

COOSAN NATIONAL SCHOOL PARENTS' ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION

This body shall be known as Coosan National School Parents' Association

The Purpose of the Parents' Association

The purpose of the Parents' Association is to provide a structure through which the parents/guardians of children attending Coosan National School can work together to help provide the best education and school environment for the children attending the school. The Parents' Association works with the Principal, staff and Board of Management to build an effective partnership between home and school.

The Aim of the Parents' Association

The Parents' Association promotes the interests of students in cooperation with the Board of Management, Principal, teachers and students in accordance with the Education Act 1998. The aim of the Parents' Association is to enable parents/guardians to play their part in ensuring the best possible education for their children, through the association's activities.

The Work of the Parents' Association

The Parents' Association will undertake a programme of activities which will promote the involvement of parents/guardians, and which will support pupils, parents and school staff. In planning its activities, the Parents' Association will consult with the school Principal.

The Parents' Association may advise the Principal and Board of Management on any matters relating to the school in accordance with the Education Act 1998, 26(2)(a). (See Appendix for the full text of Section 26, Education Act 1998.)

What the Parents Association is not about

- Decision making and management issues in the school.
- Professional issues regarding teaching and learning.
- A channel of complaints for parents.

Complaints

It is not the role of the Parents' Association to pursue a complaint on behalf of any parent(s)/guardian(s). However, in the event of an individual parent/guardian approaching the Parents' Association about an experience or concern the Parents' Association committee may;

- a) Advise the parent(s)/guardian(s) on how best to approach the school staff in order to informally resolve their issue
- b) Advise the parent(s)/guardian(s) that if they wish to make a complaint, there is a complaints procedure in place in the school, and encourage the parent(s)/guardian(s) to use that procedure.

Membership of the Parents' Association

All parents or guardians of children attending Coosan National School will be deemed to be members of the Parents' Association.

The Committee of the Parents' Association

The members of the Parents Association will elect a number of members who will have responsibility for managing the activities of the Parents' Association. The team will serve as the committee of the Parents' Association.

The Work of the Committee

The Committee will manage the tasks of the association on behalf of the parent body (the members).

1. The committee will draw up plans for the activities of the Association.
2. The committee will be responsible for seeing that activities are run in an efficient and effective way.
3. The Committee will consult with the school Principal when planning the programme of activities for a particular year.
4. The Committee will arrange with the Principal and Board of Management a system for ongoing communication.
5. The committee will report on its work to the parent body (the members) at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).
6. The committee will manage and account for any funds collected or expended by the Parents' Association.

Sub-Committees

Sub-committees can be set up to handle particular tasks. They may also co-opt people from the general parent body or people with expertise to assist in their work. They are accountable to the main committee.

The Election of the Committee

The members of the committee and its officers are elected each year at the AGM, by a process whereby parents/guardians voluntarily put their names forward.

1. A parent/guardian who cannot attend in person at the AGM, may put their name forward by proxy.
2. Ideally each class is represented by at least one parent/guardian.
3. Officer positions; Persons putting their names forward for officer positions must be proposed and seconded. Where two or more persons are going forward for a position, a vote is held in the form of a paper ballot.
4. Officer positions are held by an individual representative for a minimum of one year and a maximum of two, with officer positions being held for two consecutive years where possible for continuity reasons. Officers shall consist of a Chairman; Vice-Chairman; Secretary; Treasurer; Vice Secretary; Vice Treasurer; Class Liaison Officer.

5. Additional members may be elected to the Committee who do not serve in specific officer roles, including Parent Representative members of the Board of Management.

Finance

1. A treasurer is appointed from the committee and is responsible for the keeping of accounts of the Parents' Association.
2. A financial report containing a written statement of income and expenditure is submitted to all attending at the AGM.
3. The Parents' Association keeps a bank/credit union account in its name. The treasurer and at least one member of the committee must sign for all withdrawals.
4. All purchases/spending of the Parents' Association funds must be agreed by a majority of the committee.

Fundraising

Fundraising for the school by the Parents' Association will be done with the prior agreement of the Board of Management. The Parents' Association committee will agree with the Board of Management as to the specific purposes for which funds are to be raised by the Parents' Association.

Amending the Constitution

Amendments to the Constitution may be made at the AGM, an Extraordinary General Meeting and/or through postal ballot. Proposals/motions to amend the constitution must be submitted in writing to the Parents' Association committee at least 10 working days before the AGM. These motions are then circulated to all parents before the AGM. All eligible parents/guardians may then vote on them at the AGM.

General Conduct

1. The AGM shall be held no later than the last day of October each year.
2. At least seven working days' notice of the date of the AGM shall be given to parents/guardians.
3. The proceedings of all meetings, including the AGM, shall be held in a minute book to be kept by the Secretary, and shall include the names of the committee members present, and members who have sent apologies.
4. The first business of each meeting shall be the reading, consideration and signing of the minutes of the previous meeting, by the Chairperson.
5. Whenever possible, the date for the following meeting shall be decided at the end of each committee meeting.
6. Care must be taken that decisions agreed upon at the meeting must not be subsequently changed outside of the meeting. These decisions may only be changed or dropped by majority consent at an official meeting or outside an official meeting.
7. The school Principal or teacher delegate shall be invited to address the AGM of the Parents' Association. The school Principal may attend Parents' Association meetings at their own request or by invitation of the committee to discuss specific topics, which may arise, that requires dual input.
8. Monthly Parents' Association meetings are open to all parents & guardians to attend.

Last updated: [date]

Education Act 1998. Section 26. Parents' Association.

- (1) The parents of students of a recognized school may establish, and maintain from among their numbers, a parents' association for that school and membership of that association shall be open to all parents of students of that school.
- (2) A parents' association shall promote the interests of the students in a school in co-operation with the board, Principal, teachers and students of a school and for that purpose may-
 - (a) advise the Principal or the board on any matter relating to the school and the Principal or board, as the case may be, shall have regard to any such advice, and
 - (b) adopt a programme of activities which will promote the involvement of parents, in consultation with the Principal, in the operation of the school.
- (3) The board shall promote contact between the school, parents of students in that school and the community and shall facilitate and give all reasonable assistance to parents who wish to establish a parents' association and to a parents' association when it is established.
- (4)
 - (a) A parents' association shall, following consultation with its members, make rules governing its meetings and the business and conduct of its affairs.
 - (b) Where a parents' association is affiliated to a national association of parents, the rules referred to in paragraph (a) shall be in accordance with guidelines issued by that national association with the concurrence of the Minister.