

Parish Education Advisory Board Governance Policy



At St. Joseph's we hold the care, safety and wellbeing of children as a central and fundamental responsibility of our school. At all times, the ongoing safety and wellbeing of all children at St. Joseph's will be the primary focus of care and decision-making, with particular attention paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability.

Rationale

The role of the Parish Education Advisory Board (PEAB) is to advise the Parish Priest and Principal in accordance with this policy and in the best interests of the St Joseph's Primary School (School) community.

The Parish Priest is the administrator of the Parish, with the Principal as his delegate in matters concerning the School. The Board acts as an advisory body to them in matters concerning education at the School.

The Board has authority as a unit, which derives from its relationship to the Parish Priest. An individual member can exercise authority only if the whole Board delegates authority to that member.

Implementation

Responsibilities of the Parish Education Advisory Board

- Contributing to the development of strategies of the School including Parent education and communication, providing advice on the development and review of school policies, promoting the Catholic ethos of the School.
- Working in collaboration with the Parents and Friends Association and the committees of the Parish.
- Contributing to the review and update of school policies on a cyclical basis or otherwise as determined by the Parish Priest or the Principal.
- Reporting to the school community on achievements and other systematic issues of the School, its teachers and students (e.g. NAPLAN results, School Improvement Survey results).
- Providing input into the Annual Report.
- Contributing to educational debate in the Archdiocese, as appropriate.
- Assisting in the selection of a Principal, as required.
- Other functions as required.

Membership

The membership of the Board is for a period of two years with the option of renomination for an additional two year period. The policy of Board membership is to maintain continuity and accordingly, it is intended that board appointments will be staggered. The Board may exercise discretion to extend a member's term where it considers such an extension would benefit the School.

The following principles will apply to determining membership of the Board:

- Ex Officio members are the Parish Priest and the Principal
- There will be a minimum of four parent representatives.
- There will be a member nominated from the staff of the Primary School.
- Either the Chair or Secretary from the Parents and Friends Association will be a member.

Appointment of Board Members

- Any nominations for new board members will be considered by the Board which will then make a decision on any appointments. Nominees may be asked to provide details of their relevant skills, experience and expertise to assist the Board in its consideration of an appointment.
- The parent representatives should ideally represent a reasonable cross section of the school (e.g.: children in a range of grades) and have a diversity of relevant skills, experience and expertise to cater for the needs of the school.

Office Bearers

- A chairperson will be appointed by the Board at the first meeting each year. The chairperson shall not serve more than two years consecutively.
- The chairperson shall be responsible for leading the Board in its roles and responsibilities and facilitating effective discussions at Board meetings.
- The chairperson has authority to act and speak for the Board between its meetings, including engaging with the Parish Priest and Principal.
- The Board will appoint a secretary who will be responsible for the minutes of each meeting and other administrative tasks as may be necessary from time to time.
- An agenda will be circulated by the secretary a reasonable time period prior to each meeting.

Vacancies

If a vacancy occurs during the year, the Principal and Parish Priest shall have the power to appoint a person to fill that position.

Resignation/Removal from the School Board

Members may resign from the Board in writing. The Board may remove a member who fails to attend three consecutive meetings without a reasonable excuse or in other circumstances where the Board deems it appropriate, including where there is a breach of the obligations set out in this policy. If the children of a Board member leave the school, that Board member will resign.

Meetings of the Board

- The Board generally meets at least six times a year with meeting dates set at the beginning of each year. Special meetings, in addition to regular meetings, may be called.
- A quorum shall consist of five Board members and must include either the Parish Priest, Principal or a nominee.
- Members may attend meetings in person or by electronic means.
- The Board may form sub-committees or working groups as appropriate.

Confidentiality, conduct of meetings and conflicts of interest

- Confidentiality and solidarity are key ingredients in building trust among members. At times, there will be a good reason to declare an issue, a paper and/or a discussion as confidential. This should be done by the chair prior to the discussion at the meeting.
- Board members must respect the right of individuals to express their views freely at meetings without fear of being named outside the meeting as taking particular positions.
- Board members must declare any conflict of interest at the outset of the meeting.

Open General Meetings

The Board may, at its discretion, hold an Open General Meeting. Such a meeting could be called to discuss a specific issue. All parents, staff and parishioners will be advised of an Open General Meeting at least three weeks prior to such a meeting being held. The Chairperson of the Board or a nominee of the Board will chair any Open Meeting. The outcomes of the Open General Meeting will be communicated back to the Parish.

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed as part of a three-year review cycle.

Approved by: Parish Education Advisory Board

Date: May 2018

Review Date: 2021

Responsibility: Parish Education Advisory Board