



CONSTITUTION

PURPOSE OF THE PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

The purpose of the Parents' Association is to provide structure through which the parents/guardians of the children attending St Colmcille's National School in Moone can work together for the best possible education for their children. The Parents' Association will work with the school Principal, staff and Board of Management to build an effective partnership between home and school.

THE AIM OF THE PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

The aim of the Parents' Association is to enable parents/guardians to play their part in ensuring provision of the best possible education for their children.

The Parents' Association will promote the interests of the students in cooperation with the Board of Management, Principal, staff and students in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998.

THE WORK OF THE PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

The Parents' Association will undertake a programme of activities, which will promote the involvement of parents/guardians and support students, parents/guardians and school staff. In planning its activities, the Parents' Association will primarily consult with the school Principal and parents/guardians.

The Parents' Association is not involved in matters relating to the internal administration of the school. It is not the role of the Parents' Association or its Committee to pursue a complaint on behalf of an individual or a group of parents/guardians. However, in the case of a parent/guardian approaching the Parents' Association with a concern, the Parents' Association may refer the parent/guardian to the school's complaints procedure.

THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

All parents/guardians of children attending St Colmcille's National School in Moone are deemed to be members of the Parents' Association.

AFFILIATIONS

The Parents' Association will maintain membership of the National Parents Council Primary (NPC) by annual subscription.

THE COMMITTEE OF THE PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

Composition:

The Parents' Association will elect a Committee with a maximum of eight (8) and a minimum of five (5) members, including the following Officer roles – Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer (roles and responsibilities are outlined in Appendix 1). This Committee will have responsibility for representing the parents/guardians of St Colmcille's National School in Moone and managing the activities of the Parents' Association. Each Committee Member will be elected for one (1) year. No Committee Member will hold the same officer position for more than three (3) consecutive years.



Parents' Association

Election process:

The members of the Committee will be elected each year at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Parents' Association. The following sets out the election process:

- The outgoing Committee will set the date for the AGM and notify all parents/guardians.
- All outgoing Committee Members step down, but they can offer themselves for re-election if they are eligible to serve, i.e. if they are a parent/guardian of a child in the school.
- Parents/guardians will be asked to submit nominations for the three Officer roles (i.e. Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer) and general Committee Members. Parents/guardians may nominate themselves for any role. In advance of submitting a nomination for another person, parents/guardians must get approval from their nominee(s).
- Nominations for all Committee Members must be provided in writing to the outgoing Committee seven (7) days before the AGM.
- The Committee will publish the full list of nominees three (3) days before the AGM.
- At the AGM, parents/guardians will be provided with one voting slip and will vote for the three Officer roles. Voting will be by secret ballot, with election results determined by a simple majority. In the event of a tie, there will be another ballot until a clear result is achieved.
- Only those present at the meeting are entitled to vote at the AGM; there will be no postal or proxy votes.
- Two members of the outgoing Committee will publicly count the votes. The outgoing Chairperson will announce the result at the AGM and officially handover to the new Committee.
- If there are more nominees than Officer roles, the unelected Officer nominees are automatically nominated for the general Committee Member roles (unless nominee(s) choose to withdraw).
- If there are more than five (5) nominees for the general Committee Members, then there will also be an election for the general Committee Members. If there are less than five (5) nominees for the general Committee Members, then those nominated will be automatically elected, with no ballot required.
- In addition, the Committee may fill any vacancy that occurs throughout the Committee's existence.

Failure to elect a full Committee at the AGM:

If the AGM fails to elect a full Committee, then the elected Committee Members will invite volunteers from parents/guardians to fill these positions.

In such an event, the formation of the full Committee should be complete no later than the last day of September for the particular school year. If there are not enough willing participants, the Committee may choose to operate with reduced numbers or will discuss options with the Board of Management.



Parents' Association

Committee Meetings:

The Committee shall meet regularly throughout the year. All Committee Members should receive at least five (5) days' notice for a meeting and receive a draft agenda for the proposed meeting in advance. A quorum for the meeting is a simple majority of those present. In the event of a tie, the Chairperson will have the deciding vote.

Confidentiality must always be maintained between Committee Members on Parents' Association business, with only agreed items being discussed with others outside of the Committee.

Sub-Committees

The Committee can establish sub-committees for specific tasks. The sub-committees may also invite other people to assist in their work. Where special expertise is required, a sub-Committee member may be invited from outside the Parents' Association (i.e. not a parent/guardian of children attending St Colmcille's National School in Moone), with the approval of the Committee. Sub-committees may make recommendations, but not decisions; they always remain accountable to the Committee.

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT PARENT REPRESENTATIVES

The two (2) Board of Management Parent Representatives (one male, one female) are elected via a formal process, which is managed by the School Patron's Representative on the Board of Management.

The primary obligation of the Parent Representatives is as members of the management team of the school and, as such, their role does not include representing the Parents' Association or individual parents/guardians.

The two Parent Representatives are, however, honorary members of the Parents' Association Committee and attend Open Meetings and AGMs/EGMs, but they are not involved in day-to-day Committee activities.

THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

The Parents' Association Committee may advise the Principal and Board of Management on any matters relating to the school.

The Committee is a team that will manage the tasks of the Parents' Association on behalf of, and consult with, parents/guardians on relevant issues.

The Committee will

- Draw up a plan for the activities of the Parents' Association in consultation with parents/guardians. This may take the form of Parents' Association Open Meetings, a suggestion box, texts, emails or written submissions, and/or direct consultation with a Committee Member;
- Consult with the Principal/Board of Management when planning the programme of activities for any year;
- Be responsible for seeing that activities are run in an effective and efficient way;
- Arrange a system for ongoing communication with the Principal/Board of Management;
- Report to parents/guardians at the AGM about its work; and
- Manage and account for any funds collected or expended by the Parents' Association.



Parents' Association

MEETINGS

Annual General Meeting (AGM):

The AGM of the Parents' Association will be held in the first two weeks of September each year.

The AGM is an important accountability meeting, whereby the Parents' Association Committee account for the work of the past year, account for money received and spent during the past year and hold elections for the new Parents' Association Committee. It is also an opportunity for parents/guardians to hear directly from the Board of Management/Principal on the School Plan and priorities for the coming year.

Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM):

An EGM shall be convened upon the request of a majority of Committee Members or a minimum of ten (10) parents/guardians, who submit their request to the Committee in writing. The request shall outline the purpose of the meeting and provide details of all motions that parents/guardians propose to raise at the EGM.

Reasons for an EGM include:

- changes to the Constitution;
- changes to the role and functions of the Parents' Association;
- an issue relating to confidence in the Committee or Committee Member(s) in carrying out their work on behalf of the Parents' Association;
- an issue relating to the management of Committee finances;
- disestablishment of the Parents' Association.

The Committee will set the date for an EGM, giving at least two (2) weeks' notice to parents/guardians.

Any parent/guardian may submit motion(s) to be raised at the EGM. Such motions must be submitted to the Committee seven (7) days in advance of the meeting. Parents/guardians who attend the EGM in person are eligible to vote on the motions, with one vote per parent per motion. Motions shall be carried by a simple majority of parents/guardians in attendance.

Open Meetings:

The Parents' Association Committee may hold Open Meetings during the year to gain feedback from parents/guardians on the programme of activities, seek approval for purchases exceeding €1000 or as an opportunity for parents/guardians to meet and discuss specific items of interest.

Parents/guardians who attend the Open Meeting in person are eligible to vote on motion(s), with one vote per parent per motion. Motions shall be carried by a simple majority of parents/guardians in attendance.

OFFICIAL STATEMENTS AND REPRESENTATIONS

No member of the Parents' Association other than the Chairperson, or the Committee Member nominated by the Chairperson, shall make any official or public statement or representation on behalf of the Parents' Association.



Parents' Association

COMMITTEE LIAISON WITH SCHOOL AUTHORITIES

Liaison with the school shall normally be maintained through the Chairperson, or the Committee Member nominated by the Chairperson, with the Principal of the school, or their appointed nominee.

FINANCE

The Parents' Association Committee will finance the activities of the Parents' Association through fundraising activities and/or voluntary donations.

The Treasurer is responsible for keeping account of the income and expenditure of the Parents' Association finances and providing a written statement of income and expenditure at each Committee meeting. A written statement of income/expenditure will be given at each AGM and a copy will be given to the Board of Management, if requested.

The Parents' Association Committee will keep a bank or Post Office account. Any monies drawn from the account will require two signatures from Committee Members.

Spending decisions (excluding routine annual expenditure, NPC membership fee and the Parents' Association insurance) will be made by reaching a majority decision by the Parents' Association Committee, or at an Open Meeting/EGM if an individual expenditure is greater than €1000.

FUNDRAISING FOR THE SCHOOL

Fundraising for the school by the Parents' Association will be undertaken by prior consultation with the Principal/BOM, with a specific purpose for the funds raised.

INSURANCE & LIABILITY

The Parents' Association will ensure that an adequate level of insurance is always maintained to cover liabilities which may arise through Parents' Association activities.

CHANGING THE CONSTITUTION

Changes to this Constitution can be made at the AGM or, if for an urgent reason, an EGM can be called for that purpose.

Proposals to change this Constitution must be submitted in writing to the Parents' Association Committee. The Committee will circulate these proposals to all parents/guardians before the AGM/EGM.

All parents/guardians of children in the school at the meeting are eligible to vote on the proposals, but only those present at the specific AGM/EGM may vote on proposals.

DISESTABLISHMENT

The disestablishment of the Parents' Association shall only be valid if accepted at an EGM convened for that specific purpose. All parents/guardians of children in the school at the meeting are eligible to vote on the proposal to wind up the Parents' Association, but only those present at the EGM are eligible to vote on proposals. A two-thirds majority of the parents/guardians present shall be required to carry a vote to wind up the Parents' Association.

In the event of the winding up of the Parents' Association, any assets on hand shall be given to the Board of Management for school purposes.



Appendix 1: Roles and Responsibilities of Officers and General Committee Members

Chairperson

The Chairperson will:

1. Lead and guide the Committee in planning and delivering on its activities. This involves:
 - Chairing meetings;
 - Helping the Committee to have a clear vision and clear goals;
 - Ensuring all Committee Members are respected, listened to and are encouraged to openly express their views;
 - Facilitating people to work well together ensuring that the work of the Committee is shared fairly;
 - Reviewing the work of the Committee.
2. Ensure that everyone has a clear understanding of their roles within the Committee.
3. Delegate the work of the Committee to ensure all work is not the responsibility of only one or two people.
4. Appoint a Deputy Chairperson, who can act on the Chairperson's behalf should that person be unavailable.
5. Work closely with the Secretary to plan agendas and meetings, and ensure decisions made at meetings are clearly documented.
6. Encourage the Committee Members to be prepared for meetings.
7. Ensure meetings start and finish at the agreed times.
8. Ensure that, as each item is finished, the group is clear about what has been decided.
9. Ensure that all decisions are taken democratically and with respect for everyone's opinions.
10. Check on responsibilities taken on by Committee Members and ensure that they have been clearly understood and allocated.
11. Ensure that, at the end of term of office, all relevant documentation is passed on to the incoming Chairperson.

The Secretary

The Secretary will:

1. Take minutes at each meeting.
2. File all correspondence and minutes safely.
3. Agree the agenda for Committee meetings with the Chairperson, giving adequate time to Committee Members to include items on the agenda.
4. Ensure that all Committee Members have the agenda prior to the meetings, so that they can be adequately prepared.
5. Ensure that all Committee Members receive a copy of the minutes of meetings, including Committee Members who had been unable to attend.
6. Ensure that the minutes for each meeting are approved to be a true and accurate record of what happened and signed by either the Chairperson or a Committee Member who attended the meeting.
7. Assist the Chairperson with clarification of decisions made at meetings.
8. Appropriately administer incoming and outgoing correspondence.
9. Ensure that, at the end of term of office, all relevant documentation is passed on to the incoming Secretary.



Parents' Association

The Treasurer

The Treasurer will:

1. Record and maintain receipts for all financial transactions.
2. Manage and maintain a record of income and expenditure.
3. Give monthly reports on the Parents' Association finances to the Committee.
4. Ensure that the Committee has the necessary information to understand the financial requirements of the Parents' Association.
5. Advise on how financial resources can best be used to fulfil the aims and work plan of the Committee.
6. Liaise with financial institutions on behalf of the Parent Association.
7. Present a full account of the year's income and expenditure at the Parents' Association AGM.
8. Ensure that, at the end of term of office, all relevant documentation is passed on to the incoming Treasurer.

General Committee Member

1. Support and carry out the Parents' Association programme of activities as agreed by the Committee.
2. Actively support the Officers in their roles.
3. Be prepared for, and actively engage in, meetings and carry out agreed actions.

Effective from 2 April 2019