



St Francis Xavier  
Catholic Primary School  
MONTMORENCY

# PARENTS' ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION

*Revised February 2025*



Melbourne Archdiocese  
Catholic Schools



St Francis Xavier  
Catholic Primary School  
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## ***Vision Statement***

*St Francis Xavier Parents' Association welcomes all members of the school community to join extending respect, care and friendship to all its members.*

### **1. Constitution**

**1.1** The name of the group shall be "St Francis Xavier Parents' Association".

**1.2** This handbook will serve as the constitution.

### **2. Objectives**

The objectives of the Parents Association are:

**2.1** To provide a sense of warmth and friendship within our school and the wider school community.

**2.2** To provide opportunities for social interaction through organising social functions with the aim of bringing the school community together. This objective centres around developing '**CONNECTEDNESS**' in our school community

**2.3** To raise funds, which provides the school with support to develop the school facilities, learning materials, equipment as they see fit. This objective centres around '**FUNDRAISING**' in our school community.

**2.4** To encourage and foster the involvement of parents in the activities of the school and this association.

### **3. Membership**

**3.1** All parents and guardians of children enrolled at St Francis Xavier School are eligible to be committee members of the St Francis Xavier Parents' Association.

### **4. Committee**

**4.1** The business and administration of the Parents' Association shall be conducted by a committee comprising four office bearers (referred to as the Executive), Specific Purposes Committee Members and General Committee Members

**4.2** The Executive Committee must consist of:

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer

For an outline of duties of individual positions see Appendix A

Specific Purpose Committee Members are those who perform specific positions through the course of the school year.

General Committee Members shall constitute those members who attend monthly meetings

**4.3** The Principal and Deputy Principal are members of this committee

**4.4** The Committee shall act in a volunteer capacity and will receive no remuneration for the services they provide. They will be reimbursed for any previously agreed upon out-of-pocket expenses incurred in the conduct of the Parents Association operations.

**4.5** All members of the Parents Association should have a current Working with Children Check, have signed the SFX Parent Code of Conduct and have completed the SFX Annual Child Safety/Parent Helper course

## **5. Terms of Office**

### **5.1 Executive Committee – President Role**

This role is elected for a term of 2 years and may serve for a maximum of 2 consecutive terms (4 years).

A member may become eligible for re-election after an absence of 1 or more years from the President Role. In extenuating circumstances, the Principal may consider the resignation of the President before the expiry of their 2 year term. Such a resignation would only be considered in extreme circumstances and would require approval by the SFX School Advisory Committee.

### **5.2 Executive Committee – Vice President, Secretary &/or Treasurer Roles**

This role is elected for a term of 1 year and may service for a maximum of 2 consecutive terms (2 years). A member may become eligible for re-election after an absence of 1 or more years from these roles.

**5.3** Should a member of the Executive require a continued leave of absence through illness, the members at the next month meeting shall have the power to appoint a temporary committee member to fill the vacancy.

## **6. Meeting**

**6.1** The Annual General Meeting shall be held every year at a convenient time within the month of November.

**6.2** Every meeting must have an agenda and minutes from the previous meeting where applicable. The meeting agenda and minutes are uploaded to the school website so there is transparency and clarity for the whole school community.

**6.3** Meetings shall be held once a month during school terms.

**6.4** The President and Secretary may call special meetings of the committee the and/or Executive. The proceedings, including an explanation and purpose of such a meeting shall be conveyed to the next scheduled monthly Parents Association meeting.

**6.5** Five members of the committee, including one Executive member shall constitute a quorum of the committee.

**6.6** If required, simple majority shall take all decisions. The President may have the casting vote if necessary.

## **7. Elections**

**7.1** Elections of the St Francis Xavier Parents' Association Executive shall occur at the Annual General Meeting.

**7.2** A notice calling for nominations shall be forwarded to all members of the Association at least two weeks prior to the Annual General Meeting. Such notice may be given in the school newsletter.

## **8. Finance**

**8.1** The Parents Association, in keeping with the Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (M.A.C.S) Finance Guidelines are aware that all funds raised by this Association are the property of the school and as such, cannot be withheld.

**8.2** The St Francis Xavier Parents' Association annually raise a nominated monetary figure.

**8.3** The Parents Association should have an annual action plan to allow for future spending and appropriate budgeting. The Principal will detail a priority list of "wishlist" items so that there is a clear direction of where/when Parent's Association funds will be spent.

**8.4** The Parents' Association shall hold a bank account under the SFX School Account system and the Treasurer must keep an accurate record of all monies raised and expended via book keeping methods approved by the Principal.

**8.5** Monies raised by the Parents' Association are to provide amenities, facilities and resources for the students of the school, as recommended by the School Principal.

**8.6** The Parents' Association may use money to cover operational expenses for an event. Receipts must be kept and all entries recorded in the Parents Association's accounts.

**8.7** A statement of receipts and expenditure for the month along with an account balance sheet shall be presented at each committee meeting by the Treasurer and presented to the school bursar for auditing purposes.

**8.8** The Parents Association shall have a representative on the School Advisory Council.

**8.9** The Parents Association will be presented with a target figure for fundraising each year from the School Principal. This figure is to be presented to the committee at the February committee meeting to allow for organisation and planning of events.

## **9. Alterations to the Constitution**

**9.1** Suggestions for any alterations to this Constitution must be submitted in writing to the Secretary prior to the Annual General Meeting.

**9.2** Any alterations may be made by a notice of motion presented and supported by a two-thirds majority vote of members at the meeting.

## **10. Dissolution**

**10.1** On the event of any dissolution of the Parents Association, any of the monies will be donated to the school.

### **Appendix A**

#### **DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE:**

##### **PRESIDENT:**

- To Chair the monthly meetings and Annual General Meeting
- Make sure, particularly on contentious matters, there is the opportunity for all opinions to be expressed
- Make sure everyone is given an opportunity to speak and encourage new or more reserved members to speak by addressing questions to them
- Be the main representative/spokesperson for the Parents' Association
- To consult with and keep the Principal and School Advisory Council informed of the activities of the Parents Association regularly.
- To write and compile newsletter reports to the parent community
- To facilitate all Push Notifications and notices that are to go home
- To co-ordinate events in conjunction with the Event Co-Ordinator
- To ensure that the Parents Association is working together in harmony
- To be approachable by all members of the school community about matters of "Connectedness" and "Fundraising"
- Be mindful of time keeping, keep discussions on track and keep the meeting moving
- Try not to allow meetings to go over 1 hour. Agenda items can be carried over to the next meeting, if required.

##### **VICE PRESIDENT:**

- To chair meetings in the President's absence.
- Deal with any incoming/outgoing correspondence in consultation with the Principal and President
- To carry out other such duties as delegated by the President
- To assist in co-ordinating events/activities in conjunction with other members of the commit.

##### **SECRETARY:**

- To prepare the agenda in consultation with the President.
- To distribute agenda for meetings.
- To record the minutes of committee meetings
- To write up the minutes of each meeting and have copies available for members to read.
- To send the agenda and minutes to the Principal for uploading to the school website
- To prepare and distribute ballot papers for election of the new Executive.

##### **TREASURER:**

- To prepare and submit financial reports at meetings and include a statement income and expenditure since the last meeting
- To collect, receive and collate all monies of the Parents Association and have the money prepared for banking
- To pay accounts by due date after they have been submitted to the committee
- To submit to the school office receipts/invoices all expense within 5 days for reimbursement/payment

- To have the Parents Association accounts ready for auditing as part of the normal school audit that occurs in Term 1 each year
- To help in the co-ordination of fundraising events.

## **PARENTS' ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE CODE OF CONDUCT**

All parents volunteer their time in an effort to raise funds to benefit their children. Parents must feel comfortable to express themselves in a safe, non-threatening environment which is conducive to providing the best results for our children.

1. Listen when other meeting attendees are speaking so that only one person is speaking at a time.
2. Respect another person's view, idea or opinion.
3. Provide constructive feedback.
4. What is said in the meeting stays in the meeting, other than key actions or decisions.
5. Work together in a co-operative manner towards the same objectives for the benefit of the children
6. Seek clarification within the meeting if it is required. Do not make assumptions about what you think another person is trying to express.
7. Appreciate that all parents are individuals with different ideas, opinions and ways of expressing themselves. See this as a positive and use their different talents to the Association's advantage.
8. Be honest, open and transparent within the school community regarding Parents' Association communications.
9. Parents are required to follow MACS policies and procedures across all aspects of their operation.

### **Class Representatives**

- When available one parent from each class will volunteer as class representative
- Their role will be to act as 'liaison officers' for their individual classes and to attend as many Parent Association meetings as possible so that the interests of the whole school community are reflected as accurately as possible.
- They will promote connectedness between the classroom families and the Parents' Association.
- They will follow school policies and procedures when connecting with parents and must be inclusive of all families in the class cohort

### **Annual General Meeting (A.G.M)**

The Parents Association Committee may determine the date, time and place of the Annual General meeting.

The notice convening the A.G.M. must specify that the meeting is an A.G.M.

The ordinary business of the A.G.M. shall be :-

- a) To confirm the minutes of the previous A.G.M. and of any general meeting held since that meeting; and
- b) To receive from the committee reports upon the transactions of the Association during the past financial year; and
- c) To Elect officers of the Association and the ordinary members of the committee

The A.G.M may conduct any special business of which notice has been given in accordance with these Rules.

At the A.G.M., Office Bearers of the Parent Association will be elected by all members of the school community at **one (1) vote per family**

The order of business at the A.G.M. shall be:

1. Attendance and Prayer
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of previous A.G.M.
4. Correspondence
5. Chairperson's Report
6. Principal's Report
7. Parish Priest's Report
8. Financial Report
9. Election of Office Bearers

The first meeting of the Parent Association shall be held early in February each year.

The A.G.M will be held in November where all Executive positions will be elected.

### **Elections**

1. All parents of children attending the St Francis Xavier School shall be eligible to stand for election to the Parents' Association provided that one member only of any immediate family may accept nomination for election.
2. Any parent may nominate any other parent for election to the Parents' Association
3. Nominations must be in writing and must be accepted in writing by the nominee.
4. All parents of children attending the St Francis Xavier School shall be eligible to vote in an election for the Parents' Association.
5. The Returning Officer shall call for nominations for Office Bearers at the appropriate time. The Principal will act as the Returning Officer.
6. The annual election shall be conducted by ballot. The Returning Officer shall conduct overall supervision of the election, give such directions and instructions as necessary and adjudicate on any disputes that may arise
7. The Returning Officer will ensure that adequate notice is given to all parents of children attending St Francis Xavier School, which shall be decided by the Parents' Association in advance.
8. A casual vacancy on the Parents' Association's committee may occur following the resignation of any committee member or as the result of action taken by the Parents' Association regarding such a committee member being absent from meetings. A casual vacancy may be filled by appointment of the Parents' Association and such appointee, being a parent representative, shall hold office until the next Parents' Association election only.

### **General Meetings**

- Meetings shall be held at least monthly commencing in February each year and are to be held on the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday or as previously amended and conclude by 8.30pm. Half hour extensions may be approved by consent of the majority present.
- At every General meeting the President or Vice President shall preside. In their absence, the attending members shall choose one of their number to be Chairperson at the meeting.
- The quorum necessary for decision making shall be five members including at least two (2) members of the Executive, of which, one must be the President or Vice-President.
- Proxies can apply at General Meetings
- No business may be conducted unless a quorum is present

General Meetings are open to all members of the school community and invited guests, however, invited guests may not vote.

### **FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

Source: FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES Catholic Primary Schools

## **PARENTS ASSOCIATION BANK ACCOUNT**

1.0 The Parents' Association exists because the school exists. It works for the general good of the school. The Principal's written approval is required for the Association to be officially associated with the school, to utilize school premises and to provide funds to the school.

2.0 The Parents' Association does not have an inalienable right to the funds raised nor to the final determination of the projects on which these funds will be spent. The Parents Association should be included in the budgeting process so that funds raised by the group may be allocated in advance towards the purchase of goods or service as determined in the school's budget and school improvement plan.

3.0 Any expenditure by the Parents Association for school items classified in the AFS should be made through one of the school bank accounts. This requires a donation of money to the appropriate school bank account. Internal control procedures should be in place for these activities, including the existence of at least two authorized signatories, a receipting process and the submission of regular financial reports to the Principal. Donations and expenditure should be subject to appropriate accountability requirements.

4.0 Under no circumstances is the Parents Association to incur expenditure directly on behalf of the school

## **GOVERNING PRINCIPLES OF THE PARENTS' ASSOCIATION**

### **Use of Funds**

Each year the funds raised are allocated in the areas nominated by the school.

The majority of the funds shall be used for resources in specific areas as nominated by the Principal at the beginning of each year. The Principal will consult many stakeholders about how the Parents Association funds will be spent sourcing ideas from teacher/classroom needs, ideas from our Student Representative Council (S.R.C), from parents and from wider community/diocesan directions.

A "Wishlist" will then be given to the Parents Association at the first meeting of the year. The Parents Association may discuss items on this wishlist according to how much money they can spend at that point in time and as directed in priority by the School Principal. At no point are Parents Association funds to be spent on wages, but always on tangible assets and items that the children use in their learning each day. Items not purchased in that year may roll over into the following year's "Wishlist".

### **At no point must the bank balance in the Parents Association account fall below \$5000.**

The Parents Association does not have absolute rights to the funds raised nor the final determination of projects on which the raised funds will be spent.

**All funds raised by the Parents Association will be spent on 'legacy' items for the student's benefit. It will not be spent on gifts, flowers or wages.**

### **Disputes and mediation**

The grievance procedure set out in this Constitution applies to disputes under these Rules between-

- a) A member and another member; or
- b) A member and the Association.

The parties to the dispute must meet and discuss the matter in dispute, and, if possible, resolve the dispute within 14 days after the dispute comes to the attention of all of the parties.



If the parties are unable to resolve the dispute at the meeting, or if a party fails to attend that meeting, then the parties must, within 10 days, hold a meeting in the presence of a mediator.

The mediator must be-

- a) A person chosen by agreement between the parties; or
- b) In the absence of agreement-
  - i. In the case of a dispute between a member and another member, a person appointed by the committee of the Parents' Association; or
  - ii. In the case of a dispute between a member and the Parents' Association a person who is a mediator appointed by the school.

A member of the Association can be a mediator. The mediator cannot be a member who is a party to the dispute. The parties to the dispute must, in good faith, attempt to settle the dispute by mediation.

The mediator, in conducting the mediation, must-

- a) Give the parties to the mediation process every opportunity to be heard; and
- b) Allow due consideration by all parties of any written statement submitted by any party; and
- c) Ensure that natural justice is accorded to the parties to the dispute throughout the mediation process.

The mediator must not determine the dispute.

If the mediation process does not result in the dispute being resolved, the parties may seek to resolve the dispute in accordance with the School Rules or otherwise at law.