



St Mark's Coptic Orthodox College
Parents' & Friends' Association
Constitution

*Formally adopted at the General Meeting of the Association
XX XXXX 2009
Formally approved by the College Board
XX XXXX 2009*

1. Names

- 1.1. The Association will be known as "St Mark's Coptic Orthodox College Parents' and Friends' Association", and is referred to herein as "the Association". The "Board" shall mean the governing Board of St Mark's Coptic Orthodox College. The "Committee" shall mean the duly elected Executive Committee of the Association.

2. Vision Statement

St Mark's Coptic Orthodox College Parents' and Friends' Association aims to support the College in fulfilling its mission to cater for the spiritual, academic and social welfare of our children.

All parents are welcome to share our vision and actively participate at every level of our activities. As a united community, in harmony, we do all things according to the love and integrity of the holy Coptic Orthodox Christian faith.

We strive to set a good example through goal driven initiatives and leave a legacy of dedication for future generations of parents and students.

The Parents' and Friends' Association fosters goodwill among the parent community. It nurtures active partnership between the parents and the College, in order to promote the interests of the College by bringing parents, students, College staff and members of the community into close and fruitful cooperation.

As Australian citizens, we work to instil true community spirit and we respect the original owners of this blessed land and country.

3. Functions

The Parents and Friends Association is the key parent group in the school. It provides a forum for parents to:

- 3.1. Provide input on parent priorities and suggest ideas about Coptic Orthodox schooling.
- 3.2. Work closely with the Head of College and staff.
- 3.3. Support the Board and its policies.
- 3.4. Raise money for resources.
- 3.5. Collaborate with the Head of College in determining the priorities for the disbursement of P&F funds.
- 3.6. Provide opportunities for voluntary services.

- 3.7. Provide support for College programs e.g. literacy support, working bees etc.
- 3.8. Provide opportunities for social interaction and for parents to form supportive networks.

4. Affiliations

- 4.1. The association is affiliated to the Coptic Orthodox Church.

5. Membership

- 5.1. Full Membership of this Association will be open to all parents or guardians of current students.
- 5.2. Associate Membership (non-voting) will be open to former students, former members of school staff, parents or guardians of former students of the College and members of the local community as deemed appropriate from time to time by the Committee.

6. Subscription

- 6.1. The membership subscriptions of the Association will be laid down in each calendar year, payable for parents and guardians.
- 6.2. A financial member will be one who has paid the prescribed membership fee in respect of the current year and signed an agreement to comply with this constitution.
- 6.3. Application for membership will be processed and activated at the next available general meeting.
- 6.4. Only financial full members may vote at the meetings, or otherwise take part in the affairs of the association.

7. Resignations and Vacancies

- 7.1. Any member of the Association may resign by giving notice in writing. Such resignation shall take effect immediately upon receipt by the secretary of such notice.
- 7.2. The Committee may appoint any member to fill any vacancy, which may exist or occur in the Committee.

8. Management

- 8.1. The management of the Association shall be vested in a Committee.
- 8.2. The Committee shall consist of at least a president, one vice president, a secretary and a treasurer. Up to four other members of the Committee may also be elected. The Committee shall not have more than 8 members including the officers.
- 8.3. The Head of College, Director and members of the Board may attend and speak at the Committee and general meetings of the Association.
- 8.4. A member of the Committee may be removed from office by resolution of the Association carried at a properly convened general meeting or special general meeting provided due notice of motion has been given.
- 8.5. Any elected member of the committee who, without leave being granted, absents themselves from three consecutive general or executive meetings shall be required to show cause why they should not be relieved of office.
- 8.6. Members of the Committee are deemed to be volunteers when performing their duties as officeholders, and as such are covered by the volunteer insurance policy held by the College.

- 8.7. Neither the Association nor the Committee shall have any powers or responsibilities in relation to the policy, control, or governance of the College or in relation to any functions or duties of the Board, the Head of College, or any teacher, officer or employee of the College.

9. Sub-committees

- 9.1. Sub-committees may be appointed for specific purposes: such appointments shall be made by the members of the Association at an annual or specific general meeting or by the Committee as the need arises. Such sub-committees may act only within the terms of their appointment as recorded in the appropriate minutes, or other similar records which authorises their appointment.
- 9.2. All sub-committees shall be automatically dissolved at the commencement of the annual general meeting occurring after the date of their appointment.
- 9.3. Sub-committees may not retain monies received from fundraising activities for more than fourteen (14) days and upon dissolution, all funds held must be surrendered to the treasurer of the Association.
- 9.4. Sub-committees shall be required to submit full accounts of income and expenditure to the treasurer of the Association, to enable the treasurer to comply with the requirements of his/her appointment.

10. General Meetings

- 10.1. At least seven (7) days notice in writing of general meetings shall be given to each member; such notice shall state time and place. A notice in the College Newsletter shall be deemed to be sufficient.
- 10.2. At all general meetings, the president shall be the chairperson and in his/her absence a vice president or such member as is appointed by the meeting shall preside. At such meetings a matter shall be decided by a simple majority. Each full member present including Committee members and chairperson shall have one vote and in the event of an equal number of votes being cast for and against a motion the chairperson shall have an additional casting vote. Voting shall be by show of hands or, if required by any member present, by secret ballot.
- 10.3. The members of the Association shall meet for general business at least once during each school term on a day and at a time to be determined by the Committee. The order of business at a general meeting of the Association shall be as determined from time to time by the Committee.
- 10.4. Motions may be raised at a General Meeting at the discretion of the Chairperson.

11. Special General meetings

- 11.1. The Committee may, whenever it is considered necessary for a special purpose, and shall, upon requisition in writing of not less than 10% of the membership, call a special general meeting and such a meeting will be held within a month of the secretary receiving the requisition referred to and with 14 days clear notice given to members. The requisition shall state the purpose for which the meeting is to be called and no other business shall be discussed at the meeting.

12. Annual General Meetings

- 12.1. An annual general meeting of the Association will be held each year during the month of November or December. At least one calendar month's notice in writing of the annual

general meeting shall be given to each member; such notice shall state time and place. A notice in the College Newsletter shall be deemed to be sufficient.

12.2. The order of business shall be:

- i. Apologies.
- ii. Reading and confirmation of minutes of meeting.
- iii. Head of College's Annual report.
- iv. Treasurer's report.
- v. Adoption of the statement of revenue and expenditure, and Honorary Auditor's report.
- vi. President's report.
- vii. Nominations and election of officer bearers, Committee and approval of Honorary Auditor.
- viii. To consider such amendments to the Constitution of the Association as have been approved by the Board and of which notice shall have been given to members.
- ix. General business as determined by the Committee
- x. Any other motions of which notice has been received

12.3. The procedure for elections at the annual general meeting shall be:

12.3.1. The chair shall preside over the election of a returning officer from among the full members present. The returning officer may not be nominated for the committee or any of its offices and may not vote at that meeting.

12.3.2. The office bearers and committee members up for election in that year (see below) shall vacate their positions.

12.3.3. Nominations for the vacant positions shall be called for by the returning officer. Each nomination must be seconded.

12.3.4. The election of office bearers shall be by simple majority vote, conducted by secret ballot. The votes shall be counted by the returning officer and two other members s/he shall nominate, and shall be announced immediately the result is determined.

12.4. Half of the membership of the committee shall be elected every 2 years on alternate years.

12.5. The president, the secretary and up to 2 other committee members shall be elected in each even calendar year. Their term of office shall be for 2 consecutive years.

12.6. The vice president, the treasurer and up to 2 other committee members shall be elected in each odd calendar year. Their term of office shall be for 2 consecutive years.

12.7. Any committee member or office bearer who is elected or appointed at a time other than the appropriate annual general meeting shall serve only for what remains of the 2 year term. They may be nominated at the next appropriate annual general meeting.

12.8. Any current committee member who wishes to be nominated for any other office in the committee shall first resign his/her current position on the committee.

12.9. No member shall be elected to any office unless being present, gives consent, or if absent has given prior written consent to the chairperson of the meeting.

12.10. No member shall be elected to any office unless s/he is a parent of a current student at the time of his/her election.

13. Quorum

13.1. At Committee meetings, 50% of Committee members (other than co-opted attendees) shall form a quorum.

13.2. At all general meetings, five (5) members (including Committee members, but excluding co-opted attendees) shall form a quorum.

13.3. At the annual general meeting, nine (9) members (including Committee members, but excluding co-opted attendees) shall form a quorum.

14. President's duties.

The president shall:

14.1. Preside as chairperson at meetings;

14.2. Act as liaison between the Association and the Head of College.

15. Vice President's duties.

The vice president shall:

15.1. Preside as chairperson at meetings in the absence of the president;

15.2. Assist the president in his/her duties.

16. Secretary's duties

16.1. The secretary shall:

i. Keep minutes of all meetings of the Association and its Committee.

ii. Deal with correspondence of the Association.

iii. Prepare and maintain the roll of members of the Association, and their contact details.

17. Treasurer's duties

17.1. The duties of the treasurer shall include:

i. Custody of the funds of the Association.

ii. The receiving of subscriptions and donations.

iii. Presentation to the Association of financial statements at each general meeting.

iv. Keeping of proper accounts and the preparation of the financial statement and balance sheet made out to 31st October each year.

v. Cheques drawn on the bank account, or any other transfer of funds by any means, shall be signed or otherwise approved by any two of treasurer, president, secretary or vice president.

vi. All payments of accounts to be approved at a committee meeting.

18. Communications

18.1. Copies of the minutes of general meetings, annual general meeting, Committee meetings and financial statements, shall be made available to the Head of College, Director of the College and the Board of the College.

18.2. A copy of the President's Annual Report and a copy of the Auditor's Financial Report shall be forwarded to the Director and Head of College each year prior to the Annual General Meeting.

18.3. Communication between the Association and the Board shall normally be via the Head of College. Direct communication should only be considered by the association "in extremis".

19. Auditor

19.1. At the annual general meeting the Committee shall nominate an Honorary Auditor for approval by the meeting. The Honorary Auditor shall audit the Association's accounts for

presentation to the next year's annual general meeting by the treasurer. If the annual general meeting fails to appoint an honorary auditor, the Committee shall seek out and appoint one within the following month.

- 19.2. The honorary auditor shall examine the books of accounts and other records of the association and report to the members on the accounts, being the balance sheet and income and expenditure account, required to be laid before the members at the annual general meeting. In his/her report, the honorary auditor shall state whether, in his opinion, the balance sheet and income and expenditure account present a true and fair view of the state of the association's affairs at the end of its financial year and of the results for that year.

20. Income

- 20.1. All monies raised by the Association and/or its sub-committees shall be placed in a bank account in the name of "St Mark's Coptic Orthodox College Parents and Friends Association".
- 20.2. Before the association approves or proceeds with any public function at which it is proposed to raise money for or on behalf of the Association or the College, it shall obtain the consent of the Head of College for such function, its nature and date.
- 20.3. The Association shall not donate or raise monies for any specific school purpose unless the Head of College approves such purpose.
- 20.4. Fundraising methods used shall be in accord with Coptic Orthodox Church policy in relation to games of chance or provision of alcohol.
- 20.5. The income and property of the Association shall be applied solely toward the promotion of the objects of the Association. All office bearers and Committee members shall be and act in an honorary capacity.
- 20.6. In the event of dissolution of the Association, all funds and assets, subject to the payment of outstanding liabilities, shall become the property of the Board.

21. Indemnity of Office Bearers.

- 21.1. Office bearers of the Association who by the authority of the Committee accept or incur any financial liability on behalf of the Association shall be held indemnified by the Association against any such liability.
- 21.2. No action at law or in equity shall lie against the Board or any office bearer of the Association or the Committee on the part of any person in relation to the winding up of the Association, the refusal of membership or the cancellation of any person's membership of the Association. The provisions of this Constitution shall bind every person elected to membership.

22. Expulsion

- 22.1. Expulsion of members shall be by secret ballot at a special general meeting. A resolution to expel a member shall not be accepted or discussed unless 14 clear days notice of such resolution has previously been given to all members including the member who is the subject of the resolution. The notice shall be deemed to mean notice in writing posted to the residential or email address, as currently held in the Association's records, of each member. A two thirds majority of the members present and voting shall be required to expel a member. Any person upon ceasing to be a member in any manner shall forfeit all rights and claims upon the Association, its property and/or funds.

23. Winding Up

23.1. If at any time the Board at a special meeting called with the express purpose of considering the matter, approves a resolution by the Committee that the Association be wound up; or if the Board of its own motion at such meeting resolves that the continuance of the Association is not in the opinion of the Board in the best interests of the College; then in either case the Association shall forthwith cease to use its name or any name which associates it with the school, and shall take such steps as are necessary to disband and wind up its affairs. In the event of the winding up of the Association howsoever occurring, the property thereof shall vest in the Board.

24. Life Membership

24.1. The Association may confer the honour of life membership on a member who has made an outstanding contribution to the work of the Association over a period of 10 years or more.

24.2. Life members may attend and speak at meetings but are not entitled to vote or to hold office unless they are also ordinary members in terms of rules 5 and 6 of this Constitution.

25. Amendment and Adoption of Constitution.

25.1. No repeal, amendment or addition to the constitution shall be made except by resolution at an annual general meeting. The annual general meeting may adopt or reject any proposed amendment, or vary the amendment if the meeting so votes.

25.2. A resolution to repeal, amend or add to this constitution may be proposed by at least two members of the Association and shall be sent in writing to the secretary. It shall be considered, amended, approved or rejected by the Committee, who shall then forward it to the Board through the Head of College for consideration, amendment, approval or rejection.

25.3. A resolution to repeal, amend or add to this constitution must then be passed by a two thirds majority of the members present at the annual general meeting and entitled to vote.

25.4. The secretary must circulate all notices of repeal, amendment or additions in writing to all members no less than 14 days prior to the annual general meeting at which it shall be considered. Such notice shall include the text of the proposed amendment, the reason for it being proposed and the date, time and place of the annual general meeting at which it shall be considered.