



Our Lady of the Way Catholic Primary School Governance Policy

GOVERNANCE & AUTHORITY – SCHOOL EDUCATION BOARD

PARISH

Within the provisions of Canon Law, the Parish Priest in consultation with the parish community is responsible for providing for the Catholic education of parish children and young adults as well the catechetical formation of the faithful and outreach to those who are no longer practising their faith or who do not profess the Catholic religion.

The School Advisory Board provides advice to the Parish Priest within the context of this Constitution and the vision statement of the school.

PARISH PRIMARY SCHOOLS

With the approval and under the direction of the Archbishop of Melbourne, have been established to provide Catholic education, according to the precepts, teachings and practices of the Catholic Church. Each school is administered by the Parish Priest under the supervision of the Archbishop of Melbourne and is acknowledged as Catholic by his authority.

The governance of each school is undertaken by the Parish Priest with the support of the relevant school Principal.

The School Advisory Board provides advice to the Principal of each school within the context of this Constitution and the school's vision and mission statements.

The Parish Priest reserves his authority in matters relating to:

- the Catholicity of the school
- diocesan regulations
- employment of staff
- the formation and dissolution of the board
- appointment of board members and office bearers
- the appointment and dismissal of Principals
- school finances.

Within the provisions of Canon Law, the School Advisory Board is responsible to the Parish Priest, who in turn is subject to the vigilance of the Archbishop of Melbourne. The School Advisory Board has no responsibility for the internal management and administration of the school, which are the responsibility of the relevant school Principal.

DEFINITIONS

The Archbishop is the Catholic Archbishop for the time being of the Archdiocese of Melbourne or the person duly appointed to administer the Archdiocese. The parish is as defined by the Archbishop of Melbourne in accordance with Canon Law.

The Parish Priest is the person duly appointed to administer the parish.

The School Advisory Board is the body responsible for advising the Parish Priest and Principal according to the provisions of this Constitution.

LAND & BUILDINGS

The ownership of land and buildings thereon is vested in the Roman Catholic Trusts Corporation for the Diocese of Melbourne, which shall hold such in trust for the parish in accordance with Canon Law.

The costs of all land and buildings, comprising buildings equipped to satisfy the requirements of a parish school, shall be underwritten by the parish.

PURPOSES

The purposes of the School Advisory Board are to:

- (a) act as an advisory body to the Parish Priest and each Principal, on matters concerning education in the parish
- (b) act as a forum for discussion on matters concerning education in the parish primary school
- (c) provide a link between the parish priest, Principal, teachers and parishioners in relation to the provision of Catholic education in the parish community
- (d) promote community development by fostering a strong interrelationship between parish and the parish primary school, Catholic secondary colleges and pre-schools and broader community.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities of the School Advisory Board are to:

- (a) promote the Catholic ethos of each school and to support the Religious Education programs
- (b) provide advice on the development and review of school policies
- (c) plan for the future of each parish primary school and its ability to accommodate future enrolments
- (d) provide advice on budget planning and finance-related matters
- (e) contribute to the selection process for school Principals
- (f) ensure the appropriate provision of faith development and RE programs for children attending Government schools
- (g) foster adult education in faith.

MEMBERSHIP:

The School Advisory Board shall comprise the following:

- The Parish Priest
- Principal
- Teacher Representatives
- A minimum of five elected representatives of the parents/guardians of the students attending the school.
- other persons co-opted for a period of time to serve a particular need on the education board.
- Members are elected for a two-year term.
- At the discretion of the Principal and Parish Priest, an elected member whose term has been completed may be requested to serve an additional term.

Through membership on the School Advisory Board each member is challenged to live the Our Lady of the Way School vision statement in practice. Members assume a leadership role in the Education Ministry in the School and in the Parish Community.

NOMINATION AND ELECTION PROCESS:

The School Advisory Board will advertise for nominations one month prior to the Annual General Meeting, which is to be held in March each year – and allow two weeks for nominations to be submitted. If the number of nominations exceeds the number of vacancies, there will be an election. If an insufficient number of nominations are received to fill the vacancies the Principal, may elect to do either of the following:

1. Approach members of the parent community to determine their interest to be seconded onto the School Advisory Board for a period of one year or;
2. Elect to proceed with a smaller School Advisory Board for the upcoming year.

WHEN AN ELECTION IS REQUIRED:

- A member of the School Advisory Board will be appointed as the Returning Officer and will have the responsibility for overseeing and organizing the election in accordance with School Advisory Board constitution.
- All persons who have nominated will be invited to prepare a brief written profile. Voting forms including profiles will be distributed to all parents in the school community.
- The closing date for the return of voting forms must allow sufficient time for the votes to be counted prior to the Annual General Meeting.
- Voting slips are to be printed on coloured paper and individually numbered.
- One voting slip per family will be issued.
- Voting slips will list all nominees in alphabetical order and require voters to indicate their preference by marking 1 for first preference, 2 for second preference and so on.
- Voting slips that are not numbered in accordance with the above format will be declared invalid.
- Photocopies of voting slips will not be accepted as valid votes.
- Votes should be counted in the presence of the Returning Officer, the Principal and at least one additional School Advisory Board member. All nominees will be invited to attend.
- The Returning Officer is required to record the voting details and the unique voting slip number.

In the event that one or more nominees receives the same number of votes the Returning Officer will recount the votes to determine the nominee with the greatest number of first preferences who will then be elected to the Board. In the event that more than one nominee receives the same number of first preferences the Returning Officer will count the number of second preferences and so on to determine the successful candidate. In the situation that more than one nominee receives the same number of each type of preferences the name of each nominee, with the same number of votes, will be written on a piece of paper which will be placed in a container from which the required number of names will be selected by the Returning Officer.

The Returning Officer will advise all nominees of the outcome of the nomination process – and in the event of an election the results of the election process.

The Returning Officer will arrange for the results of the election process to be communicated to the school community.

ROLES:

DUTIES OF THE CHAIRPERSON

- To be the main representative/spokesperson for the School Advisory Board.
- To liaise with the Principal to set agenda items for the School Advisory Board meeting.
- To accept agenda items and distribute a copy of the agenda to each School Advisory Board member prior to the Board meeting.
- To formally open the meeting punctually and ensure the agenda is followed.

- To ensure that all members have the opportunity to express their views and not attempt to influence opinions.
- To strive to address all listed items of business within the time allowed for the meeting and conduct the meeting in an orderly manner.
- To understand the procedure of taking motions from the members.
- To identify any agenda items to be carried over to the next meeting.
- To formally close meetings.
- To ensure that all who are entitled know the arrangements for the next meeting.

DUTIES OF THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON

- To replace and chair meetings in the absence of the Chairperson.

DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY

- To maintain an accurate record of the minutes of each meeting and distribute them to the members within seven days following the meeting.
- To manage any incoming and outgoing correspondence in consultation with the Principal and Chairperson.

DUTIES OF A BOARD MEMBER

- To attend all meetings.
- To discuss agenda items and provide informed advice.
- To discuss and develop school policies tabled by the Principal and under the guidance of the Principal and Parish Priest.

CODES OF CONDUCT:

A member of the school advisory board:

- Will abide by meeting procedures.
- Must adhere to decisions resulting from board discussions regardless of personal opinions.
- Will work with other board members in a spirit of respect, harmony and cooperation.
- Has no authority to act on behalf of the School Advisory Board or school unless specifically authorized by the Principal or Parish Priest.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

All matters before the School Advisory Board are to be treated as confidential unless otherwise agreed. The Parish Priest has the authority to suspend a member or dissolve the School Advisory Board.

MEETINGS:

FOCUS OF MEETINGS

To assist the Board focus on both short and long term needs of the school, the Board should develop a school community plan in support of the School Improvement Plan. This will allow priority issues to be identified and assist Board discussions and decision making. A school community plan will also provide an ongoing reference document as membership of the Board changes over time.

Ordinary Meeting

The School Advisory Board should meet at least six times per year, once in Terms 1 & 4, and twice in Terms 2 & 3.

A quorum, comprises one ex-officio and three parent members at the time of the meeting and members must be present at all time during a meeting.

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the School Advisory Board shall be held once a year. An annual report is to be presented at the AGM and communicated to the parish community.

APPENDIX 1 – Agenda Format

1. Chairman welcomes all present and opens meeting with a prayer.
2. Ask for Secretary to record apologies, if any.
3. Minutes of the last School Advisory Board Meeting are read by Secretary, if not circulated previously, confirmed by the meeting and signed and dated by the Chairman.
4. Business arising from the minutes may then be brought to the notice of the meeting.
5. Correspondence, if any, is read by the Secretary, where this requires attention of the Board. Other inward correspondence and outward correspondence not requiring further attention are mentioned briefly and all correspondence is then received by the School Advisory Board before being dealt with as necessary. Any replies directed by the meeting should then be attended to promptly.
6. Principal's report: The Principal will inform the board briefly what has been happening in the areas of learning and teaching, education in faith, leadership and management, student wellbeing and school community.
7. Committee Reports: Brief reports on action carried out since the last meeting are appropriate and any recommendations concerning future action should be presented for consideration. Reports should be tabled in writing for the Secretary and members, and be spoken to if aspects of the report require further information. The Chairman should deal with recommendations and business arising from each report in turn.
8. Discussion session – topics of interest in Catholic Education to keep members informed and up to date. This may be arranged and presented by a School Advisory Board member or a resource person from outside the School Advisory Board.
9. Other business as listed on the agenda for the meeting.
10. General Business of which notice has not been given.
11. Date of the next meeting to be confirmed or varied as appropriate.

EVALUATION:

These Administrative Guidelines will be reviewed with staff, parent and community input as part of the school's review cycle.