



St Mary's Primary School

Hamilton

School Advisory Council Constitution

Vision Statement

"You must love one another. If you have love for one another, then everyone will know that you are my disciples."

John 13:34 - 35

As a Parish Catholic Primary School, we at St. Mary's are committed to creating a vibrant educational community, allowing each child to achieve their full potential, imbued with the Good News of Jesus: one in which each person in our community is enabled to grow in dignity, developing a living, loving relationship with Christ and others.

Mission Statement

In accordance with the tradition of the Good Samaritans;

- The person of Jesus and His Gospel are at the centre and the focus of all aspects of school life.
- We are committed to the development of the whole child; spiritual, social, emotional, physical and intellectual, where educational needs for all children are met.
- Priests, Parishioners, Parents, Staff and Children are seen as integral to our school community.
- The unique dignity of each person in our community will be recognised, respected and affirmed.

1. Name:

- 1.1. The name of the council will be St Mary's Parish Primary School Advisory Council.

2. Role:

- 2.1. The Council is to assist with the preservation and promotion of the school's Catholic ethos and culture.
- 2.2. The Council provides the opportunity for members of the school and parish communities to support the mission of Catholic Education in the school. Working with the Principal, Parish Priest (Canonical Administrator) and staff the Council members provide leadership to the wider school community.
- 2.3. The Council assists in the development of policies and procedures to support the school and ensure compliance with CEO policy requirements.
- 2.4. The Council will be mindful that the Parish Priest, as pastor and administrator of the faith community, retains the right to make the final decision on policy recommendations made by the Council.

- 2.5. The Council will be mindful of the role of the Principal and staff and their associated professional and legal responsibilities in regard to implementation of policy.
- 2.6. As the leader of the school as delegated from the Canonical Administrator, the Principal is responsible for the good governance of the school. The Principal will set the direction of the Council but is not answerable to the Council for the day-to-day operational decisions of the school.
- 2.7. The School Council has responsibility to provide advice in areas such as:
 - Curriculum offerings
 - Educational policies for the school, eg reporting, homework
 - Student welfare policies, eg pastoral care, discipline, sun safe
 - Parent support processes
 - Other matters as requested by the Parish Priest or Principal.

3. Guidelines:

3.1 Formulation and Evaluation of Policy

- 3.1-1 To assist in formulating, ratifying and revising the School's Vision and Mission Statements and Policies in conjunction with the Parish Priest, Principal, staff and parents.
- 3.1-2 To ensure that school and diocesan policies are implemented.
- 3.1-3 To participate in the periodic school review process.
- 3.1-4 To set the priorities for action addressing the educational needs of the school.

3.2 Financial Management

- 3.2-1 To approve budget recommendations and oversee the school's financial operations.
- 3.2-2 Developing, approving and monitoring school determined levies, loan commitments and the fees collection policy.

3.3 Provision and Maintenance of Facilities

- 3.3-1 To support the school in practical ways, such as ensuring the adequacy and maintenance of school facilities and equipment.

3.4 Future Planning

- 3.4-1 To plan for the future and ensure that the primary school can accommodate future enrolments.
- 3.4-2 Facilitate local school community debate in response to System leadership by the CECV and CEO in lobbying governments in school funding campaigns.

3.5 Public Relations

- 3.5-1 To develop school/community relationships and encourage home/school interaction.
- 3.5-2 To develop strategies for the local promotion of Catholic education, primary and secondary.

3.6 School Auxiliaries

- 3.6-1 To collaborate with the St Mary's Parents and Friends (P&F) group which remains accountable to the Council.

- 3.7 **Selection of Principal and Staff**
3.7-1 To assist in the selection of a principal and staff in accordance with Diocesan guidelines.
- 3.8 **Communication**
3.8-1 To make annual reports to the school and parish communities.
3.8-2 To keep the community informed of the vision and mission of the school as well as the school's educational policies and programs.
- 3.9 **Curriculum**
3.9-1 To encourage community involvement in the educational life of the school, including local level consultation regarding choice and development of learning programs within the school and parish.
3.9-2 To encourage adult education in the Faith.
- 3.10 **Pastoral Care**
3.10-1 To undertake a distinctive pastoral role within the community, in regard to the children enrolled in the parish school, to staff and to appropriate adult groups.
- 3.11 **Initiation**
3.11-1 To facilitate the integration of parents and children new to the school.
- 3.12 **Induction of Council Members**
3.12-1 To induct new Council members to ensure their understanding of the School's Vision and Mission Statements, and the Council's functions, policies and procedures.
- 3.13 **Parish Council Link**
3.13-1 To represent the School Council on the Parish Pastoral Council.
- 3.14 **School Improvement Framework**
3.14-1 To support the school leadership and staff to monitor, review and implement the School Improvement Framework
3.14-2 To be involved in the formulation of a four year strategic plan and associated annual action plans
3.14-3 To be active in the school's endeavours to achieve its stated goals

4. Membership:

4.1 Ex-officio Members

- 4.1-1 Parish Priest – Canonical Administrator
- 4.1-2 Principal.
- 4.1-3 Deputy Principal.
- 4.1-4 Business Manager (non-voting)

4.2 Elected Members.

- 4.2-1 One staff representative elected by whole school staff.
- 4.2-2 Four representatives, who must be current parents, and are elected by the school community.
- 4.2-3 One representative elected by the Parish Pastoral Council.

5. Office Bearers:

- 5.1 The Parish Priest may choose to act as Chairperson. If not, the Chairperson is elected from among the members each year at the first meeting after the Annual General Meeting.
- 5.2 The Principal is not eligible for the position of Chairperson.
- 5.3 Members will, at the first meeting elect an acting Chairperson to preside in the absence of the Chairperson.
- 5.4 The Secretary will be elected from among members, excluding the Parish Priest and Principal, at the first meeting of the Council after the Annual General Meeting.
- 5.5 The Principal of the Parish School is the executive officer of the Council, assists in the preparation of the agenda and generally provides professional leadership for the Council.

6. Tenure:

- 6.1 A term of office is normally two years.
- 6.2 Elected members will serve no more than two consecutive terms.
- 6.3 Occasional vacancies of six months or less will be filled by co-option. Otherwise an extraordinary election will be held.
- 6.4 The tenure of any elected parent representative will cease if their child or children are no longer enrolled at the school.

7. Elections:

- 7.1 The Council will determine electoral procedures.
- 7.2 Elections for vacancies will be held annually, in or about Term 1, or as provided for in 6.3 and 6.4 above. This will ensure that continuity of membership is maintained.

8. Representatives:

- 8.1 At the first regular meeting of the year, Council members will elect any persons required to represent the Council on any other bodies. For example: the Parish Pastoral Council, Parents and Friends.

9. Meetings

- 9.1 The Council will meet at least eight times a year, including twice a term, and will conduct meetings in accordance with standard meeting procedures.
- 9.2 The Council will hold an open Annual General Meeting each year. An overview of reports will be presented to the school community regarding the operations and performance of the school over the previous year. These will include Principal's Report, Chairperson's Report and Financial Report.
- 9.4 All meetings will begin and end with some time spent in prayer led by a member of the Council.
- 9.5 Meetings should be limited to no more than two hours duration unless agreement is obtained from those present at the meeting.
- 9.6 Reports should normally consist of a one-page summary.
- 9.7 Special meetings may be called by the chairperson or as requested by four Council members.

10. Standing Orders

- 10.1 **Council Meetings.**
 - 10.1-1 No meeting may be called unless all members have been notified.
 - 10.1-2 A quorum will consist of half of the Council members plus one.
 - 10.1-3 The secretary will keep minutes of meetings and distribute them in reasonable time before the next meeting.
 - 10.1-4 The secretary will distribute a copy of the agenda of the next Council meeting along with copies of reports and recommendations of committees in a reasonable time before the next meeting.
 - 10.1-5 Committee reports should be submitted to the secretary for distribution to members with the agenda.
 - 10.1-6 Recommendations included in committee reports should be framed in the form of motions for inclusion in the agenda as formal motions.
 - 10.1-7 The chairperson should allow a question time of up to fifteen minutes on committee matters not included in the agenda.
 - 10.1-8 Consensus is the preferred mode of decision making. Where voting is required it will be by simple majority and the Parish Priest will have a deliberative and a casting vote.
- 10.2 **Annual General Meeting**
 - 10.2-1 Notice of the Annual General Meeting shall be given at least thirty days prior to the meeting and an agenda shall be forwarded to all parents at least fourteen days before the due meeting date.
 - 10.2-2 The annual report should be printed and available to all parents at least fourteen days before the Annual General Meeting.
 - 10.2-3 The secretary will keep minutes of meetings and distribute them in reasonable time before the next meeting.

- 10.2-4 Parents wishing to have a matter considered at the Annual General Meeting are required to submit such a matter to the secretary not less than seven days before the Annual General Meeting.

11. Committees:

- 11.1 The Council may appoint committees as it deems necessary and appropriate and in all cases determines the terms of reference.
- 11.2 Membership of committees is limited to persons appointed by the Council. At least one Council member will serve on each committee.
- 11.3 Committees are appointed and dissolved at the discretion of the Council.
- 11.4 A committee is answerable to and will communicate only with the Council to whom it makes its recommendations.

12. Attendance

- 12.1 Any elected or appointed member of the Council who is absent from three consecutive meetings of the Council without sufficient reason will be deemed to have resigned from the Council. In such an instance, the Council will notify the member of loss of membership of the Council and will call for replacement from the appropriate body for appointment until the next election for Council members.

13. Amendments:

- 13.1 This constitution may be amended only at the Annual General Meeting and if at least two thirds of those present and eligible to vote agree to the change.
- 13.2 Any amendment of the constitution must be proposed by at least five parents of current students and submitted in writing at least twenty one days prior to the Annual General Meeting for inclusion on the agenda.
- 13.3 Persons eligible to vote on amendments to the constitution are parents of current students and current Council members.

14. Grievance Procedure:

- 14.1 The school Council should be aware of the difference between policy and operations and sensitive to the fact that it is the role of the Principal and staff to select the means by which school policy is implemented.
- 14.2 The role of the school Council is not to arbitrate over questions of grievance. However, positive recommendations, within the guidelines of the constitution, may be channelled through a Council member to a meeting of the Council.
- 14.3 If for any reason the Council does not function effectively the assistance of the CEO should be enlisted promptly.

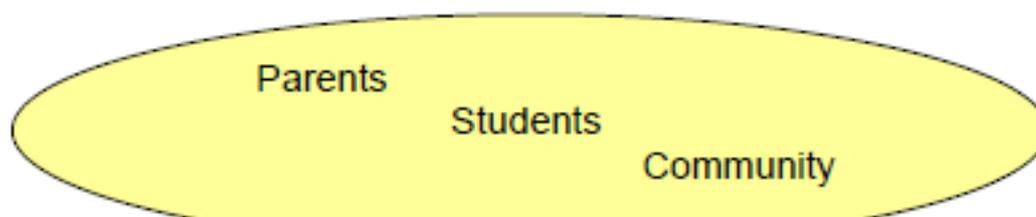
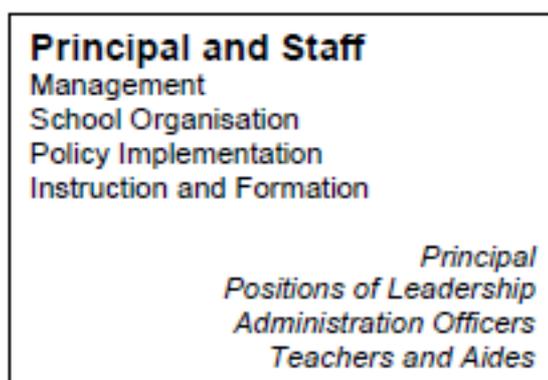
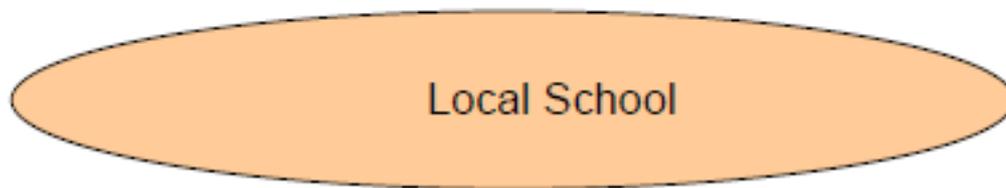
Ratified: 21st March, 2012
By: St Mary's Parish Primary School Advisory Council
Due for Evaluation: 2017

Appendices: 'Catholic Education in Australia' and 'Characteristics of an Effective School' – both from *General Information School Advisory Councils (for the advice of Diocesan Primary and Secondary schools)*, *Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education*

Catholic Education in Australia

Advisory Bodies

National Level	Australian Bishops	National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC)
State Level	Victorian Bishops	Catholic Education Commission Victoria (CECV) Catholic Education Offices(CEO) Melbourne Sale Bendigo Ballarat
Diocese Level	Bishop of Ballarat	Ballarat Diocesan Schools Advisory Council Catholic Education Office, Ballarat
Zone Level	Canonical Administrators Parish Priests & Parish Leaders	Primary Zone Networks Southern Zone (Warrnambool) Central Zone (Ballarat) Northern Zone (Horsham)
Parish Level	Parish Priest	Local School Advisory Council <i>Parish Pastoral Council</i> Local Parish School



Characteristics of an Effective School

School Advisory Councils are able to provide advice in relation to the following characteristics of an effective school.

Professional

Professional Leadership provides a clear sense of purpose and shared