



## The Constitution of the Parent Association of St. Patrick's Boys' National School, Drumcondra, Dublin 9

### The Purpose of the Parent Association

The purpose of the Parent Association is to provide a structure through which the parents/guardians of children attending St. Pats Boys National School (St. Pats BNS) can develop an active partnership with the School Authorities and Board of Management to promote the educational welfare, emotional wellbeing and physical interest for their children.

*Under the Education Act, 1998:*

*Section 26 (1)*

*The parents of students of a recognised school may establish, and maintain from among their number, a parents' association for that school and membership of that association shall be open to all parents of students of that school.*

*Section 26 (2)*

*A parents' association shall promote the interests of the students in a school in co-operation with the board, Principal, teachers and students at the school and for that purpose may*

- (a) advise the Principal or the board on any matter relating to the school and the Principal or board shall have regard to any such advice, and*
- (b) adopt a programme of activities which will promote the involvement of parents, in consultation with the Principal, in the operation of the school.*

*Section 26 (4)*

*A parents' association shall promote the interests of the students in a school in co-operation with the board, Principal, teachers and students at the school by the following:*

- (a) A parents' association shall, following consultation with its members, make rules governing its meetings and the business and conduct of its affairs.*
- (b) Where a parents' association is affiliated to a national association of parents, the rules referred to in paragraph (a) shall be in accordance with guidelines issued by that national association of parents with the concurrence of the Minister.*

### The Mission of the Parent Association

The mission of the Parent Association at St. Pat's BNS reflects that of the school:

*"At St. Pats BNS, we believe all children are entitled to develop their fullest potential – academically, socially, emotionally, physically, morally, spiritually and aesthetically, enabling each child to grow in confidence to participate in the wider community, We provide a happy caring and stimulation environment promoting self-esteem and confidence. We work in partnership with parents and the community in an atmosphere of mutual trust."*

### The Aim of the Parent Association

The aim of the Parent Association is for parents/guardians to support and initiate activities which advance the aims and objectives of St. Pats BNS. By actively creating and promoting communication



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channels and for providing opportunities for discussion, information and consultation about matters of common and/or topical interest to parents, teachers and pupils. Where it is deemed appropriate, the Parents Association, will support or lead fundraising activities related to the enhancement of facilities within the school.

The Parent Association will promote the interests of the students in co-operation with the Board of Management, Principal, teachers and students, in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act, 1998.

This committee will have responsibility for representing the parents of St. Pats BNS and managing the activities of the Parents Association.

### The Membership of the Parent Association

All parents and guardians of children attending St. Pats BNS are deemed members of the Parent Association. The Parent Association encourages representation of all classes within the school where feasible. Parents/Guardians are invited to become involved in any of the activities of the Parent Association and are welcome to attend meetings during the school year, which are generally held once a month during the academic year. It is the intention for each class to have at least one parent representative on the committee.

The School Principal will appoint a representative, from the teaching staff, to attend the Parent Association meetings - most recently this has been the Vice Principal.

### The Committee of the Parent Association

The Parent Association committee will be responsible for ensuring that all parents are consulted on issues which are pertinent to the entire parent body. The Parent Association committee may advise the Principal and Board of Management on any matters relating to the school in accordance with the Education Act, 1998, 26.- (2)(a).

The **Committee members** comprises of a team that will manage the tasks of the association on behalf of the parent body (the members).

The **Committee Executive** are called Officers and their roles are described below.

The **Chairperson** is responsible for the conduct of meetings; endeavours to let all viewpoints be heard and comes to clearly stated resolutions. Where a matter is put to a vote the chairperson has a second and casting vote in the event of a tie.

The **Secretary** records the minutes; informs the membership of forthcoming meetings and agenda for same; writes and receives correspondence on behalf of the association and brings all correspondence to the notice of the members



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The **Treasurer** opens and operates a bank account on behalf of the Association; is responsible for all money received; prepares a statement of accounts for each meeting and prepares and presents an annual account at AGM.

The **Public Relations Officer (PRO)** is responsible, on behalf of the Association, for liaison with the media, the local community and other schools in the area.

Parents' representatives elected to the Board of Management will automatically become members of the committee, if not already, but they cannot hold an officer position on the Parent Association committee.

### **The Election of the Parent Association Officers**

The officers of the committee will be elected each year at the AGM of the Parent Association. Each officer will be elected for one year. At the AGM, all officers should step down, but they can be re-elected if they continue to be eligible to serve, that is as long as they continue to be a parent or guardian of a child in the school. No member of the committee will hold the same officer position for more than three consecutive years. The officer positions are those of the Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and Public Relations Officer. Those seeking to be appointed officers must already be members of the Parent Association Committee.

### **The Election of the Parent Association Committee Members**

Committee members remain part of the committee until they decide to step down or until his/her child has left St Pats BNS. Committee members may be co-opted on to the committee, however due regard must be given to the number of members currently serving on the committee which should not exceed 25. The committee will aim to ensure that at least three places are available to new members, with priority being given to parents of Junior Infants classes and classes without a representative. Where the number of members exceeds the maximum of 25, voluntary resignations will be sought.

### **Annual General Meeting (AGM)**

An Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the members of the Parent Association shall be held before the end of October each year.

At least two weeks' notice of the date of the AGM shall be given and the notice should include the Agenda for the meeting.

Invitations should also be extended to the Principal, Vice Principal and Board of Management.

At the AGM, the Officers of the Parent Association must account for the work of the past year, account for monies received and expended and hold elections for the Parent Association Officers.

The parents shall elect parents to the following Parent Association Officer positions:



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- Chairperson
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Public Relations Officer
- If sufficient candidates allow, Vice Chairperson, Assistant Secretary and Assistant Treasurer
- Any other position they deem necessary to effectively carry out the functions of the Parent Association.

If more than the required number of candidates are nominated, a secret ballot shall take place at the AGM.

All eligible parents attending the AGM shall have one vote.

### **The Parent Association Committee meetings**

The members of the Parent Association will elect a committee with a minimum of 10 members and a maximum of 25.

A quorum shall consist of 5 (five) members of the committee.

The committee will meet no less than 10 times a year and if a meeting cannot take place, an explanation will be recorded in the next meeting's minutes.

If the membership of the committee falls below 9 (nine) at any time the committee shall have the power to co-opt a parent/ guardian to fill the remaining places.

Committee members are required to attend all committee meetings unless prior notice is given to the secretary. If a committee member does not attend at least 3 meetings per school calendar year, that person will be deemed to have resigned. The only exception is when a committee member cannot attend over a period due to extenuating circumstances.

The committee shall make representations to the Principal on behalf of the general body of parents regarding issues affecting the education of their children. However, the Association is not a forum of individual representations against teachers or parents. These issues shall be dealt with by private discussions between the parents and teachers concerned. Neither will the Association interfere in the internal operation and administration of the school or infringe upon the rights and responsibilities of the administrators.

Confidentiality must always be maintained. Breach of confidentiality may lead to a vote of no confidence in a member and dismissal from the committee. Only items agreed for communication to parents, as per agenda, are acceptable items of information to discuss.

### **Subcommittees**

The Parents Association Committee may constitute and dissolve sub committees and working parties as it considers necessary, to achieve the objective of the Association. Any such bodies will be accountable



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to the Committee. All proposals from the subcommittees must be presented to the main committee for approval and final decision.

### **Finance**

A Treasurer will be appointed from among the committee members and will be responsible for keeping account of the income and expenditure of the Parent Association finances. The Treasurer will give a statement of income and expenditure at each committee meeting.

A written statement of income and expenditure will be given at the AGM and a copy will be forwarded to the Board of Management for their information.

The Parent Association will keep a bank account in its name. Each cheque issued requires two signatures. The Treasurer and at least one other assigned member of the committee who is an authorised signatory, must sign all cheques drawn on the account.

All purchasing/spending of the Parent Association funds must be authorised by a majority vote of the committee.

In the event of the Association's dissolution, power of attorney shall pass to the Board of Management with the provision that resources be disposed of at the discretion of the School Principal.

### **Fundraising for the School**

The Parent Association committee will finance the activities of the Parent Association through fundraising and collection of the voluntary subscriptions.

Fundraising for the school by the Parent Association will be done with the prior agreement of the Principal and Board of Management and shall be for the enhancement of facilities within the school. The Parent Association committee will agree with the Principal as to the specific purposes for which funds are to be raised by the Parent Association.

Any funds raised must be used for purposes for which the money was collected. If the funds are not allocated for the original purpose, the Principal must communicate this to the Parent Association, and an alternative and suitable use of the funds must be put forward for consideration by the Committee before these funds can be utilised by the school. The Parents Association must be given sufficient time to communicate any change in allocation of funds to the wider school community.

### **Membership of the National Parents Council Primary**

The Parent Association will maintain membership of the National Parents Council Primary by annual subscription.



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### Changing the Constitution

Changes to the constitution can be made at the AGM or, if for an urgent reason, an EGM can be called for that specific purpose. Proposals to change the constitution must be submitted in writing to the Parent Association committee secretary. The Parent Association committee will then circulate these proposals to all parents before the AGM/EGM. All parents of children in the school at the meeting are eligible to vote on the proposals.

### General Conduct

- The AGM shall be held no later than the last day of October each year.
- At least two weeks' notice of the date of the AGM shall be given to parents/guardians.
- The proceeding of all meetings, including the AGM, shall be held in a minute book/folder to be kept by the Secretary, and shall include the names of the committee members present, and members who have sent apologies.
- The first business of each meeting shall be the reading, consideration and signing of the minutes of the previous meeting, by the Chairperson.
- If the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson are not present the committee shall elect a Chairperson for that meeting.
- Voting shall be by show of hands or secret ballot.
- The Chairperson shall have the casting vote.
- Extra Ordinary meetings shall be provided for.
- A calendar of dates for each committee meeting for the coming school year will be published at the first meeting of the year.
- All committee members shall receive a copy of the minutes of meetings via email.
- Care must be taken that decisions agreed upon at the meeting must not be subsequently changed outside of the meeting. These decisions may only be changed or dropped by majority consent at an official meeting or outside an official meeting.

**The Constitution was adopted at the AGM of the Parent Association on date: 12<sup>th</sup> November 2020.  
This document will be reviewed every 2 years.**

Signature of Chairperson of the Parent Association

Signature of Chairperson of Board of Management