



St Joseph's Primary School Northcote

39 James Street, Northcote, Victoria, 3070

Parish Education Board Constitution

1. Profile of Our Parish and School

History of the parish and school

St Joseph's Primary School is set amongst some of Melbourne's beautiful historical landmarks in the inner, northern, suburb of Northcote, 6km north of Melbourne's CBD. The Sisters of Mercy in Arthurton Road, Northcote, originally established St Joseph's Primary School in 1893. After several years the school came under the care of the Good Samaritan Sisters who would travel by horse and cart from South Yarra.

The Arthurton Road site was used as a school during the week and Masses were conducted there on Sundays. It soon became apparent that with the increasing number of students and parishioners the Arthurton Road site was no longer viable. The Diocese purchased our present site in 1912 and construction began soon after of a Church, Presbytery and Parish School.

The new large two-storey brick school was opened in 1916. The enrolment at that time was approximately 800 students and classes taught were Prep to Year 8. The staff consisted mainly of Good Samaritan Sisters and this Order was responsible for the education of the children until 1974 when the Good Samaritan Sisters relinquished responsibility of the school and the first lay Principal was appointed.

Vision and Mission Statement for the school

As a Catholic School we are committed to teaching and living out the Gospel in a caring community where Christian values are nurtured and celebrated.

There is a strong, positive sense of community and we work together with a focus of ensuring that the needs of the students are our priority at all times. The children are encouraged to care for others.

St Joseph's school community will work in partnership to build:

- A faith community inspired by Gospel Values
- A learning community that values a culture of excellence and a passion for life-long learning
- A community that is committed to and promotes a strong sense of self belief and personal high expectations
- A community that actively, positively and responsibly engages with and contributes to school, local and global communities



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2. The Governing Principles for the Parish Education Board

- Engage in the mission of the Church
- Strengthen community partnerships
- Build a sense of ownership and belonging
- Create a rich source of wisdom and insight
- Support the school, principal and staff

3. Governance and Authority

Parish

3.1 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 parish education board (PEB) provides advice to the parish priest within the context of this Constitution and the vision statement of the parish.

Parish Primary School

3.2 With the approval and under the direction of the Archbishop of Melbourne, St Joseph's has been established to provide Catholic education, according to the precepts, teachings and practices of the Catholic Church.

This school is administered by the parish priest of St Joseph's under the supervision of the Archbishop of Melbourne and is acknowledged as Catholic by his authority.

The governance of this school is undertaken by the parish priest with the support of the principal.

The parish education board (PEB) provides advice to the principal 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



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- the appointment and dismissal of the principal
- school finances.

3.3 Within the provisions of Canon Law, the PEB is responsible to the parish priest, who in turn is subject to the vigilance of the Archbishop of Melbourne.

3.4 The PEB has no responsibility for the internal management and administration of the school, which are the responsibility of the school principal.

4. 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 parish priest for the time being of the parish of St Joseph's or the person duly appointed to administer the parish.

The **parish education board** (PEB) is the body responsible for advising the parish priest and principal according to the provisions of this Constitution.

5. Land and Buildings

5.1 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.

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

6. PEB purposes

The purposes of the PEB are to:

- (a) act as an advisory body to the parish priest and 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.



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7. PEB responsibilities

The responsibilities of the PEB are to:

- a. promote the Catholic ethos of the school and to support the Religious Education programs
- b. contribute to the St Joseph's School Improvement Plan/Annual Action Plan prior to the AGM in term 4 in order to align the direction and goals of the board for the next twelve months
- c. provide advice towards the selection and determination of appropriate policies in accordance with the school improvement plan, in consultation with appropriate parties that will assist the parish priest, principal and staff in working towards the objectives of the school
- d. plan for the future of the parish primary school and its ability to accommodate future enrolments
- e. provide advice on budget planning and finance-related matters where appropriate, taking account of the goals and directions of the school as set out in the school's Vision Statement and School Improvement Framework
- f. receive reports on financial matters from the principal throughout the year via the PEB meetings
- g. contribute to the selection process for the school principal
- h. support the appropriate provision of faith development and RE programs for children attending Government schools
- i. foster adult education in faith.
- j. evaluate the effects of the board's decisions in achieving these objectives. The Board will annually provide a report to the school community with the Board's achievements during the current year and the Board's goals for the following year. This report will be included in the annual school report to the school community and will be displayed on the school website.
- k. Provide a reporting avenue for the Parents and Friends Association. The Board will appoint a representative to the parents and friends association to assist in communication between the Board and the Parents and Friends Association.



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8. The Parish Education Board (PEB)

Membership

8.1 The PEB shall be composed of at least ten (10) members who appreciate, value and share the educational mission and ethos of the Catholic Church. It shall consist of:

- (a) the parish priest (ex officio)
- (b) the school principal (ex officio)
- (c) at least four (4) parents of children attending the parish primary school elected by the parents of the school, including a nominee of the parent and friends association
- (d) at least one and up to three (3) parishioners nominated by the parish priest
- (e) other persons co-opted for a period of time to serve a particular need on the education board.

Ordinary Meeting

8.2 The PEB should meet at least eight times per year and at least once in every two months.

8.3 A quorum, comprises a majority plus one of PEB members at the time of the meeting and members must be present at all time during a meeting.

Annual General Meeting

8.4 The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the PEB shall be held once a year.

8.5 An annual report of the board's activities is to be presented at the AGM and communicated to the parish community.

9. Office Bearers

9.1 Following the AGM, the PEB will elect from its own members a chair. Ex officio members and employees of the parish or school shall not be eligible to hold the office of chair.

9.2 The PEB will elect a deputy chair who will carry out the duties of chair in his/her absence.

9.3 The PEB will appoint a secretary from among its members. The secretary attends board meetings and prepares necessary documentation under the direction of the executive officer or chair.

9.4 The PEB will appoint the principal as Executive Officer.



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10. PEB Executive Committee

10.1 The PEB shall form an PEB Executive Committee which may comprise:

- (a) chair
- (b) parish priest, or his nominee
- (c) principal, as Executive Officer
- (d) PEB secretary.

The PEB Executive Committee shall finalise the board meeting agenda and carry out the directions of the school board. It shall have authority to make decisions on behalf of the board between regular meetings according to conditions laid down from time to time by the board, and ratified by the parish priest. Such decisions shall be presented to the board for ratification.

11. Other Committees

11.1 Other committees, or working parties, may be established by the PEB in response to identified needs of the PEB.

The PEB Faith Formation and Development Committee

11.2 The PEB may form an PEB Faith Formation and Development Committee which may comprise:

- (a) parish priest, or his nominee
- (b) 2 members of the PEB nominated pursuant to 8(d)
- (c) 1 member of the PEB elected or nominated pursuant to 8(c)

11.3 The PEB Faith Formation and Development Committee provides support to the parish priest and the PEB and operates with terms of reference determined by the PEB.

The PEB Fundraising Committee

11.4 The PEB may form a Fundraising Committee which may comprise:

- (a) chair
- (b) parish priest, or his nominee
- (c) 2 non ex-officio members of the PEB
- (d) principal

11.5 The PEB Fundraising Committee provides support to the principal and the PEB and operates with terms of reference determined by the PEB to raise funds for school related purposes.



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12. Appointment of PEB Members

12.1 The parish priest will appoint PEB members nominated or elected under categories 8.1 (d) and (e).

12.2 In the event of a casual vacancy, the vacancy will be filled by appointment of the parish priest on a recommendation of the PEB. Any person appointed to a casual vacancy shall hold office for the balance of the term of the member who is vacating the position.

12.3 The terms of appointment for members of the PEB are as follows:

- The parents of children at the school will be elected for three years, and may be re-elected
- The parishioner(s) will hold membership for three years, and may be re-nominated

12.4 The term of appointment for the board chair will be for two calendar years and may be eligible for re-election.

13. Board Handbook

Based upon this Constitution, the PEB shall produce and follow a Handbook to guide the operations and protocols of the PEB. The Handbook is to be updated on an annual basis

- The Board Handbook shall include:
 - the history and profile of the school
 - a statement on the governing role of the board
 - a list of all board members and their bio
 - role descriptions of all board executive positions
 - a list of board operating policies e.g. meeting attendance, quorum
 - guidelines for the review and development of the board
 - the board sub-committee structure terms of reference
 - the annual schedule of board meetings
 - a draft format of the board agenda
 - the induction process for new board members
 - strategies for board membership succession planning
 - code of conduct for board members
 - process to resolve conflicts or grievances
 - a diagram of the organisational structure of the school
 - a list of all policies of the school



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- a copy of the current school strategic plan
- Standing Orders: the source for the rules of board meetings

14. Change of Constitution

- 14.1 This Constitution may be changed only if the parish priest, after consultation with the PEB, decides upon alterations or accepts any alterations proposed by two-thirds of the members of the PEB.
- 14.2 Notice of any proposed change to the Constitution must be given to PEB members, in writing, 14 clear days in advance of an extraordinary PEB meeting called specifically for the purpose of discussing the matter.
- 14.3 Notwithstanding the above, the parish priest may direct change(s) to the Constitution at any time.

15. Confidentiality and Solidarity

PEB 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 a PEB meeting.

PEB members should also respect the right of individuals to express their views freely at meetings without fear of being named outside the meeting as taking particular positions. A sense of trust and harmony among members is vital for the wellbeing of the PEB.

This Constitution was ratified by the parish priest on

Dated _____

Signed _____