



**St Mary's Primary School**  
**Parents and Friends Association**  
**Handbook**

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## **The purpose of the handbook is to provide:**

An overview of the Association

Clear role descriptions of the:

- Executive committee
- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Committee Members
- Sub-Committees

Guidelines for:

- General Meetings
- Annual General Meetings
- Executive Meetings
- Special General Meetings
- Financial Management
- Other Guidelines

Association Communication

## **Overview of the Parents and Friends Association**

The Association is a formal structure in the School community which facilitates the involvement of parents and friends. As stated in the Constitution it exists to:

- to associate together for the purposes of assisting the School to advance its objective in providing an educational environment of the highest standard and to give time, effort and raise funds for this purpose;
- to strengthen the relationship between parents and the School, its supporters and the wider community;
- to act as a liaison between parents and the School in matters to do with the broad School policy and the advancement of the School;
- to provide a forum where parents can pose questions, express concerns and seek clarification regarding School policy and management.

The Association has no authority over:

- School staffing

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- educational matters
- the School's financial decisions

Membership of the Association is open to:

- all parents/carers of students attending the School
- friends of the School who are interested in furthering the aims and objectives of the Association (refer to Constitution for eligibility process); and
- the Principal who is an ex-officio member (a member who is part of it by holding another position in the School) of the Association.

Liability and risk management

- The Association is listed on the School's insurance policy

## **Considerations for Executive positions of the Association**

Before taking a position consider:

- do you have time to take an executive role -keeping in mind home and work responsibilities
- do you have the support of your family

## **Roles within the Parents and Friends Association**

### **Executive**

The Association is managed by an Executive.

The Executive:

- plan, manage and organise the smooth running of the Association
- ensure the Association works collaboratively and cooperatively with the Principal and other executive School staff
- ensure the Association's financial accountability is in accordance with its Constitution
- organise regular General Meetings of the Association
- conduct Executive Meetings for issues and decisions that require discussion before General Meetings
- set up and supervise any Committees of the Association as necessary and
- represent the Association at School events as required

The Executive consists of the:

- President
- Vice President/s
- Secretary; and
- Treasurer

## President

The President:

- provides leadership and direction to the Association
- works collaboratively and cooperatively with the Principal
- promotes the aims and objectives of the Association
- supports other members of the Executive Committee
- schedules, plan and preside over meetings of the Association as Chairperson
- schedules, plans and presides over meetings of the Executive Committee;
- attends to incoming and outgoing correspondence as presented by the Secretary between meetings and follow up an action arising from previous meetings. These tasks can be allocated to another member of the Executive where appropriate
- Represent the Association, and on occasion speak at School and community events

## The Chairperson

The President is usually the Chairperson of Association Meetings. If the President is unable to attend a meeting, the Vice President or another person as nominated by the President, will chair the meeting.

The Chairperson:

- convenes each General Meeting in accordance with the Constitution
- ensures an agenda is prepared and circulated with the help of other executive members
- ensures a quorum is present at each meeting
- provides a punctual start and finish of meetings
- ensures all motions and amendments are put in clear terms and relate to the business of the meeting
- ensures that control is maintained, and after impartially hearing all views on a matter declares that discussion is closed and puts a question/motion to vote. This can be done via a show of hands or via a secret ballot as required.

The Chairperson must remain impartial in a discussion. They must ensure that all points on both sides are raised and thoroughly discussed. If the President when acting as Chairperson has strong views on the matter being discussed, then they should step down from the Chair for that particular discussion to enable them to speak from the floor. The Vice President or another Executive member can take the Chair for the duration of the discussion.

The Chairperson can exercise a casting vote if voting is tied. In the case of a tied vote, the President is generally advised to vote to maintain the status quo.

## Vice President/s

The primary role of the Vice President/s is to fulfil the role of President in his or her absence or when required.

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The Vice President:

- chairs Association meetings when the President is absent; and
- assists the President in attending official School and parent functions.

## Secretary

The Secretary:

- Maintains a register of active Association members
- organises meetings (including agenda, venue, meeting notifications, etc.)
- records the minutes of Executive and General Meetings
- attends to inward and outward correspondence
- distributes minutes, information and correspondence to Association members as required; and
- maintains a record of Association minutes, the Association Constitution and correspondence.

In preparing for a meeting the Secretary:

- ensures members are notified of the date, time and venue of the meeting
- receives agenda items in accordance with the Constitution
- develops the agenda
- lists pertinent correspondence that require the meeting's attention; and
- advises the Chairperson of any visitors and list of apologies.

At the meeting the Secretary:

- Records the minutes and circulates as soon as possible after the meeting
- attends to all correspondence required by the meeting
- Tables correspondence

## Treasurer

The role of the Treasurer is to ensure all financial dealings of the Association are carried out and recorded in an efficient and transparent way. To protect the Association and its members, complete financial records must be kept.

The Treasurer:

- keeps accurate records of receipts and expenditure of the Association
- issues receipts for all money received
- banks money promptly and maintains proper financial records
- pays all accounts authorised by the meeting as soon as possible
- manages cash floats for Association functions

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- presents a financial report at each General Meeting showing current receipts, expenditure and the outstanding balance;
- organises an annual review of all accounts and presents an annual financial report at each Annual General Meeting.

### **Committee Members**

The Association Executive requires the participation of the school community in the running of the Association. To this end Association meetings require a quorum for all meetings as specified in the Constitution.

The role of these committee members is to attend meetings and assist in discussions and decision making. They also play an important part in supporting the Executive in the running of the Association and bringing varying perspectives.

### **Sub Committees**

The Association may choose to have sub committees that carry out particular functions on its behalf. This is a useful way to include as many parents as possible in the work of the Association.

The sub committees:

- always work collaboratively with the main Association to promote the objectives of the Association.
- have a co-ordinator.
- have well-defined areas of responsibility.
- will report/attend their progress and financial position at the regular Association General Meetings and Annual General Meeting (AGM)

## **General Meetings**

### **Meeting Purpose**

General Meetings are the regular meetings that deal with the ongoing business of the Association. They provide a regular opportunity for the involvement of the wider School community in the business of the Association. General meetings are open to all parents and other supportive interested parties.

There is a General Meeting held each term:

### **First Meeting of the Term - Week 4**

Record members present and Chairperson:

Meeting opened:

Apologies noted:

Business arising from previous minutes:

Correspondence:

    Incoming

Outgoing

Reports:

    Treasurer Principal

    Sub-Committees

General Business:

    Items of business with prior notice to meeting

    Notice of items for discussion at next meeting

    Matters for future consideration

Next Meeting:

Meeting Closed:

### **Notification**

Notification of each General Meeting must be provided to all members of the school community. Notification is provided via the school newsletter and calendar.

### **General Meeting Procedure**

#### **Opening**

The Chairperson declares the meeting open. Those in attendance and the starting time are minuted. Commencing the meeting at the advertised starting time is important.



## Apologies

The Chairperson calls for any apologies, and these are noted.

## Minutes of the previous meeting

The previous meeting minutes are formally accepted by the meeting. The last minutes need to be circulated before the meeting. The Chairperson will then ask if the minutes have been read and are correct.

If an error exists in the minutes, it must now be brought to the attention of the meeting. Any change can only be suggested by a person who was present at the meeting to which the minutes refer. The Chairperson approves the correction, it is recorded in the current meeting minutes and the Secretary makes an addition/amendment to the previous minutes.

After it is agreed that the minutes are true and correct the Chairperson will ask **"Would someone move that these minutes be accepted as an accurate record of the last meeting?"** When someone moves this, the Chairperson then asks, **"Would someone second this?"** The Chairperson then asks **"Those in favour? Those against? Motion carried. Thank you"** Note: The mover and seconder must have been present at the last meeting.

## Business arising from the previous meeting's minutes

After the minutes have been accepted, the Chairperson then allows for any 'business arising from the minutes to be discussed. Any minor matters are dealt with here, but those requiring further discussion are held over to General Business. The decision to hold over a matter until General Business is at the discretion of the Chairperson giving his or her reason for this ruling.

## Correspondence

Correspondence is divided into incoming and outgoing correspondence.

- Incoming: The Secretary may read aloud all letters or emails received since the last meeting or to save time list the correspondence and give a summary of the content. Those letters which require discussion are best listed in General Business.
- Outgoing: The Secretary may read aloud all letters or emails sent since the last meeting or to save time list who the letters have been sent to and give a summary of the content.

Once all incoming and outgoing correspondence has been tabled the Chairperson will ask **"will someone move that all correspondence be endorsed?"** When someone moves this, the Chairperson then asks, **"Will someone second this?"** The Chairperson will then ask **"Those in favour? Those against? Motion carried. Thank you."**

## Reports

During this section of the Meeting, the Chairperson calls for the relevant reports. These reports will include:

## Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer will present the financial statement and any accounts for payment. He or she ends the report by saying **"I move that this financial report is accepted"**. The Chairperson then asks for a seconder and then conducts the vote and the report is moved.

## Principal's Report

The Principal will give a brief account of relevant activities within the School since the last meeting. If the Principal has any issues she wishes to raise for discussion, these are to be listed in General Business and ideally brought to the notice of the President before the meeting.

## Sub-Committee Reports

Sub-Committees are to table a written report at the general meeting, providing a summary of their activities, a financial report and bring before the meeting any recommendations for motion.

Sub-Committee reports need to be received and passed by the meeting. The Chairperson will ask **"will someone move that all Sub-Committee reports be accepted?"** When someone moves this, the Chairperson then asks, **"Will someone second this?"** The Chairperson will then ask **"Those in favour? Those against? Motion carried. Thank you"**

## General Business

This section of the meeting is reserved for the business that:

- is carried over from the previous sections of the meeting to enable adequate discussion to take place.
- Has been listed for discussion on notice (i.e. provided to the Executive before the meeting for listing), and
- new ideas/motions provided by members present at the meeting (which may be deferred to another meeting).

It is important that adjourned business from previous meetings and notices of motion are dealt with first. After all matters listed on the agenda have been attended to, the Chairperson asks the meeting if there are any further issues which members wish to discuss or to give notice of for the next meeting. If an item requires significant discussion, or for which further exploration or investigation is required, then it should be listed as a matter for future consideration (i.e. matter to be listed on agenda of next meeting).

It is reasonable that the Principal is given notice of questions requiring detailed answers or relating to controversial issues. It is also reasonable that all members of the Association be given due notice when significant issues are to be discussed. The Chairperson has the discretion to determine whether an item is discussed or held over for future consideration.

## Closing the Meeting

After all business has been dealt with, the Chairperson states the date of the next meeting and declares the meeting closed.

## Annual General Meeting (AGM)

### Meeting Purpose

Annual General Meetings are open to all school community members.

This annual meeting is held in Term 1 of the School year and includes:

- reporting of the Association's activities during the past year
- election of office-bearers; and
- decisions such as changes to policy affecting the Association's constitution or rules

### Notification

The School community must be advised of an upcoming AGM as per the Association Constitution. Notification will be provided via the School Newsletter and calendar. The notification needs to include a statement saying all positions will be made vacant and an election will be held for new office-bearers.

### AGM Agenda

The agenda will include:

- Record of attendances and apologies
- Confirmation and acceptance of previous AGM minutes
- Correspondence in and out
- Principal's report
- President's annual report
- Treasurer's annual report
- Sub-Committees annual reports (reported from their last AGM)
- Election of the office-bearers
- Election/call for year group representatives
- Special business (where notices of motion have been presented, including proposed Constitution changes)

A nomination form is to be distributed with the Agenda.

### AGM Procedure

The outgoing President welcomes all members and special guests (e.g. scrutineers)

#### Apologies are called for

#### Minutes from previous AGM are circulated and accepted.

**"Will someone move that the previous AGM minutes be accepted as a true record of the last meeting?"**

When someone moves this, the Chairperson then asks, **"Will someone second this?"** The Chairperson will then ask **"Those in favour? Those against? Motion carried. Thank you."**

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Note: The mover and seconder must have been present at the last meeting.

## **Business rising from minutes**

(Business (if any) arising from these minutes is actioned

## **Correspondence**

Only communication relevant to the AGM e.g. letters of apology

## **Presidents Report**

The outgoing President presents the annual report. This report includes activities of the Association during the year and makes recommendations for future direction and acknowledges those who have assisted in the work of the Association.

## **Financial Report**

The outgoing Treasurer presents the annual financial report and moves that it be accepted.

**"I move that this financial report is accepted"**. The Chairperson will then ask for a seconder.

## **Sub-Committees Report**

Sub-Committees present their annual report. The President asks that all reports be accepted e.g. "Will someone move that all Sub-Committee reports be accepted?" When someone moves this, the Chairperson then asks, "Will someone second this?" The Chairperson will then ask "Those in favour? Those against? Motion carried. Thank you."

## **Election of Office-bearers**

The Principal (returning officer and ex-officio member) declares all positions vacant.

"In accordance with the Constitution of St Mary's Primary School Parents and Friends Association, I would now like to declare all positions of the Association Executive vacant."

The Principal advises attendees that:

- Each role will be filled for 12 months;
- Each position will be elected separately;

The Principal calls for nominations for the position of President.

- "I call for nominations for the position of President."
- If any written nominations have been received, the Principal will advise who they are and who nominated them. Nominations from the floor are then sought.
- Ask nominee(s) if he/she are prepared to accept the nomination

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- If only one person is nominated, the Principal declares the position filled.
- If there is more than one nomination, a secret ballot is held. The scrutineers count the votes and report the result to the Principal who announces the successful candidate.

Once this vote is completed the Principal asks the elected President to take the Chair

After thanking the Principal, the President repeats the above process for all other key office bearers.

- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Volunteers for year representatives are sought.

If there are no nominations for a position, declare the position open and advise that the incoming executive will seek other nominations for the role and announce at some future time. The outgoing office bearer for that particular position may be asked to fill the vacancy in an interim capacity.

The President thanks the Principal and scrutineers and meeting members for their vote

The President seeks nomination for the Committee.

Any special business is called for.

**AGM is closed**

## **Executive Meetings**

### **Meeting Purpose**

On occasion the Executive Committee may need to meet and discuss matters of the Association. This may be because:

- a decision is required of the Association before the next general meeting; or
- The executive needs to discuss a sensitive or controversial issue before it is included as an item of business at a General Meeting.

### **Agenda**

Generally, these meetings are informal, and it is not necessary to follow a strict agenda. However, in the interests of transparency, a record of the meeting, discussions and outcomes is minuted by the Secretary.

## **Meeting Guidelines**

### **Meeting Rules**

The meeting rules should be followed to maintain an orderly and timely meeting

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- Every person at the meeting has an equal right to be heard and to have his/her point of view considered;
- All qualifying people at the meeting have an equal right to vote on any issue
- To ensure the privacy of School community members, discussion of individuals should not be raised at an Association meeting either directly or by implication
- Particular incidents should not be discussed unless it is spoken of in a general nature affecting all students
- If personal matters are raised, they should be referred to the Principal, so a private discussion can be organised
- Act openly and frankly - the meeting is the place for discussion, not the carpark afterwards
- Listen to other viewpoints. Seek first an understanding of the view rather than looking for 'holes' in an argument
- Ensure one person speaks at a time - side conversations show disrespect to the person talking

## Common Meeting Procedures

### Motions

A motion is any proposal put to members for gaining a decision. It is an affirmative statement and begins with the words "**I move...**"

Any person of the Association can put a motion forward.

Once the motion has been put to the meeting, it needs to have someone to 'second' it i.e. to state they support the motion. If the motion is not seconded by anyone the motion lapses and no further discussion follows.

Once the motion has a mover and seconder, the Chairperson repeats the motion and states that it is now 'open for discussion'. The person who moved the motion can speak first, and then all other view-points are heard. No member may speak more than once for or against the motion or repeat any point of view already stated. The member who moved the motion has the right to reply at the end of the discussion.

When all points of view have been heard the Chairperson repeats the motion and calls for, "**All those in favour? All those against?**" And then announces if the motion has been carried. Votes may be made by a show of hands or by 'aye' or 'nay'.

### Amendments

An amendment slightly alters the wording of the motion. It may be used to modify a motion in such a way as to increase its acceptability or to present an alternative of an original motion.

If the amendment seeks to change the motion radically, it is another motion being foreshadowed and should not be accepted by the Chairperson.

## Notice of Motion

A notice of motion is advice given at one meeting of a motion to be discussed at the next. It will form part of the agenda for the next meeting.

If the motion involves the alteration of policy or Constitution, then all members should be given notice for the Motion that is to be tabled at the next meeting.

At the subsequent meeting, a seconder is called for and if one is found the matter will be discussed. If a seconder is not found the motion lapses.

## Point of Order

This is a term used to point out (to the Chairperson) any incorrect procedures at a meeting. If at any stage during the meeting the Chairperson misses a point that ought to have been picked up or queried, a member may simply say 'point of order' and then explain what has been missed.

For example, one member has spoken twice to the same motion, and the Chairperson failed to notice this.

## Rescission of Motion

This is when a motion is moved to overturn a resolution that has been accepted by the members. It cannot be moved at the same meeting which passed the original motion because adequate notice must be given to all members.

## Guidelines for Financial Management

### General Principles

The Association Treasurer coordinates all funds held in the Association's bank account and allocates them in consultation with and at the instruction of the appointed representative of each Sub-Committee.

The funds held in the Association Bank Account are assigned to the following Sub-Committees, and to any Sub-Committees formed by minuted approval of a General Meeting of the Association:

- General Association Funds
- Cattle Funds
- Tuckshop Funds

The balance of General Funds includes the net proceeds of the fundraising organised by the general Association and not allocated to a Sub-Committee unless alternative allocation is minuted at a General Meeting of the Association.

All references to Sub-Committees include the groups listed above. General Association funds are administered by the Association Executive consisting of the President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer, who may devolve responsibility to committees formed annually for the organisation.

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Each Sub-Committee will liaise with the Association Treasurer.

The Association Treasurer will accept instruction solely from the appointed representative with respect to all disbursement transactions related to Sub-Committee funds.

The security of Association funds is always the responsibility of adult members of the School community, and students of the school should never be expected to accept the responsibility of holding or transporting funds collected by or destined for the Association.

## **Annual Review**

The financial records of the Association will be reviewed annually by an independent reviewer. The financial year will be 01 July to 30 June in the next year. Copies of records related to all financial transactions of each Sub-Committee are to be held and made available on request.

Any follow-up consequent to the review of financial records will be coordinated through the Association executive, reported at a General Association meeting and to the Sub-Committees as appropriate.

## **Other Guidelines**

### **Support to members of the School community in financial hardship**

Due to extraordinary circumstances members of the School community may experience financial hardship.

On a case by case basis the Association may choose to assist those in financial hardship. This could be by assisting with fundraising events or other contributions as agreed by the Association at the time.

## **Association Communication**

Effective communication is supported by clear and simple pathways.

## **Association Constitution**

The Constitution is tabled annually at the annual general meeting. All members the executive committees are provided with a copy of the Constitution.

## **Association Handbook**

Copies of the Association Handbook will be available to all families at the commencement of 2019 and new families thereafter, and will be available at the Annual General Meeting. All members of the Association are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the handbook and use it throughout the year. This will promote consistency and good risk management in the Association.

## **Distribution of Minutes**

Meeting minutes are the official record of the actions and decisions taken in a meeting. It is not a transcript of the meeting.

The minutes will be made available to all members of the school community.