

# PARENTS' CLUB

## POLICY & CONSTITUTION

### **Purpose:**

To ensure school parent clubs are established and operated in accordance with the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 and Department guidelines.

### **Role of Parents' Clubs:**

Parents' clubs promote the welfare of, and provide support to, the school and its community. Parents are key partners in their child's learning. By interacting with the school and other parents, parents' club members gain a firsthand understanding of how schools operate, and can use their skills and experience to work collaboratively with others in supporting the school and its students.

Parents' clubs may undertake social, educational and fundraising activities and contribute to school council decision making.

The role of a parents' club is threefold:

- to provide support, in various forms, for the school, its students and community
- to work in cooperation with the principal, staff and school council in building effective partnerships between home and school
- to get to know the parents of other children at the school and to support the operation of the school.

A parents' club is not a sub-committee of the school council and has no formally prescribed powers or duties.

### **Working with the principal and school council:**

Parents' clubs are most effective when there is a close and cooperative working relationship with the principal and school council. This can be achieved by:

- offering a position on school council in the community member category, where there is capacity to do so, to a parents' club representative
- inviting parents' club members on subcommittees of the school council where appropriate to do so
- providing opportunities for regular updates and discussion between the parents' club, principal and school council
- encouraging discussion about, and an understanding of, a wide range of issues relating to broader general education and student welfare matters
- principals providing feedback (and school council where required) when the club is planning social, educational or fundraising activities
- utilising the parents' club as a reliable mechanism for parent feedback on school policy and initiatives.

### **Fundraising:**

The club may undertake fundraising activities with the prior approval of the school council, having as their object the establishment or augmentation of school funds or funds for a particular school purpose.

School councils are required to work closely with parents' clubs and not reject any proposed fundraising activity until the school council has considered a recommendation by a committee consisting of:

- the president of the school council or the president's nominee, who must be the chairperson; and
- one other representative of the school council elected for the purpose by the school council; and
- two representatives of the club; and
- the principal.

Where funds raised are used to establish or augment school funds, the school council will determine how the funds are expended after consultation with the parents' club and the principal as to what is most desirable in the interests of the school.

References:

If a club plans to raise funds by means of a raffle or bingo or other minor gambling activities, permission and instructions must be obtained from the Victorian Commission for Gambling Regulation, see: Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation - Community and Charitable Gaming

Note: An interim committee is not considered a parents' club and should not engage in fundraising activities. However, members of the school community of a Government school may undertake fundraising activities, having as their objective the establishment or augmentation of school funds or raising funds for a particular school purpose, if the school council approves these fundraising activities first.

### **Formation of a parents' club:**

Principals must:

- on receiving a written request signed by at least 6 parents of students at a Government school, convene a meeting for the purposes of forming a parents' club
- take reasonable steps to inform the school community of the date, time and purpose of the meeting; providing at least 14 days notice.

If the decision of the meeting is to form a parents' club, those persons present must appoint an interim committee to:

- develop a constitution for the club consistent with the model published by the Secretary of the Department
- seek approval of the Minister for the formation of the club under the terms of that constitution.

The sole purpose of an interim committee is to seek the approval of the Minister to form a parents' club. The interim committee must not conduct fundraising activities.

When the interim committee and the school's principal receives notification that the Constitution has been approved by the Minister, an inaugural meeting of the club is called and the principal, teacher at the school or a senior regional officer of the Department (none of which are current club members or are nominated for office) will conduct the election of office bearers. All future meetings are held in accordance with the Constitution.

### **Dissolution of a parents' club:**

A club will cease to operate if it is voluntarily or automatically dissolved.

Note: A principal does not have the authority to dissolve a parents' club.

### **Voluntary Dissolution:**

A club may not be voluntarily dissolved unless:

- all reasonable steps have been taken to circulate a notice of the proposed dissolution generally throughout the school community; and
- a meeting to discuss the notice of dissolution is held not less than 14 days after the circulation of that notice; and
- at least two-thirds of those present at that meeting agree to the dissolution.

Following this meeting, if a decision is made to voluntarily dissolve a parents' club under the Regulations the following actions must be taken:

- all property and other assets are to be transferred to the control of the school council; and
- a person present at the meeting must report the dissolution in writing to the school council as soon as practicable.

The school council must report as soon as practicable the dissolution to the Minister and advise him or her of the completion of actions outlined above.

### **Automatic Dissolution:**

When a school closes, the parents' club is automatically dissolved as a matter of course. Where schools merge or demerge, the schools involved close and then form a new school entity/entities. If the schools have parents' clubs, the clubs will also close.

A new parents' club can be formed once the new school entity/entities have been established. Any funds, property and/or assets from the closed parents' clubs go to the newly merged school entity/entities. In the case where a school closes or merges in accordance with the Regulations, the principal should be proactive and clear in his or her communication to the parents' club about this process.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in....

**June 2019**

## **Role of a parents' club**

Parents' clubs foster closer links between parents, teachers and the principal; facilitate parental participation in their child's school; and work together with school staff and the school council to ensure the best possible educational outcomes for the benefit of all students.

A parents' club not only benefits students, but also can enrich and contribute to the wellbeing of the whole school community through their positive interactions and support. Parents participating in club activities can gain a firsthand understanding of the general operations of a school, can use, and build on, existing skills and expertise, develop friendships and work collaboratively with other parents interested in supporting the school.

Parents' clubs play a valuable role in the life of a school as they:

- work in partnership with a wide array of individuals and organisations in the local community to broaden and enhance the school's ability to advocate for all children and families
- are dedicated to children's educational success, health, and well-being (through strong family and community engagement)
- acknowledge the potential of everyone without regard, including but not limited to: age, culture, economic status, educational background, ethnicity, gender, geographic location, national origin, parental status, race and religion.

The club is not for profit or gain of its individual members.

## **Working with the principal and school council**

A parents' club is not a sub-committee of school council and has no formally prescribed powers or duties. However, club members working together with the school council can provide a vehicle for schools to effectively collaborate with families, and support them to engage with their children's learning.

They can provide input into school decision-making and organise cultural, social, educational and fundraising activities. Not all parents' clubs choose to fundraise for their school. This is an optional activity. Where a club does choose to undertake fundraising activities for the benefit of the school community, these can only proceed with the prior approval of the school council.

Parents' clubs are most effective when there is a close and cooperative relationship with the principal and school council. This can be achieved by:

- the club providing regular updates to the principal and school council on club activities
- ensuring advice is sought from the principal (and school council where required) when planning social, cultural, educational and fundraising activities
- seeking agreement of the school council prior to undertaking fundraising activities, in line with regulatory requirements
- accepting a position on the school council in the community member category, where the school council has invited a member of the parents' club to do so

- joining a sub-committee of the school council if the opportunity arises.

The role of the principal is to:

- convene a meeting for the purpose of forming a parent's club
- work in cooperation and partnership with the parents' club - the principal has the responsibility for the day-to-day leadership and management of the school
- take an active interest in the activities and operations of the club, and where possible, attend club meetings (sometimes only in part) for the purposes of reporting on matters of interest to the club, to respond to questions and to give advice where necessary
- meet with the club's president, school council president, and other members if required, to discuss proposed events and activities.

## Activities

Parents' club members, working with the principal, provide invaluable support to the school in a number of ways, for example:

- establishing valuable links between teachers and parents
- organising information and welcome events for new students and parents at the school
- helping with other school events and functions, such as a fun run, book fair, debutante ball
- organising second-hand book and uniform schemes
- organising fundraising activities. • Helping to cater or work at fundraising activities
- assisting in the preparation of school newsletters, handbooks and calendars
- channeling parent views to school leadership about school policies that have been identified by the school for review, such as anti-bullying, codes of behaviour, etc.
- promoting cultural and social diversity by encouraging membership and participation of all parents in parents' clubs.

## Formation

The establishment and procedures for running parents' clubs are governed by the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 and Department guidelines.

If there is no existing parents' club at the school, and there is sufficient interest from a number of parents in forming a club, one or two interested parents should arrange to meet with the principal to discuss the possibility of formally establishing the new parents' club. The formal process is outlined below.

On receiving a written request signed by at least six parents of students at a government school, the principal must:

- convene a meeting for the purpose of forming a parents' club

- take reasonable steps to circulate a notice informing the school community of the meeting (at least 14 days before the meeting).

Any member of the school community may attend the meeting. If the decision is to establish a club those present at the meeting must appoint an interim committee to

- adopt the Model Parents' Club Constitution as published by the Secretary of the Department, adding the club's details and arrangements where indicated; and
- seek the approval of the Minister (or his/her delegate) for the formation of the club under the terms of that Constitution; and
- conduct meetings necessary for the sole purposes of the above.

When the committee and the school's principal receives notification that the Constitution has been approved by the Minister, an inaugural meeting of the club is called and the principal, teacher at the school or a senior regional officer of the Department (none of which are current club members or are nominated for office) will conduct the election of office bearers. All future meetings will be called in accordance with the Constitution.

The draft Constitution should be sent for review and Ministerial approval to:

Email: [community.stakeholders@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:community.stakeholders@edumail.vic.gov.au)

Or by mail to:

Manager, School Operations and Governance Unit  
Group Planning, Coordination and Operations Division  
Department of Education and Training  
GPO Box 4367, MELBOURNE 3001

## Operational requirements

The operational requirements of the parents' club are detailed in the Model Constitution. Parents' clubs are required to adopt the Model Constitution as published by the Secretary of the Department and are encouraged to review annually, and where required update, their Constitution to ensure consistency with the current Department Model.

## Finance

All parents' clubs are required to operate a separate subprogram maintained within the school's official account – recorded on Cases21. For details on financial arrangements for parents' clubs see the *Finance Manual for Victorian Government Schools* at: [School Financial Guidelines](#)

The club's finances will be audited along with those of the school.

**Note:** Parents' clubs are no longer authorised to operate an Option B bank account. The Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 have mandated the use of Option A bank accounts for all parents' clubs.

## Fundraising

The club may undertake fundraising activities, with the prior approval of the school council, having as their object the establishment or augmentation of school funds or funds for a particular school purpose

.At the time a fundraising activity is approved, it is recommended that the school council and the parents' club discuss how funds raised will be spent, to determine what is in the best interests of the school.

Interim committees must not conduct fundraising activities (see: Formation).. This activity should only take place once the Minister has approved the formation of the Club and its Constitution and has been formally approved.

The school council must not reject any proposed fundraising activity until it has considered a recommendation by a committee consisting of:

- the president of the school council or the president's nominee, who must be the chairperson; and
- one other representative of the school council elected for the purpose by the school council; and
- two representatives of the club; and
- the principal.

Where funds raised are used to establish or augment school funds, the school council will determine how the funds are expended after consultation with the parents' club and the principal as to what is most desirable in the interests of the school.

If a club plans to raise funds by means of a raffle or bingo or other minor gambling activities, permission and instructions must be obtained from the Victorian Commission for Gambling Regulation, see: [Community and Charitable Gaming Application Process and Requirements](#)

## Dissolution

A club may not be voluntarily dissolved unless:

- all reasonable steps have been taken to circulate a notice of the proposed dissolution generally throughout the school community; and
- a meeting to discuss the notice of dissolution is held not less than 14 days after the circulation of that notice; and
- at least two-thirds of those present at that meeting agree to the dissolution.

The Department suggests executing the following actions (as a minimum, although not exhaustive) to ensure that all reasonable steps have been taken to circulate a notice of the proposed dissolution generally throughout the school community:

- include a notice of voluntary dissolution in the school newsletter
- use the school's bulletin board, website or social media sites to circulate the notice
- provide a report at a school council meeting.

Following this meeting, if a decision is made to voluntarily dissolve a parents' club under the Regulations the following actions must be taken:

- all property and other assets are to be transferred to the control of the school council; and
- a person present at the meeting must report the dissolution in writing to the school council as soon as practicable. The school council must report as soon as practicable the dissolution to the Minister and advise him or her of the completion of actions outlined above.

When a school closes the parents' club is automatically dissolved as a matter of course. Where schools merge or demerge, the schools involved close and then form a new school entity/entities. If the schools have parents' clubs, the clubs will also close.

A new parents' club can be formed once the new school entity/entities have been established. Any funds, property and/or assets from the closed parents' clubs go to the newly merged school entity/entities.

It is the new school council's decision how the funds and resources are allocated if a new parents' club(s) is formed at the new school. The Department encourages school councils to work with parents' clubs to determine the most effective allocation of funds.

---

# CONSTITUTION OF CAVENDISH PRIMARY SCHOOL PARENTS' CLUB

The organisation formed under this constitution shall be known as Cavendish Primary School Parents' Club hereinafter referred to as "the Club".

## 1. Aims and Objectives

Working in cooperation with the Principal and School Council, the Club's aims and objectives are to:

- contribute to the wellbeing of the school community
- encourage the participation of all parents in the life of the school and the education of their children
- provide opportunities for parents to get to know each other and to be informed about their child's school
- provide opportunities for parents to extend their understanding of school operations, and general education policy
- contribute to proposals on school policy and other educational issues (as identified or discussed with the Principal or School Council)
- raise funds for the benefit of the school (optional).

## 1. Parents' Club Values

The Club commits to upholding the following values:

- respectful partnerships
- clear and honest two-way communication
- transparent processes
- democratic, informed decision-making.

## **2. Membership and Annual Registration**

Membership shall be open to any parent or guardian of a child attending the school or any other interested individual of the immediate school community.

All members must sign and complete the Registration Form at Schedule 1 to the Constitution.

The annual Registration Form shall be submitted to the Club Secretary on or before the Annual General Meeting of the Club or at any General Meeting of the Club.

Upon submitting a signed and completed Registration Form, a person becomes a Registered Member of the Club until the next Annual General Meeting.

Only Registered Members are eligible to vote at any meeting.

The Club Secretary shall maintain a file of Registered Members of the Club and their addresses, and either provide an attendance book for members to sign at each meeting they are in attendance or take attendance of present Registered Members in Club minutes at each meeting.

Only Registered Members are eligible to vote at any Club meeting or for election to any office in the Club.

## **3. Office Bearers**

The Club shall have as a minimum number of office bearers, a President, Secretary and Treasurer. Other office bearers may be elected as required. All office bearer positions shall be declared vacant at the Annual General Meeting and shall be open to any Registered Member of the Club. Office bearers will be elected to office for a period until the next Annual General Meeting.

## **4. Election of Office Bearers**

Elections shall be conducted by an independent person, such as the Principal, a teacher at the school or a senior regional officer of the Department of Education and Training. The person who conducts the election of office bearers must not be a current Club member or nominated for an office in that election. Elections may be conducted by secret ballot.

A Registered Member who nominates for office must be present at the Annual General Meeting at which the election of office bearers occurs, or have indicated their intention to nominate in writing to the President prior to the meeting.

An office bearer of the Club may be removed from office (but not from membership of the Club) by a resolution carried by a majority vote of members present at a General Meeting.

Notice of intention to move a resolution that an office bearer be removed from office shall be included in the notice summoning the meeting at which the resolution will be moved. Such notice must be circulated to all Registered Members and the office bearer, at least seven days prior to the meeting at which the resolution will be considered.

The office bearer in question must have an opportunity to respond at the meeting to a written copy of the claim made against him/her, which must be provided to him/her at least seven days prior to the meeting at which the resolution will be considered.

A casual vacancy caused by the resignation, removal or death of an office bearer shall be filled at the next meeting of the Club by election. Notice of this shall be provided to all Registered Members of the Club at least seven days prior to the meeting at which the election shall be held.

#### **5. Annual General Meetings**

The Annual General Meeting of the Club shall be held during the month of November unless the majority of members present at a General Meeting vote, after proper notice of a motion to change the date of a particular Annual General Meeting.

#### **6. General Meetings**

General Meetings shall be held monthly unless otherwise agreed by a majority vote of Registered Members. All members shall be notified of the date of a General Meeting at least one week before each meeting.

#### **7. Extraordinary Meetings**

An Extraordinary Meeting of the Club can be called, upon a written request to the President or Secretary, by three Registered Members or by a General Meeting of the Club. Written notice of the time, date, place and object of an Extraordinary Meeting must be provided to all Registered Members no less than four days before an Extraordinary Meeting occurs.

#### **8. Conflict of Interest**

If a Registered Member or a member of his or her immediate family has an actual or perceived conflict of interest (either a pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest) in a subject or matter under discussion at a meeting, the member must declare the conflict of interest.

If the person presiding at the meeting decides that the declared conflict is material, the member must not be present during the relevant discussion unless invited to do so by the person presiding at the meeting and must not be present when a vote is taken on the matter. A member's temporary absence for this purpose does not affect the meeting quorum. The declaration of interest should be included in the minutes of the meeting.

#### **9. Quorum**

The quorum for a meeting of the Club shall be a minimum of 3 Registered Members.

## **10. Voting**

A person who has become a Registered Member at the Annual General Meeting is immediately eligible to vote. A person who has become a Registered Member at a General Meeting is not eligible to vote until the next meeting is held.

Only Registered Members present at any meeting shall be entitled to vote.

A Registered Member may be present at a meeting in person or, by prior agreement with the Secretary, by videoconferencing or teleconferencing. It is the responsibility of the Secretary to ensure appropriate videoconferencing or teleconferencing facilities are available and set up at the time of the meeting.

Voting shall be by a show of hands unless a majority of those present request a secret ballot. Voting shall be determined by a simple majority. Where voting is tied, the President may exercise a casting vote. In the event that a secret ballot is called when one or more Registered Members are present via videoconferencing or teleconferencing, it is the responsibility of the President to determine the voting process for these members.

## **11. Finance**

All revenue and expenditure (including reimbursements) in relation to the Club must be approved by a General Meeting of the School Council in accordance with the school's procedures.

The Club will have a sub-program within the school's official account on CASES 21. All revenue and expenses relating to the Club must be recorded within this sub-program in accordance with Department of Education and Training policy as per the Department's website.

A separate sub-program must be maintained for the purpose of:

- (a) the administrative functions of the Club; and
- (b) the raising of funds by the Club for the benefit of the school.

All funds raised by the Club by fundraising activities must be held in the Club sub-program by the School Council in trust for the general or particular purpose for which the funds were raised.

The Club's finances will be audited along with those of the school as part of the Department's audit process. It is the responsibility of the School and the Club to provide relevant financial documentation and ensure records are up to date.

The Club shall not operate for profit or undertake activities for the private gain of individual members.

## **12. Fundraising**

The Club may undertake fundraising activities, with the prior approval of the School Council, for the purpose of:

- (a) the establishment or augmentation of school funds; or

(b) the establishment or augmentation of funds for a particular school purpose.

### **13. Standards and Procedures**

The Club **may** set its own standards and procedures provided that these do not conflict with this Constitution. These standards and procedures may include but are not limited to:

- (a) standing orders for the conduct of meetings, including minute taking
- (b) dispute resolution processes
- (c) code of conduct.

### **14. Privacy**

The Club and all members of the Club must comply with Victorian privacy law and the [Schools' Privacy Policy](#) on the Department of Education and Training's website. All 'personal information' collected, used or disclosed by this club, is protected by the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic) and *Health Records Act 2001* (Vic) (collectively, Victorian privacy law).

### **15. Club/Association Records**

All minute books, correspondence, annual financial statements, expenditure vouchers, registration forms and other documents of the Club will be the property of the Minister and will be made available to officers authorised by the Secretary of the Department of Education and Training. All such records not in current use will be filed in the school building with other school records.

### **16. Representation on School Council**

Where the School Council invites the Club to nominate a member to fill a Community Member Category position on the School Council, the Club/Association shall elect a member, as the Club/Association nominee. The member elected by the Club/Association must not be an employee of the Department of Education and Training.

### **17. Incorporations**

The Club/Association is not permitted to incorporate.

### **18. Voluntary Dissolution**

The Club/Association may not be voluntarily dissolved unless:

- (a) all reasonable steps have been taken to circulate a notice of the proposed dissolution generally throughout the school community; and
- (b) a meeting to discuss the notice of dissolution is held not less than 14 days after the circulation of that notice; and
- (c) at least two-thirds of those present at that meeting agree to the dissolution.

If, at the meeting, a decision is made to dissolve the Club, the following actions must be taken:

- (a) the control of all property and other assets must be transferred to the School Council; and
- (b) a person present at the meeting must report the dissolution in writing to the School Council as soon as practicable.

### **19. Automatic Dissolution upon Closure or Merger of School**

If the school closes or merges with another school, the Club is dissolved. The Club must transfer control of all property and other assets held by the Club to the School Council before the school closes or is merged.

## **Membership of Parents Victoria**

Parents Victoria is a not-for-profit organisation, representing parents and Parents' Clubs in Victorian Government schools. The Club may choose to become a member of Parents Victoria. Delegates elected by the Club to attend conferences of Parents Victoria shall vote as directed by the Club.

## SCHEDULE 1: Parents' Club Registration Form



### Parents' Club Registration Form [2019]

I .....\* wish to become a Member of the .....\* School's Parents' Club. By signing this form, I agree to abide by the Club's Constitution at all times, including upholding the values in clause 2 of the Constitution. I will strive to make a positive difference in the school community; act honestly and with integrity; use resources responsibly and appropriately; engage genuinely with the community; comply with relevant legislation and policies; and to treat everyone in a considerate, fair and courteous manner.

I am aware that my registration needs to be renewed at the next Annual General Meeting.

Address\* .....

Phone number..... (or) Mobile number.....

Email\* .....

Child(ren) Name(s) and Year Level(s).....

#### *\*Required information*

*The Club Secretary is required to maintain a log of registered members of the Club and their addresses in accordance with the Club's Constitution.*

*The Parents' Club will seek to provide information including meeting agendas and any supporting documentation via email.*

Signature.....

Date.....

This form will be filed in the school building, will be the property of the Minister and will be made available to officers authorised by the Secretary of the Department of Education and Training.

All school clubs, (including Parents' Clubs), are governed by the Department of Education and Training, and therefore must protect the information that they collect. This means that all members of **Cavendish Primary School Parents' Club** must comply with Victorian privacy law and the [Schools' Privacy Policy](#). All 'personal information' collected, used or disclosed by this Club, is protected by the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic) and Health Records Act 2001 (Vic) (collectively, Victorian privacy law).



***Cavendish Primary School is committed to Child Safety – We have a zero tolerance for child abuse.***

References: