop of Hobart

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11 March 2022

Dear Friends,

The Church has always maintained that parents are the first educators of their children. Whilst the Catholic Education system seeks to provide the highest educational standards possible to student attending Catholic schools, this can never replace the role of parents as the first and most important educators of their children.

This is particularly true with faith development. The direction and example offered by parents is foundational to the development and flourishing of children.

I commend the work of the Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents Council (TCSPC). In supporting Catholic schools in Tasmania and the guidelines developed to help govern Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents and Friends associations.

May the TCSPC and related associations continue to work to promote the Christian mission and identity of Catholic Schools and endeavour to foster a true spirit of Christian Community in catholic schools.

Wishing you grace and peace,

Julian Porteous DD
Archbishop of Hobart

Message from Acting Executive Director Catholic Education Sean Gill



2 March 2022

Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents Council

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In Tasmanian Catholic Schools we continually focus on developing our students a strong Catholic faith and spiritual life. We form our students as well-rounded Australians who have a relationship with Christ in their daily lives. This is achieved, not only through focusing on academic excellence, but by also ensuring that students have opportunities to grow in Catholic belief and practice whilst developing intellectually, physically, spiritually and socially.

The goal of CET is to bring Christ to our students (and school communities), to lead our students to Christ and, in this way, to take Christ to the world.

The Church acknowledges that it is the Parents who are the first and most important educators of their children. It is their relationship with their children that will be the most influential on their child's life journey. This formative relationship is celebrated, enhanced and supported by the school, but always remains the prime role and duty of each parent/carer.

The success of Tasmanian Catholic schools depends on strong partnerships between our parents/carers, dedicated staff and our parish communities as, together, we reach out into the wider Tasmanian community. These partnerships bring together many different people whose singular goal is to help our students reach their potential and set them on their path of success.

At the heart of our collective effort is the work of the Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents Council who bring their energy, passion and desire to support the work of our Catholic schools.

These guidelines are designed to assist individual school's Parents and Friends Associations in their work in schools in Tasmania. The Tasmanian Catholic Education Offices endorses them and the important work that parents/carers undertake on behalf of Catholic Education every day.

Kind regards

Two handwritten signatures in blue ink. The first signature is "Matt Jones" and the second is "Cameron Brown".

Matt Jones & Cameron Brown

Deputy Executive Directors

Student Focused • Christ Centred • Learning for Life

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Message from President, Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents Council

Dr Pepetua Turner



**Tasmanian Catholic Schools
Parents Council**

May 2022

To Parents and Carers of children in Catholic Schools,

I am delighted to provide a welcome and forward in regards to these updated (April 2022) 'Guidelines for Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Associations'.

As a parent of school age children, I understand the pressure on parents time and availability. It is therefore timely for these Guidelines to be updated so parents have a relevant resource to refer to in regards to Parents & Friends organisations, whether it is to refer to for correctly establishing/re-establishing a P&F, the successful running of a meeting, or seeking general advice.

The Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents Council (TCSPC) is also available to provide further assistance or clarification should it be required. Our website (www.tcspc.org.au) has a copy of these Guidelines on it, as well as contact details.

Thank you to all parents who play such a vital role in the education of your children. Your engagement and support (and not necessarily through P&F's) also enhances and enriches the school experience for all children, and the wider school community.

On behalf of the TCSPC, I commend to you the use of these guidelines which build on the expertise of Parents & Friends Associations within the school environment.

Dr Pep Turner
Acting President
Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents Council

Background

For many years the Knights of the Southern Cross provided a training package for school Parents and Friends Association's. In 2003, the Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation adopted the then Knights process when they were no longer able to continue with this service.

The Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents and Friends Federation following a motion to the 2006 Annual Conference requested the development of a manual for use by school parents and friends associations and the Federation's State Council decided to develop a more complex package that would provide assistance to school Parents and Friends Association's.

With formation of the Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents Council (TCSPC) in 2012 the updating and reformatting of this document was undertaken.

The Council, when re-developing this guideline saw it as an opportunity to take an even broader approach.

This guideline contains an explanation of where the Council, and specifically parents, sit in the Catholic Education Community. It includes support from Government for our schools.

It also provides information on the roles of individual parents, Parents and Friends Associations and those who take on the specific leadership roles, including President, Secretary and Treasurer.

The guideline will be continuously improved, and has recently been reviewed and amended in April 2022. Any feedback or suggestions are welcome.

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Guidelines for School Parents and Friends Association

1. Introduction

Parents and Friends Associations are an integral part of the Catholic School structure in Tasmania and is a valuable instrument in this important partnership in education.

The Parents and Friends Association works in conjunction with the School Board and it has the Legal Indemnity of the Church Trust Corporation. The School Board recognises the unique role the Parents and Friends Association plays in the life of the School and acts under the auspices of the Archbishop of Hobart.

In accordance with the Archbishop's desire for Catholic Schools in Tasmania to give witness to its most important role as an agency of the Catholic Church in Tasmania, the Archbishop has endorsed the establishment of Parents and Friends Associations:

- (i) to promote the mission of catholic schools; and
- (ii) to foster a true spirit of community.

In that same spirit *CANON LAW – 796*, lays the foundation for the relationship between parents and friends and the Catholic school, it states, "*Among the means of advancing education, Christ's faithful are to consider schools as of great importance, since they are the principal means of helping parents to fulfil their role in education. There must be the closest cooperation between parents and the teachers to whom they entrust their children to be educated. In fulfilling their task, teachers are to collaborate closely with the parents and willingly listen to them; associations and meetings of parents are to be set up and held in high esteem...*"

The Archbishop fully supports the Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents Council (TCSPC). The Parents Council acts under the Archbishop of Hobart, in accordance with his desire for Catholic Schools in Tasmania to give witness to its most important role as an agency of the Catholic Church in Tasmania. The Parents Council is funded through a parent levy supported by the Archbishop to ensure the financial viability of the Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents Council. These levies are issued to all Tasmanian Catholic Schools/Colleges annually for payment by the school/college.

2. Objectives

(An Extract from Relationships document Sample Constitution)

"3.1 The objectives of the Association shall be those which accord with the content of the documents "The Catholic School" (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, Rome (1977)) and "The Code of Canon Law (1983)".

In particular, the Association will participate in the optimum spiritual, intellectual, social and physical development of the pupils in the school by:

- (a) fostering a Catholic environment in the school;*
- (b) developing maximum co-operation between parents and school staff;*
- (c) utilising those structures which are established to promote the principles of Catholic education;*
- (d) providing a vehicle for information sharing and participation of parents, in a spirit of collaboration and common purpose;*
- (e) identifying gifts and talents within the parent community and making them available to meet the spiritual, educational, social and material needs of the school; and*
- (f) work to promote and defend government support for Catholic education and promote recognition of the important role that parents play in the education of their children by affiliating with, and participating in the activities of the Tasmanian Catholic School Parents Council.*

3.2 The Association shall not: have, nor shall it seek to have, any direct control over the management and administration of the school;

- (a) affiliate with any political party or body; nor*
- (b) affiliate with any association whose objectives are in conflict with the objectives stated in Clause 3.1."*

3. What is the Parents and Friends Association's Role

3.1 The role of the Parents and Friends Association in Catholic Schools is to:-

- Strive to develop a real community of parents, teachers and students, which reflect a truly Catholic ethos;
- Work closely with the School Principal, to achieve common goals;
- Ensure that a high level of social and educational interaction exists between home and school, parents and teachers;
- Endeavour to have all parents enjoy the exciting experience of their children's formal school years by active participation and personal involvement in the school's programs;

- Provide a healthy forum for ideas and discussion on any relevant issue that will benefit the education of the children;
- In particular, concern itself with further education for the parents of the school in their faith development and ensure that a clear understanding of the school's religious education program exists;
- Assist in planning and organizing functions associated with the social, sporting, cultural and education life of the school community; and
- Work to provide extra resources and items for children and teachers to assist with education and lifelong learning. *Whilst this role has been and will continue to be very important in Catholic schools, it should not be the only function of the Parents and Friends Association, which should ensure that its activities extend into the above areas as well*.

The Parents and Friends Association can encourage parents to do this by:

- Seeking effective home/school communication, determining parent needs about reporting on student progress, encouraging language translation where necessary and appointing class representatives contacts.
- Supporting parent involvement in learning at home with information to help parents assist learning at home, a well-publicised homework policy and by organising workshops for parents.
- Fundraising, however taking into account the words in the * point above.
- Operating school support services if appropriate and with the support of the Principal, such as the canteen.
- Encouraging parents to participate in decision making and school policy development by providing forums, in conjunction with the Principal for parent discussion and encouraging interested parents to stand for election to the school board.

3.2 Constitution

Constitutions are adopted to facilitate the smooth running of an organisation.

Constitutions are helpful if difficulties arise which can be resolved by having a document to refer to.

A sample Constitution is included with this document; see [appendix 1](#)

3.3 Membership of the Parents and Friends Associations

Membership of the Parents and Friends Association should be drawn from the Parents and Friends of the School.

Invitations should be extended at the beginning of each school year, where elections for positions are required, seeking indications of interest in the following positions:

- President;
- Vice President;
- Secretary;
- Treasurer; and
- Committee Members

All parents/family members/carers are members of the Parents and Friends Association and are invited to all meetings.

The Principal is an ex-officio member of the Parents and Friends Association and a member of the Executive. The Principal (or his/her delegate) will be represented at all Ordinary meetings of the Parents and Friends Association.

The School/College Community Nominee is a member of the Parents and Friends Association and a member of the Executive. The School/College Community Nominee is nominated for a two-year period through a singlenomination by the Parents and Friends Association Executive and the School/College Board Executive, to represent the School/College Community on the Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents Council (TCSPC). The TCSPC will still accept a school representative as the nominee if they are not a member of either the School P&F or Board.

Nominees should be approved at the meeting of the School Parents and Friends Association and due to the legal indemnity of the Church Trust Corporation should satisfy the criteria as outlined in the Board Manual Section 3.1, which states:

“Members show the value they place on Catholic ethos by the way they support the school’s Vision and Mission. They are called to respond to the Catholic community, focused as it is upon the person of Jesus Christ, and to reflect genuine concern for students’ formation as Catholic men and women.

To fulfil their role, members are expected to participate in formation. In this way, they can explore the richness of the Catholic tradition as it is being reformulated to meet contemporary challenges and opportunities. Such formation is essential to appreciate fully the role in supporting the education of young people for participation in family, the Church and world communities today.

Members are protected from liability to the extent that this is possible by law and in keeping with appropriate insurance policies held by the school. The Church Trust Corporation indemnifies every person who is, or has been, a member of a school Parents and Friends Association.

It is imperative that members act honestly and diligently and respect the confidentiality of discussions. It is not possible to indemnify members, through insurance or otherwise, for conduct involving lack of good faith or for unlawful activity.

Members must be aware constantly that, on any particular issue, they must act clearly, and be seen to act clearly, in the best interests of the Association and its operations, and the best interests of the school. It is incumbent upon members to act as individuals committed to the spiritual, faith, social, intellectual, physical and educational welfare of children as distinct from representing a specific interest group or groups within the school or Church community (for example, sporting group or parish liturgy committee). Members must exercise their decision objectively, even though it may not suit their personal interests or reflect their personal views.

Members should:

- possess an enthusiasm for and willingness to promote the mission of Catholic schools,*
- bring to the Association their gifts and skills,*
- desire to give service to their school community,*
- be prepared to undertake formation, and*
- have sufficient time to devote to duties. Potential members must:*
- have an ability to work cooperatively and constructively with all members of the Association,*
- have an ability and desire to uphold confidentiality, and*
- hold a valid Working with Vulnerable People Card*

Members must not:

- be bankrupt,*
- have been convicted of an offence involving fraud or dishonesty,*
- have been convicted of a serious criminal offence, especially related to the welfare of children,*
- commit an act with intent to deceive or defraud,*
- make improper use of information to gain material advantage either personally or for another person,*
- conceal, destroy or falsify records of the Association, nor*
- refuse or fail to allow an auditor to perform his or her duties, or hinder, obstruct or delay an auditor.”*

3.4 The Role of Parents and Friends Associations Office Bearers

Each Parents and Friends Association needs a team to ensure that actions happen during and between meetings. This team becomes the Office Bearers of the Parents and Friends Association and the actions are less onerous if all Office Bearers are willing to share the responsibility for operating a successful Parents and Friends Association.

A suggestion about the roles for the Office Bearers is included: see [appendix 2](#).

3.5 How can you encourage parents to become involved in the Parents and Friends Association

There should be an ongoing process of encouraging members to be actively involved in their Association. If parents are reluctant to become involved, find out why. Members are a vital part of the organisation – decisions should not be left to just a few.

Some of the following ideas may help you to increase members:

- alternate meeting times
- allowing for social interaction
- running meetings well
- present interesting speakers and topics
- ensure parents know what is being discussed by advertising on school apps, on school approved social media in the newsletter and notices sent home to parents.

We realise that not everyone has the time to come to Parents and Friends Association meetings. Parents support their children's school in many ways and these must be recognised and valued.

They include:

- assisting in the canteen, uniform shop or library
- helping with classroom activities
- providing expertise in particular areas and so on.

Participation in the Parents and Friends Association must always be seen as an invitation, not as an obligation. Parents, as well as having the right to volunteer, also have the right not to. Acknowledge the fact that all parents have an interest in their children's education and continue to encourage them to take part in a variety of school activities. The more comfortable and confident parents feel in the school environment, the more likely they are to contribute to their children's learning experiences.

3.6 Meetings

Meetings of the Parents and Friends Association should be held on a regular basis during school terms. Meetings can be run either in person or on line or via a mixture of both (if available). Meetings should be regular and properly convened. They may be run formally or informally, but decisions and agreements must be formally recorded with movers and seconders and all who wish to speak must be allowed to have the chance to do so.

Typical Order of a Meeting

The order of the meeting follows the Agenda which has been drawn up by the Chairperson or Secretary: see appendix 3 for a typical agenda for Parents and Friends Association meetings.

The agenda is prepared in advance of the meeting. While there should be a meeting agenda, members of your Parents and Friends Association may change the order of the items by placing urgent business ahead of reports. The agenda as well as the minutes from the previous meeting must be available before the meeting to allow members enough time to know and consider the items to be discussed. Following the meeting, the minutes should be written up by the Secretary and distributed for all to see. An action list drawn up is helpful for people to follow and be reminded of business that needs attending to.

Open the meeting

The Chairperson declares the meeting open, welcomes all present and calls for any apologies and any additional items for the agenda.

Opening Prayer

The Chairperson should prepare an opening prayer or arrange for someone to lead the meeting in prayer. The prayer can be as simple as “the Our Father”. The Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents Council has developed a number of prayers which are available on the website www.tcspc.org.au/publications/public.

Apologies

An apology should usually be given to the Secretary before the meeting. Your apology shows that you are interested in the Committee. The Secretary records the names of all present at the

meeting.

Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting may be read. Members are asked if the minutes are a true record of the previous meeting. The Chairperson will call for a motion to accept them as a true record, seeking a mover and seconder and putting the motion to a vote.

Business Arising from the Minutes

Any topic which needs to be discussed from the last meeting is discussed at this time. Any actions since the last meeting will be reported at this time.

Correspondence

The Secretary will list or mention any incoming letters which need to be drawn to the attention of the Committee. Any outgoing letters are also mentioned (these may need to be confirmed (approved) by the meeting).

Treasurers Report

The Treasurer may give a monthly report of the financial status of the Association, which may include any accounts which need approval before being paid.

Principal's Report/Board Report

The Principal /School Leader may give a report of key issues. The Parents and Friends Association representative on the Board may also report back on the previous Board meeting.

Other Reports

Any Sub Committees which have been formed by the Parents and Friends Association will then provide their report. The TCSPC School/College Community Nominee would report at this point in the meeting. It may also be that a member has attended a special meeting or seminar and should report on this to the Committee.

General Business

Topics of interest to the group are usually discussed under this section. The Chairperson may take motions on any relevant topics which require action. Possible guest speakers for future meetings

may also form part of this section.

Next Meeting

The next meeting date and venue for meeting will be decided or confirmed.

Closing prayer

The Chairperson should prepare a closing prayer or arrange for someone to lead the meeting in prayer. The prayer can be as simple as “the Our Father”. The Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents Council has developed a number of prayers which are available on the website www.tcspc.org.au/publications/public.

Close the meeting

The Chairperson declares the meeting closed once all matters of the meeting are dealt with.

3.7 How to make meetings work

Meetings are held to encourage group discussion and make decisions. Meetings do not have to be formal, styles can vary from traditional to open and relaxed. Responsibility needs to be taken that the committee functions well, that decisions are made successfully and followed through.

Formal voting is a quick way of following a meeting’s agenda but it may run the risk of alienating those who lose the vote and thereby damage the group’s sense of unity.

Consensus on the other hand is agreement reached through a process of gathering viewpoints and through discussion and negotiation. The goal of consensus is to reach a final decision that everyone feels comfortable with although the group decision may not be unanimous. You may need a vote at the end to formally record the decision, especially financial ones as the auditor will require this. While consensus is often more difficult and takes more time, it is the ideal way for a participatory group to make decisions.

Finally, consider the needs of everyone who comes to the meeting. To make it work well, everyone should:

- focus on issues not on personalities
- confine the discussion to the topic
- listen to all member’s points of view
- avoid speaking at great length
- avoid using jargon

- feel free to ask for explanations
- allow only one person to speak at a time
- avoid private conversations while someone else is speaking
- start on time and finish on time

All decisions must be transparent and shared.

Major problems occur are when members are excluded from debating and voting on issues.

When the executive / committee are making all of the decisions without involving the members, parents and friends very rapidly lose interest in supporting the Parents and Friends Association and attending meetings.

There needs to be active involvement by all as well as true democracy for a Parents and Friends Association to remain vital and alive.

It is important to have a general meeting once a month or at least once per term at which all present can have input and vote.

3.8 *Spending Parents and Friends Associations Funds*

Fundraising and spending by a Parents and Friends Association is facilitated by good communication between the school principal, the Board and the Parents and Friends Association. The following principles should apply to the expenditure of funds raised by the Parents and Friends Association:

- Consult your Parents and Friends Association's own constitution, to make sure that you comply with the rules about expenditure of funds;
- Parents and Friends Associations raise funds to provide extras for their children's education in the expectation that the basics are provided within normal school budgets;
- The School/College Board/Principal should not request that Parents and Friends Associations make up shortfalls in the school/college's budget, nor request specific amounts of money from the Parents and Friends Association to "balance the books".
- Parents and Friends Associations should not allocate funds beyond the current term of office of the Office Bearers (i.e. commit future committees to raise funds for an ongoing activity).

Parents and Friends Associations often choose to help the school by raising funds for specific items, events or services that will benefit the students at the school. Sometimes, Parents and Friends Associations may support projects that directly benefit the schools or teachers because there are flow-on benefits to students.

In order to get the support of the parent community for fundraising, it is important to involve it in determining priorities for fundraising and expenditure, publicise the intended purpose and provide opportunities for the school community to see the results of the expenditure in active use.

Deciding how to spend the money raised by the Parents and Friends Associations, including voluntary contributions, should be discussed as widely as possible in the school community. The Parents and Friends Association meetings are the ideal forum for discussion on how to spend the funds raised, as both the principal and at least one of the parent members of the school board are likely to be present to explain the school's needs and to suggest priorities. For some schools the principal provides a "wish list" for the Parents and Friends Association to consider. Any expenditure should be formally moved and seconded at a meeting of the Parents and Friends Association. Major proposed expenditure should be notified in advance of the Parents and Friends Association meeting so as many parents as possible have opportunity to vote or have a say.

The wider school community should be informed of the decisions reached in such discussions, and the school newsletter is an appropriate way to do this. The Parents and Friends Association should explain its reasons for supporting or not supporting the expenditure of funds for particular items requested.

The beginning and end of this subject is that clear communication and goodwill between the Principal, School Board and the Parents and Friends Association is required.

See [appendix 4](#) which contains some suggestions on how to raise funds for Parents and Friends Association activities or for other ideas refer to the Fund Raising Directory <http://www.fundraisingdirectory.com.au/>.

3.9 Meeting Procedures

For your association to run democratically, meetings should be regular and properly convened. They may be run formally or informally, but decisions and agreements must be formally recorded with movers and seconders and all who wish to speak may be allowed to have the chance to do so. See [appendix 5](#) which contains some "Effective Meeting Tips".

- ***Chairing the meeting***

The President must make sure members have been advised of the meeting time and location well in advance and that an agenda has been prepared and sent. The President must ensure that the meetings commence and finish with a prayer. The President presides over the meeting to ensure that proceedings are conducted in a proper and orderly manner and to guide the meeting towards achieving its aims. In order to do this the President has the power to:

- Ensure procedures are followed;
- Decide who can speak and in what order;
- Ensure sufficient discussion on matters have taken place; and
- Reject motions if insufficient notice has been given or if the motions are phrased in objectionable or ambiguous language.

The President should:

- Know and follow the constitution
- Ensure meetings start and end on time
- Follow the agenda
- Sign the confirmed minutes of the previous meeting
- Give all members the opportunity to speak
- Ensure that the discussion is addressed through the chair
- Sum up the debate without personal bias to ensure motions and amendments are clearly understood before the vote is taken

The President should not:

- Impose personal views
- Influence the debate
- Dominate the meeting
- Chair the meeting without preparing for it beforehand.

*** Remember the chairperson is a member of the team and not the “Boss”.**

- ***Financial Operations***

As listed in appendix 2 the Parents and Friends Association Treasurer is responsible and accountable to the Parents and Friends Association for all monies held in Parents and Friends Association accounts. Parents and Friends Associations monies

should be maintained in a Catholic Development Fund (CDF) account where possible.

Upon accepting the role of Treasurer, the Treasurer should:

- Obtain the records from the previous Treasurer;
- Find out how any subcommittees keep their financial records;
- Have signatories for account operation changed at the bank as quickly as possible; and
- Begin recording the transactions of the Parents and Friends Association as they occur during the month.

The Treasurer is responsible for seeing that the Parents and Friends Association's members are provided with all the information on what is happening to the Parents and Friends Association's money. Including:

- A useful and adequate record of accounts is kept, for the Parents and Friends Association and subcommittees;
- The adopted bookkeeping system is not confusing and really works. (a simple Excel spreadsheet accounting package would be suitable);
- That those who are handling cash, are protected by an appropriate check-up system that will not give a third-party room to make unfounded accusations, which cannot be refuted because of poor practices;
- A minimum check-up system has two people to count any cash together, and initial the entry in the record book. Talk to your auditor on this;
- Invoices/accounts are paid on time, to the Parents and Friends Association best advantage;
- The Parents and Friends Association is advised of what money it owes so that it does not overspend
- Check bank balances and transactions regularly and have up to date 'statements' available for the meeting.
- If using electronic banking ensure that two authorised office bearers of the Parents and Friends Association operate it and that they do not share passwords or compromise the required security;
- If paying accounts by cheque, cross all cheques "not negotiable" and cross out "or bearer";
- If you need to write a cash cheque for petty cash, wages or a float, issue a cheque in the name of the person taking it to the bank, write petty cash, wages or float next to the name and

“open” it by writing, “please pay cash” on top of the cheque and both parties signing it a second time next to these words;

- A cheque made out to a particular person should not be co-signed by that person if they are a signatory on the account;
- Use a petty cash impress system which allows only the replenishment of the spend made.

This is how it works:

- If the Parents and Friends Association agrees to advance fifty dollars petty cash to the Secretary, you issue a cheque for \$50.00 accordingly;
- The Secretary then has the \$50.00 cash to be used to purchase stamps, stationery or reimburse phone calls etc. Receipts or Petty Cash Vouchers are kept and these are entered into a Petty Cash Account record broken up into the various areas of expense;
- At each Parents and Friends Association meeting the Secretary advises the amount of Petty Cash used during the month and a cheque is made out for the amount giving the Secretary a total of \$50.00 once more;
- Use a profit and loss statement when the Parents and Friends Association has any long-term fundraising projects you may need to include a stock-take figure for this to be accurate.
- A budget is a useful way to plan the year, it gives goals to aim for, arranges priorities on when money is to be spent and reduces the level of “off the cuff” or ad hoc decision-making on spending;
- The Parents and Friends Association’s annual statements should be completed as soon as possible and handed over to the auditor (if applicable – this should be discussed with the School Principal), with receipts, cheque stubs, deposit books, minute books and other records quickly;
- Where there is more than one account, separate statements should be prepared for audit. The Parents and Friends Association Treasurer also prepares an all-inclusive statement; and
- Subcommittees should not hold large amounts of money in their bank accounts in the normal course of events. Amounts over the requirement of working capital should be transferred to the Parents and Friends Association general account.

- ***The Annual General Meeting***

Why do you need to hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM)?

An annual general meeting is held to elect Office Bearers, present annual reports or attend to matters that are required to be decided at an AGM.

When should you hold the AGM?

Your constitution probably states that the time and place should be determined by a General Meeting of the Parents and Friends Association. Some Parents and Friends Associations hold their AGM towards the end of the school year in November as parents are then more familiar with the Parents and Friends Association and its activities and it allows for some planning to take place for the next year.

How much notice do you need to give of the date of the AGM?

The standard Parents and Friends Association Constitution requires that the notice of the date of the AGM be given in writing no less than seven days prior to the proposed meeting, one month is preferable.

What is dealt with at the AGM?

The Executive Committee, as described in your Parents and Friends Association constitution, is elected at each Annual General Meeting. The Treasurer must present an audited copy of the annual statement of receipts and expenditure.

The Outgoing President as well as any Sub-Committees should present written reports of the past year's activities.

An Auditor with appropriate qualifications should be appointed for the coming year.

How should the Annual Reports be presented?

Annual Reports should be printed and distributed before the AGM and a verbal summary presented at the meeting.

What is an Executive Committee?

The Executive Committee are your Office Bearers, those who take on the specific responsibilities of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and School/College Community Nominee.

How can you encourage more people to stand for positions?

All members should feel welcome and encouraged to participate throughout the year. They should be aware of what is involved in the various roles of office. If members are reluctant to take on office-bearers positions, find out why. Do the current office-bearers have too heavy a workload? Can some of the tasks be delegated to other members? To encourage more parents, some schools prefer not to have the AGM coincide with the first Parents and Friends Association meeting of the school year. The first meeting could provide an opportunity for planning the year's events and for social interaction.

See [appendix 6](#) Checklist for Assessing Parents and Friends Association Meetings as a guide to how effectively the meetings through the year are conducted and what improvements could be considered. This may encourage more people to stand for positions.

Attracting new office bearers/members

If the Parents and Friends Association is having problems finding new officer bearers or members you might like to try some of these ideas. [Appendix 7](#) contains some ideas to assist in finding new executive members/members for your Parents and Friends Association.

Is there a limit to the time someone can remain on office bearer?

Your constitution will specify any time limits that may apply otherwise, retiring committee members are eligible to stand for election.

4.0 Social Media

A number of Parents and Friends Associations have established Facebook pages to promote the activities of the Association and their school/college. Some of these are managed by the Association and some by the school/college and some are either opened or closed. Careful consideration for correct setup needs to be investigated. In addition to Facebook there are many other social media outlets (i.e. twitter, blogs etc.). The bishops of Australia have developed Social Networking Protocols See [appendix 8](#) which contains some helpful tips for the navigating a way to use Social Media in sharing the message.

Facebook

Parents and Friends Association often wish to establish a Facebook page, as a further means of engaging your parent community in the activities of the school/college. A number of considerations must be investigated prior to establishing a Facebook page:

Approval.

The approval of the school/college principal must be obtained prior to the establishment of any page carrying the school/college name. A proposal should be developed and discussed with the Principal by the Parents and Friends Association Executive. This will require some of the following work to be undertaken but then will allow for the easy establishment of a

page. Once the Principal has given approval then the development of a suitable page should be established.

Establish guidelines to govern the use and type of page.

Guidelines will need to be established to ensure the correct usage of the page is maintained. These guidelines should state that the page would be monitored regularly and a review undertaken in the near future to gauge the page's usefulness. A decision as to what type of page the Parents and Friends Association would have needs to be established. There are two possibilities:

An Open page allows anyone to join the page through "liking" or "friending".

A Closed page allows only access to those who are granted access

Investigate Facebook settings and security.

Facebook has a number of settings and securities which need to be setup. Whilst these settings are setup at the beginning of the establishment of the page they can be altered along the way.

Appoint Administrators.

To ensure that information added to the Facebook page is suitable to your school/college community, two administrators should be appointed to carry out this work.

The types of things the administrators would be doing is uploading material onto the page, ensuring that offensive language or comments are removed or if someone misuses the page their access can be blocked.

Establish what information would be included onto the page.

Below is a possible listing of items that could be included onto the Facebook page (bearing in mind many of the things listed are also provided to parents by the school/college.

- Links to the School/College website;
- Term dates;
- Uniform changeover;
- Grade camps;
- Enrolment dates;
- Fair updates;

- Highlights of various grades/classes/sporting teams achievements or units of work;
- School/College wide events (including sports, NAPLAN etc.)
- Parents and Friends Meeting dates; and Reminders about returns – parent-teacher, student information, permission slips for excursions etc.

This list is only limited to what information is given to the administrators to upload, and the amount of time they have to commit to the page.

It may be best to start ‘small’ and gauge the reaction and usefulness to your audience and then build upon this in the future.

5. Effective Schools

a. Effective Schools are those where:

- a) There is a strong focus on teaching and learning;
- b) There is meaningful and positive leadership;
- c) The school community has a shared vision for the school;
- d) The classroom and school environment are conducive to learning;
- e) There are high expectations of students;
- f) Positive reinforcement is used;
- g) Performance is monitored regularly;
- h) Students have rights and responsibilities; and
- i) The School is a place of learning for all.

b. Effective partnerships

Building effective partnerships between parents, families and schools to support children’s learning leads to better learning outcomes. The whole school community benefits when parental engagement is an integral part of school planning and improvement processes.

c. Family-School-Parish partnerships

Family-School-Parish Partnerships are collaborative relationships and activities involving all members of the Tasmanian Catholic community. Effective partnerships are based on mutual trust, respect, shared responsibility and good communication. These foster the spiritual formation and education of the children and young people at a school

within the parish community.

With our faith at its centre this framework seeks to provide partnership strategies that can be used to support the development of the whole person.

d. *The importance Family-School-Parish partnerships*

Families are the first educators of their children and they continue to influence their children's faith formation, learning and development throughout their whole lives.ⁱ

Effective schools have high levels of family and parish community involvement and this is strongly related to improved student learning, attendance and behaviour.ⁱⁱ

Effective parishes nurture and greatly benefit from family and Catholic school involvement.ⁱⁱⁱ

Developing Family-School-Parish partnerships requires commitment and time to enable all to experience deeper, rewarding and more meaningful pastoral relationships.^{iv}

The Family-School-Parish Partnerships framework encourages sustainable and effective relationships between all members of the Tasmanian Catholic community.^v

e. *A calling*

A successful partnership needs to involve families and members of the school and parish communities at the School level in its preparation, planning, implementation and review. These communities are encouraged to review their current partnerships and explore new ways of working together where necessary.

f. *Parents are involved*

i. *Getting Involved in Your Child's Schooling*

Being involved in your child's schooling adds richness to their experience and sends a clear message that their education is important to you.

Your child will do much better in school if you are actively involved in their education and if you are as informed as possible about the education system.

ii. How to be involved

You can choose how you become involved, based on your own particular interests, availability and skills. Here are some suggestions:

- a. talk with your child – ask “how was school today?”;
- b. regularly read with your child at home;
- c. look at your child’s homework and ask them questions about it;
- d. limit electronics (computers, ipad’s, ipod’s etc.) and television viewing on school nights;
- e. regularly discuss your child’s progress with their teacher;
- f. visit your child’s classroom (if allowed and subject to WWVP);
- g. volunteer for parent help (if allowed and subject to WWVP) – you can help in the classroom with activities such as reading;
- h. volunteer to help out with school activities such as open days, working bees, school fairs, the canteen and excursions, extracurricular activities, drama’s; (if allowed and subject to WWVP)
- i. read the school newsletter;
- j. join the school’s parent group;
- k. go along to the Parents and Friend Association meetings;
- l. if they have one, check your school’s website regularly;
- m. attend school social occasions and become an advocate for education.

The best way to keep up with what is happening in your school is via the newsletter and school apps.

iii. The benefits of Parental involvement in children’s learning

“It appears to be most critical for children’s achievement at school-entry age that their parents perceive themselves as educators of their children” (*Nancy Dunn: ‘Children’s achievement at school entry age as a function of mothers’ and fathers’ teaching sets’*)

1. Improves parent’s understanding of schools and education;
2. Improves student’s attainments;
3. Enables parents to share the knowledge of their own children with teaching staff;
4. Provides practical help for busy teachers;
5. Parents develop new strategies for talking, reading and

- writing with their children;
- 6. Parents gain confidence in helping their children;
- 7. Children’s performance, attitudes and interests are enhanced;
- 8. Teachers gain a greater understanding of children;
- 9. Teachers gain a greater understanding of parents and their role, and their hopes and dreams for their children;
- 10. Teacher impressions of parents are more positive.

“Children’s success in the first years of primary school depends on a background of rich learning in their preschool years. When moving through the first few school grades parental interest in their life at school and parent participation in their school activities is vital for children’s success.” (*Children’s Learning – The Parent Factor*)

6. Parents and Schools

a. A partnership in education

Parents are partners in schooling by virtue of their role as the central provider/carer and the role they play in their children’s learning and development.

Parents have the right to be involved in all aspects of education of their children, at home, at school and at the system level.

There are many ways in which parents can be involved. These include:

- i. supporting learning at home;
- ii. helping in the classroom and with a variety of school programs such as craft, sport, excursions (subject to WWVP);
- iii. helping in the school canteen or school library; (subject to WWVP);
- iv. assisting with fundraising;
- v. attending interviews with teachers about their children’s progress;
- vi. participating in discussions with other parents about school programs and policies;
- vii. becoming a member of the Parents and Friend Association;
- viii. becoming a member of the school board;
- ix. representing the parents of your school as TCSPC School/College Community Nominee and attend TCSPC Council meetings;
- x. Representing the wider parent community on State and National committees and advisory groups.

Parent participation is a democratic right. It contributes significantly to better outcomes for all students. It enables the school system and individual schools to respond more effectively to community values,

aspirations and needs. It enhances the strength and vibrancy of the education system and, most importantly, it builds a stronger school community.

7. Valuing Your Community

Schools benefit from the support of their Parents and Friends Associations. Besides creating opportunities for the school community to interact socially, the Parents and Friends Associations provides an important forum to discuss and debate school issues. How parents become involved in the education of their children will depend on what suits the family.

Being involved in the Parents and Friends Association can have several advantages:

- meeting the parents of your children's friends
- getting to know the principal and teachers
- understanding more about what happens at school
- acquiring new skills
- demonstrating a positive attitude to schooling to your child

8. Policies

The Tasmanian Catholic Education Commission has developed a number of policies which cover all Tasmanian Catholic Schools and Colleges. These policies are regularly reviewed and updated. These policies can be located on the Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents Council website (<http://www.tcspc.org.au/content/tasmanian-catholic-education-commission-policies-and-guidelines>) which links to the Tasmanian Catholic Education Office website or via your own school websites.

a. Grievance Policy

The Schools Registration Board (the Board) was established under the *Education Act 1994* (the Act) to ensure that non-government schools comply with standards for education approved by the Minister for Education. The Act requires that all non-government schools operating in Tasmania must be registered by the Schools Registration Board.

Under this legislation, all non-government school are required to have a grievance policy in place.

i. Grievance Process

Section 53 – (1) (fd) the proposed grievance process the standard requires schools to provide a process for dealing with grievances.

The process must be published, available to and widely known in the school community.

The processes must provide clear procedures for:

1. members of staff
2. students
3. parents or carers/guardians
4. the general community

In the case of a grievance against any member/s of the school community, complainants must be provided with the process document at the time of notifying of a possible grievance.

The documented process must:

5. allow for mediation, and
6. recognise the right of aggrieved parties to have ultimate recourse to resolution through legal processes

The Board recommends that schools include the possibility of resolution through mutually acceptable conciliation procedures before recourse to arbitration or other legal processes.

Appendix 1

Sample Parents and Friends Association Constitution

1. PREAMBLE

The Catholic school known as (INSERT FULL SCHOOL NAME) operates under the auspices of the Archbishop of Hobart. In accordance with his desire for the school to give witness to its most important role as an agency of the Catholic Church in Tasmania the Archbishop has endorsed the establishment of an Association of parents and friends of the school:

- to promote the mission of the school; and
- to foster a true spirit of community.

In that spirit Canon Law 796 lays the foundation for the relationship between parents and the friends and the Catholic school, it states,

"Among the means of advancing education, Christ's faithful are to consider schools as of great importance, since they are the principal means of helping parents to fulfil their role in education.

There must be the closest cooperation between parents and the teachers to whom they entrust their children to be educated. In fulfilling their task, teachers are to collaborate closely with the parents and willingly listen to them; associations and meetings of parents are to be set up and held in high esteem"

2. NAME

The Association shall be known as (INSERT FULL SCHOOL NAME) Parents & Friends Association.

3. OBJECTIVES

3.1 The objectives of the Association shall be those which accord with the content of the documents *"The Catholic School" (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, Rome (1977))* and *"The Code of Canon Law (1983)"*.

In particular, the Association will participate in the optimum spiritual, intellectual, social and physical development of the pupils in the school by:

- (a) fostering a distinctive Catholic environment in the school;
- (b) developing maximum co-operation between parents and school staff;
- (c) utilising those structures which are established to promote

the principles of Catholic education;

- (d) providing a vehicle participation, information sharing and participation of parents, in a spirit of collaboration and common purpose;
- (e) identifying gifts and talents within the parent community and making them available to meet the spiritual, educational, social and material needs of the school; and
- (f) work to promote and defend government support for Catholic education and promote recognition of the important role that parents play in the education of their children (by ensuring the school pays the levy to the Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents Council and that the Association participates in the activities of the Parents Council).

3.2 The Association shall not:

- (a) have, nor shall it seek to have, any direct control over the management and administration of the school;
- (b) affiliate with any political party or body; or
- (c) affiliate with any association whose objectives are in conflict with the objectives stated in clause 3.1.

4. MEMBERSHIP

- 4.1 Membership of the Association is open to all parents or guardians of students in the school; former parents and students; staff members; and friends of the school who wish to assist with the promotion of the Association's objectives.
- 4.2 The Parish Priest (where applicable) and Principal are ex-officio members of the Association.

5. SUBSCRIPTIONS

The subscription, if any, shall be determined by the Annual General Meeting and shall be payable.

6. LEADERSHIP

- 6.1 The affairs of the Association will be co-ordinated and facilitated by an Executive Committee which will comprise the following office bearers who shall be elected at each Annual General Meeting:
 - President
 - Vice President
 - Secretary

- Treasurer
- Committee Members

The Principal is an ex-officio member of the Association and a member of the Executive. The Principal (or his/her delegate) will be represented at all Ordinary meetings of the Association.

The School/College Community Nominee is a member of the Parents and Friends Association and a member of the Executive. The School/College Community Nominee is nominated for a two-year period through a single nomination by the Parents and Friends Association Executive and the School/College Board Executive, to represent the School/College Community on the Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents Council.

- 6.2 No person shall hold any one of the Executive positions for more than three (3) consecutive years.
- 6.3 Should any office become vacant during the year it may be filled by a member of the Association co-opted by the Executive, or by election at an ordinary meeting of the Association.

7. FUNCTIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- 7.1 The Executive Committee shall ensure that the activities of the association comply with the requirements of this Constitution and, except as otherwise provided herein, shall:
 - (a) give due notice to the school community aboutt meetings of theAssociation;
 - (b) ensure that correspondence is appropriately considered and dealt with;
 - (c) inform the school community aboutt the Association's activities;
 - (d) ensure that adequate documentation is kept; and
 - (e) ensure that proper financial budgeting, disbursement, reporting and recordkeeping procedures are followed.
- 7.2 Special Projects
 - (a) The Association may appoint officers for special projects or fundraising activities. These officers may be co-opted onto the Executive Committee, if deemed appropriate, by an Annual General Meeting. Such appointments will be effective until the subsequent Annual General Meeting.
 - (b) Where the Association manages these activities, it does so under

the auspices of the School Board.

- (c) Any salaried staff employed to carry out these activities must be employed by the Principal under the policy and procedures of the Catholic Education Office.

7.3 Committees

- (a) Standing or ad-hoc committees may be established by meetings of the Association.
- (b) These committees operate under the direction of the Association and its Executive Committee and may be disbanded at any time.
- (c) The membership of such committees will expire at each Annual General Meeting, but members will be eligible for reappointment by the Annual Meeting.

8. MEETINGS

- 8.1 At least one ordinary meetings of the Association will normally be held during each school term.
- 8.2 The Executive Committee will meet as often as required to effectively co-ordinate and facilitate the activities of the Association.
- 8.3 An Annual General Meeting of the Association will be held in the month of (INSERT MONTH) each year.

As well as any other matters required by this Constitution, at this meeting:

- (a) the President will present an Annual Report;
 - (b) the Treasurer will present an audited Financial Statement and a budget for the forthcoming year;
 - (c) reports of activities since the last Annual General Meeting will be presented by the Chairpersons of standing and/or ad-hoc committees;
 - (d) a Returning Officer appointed by those present shall conduct and declare the election of members of the Executive Committee;
 - (e) an Auditor will be appointed; and
 - (f) any other business as may properly be brought forward shall be dealt with.
- 8.4 Standard meeting procedures will be used at all meetings of the Association, but in a manner which reflects the Association's

spirit of participation, collaboration and common purpose.

- 8.5 Meetings of the Association will deal with issues of importance to the school community and any other matters pertaining to the Association's objectives.

Issues involving individual students or members of staff are not matters to be raised within the context of the Association's meetings. The person chairing any meeting of the Association shall therefore ensure that no reference or statement is made which is critical of a member of the Association, a member of staff, a student or any other member of the school community.

- 8.6 A quorum shall be:

- ordinary meetings 4 members (excluding ex officio members);
- Executive Committee meetings, 3 members (excluding ex officio members); and
- Annual General Meeting, 4 members (excluding ex officio members).

- 8.7 Voting shall be determined by a simple majority, with the exception of amendments to the Constitution. In the event of a tied vote a motion shall lapse.

- 8.8 In the event of a failure to reach consensus on a significant matter further advice should be sought from the appropriate authority. Once all issues are clarified a proposed motion for consideration by the next meeting of the Association will be published in the school newsletter.

9. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE ASSOCIATION AND THE SCHOOL BOARD

- 9.1 The Association recognises the working functions of the School Board and the Board's overall responsibility for the management of the school.

- 9.2 In furthering the Association's objectives, the members will consult with the Board in a spirit of collaboration putting forward ideas and suggestions.

- 9.3 The Association Executive and the School Board Executive will nominate a single nomination as the School/College School Community Nominee, to represent the school community on the Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents Council.

9.4 Activities of the Association carried out with the purposes of fundraising or undertaking projects to improve the school will be developed in close liaison with the Board using the following model in the normal course of events:

- a list of needs and projects is prepared by the Board in consultation with the Association;
- priorities are set with the advice of the Principal;
- the priority list is reviewed with the Association through a meeting of the respective Executives.
- the Association and the Board will agree on a program for its implementation;
- the Association provides funds and monitors projects to completion;
- the Association will keep the Board advised of progress as appropriate.

10. REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION

10.1 The terms and conditions of this Constitution may be amended:

- (1) by a resolution passed by a majority of not less than two-thirds of all financial members present at an Annual General Meeting;
- (2) a notice foreshadowing such a motion must be published in the school newsletter under the signatures of the proposer and seconder no later than twenty-eight days prior to the date of the Annual General Meeting;
- (3) no such resolution shall be valid until ratified in writing by the School Board.

10.2 This Constitution will normally be subject to a review by the members of the Association every three years from the date of its adoption, unless an earlier review is requested by the school authority.

11. INDEMNITY IN RESPECT TO LIABILITY

Appropriate liability cover is provided for diocesan schools by the Archdiocese of Hobart. In the case of Congregational schools this coverage is provided by the trustees of the governing body. The appropriate governing authority for the school will indemnify a person in respect of liability from matters done in good faith.

12. WINDING UP

All assets and monies of the Association are the property of the School and will be paid over to the school authority in the event of the Association ceasing to operate.

Signatures of the Parties:

Date P&F President

Date P&F Secretary

Date Principal

Date School Board Chair

Appendix 2

Parents and Friends Associations Duty Roles

1. The President

Chairs all general, executive committee and Annual General Meetings of the association. The role of the President includes:

- Provides Leadership. As a leader, be a role model by listening, showing interest, appreciation and confidence in members, identify opportunities for improvements;
- Acting as a spokesperson for the association;
- Must ensure that the decisions made are consistent with the objectives of the organisation and in accordance with the constitution;
- Reporting to Parents and Friends Association meetings about the activities of the Parents and Friends Association;
- Ensure meetings follow the agenda and run on time;
- Follow up on actions from the previous meeting;
- Sign the minutes of the previous meeting once they have been accepted as a true and accurate record of that meeting;
- Ensuring adequate and efficient communication exists between the members of the association and the school;
- Make sure as many opinions as possible are expressed;
- Ensure speakers are not interrupted;
- Develops a working relationship with the Secretary and other members of the executive;
- Exercising some supervision of the functions of other officer bearers; and
- Encouraging parents to participate.

2. The Vice President

The role (If applicable) includes:

- Presiding as chair at meetings where the President is absent;
- Provides Leadership;
- Being familiar with the operation of the Parents and Friends Association;
- Becoming acquainted with the duties of President;
- Having a working understanding of meeting rules and procedures;
- Works with the President by sharing tasks to achieve the goals of the association ; and
- Undertaking tasks to reduce the burden of the President.

3. The Secretary

The role includes:

- Drawing up, in consultation with the President, the meeting agendas;
- Notice of meeting to attendees (allow at least 2 weeks prior to meeting date)
- Agenda to attendees (one week before the meeting)
- Communicate with Chairperson on any urgent correspondence as soon as possible after listing;
- Keeping full and correct minutes of the Parents and Friends Association proceedings;
- Advise Chairperson of any visitors and list apologies;
- Acting upon decisions as directed by the meeting;
- List all incoming and outgoing correspondence;
- Attending to the correspondence of the association;
- Have spare copies of agenda and minutes of previous meeting on hand for the meeting;
- Supply a prayer for meetings;
- Note all motions and resolutions. Proposer's name, Seconder's name and motion lost / carried;
- List attendees;
- Prepare minutes as soon as possible after the meeting;
- Prepare correspondence as soon as possible after the meeting;
- Action on motion / resolutions as soon as possible;
- Distribute minutes as soon as possible after the meeting;
- Organise information for the introduction of any guest speaker;
- Looking after the association documents;
- Meetings—assist Chairperson in smooth running of meetings;
- Develop a working relationship with the Chairperson of the Committee;
- Ensure that approved minutes are signed by the Chairperson; and
- Maintaining a register of financial and ex-officio members.

4. Treasurer

The Treasurer is responsible and accountable to the Parents and Friends Association for all monies held in Parents and Friends Association accounts.

The Treasurer's job is one of the most important roles in ensuring the smooth running of the Parents and Friends Association. Basically, all that is necessary is to record transactions regularly, to balance them with the

bank records (monthly suggested) and to present statements to the Parents and Friends Association for approval throughout the year.

Some key responsibilities of the Parents and Friends Association Treasurer are:

- Responsibility for overall responsibility for the financial management of the Parents and Friends Association;
- Setting of an annual budget;
- Keep accurate accounts of receipts and expenditure;
- Supply a statement of finance to the meeting;
- Prepare and annual statement, which must be audited;
- Pay all accounts as authorised by the meeting or as required;
- Issue receipts for all monies received;
- Ensure all payments are correctly completed and signed by the appropriate people;
- Ensure all monies are held / stored securely (preferably within school safe);
- Bank all money regularly; and

4.1 Authority to sign cheques (if applicable):

The requirement for the signing of cheques should be set out in the constitution of the association and should be strictly adhered to. The approved signatory's should be any two to sign of the President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer.

All funds should be held preferably in a CDF Account.

The CDF offers for the establishment of electronic transfers for the payment of accounts. This requires the entering of the information into the CDF online Business System and then getting a second authoriser to approve the payment. If the Parents and Friends Association is interested in having this facility, contract the CDF on (03) 6208 6260.

5. School/College Community Nominee

The role includes:

- Attend the Council meetings of the Tasmanian Catholic School Parents Council;
- Represent the views/concerns of your Parents and Friends Association, School/College Board at these meetings;
- Report back to your Parents and Friends Association, School

Board, Principal on the meetings and issues that may affect the education of your children;

- Attend any State Conference and Seminars to share information.

6. Parents and Friends Committee Member

The role includes:

- Attend meetings as regularly as possible and be punctual.
- Be prepared for the meeting by reading minutes of previous meeting and the agenda.
- Send apologies if unable to come to the next meeting.
- Be prepared to listen attentively when others are speaking.
- Be co-operative at all times, sharing interest in the issues at hand and doing your best to ensure that the meetings runs efficiently and does not move from the point.
- Address the Chairperson when speaking. This will prevent a confusing crossfire of discussion among individual members.
- Responsibility for what has been agreed should be shared by all group members.

Appendix 3

A Typical Agenda

Meeting of _____ to be held _____ on _____

- 1. Opening Prayer**
- 2. Apologies**
- 3. Confirmation of minutes of previous meeting (Date of previous meeting)**
- 4. Business Arising from Minutes (Previous Meeting)**
- 5. Correspondence**
- 6. Treasurers Report**
- 7. Principal's Report/Board Report**
- 8. Other Reports**
- 9. General Business**
- 10. Next Meeting**
- 11. Closing Prayer**

Events

- Fun Run, Walk-a-thon, Bike-a-thon, Dance-a-thon.
- Fairs and Fetes.
- Food from around the world.
- Trivia / Quiz Nights.
- A night at the movies.
- Auctions.
- Disco's.
- Car Wash.
- Ten Pin Bowling.
- Indoor Climbing.
- Raffles.
- Fashion Parade.
- School Art Exhibition.
- Progressive Dinner.
- Concerts (musical/performance)
- Talent evenings (parents and children)

Special Days – Non-Food

- Coin Line.
- Theme Days. E.g.: free dress, crazy day, wacky legs day, 60's, 70's or 80's day, Jeans day, PJ day, crazy hair day.

Special Days – Food

- Sausage Sizzle.
- BBQ veggie day.
- Smoothie / Milk Shake day.
- Pancake day.
- Pasta day.
- Juice bar day.
- Soup and Sandwich day.
- Cake Stall.

Fundraising Items

- School Cook Book.
- School made Calendars.
- Cards.
- Stickers.
- Bulbs.
- Portrait Photo's.
- School Catering for community events.

For more ideas try the Fund-Raising
Directory. www.fundraisingdirectory.com.au

Appendix 5 Effective Meeting Tips

1. Develop, distribute and circulate an agenda and any other documents / items prior to the meeting so members will be prepared, feel involved and be up to date.
2. Choose an appropriate meeting time.
3. Arrange the room so that members face each other.
4. Choose a location suitable to your group's size. Small rooms can get stuffy and create tension. A larger room is more comfortable and encourages individual expression.
5. Use visual aids for interest.
6. Greet members and make them feel welcome this includes members arriving late when appropriate.
7. Serve light refreshments, they are good icebreakers and make your members feel special and comfortable.
8. Start on time and end on time.
9. Stick to the agenda.
10. Encourage group discussion to get all points of view and ideas. You will have better quality decisions as well as highly motivated members where good discussion occurs. Members will feel that attending meetings is worthwhile.
11. Encourage feedback. Ideas, activities and commitment to the organisation improve when members see their impact on the decision making process.
12. Keep conversation focused on the topic.
13. Summarise agreements reached.
14. End the meeting on a unifying or positive note.
15. Set a date, time and place for the next meeting.
16. Give recognition and appreciation to jobs well done and attendance of members.

Appendix 6 A Checklist for Assessing Parents and Friends Association Meetings

There are many ways to work together as a group. There is no right or wrong, the best meeting procedure (what works for the group) should be agreed upon by a majority of the members. Use the checklist below to start discussion about your Parents and Friends Association meeting procedures.

Introducing people

Our Association has some “getting to know you” activities at the start of the year.

YES / NO

Our Association has a method of introducing new members which quickly makes them feel at home.

YES / NO

Our Association allows time during meetings for people to get to know each other socially.

YES / NO

Our Association provides tea / coffee during the evening.

YES / NO

Information Sharing

Members can put forward their opinions anonymously through a suggestion box.

YES / NO

Our Association explains the issues and tries to avoid jargon.

YES / NO

Our Association sets a regular time at each meeting for questions.

YES / NO

Problem Solving

Our Association has used these techniques to help with problem solving:

- Breaking into small groups. YES / NO
- Brainstorming. YES / NO
- Short statements from each member with no discussion. YES / NO
- Circulating the topics for discussion beforehand. YES / NO

Decision-making and who does what

Our Association has made sure that every member knows what sort of decision making process we use and how it works.

YES / NO

Our Association has discussed the decision making processes and is happy with the way we make our decisions.

YES / NO

When a decision is made, our Association notes who will carry it out and when.

YES / NO

Decisions our Association make are carried out and reported back.

YES / NO

CONSENSUS - DO YOU REALLY HAVE IT?

Are some people unable to speak because others talk a lot?

Do some members feel overwhelmed by the more powerful in the group?

Do people in the Association agree simply to get things over and done with?

Do people agree because they don't really understand the issue?

Do people agree because they're afraid to "rock the boat"?

Do people agree because they feel intimidated by those of authority attending?

Does consensus in our meeting mean that some people don't have their say?

If your Parents and Friends Association is having problems finding new office bearers or members you might like to try some of these ideas.

- Try contacting individuals personally (even pick them up and take them to meetings, morning teas, etc. If necessary) and inviting them initially to take on a small job – e.g. minute secretary, correspondence secretary, social secretary, treasurer, assistant treasurer etc.
- The idea is to break office bearers' roles down into 'bite-size' jobs, and get more people involved (through a personal approach).
- If nobody nominates for President, Secretary, Treasurer, Vice President etc. then elect a chairperson and minute secretary, etc. at each meeting for the time being.
- Personally invite the Principal and Teachers along to meetings and ask them to have input re resources required and/or give an occasional presentation on educational issues (literacy, reading, maths, etc.)
- Try alternating meetings between day and night.
- One person (with helpers) could be asked to organise each of a number of activities such as sausage sizzles, fairs, raffles, etc.
- Ask the Principal/Teachers to identify two or three parents from each class (men and women) who could form the basis of the committee (or nominate for the committee).
- Participate in the Tasmanian Catholic School Parents Council's (TCSPC) seminars, conference etc. to network with others and hear new ideas.
- Arrange more social functions (at little or no cost) – i.e. morning teas, wine and cheese nights, sausages sizzles/barbeques etc., where people can get to know each other and create some synergy, without having to constantly dip into their pockets

The Bishops Commission for Mission and Faith Formation, a Commission of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference has just released the following updated version of the Social-Networking Protocols. We hope that this will be helpful to you in navigating a way to use Social Media in sharing the message of Christ in the world.

Introduction

In the vast world of new technology, a myriad of possibilities for communication has been opened up for evangelisation and for building bridges. The Catholic Church recognises the enormous potential which these new technologies bring.

Addressing young people who have grown up in a digital world, Pope Benedict XVI in his message for the World Day of Communication 2011 recognised the great opportunities and challenges brought by social networking and the internet.

‘The new technologies are not only changing the way we communicate, but communication itself, so much so that it could be said that we are living through a period of vast cultural transformation. This means of spreading information and knowledge is giving birth to a new way of learning and thinking, with unprecedented opportunities for establishing relationships and building fellowship.’

Social networking, using platforms such as Facebook, is a phenomenon which allows groups to share information, build friendships and promote activities. Indeed, social networking has already proven to be a powerful way to engage with and promote the Gospel of Jesus Christ in a widevariety of fora.

The Church, in her desire to use technology for the greater glory of God, understands that this technology should be pursued only to the point to which it allows growth in faith and in communion with others.

The overarching principle in this communion should be that of human dignity, and at each step in the social networking endeavour, care should be taken by Church personnel to ensure that the innate dignity of each person is upheld.

These protocols are intended as a guide for those working at various levels of Church organisations. They are by no means exhaustive and may simply form the basis for more comprehensive and specific protocols at local levels.



On-line or off-line, respect for human dignity rules

On-line and off-line behaviour of clergy, Church employees and members of Church organisations – particularly those representing the Church – should always demonstrate a Christ-centred love for others. Even those working in Church organisations who might not be Christian should still ensure that when representing the Church, their behaviour off-line and on-line should demonstrate a respect for human dignity. Boundaries should always be taken into consideration and observed, particular in relating to young people in a youth ministry setting.

In particular, those involved in work with young people should be aware of the Church's child protection protocols and policies of both the Church and of civil authorities.

Those who engage in social networking as part of their Church ministry should do so in the name of evangelisation; to build appropriate relationships that can encourage and foster growth in faith. This engagement should facilitate a growing in relationship with Christ.

The sharing of information on sites should be of appropriate materials for faith formation or catechesis. Social-Networking sites can be ideal for promotion of Church events or activities and for sharing worship resources in a wide range of formats, be it video, text or sound.

The teachings of the Catholic Church should be consistently upheld in these social networking activities, and should not move beyond appropriate personal communication with those being ministered to.

Clear distinctions should be maintained between personal and professional communication in the social networking environment.

The following pointers might be helpful to Church organisations which wish to engage in social networking on the wide variety of platforms available.

On public sites such Facebook

Catholic Bishops around Australia have developed some presence on social networking sites such Facebook during recent years, and other Church personnel, members of the clergy or religious, might wish to also extend their engagement in this field. There are a number of options for setting up a profile on Facebook which others working in Church might like to consider, based on these experiences.

- Some Bishops have elected to set up a public profile on Facebook, which displays them as a public figure – for example, the Archbishop of Canberra and Goulburn would be listed as a public figure, with a photo and information about his work and ministry. Those using these sites may wish to become a ‘fan’ of the Archbishop as a public figure. This can avoid some of the tensions which can come with accepting or denying ‘friend’ requests.
- Other Church personnel and some Bishops have chosen to set up a personal profile, and accept ‘friend’ requests which a personal profile requires. This allows some control over who appears as an associate on a page, but requires a more consistent engagement with the page.
- Those working in a youth ministry or other Church capacity which could involve social networking should seek permission from their Bishop before engaging in this area.
- Clergy, Church workers or religious who use social networking sites in a professional capacity should keep this distinct from a private capacity and care should be taken in accepting or adding ‘friends’. There is great potential for a blurring of boundaries in the social networking field.
- Those Church organisations which wish to engage officially in social networking activities might choose to do so as a group, and found a page which can be administered by a number of people – for example, Darwin Youth Ministry might be the name given to the profile, rather than the name of one of the Youth Ministers in the Diocese as an appropriate way of setting boundaries in that ministry relationship. This system does not prevent Church workers from having their own personal profiles; it simply places a clear line between personal and work. This can also remove any ambiguity about friendship relationships or ministry relationships.
- Church groups and organisations – particularly those which are officially recognised as speaking for the Church on various matters, should be placed under the ‘Religious Organisations’ grouping on social networking

sites and should clearly identify that they are members of or coordinators of the Official Group of the Diocese/Parish/Catholic organisation.

- The use of photographs or videos should be carefully monitored, and permissions should be sought from all who appear in photographs or videos before being posted or tagged. While in some public contexts, it can be assumed that people know they are being photographed to go on a website or a Facebook page; other situations might not be so obvious. Material should always be appropriate, and the sharing of embarrassing or offensive photos or videos should always be avoided.
- Church networking activities should be monitored by a third-party where possible, and where this is difficult, the Church worker should refer to underlying principles and teaching of the Church. Commentaries appearing on social networking sites of a rude or offensive nature or those which are vulgar or which could be interpreted as bullying should be immediately removed.
- Privacy should be of the utmost importance, and care should be taken to protect people, especially youth, from their personal information being displayed on a social networking site. This particularly refers to phone numbers and email addresses.

Twitter

More and more, Twitter is being used in the news media, by celebrities and by organisations to promote events, to share information and to provide quick updates about various issues. By ‘tweeting’ a sentence or two about a Church website or event, potentially thousands could be pointed back to this information. Twitter is a free social networking tool, yet has the power to disseminate information quickly and efficiently. Like with all social networking engagement, Church entities should reflect carefully before posting on Twitter that their messages reflect Church teaching and Christ-centred principles.

Blogs

The Catholic Church is more and more engaged in the blogosphere, and the official Church recognises the influence of Blogs as a medium. Pope Benedict this year encouraged bloggers to consider the importance of their message to the world as the measure of their success, and not just focus on the number of ‘hits’ they receive. ‘We must be aware that the truth which we long to share does not derive its worth from its “popularity” or from the amount of attention it receives.’

Blogging is a conversational and reflective mode of communicating which is cost-effective and allows people to express their views in a relatively unmoderated forum. A number of priests, religious and lay people within Australia maintain excellent blogs which can be helpful for the promulgation of faith. Once again, Church workers should try to consistently represent the Church in a positive light and communicate evangelically using this medium.

YouTube

YouTube is an online video site which allows individuals and groups to post videos of up to 15 minutes on any topic. The Catholic Church has an extensive presence on YouTube in both official and non-official capacities. Like with all social networking, the use of YouTube can assist in the work of evangelisation and promotion of the activities of the Church. Church entities should ensure that all material posted on YouTube or other video-based sites is in accordance with Church teaching and respects human dignity. Ethical considerations should be applied when uploading content, and explicit or offensive material should be avoided at all times.

The Digital divide

While the gifts of social networking are vast, it is important to remember in our engagement that the digital world is not exclusive. Social networking should never replace real relationships with people, and particularly in a ministry context, efforts should be made to avoid simply digital relationships.

This is also important in the sense of retaining the Church's focus on the poor. The majority of the world still cannot afford a computer, many have little access to educational possibilities and as such struggle with literacy; or perhaps they live in remote areas with limited access to technology. Hearing others talk about their social networking experiences can be profoundly isolating for those unable to take part.

Pope Francis's message for the 2021 World Day of Communications speaks in part about Social Media: AMENDED FROM PREVIOUS WORLD DAY QUOTE FROM POPE BENEDICT

Opportunities and hidden dangers on the web

The internet, with its countless social media expressions, can increase the capacity for reporting and sharing, with many more eyes on the world and a constant flood of images and testimonies. Digital technology gives us the possibility of timely first-hand information that is often quite useful. We can think of certain emergency situations where the internet was the first to report the news and communicate official notices. It is a powerful tool, which demands that all of us be responsible as users and consumers. Potentially we can all become witnesses to events that otherwise would be overlooked by the traditional media, offer a contribution to society and highlight more stories, including positive ones. Thanks to the internet we have the opportunity to report what we see, what is taking place before our eyes, and to share it with others.

At the same time, the risk of misinformation being spread on social media has become evident to everyone. We have known for some time that news and even images can be easily manipulated, for any number of reasons, at times simply for sheer narcissism. Being critical in this regard is not about demonizing the internet, but is rather an incentive to greater discernment and responsibility for contents both sent and received. All of us are responsible for the communications we make, for the information we share, for the control that we can exert over fake news by exposing it. All of us are to be witnesses of the truth: to go, to see and to share.

Endnotes

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- ⁱ *“Since parents have given children their life, they are bound by the most serious obligation to educate their offspring and therefore be recognised as the primary and principal educators ...”* Paul VI, 1965, *Declaration on Christian Education*, no. 3, ‘The Authors of Education’.
- ⁱⁱ *“We believe that our school improvement processes, structures and systems should be consultative, collaborative, participative and supportive in recognition of each school’s service to its students and partnership with parents, parish, the Catholic Education Office and the broader Catholic Education community”.* *Live, Learn, Grow: A School Improvement Framework for Tasmanian Catholic Schools*, 2007, ‘Guiding Principles for School Improvement, Evaluation and Development’, pp. 1 and 2. *“Initiatives to foster the relationship between the local parish and the school should be developed. Expertise should be sought and invited from parishioners to assist in curriculum and programs that support student connection with the Christian community”.* *Archbishop’s Charter for Catholic Schools*, 2008, no. 2, ‘Links to the Parish Community’.
- ⁱⁱⁱ *“The Catholic school does not function in isolation. It is part of the wider Church community”.* Catholic Education Office Hobart, 2005, *Good News for Living: A Curriculum Framework for Religious Education in the Archdiocese of Hobart*, 2.5, ‘Community and Partnership’.
- ^{iv} *“As a community of Catholic schools, we will strive to work in genuine partnership with our school staffs, parents, caregivers, teachers, parish, students and the wider community”.* TCEC (Tasmanian Catholic Education Commission), 2006, Vision and Mission Statements.
- ^v *“In this context, the tasks of evangelisation, catechesis and religious education are shared by home, school and parish, with each having its own distinct contribution to make in a sense of genuine partnership”.* Catholic Education Office Hobart, 2005, *Good News for Living*, 2.5.