Diocese of Wollongong

Parents and Friends Forum

Parents and Friends Association Handbook

June 2006

This document has been put together using the combined resources of the

Diocese of Wollongong Catholic Education Office

and the

Diocese of Wollongong Parents and Friends Forum
Foreword for Parents’ Manual
from Bishop Peter Ingham

At the heart of the parish primary and regional secondary schools, for which the Diocese is responsible, are the children, who belong to their parents, who belong to their parishes, and who are entrusted to the Principals and Staff of our diocesan schools.

Ever since the Church began in this country, we were anxious to associate the education of our children with parish life. Each parish set out to have a school so that the faith of the parents and of the parish community could be shared with the oncoming generation.

It is my dream that in every parish where there is a school, the integration of family, school and parish life will model an authentic Christian community, so that, as we reach out to educate our young people to grow and develop in body, mind, heart and soul, the students in our schools will gratefully reflect the solid Catholic influences that have been forming them through the work of their parents, their priests, their teachers, their fellow students and the wider parish community.

Official Church documents, as well as educational research, indicate that the effectiveness of Catholic schooling is enhanced when parents are perceived by their children as being supportive of, and involved in, the work of the parish through its school. The Catholic school is an integral part of the mission of the Church to spread the teaching and lifestyle of a follower of Jesus Christ.

The Diocesan Parents & Friends Forum represents all families with children in our schools. Each school has a functioning Parents & Friends Association.

I warmly commend this manual which has been compiled to assist all Parents & Friends Associations through our Diocese, not only to function effectively but also to work towards the aims and objectives set out in your constitutions.

The Diocesan Parents & Friends Forum is to be highly commended and thanked for producing such a practical manual.

Most Rev Peter W Ingham DD
BISHOP OF WOLLONGONG

22 June 2006
PWI:lt/1322
A Message from the Acting Director of Schools
Catholic Education Office
Diocese of Wollongong

I am pleased to have this opportunity to offer my congratulations to the Diocesan Parents & Friends Forum for producing this Manual for Parents and Friends Associations in the schools of the Diocese of Wollongong.

By supporting the work of the key parent body in each school, parents have a vital means of showing that they support the school and the culture of the school as a Catholic education community. An effective Parents and Friends Association is one which understands its role, accepts the advice of its members and conducts itself as an authentic representative parent body for the sake of the betterment of the entire school and parish. Above all an effective Association understands that it exists to support the provision of the best possible Catholic school for the students.

This Manual assists them to fulfill this important role. Whether Parish Primary or Diocesan Secondary, our schools are noted for the dedication and support given to them by the parents who have chosen, often at personal sacrifice, to send their children to a Catholic school.

I trust that the good relationships developed between the Diocesan Parents and Friends Forum, the Catholic Education Office, school staff and principals and the broader parent school and parish communities will continue to grow in strength. We are all engaged in the important work together of assisting schools to achieve the highest quality Catholic learning and teaching for the children in our care.

Yours sincerely

John Tubridy
Acting Director of Schools
Diocese of Wollongong
22 June, 2006
Acknowledgements

The Diocese of Wollongong Catholic Education Office and the Diocese of Wollongong Parents and Friends Forum would like to acknowledge the valuable contributions made by the following:

- The Diocese of Broken Bay Catholic School Parents Council.
- The Parents Representative Council of Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Parramatta.
Parents and Friends Association Handbook

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Section 1

The Parents and Friends Association

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1.1 What is a Parents and Friends Association?

- President
- Vice President
- Treasurer
- Secretary

The Diocesan Delegate can be either a member of the Executive or an ex officio along with the Principal and Parish Priest.

The Association:

- Consists of parents, teachers and supporters of the school
- Is open to input from the students
- Is an integral part of the school community
- Shares responsibility for the school with the Principal and teachers
- Exists for the benefit of the school
- Does not limit its scope to fundraising, but is involved in the total life of the school
- Provides opportunities for parents to meet

1.2 The Role of the Parents and Friends Association in Your School

The Association aims to participate in the spiritual, intellectual, social and physical growth of students in a school community by:

- Playing an important role in a community home/school partnership.
- Fostering a distinctive Catholic environment within the school
- Promoting the school vision in all possible ways
- Developing maximum co-operation between parents and the school staff
- Utilising the structures which are established to promote the principles of authentic Catholic education
- Allowing an affective medium for people to contact Executive members with any concerns i.e. via the school web page or through the school.
- Encouraging, affirming and co-operating with other groups working for the good of the school community
- Providing a medium for information and education of parents
- Affording parents the opportunity to contribute to the decisions made for the whole school
- Having regular meetings (For example - third Monday of every month). Insert date, time and location here:
  - Date

parents as partners – leading, learning, supporting, growing
Objectives

The key objectives of any Parents and Friends Association should include:

- To act at all times with the approval of the Parish Priest (for Primary schools only)
- To raise funds
- To promote the cause of true Christian education by bringing parents, friends, students and teaching staff of the school into fruitful co-operation
- To provide material assistance in equipping and maintaining the school, when deemed necessary by the Principal and staff
- To confer with the Parish Priest and Principal in matters relating to the educational needs of the school, staff and students
- To promote social contact among parents
- To liaise with other parish organisations on matters relating to the school
- To encourage members to live a full Christian life
1.3 What Can’t a Parents and Friends Association do?

**NO** Parents and Friends Association has any influence on…

- School staffing issues
- Specific student issues
- Educational issues relevant to specific students
- Financial decisions without consultation with the school Principal
1.4 The Parents and Friends Association Executive

The following is a brief overview of the roles and responsibilities of the various positions that make up a typical Parents and Friends Association Executive.

The Executive Committee

This committee comprises a President, Vice President (in some schools two VP’s may be required), Secretary, and Treasurer. The role of Diocesan Delegate is also seen as critical and this person should attend all Executive meetings.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Executive Office Bearers

The key roles and responsibilities of the Executive Office bearers are as follows:

President and Chairperson

The President has the most responsible position in the association. Not only does the association depend on the President, but the success of the Diocesan Parent Forum and the Council of Catholic School Parents (state body) relies on the effective leadership of their Presidents at local association level.

The Parents and Friends Association is only as effective and as strong as its school-based associations. While each person brings his or her own style of leadership to the presidency, it is important that Presidents understand the role and function of a Parents and Friends Association and how his or her leadership will determine its success or otherwise.

The President is usually the Chairperson.

A President ensures an efficient and well run association by:

- Developing an understanding with the Secretary
- Planning the preparation of meetings
- Attending to incoming and outgoing correspondence as presented by the Secretary between meetings and following up on action from the previous meeting

Establishing a good personal relationship with all members of the Parents and Friends Association Executive as well as the Parish Priest and Principal may be time-consuming and even personally demanding but it will pay dividends a hundred fold.

The President is also a vital public relations officer not only for the Parents and Friends Association but for the school, parish, religious order and church as well.
The Role of a Chairperson

At meetings, an effective Chairperson:

- Restricts speakers to one or a strictly limited number of addresses
- Insists speeches are directed to or through him/her
- Makes sure his/her own participation is minimal.

The Chairperson should recognise the importance of presiding at the Parents and Friends Association meeting and prepare well in advance with the Secretary.

An Executive meeting between general meetings will ensure smooth and effective meetings. Such meetings should include the School Principal and the Parish Priest. (Ex officio members – refer Section 1 point 1.6 – Ex Officio)

Although an extra meeting each month may seem demanding, these Executive meetings often prove essential and beneficial. Principals appreciate both the courtesy of being prepared for all items on the agenda and the opportunity to establish friendly relations with the Executive in a less structured atmosphere than the general meetings. Sometimes a half-hour session before a scheduled general meeting is sufficient, but often a short meeting a week before is preferable. The Executive meeting will help develop a close and effective relationship between the School Principal and the Parents and Friends Association. The importance of shared prayer at this level should be emphasised.

The Chairperson’s duties include:

- Ensuring the meeting is properly convened in accordance with the constitution of the association
- Ensuring a quorum exists to allow business to be handled and decisions taken
- Ensuring proper order is maintained and all duties are carried out firmly but impartially in accordance with accepted meeting procedure
- Extending a welcome to all in attendance with a special greeting for new members or visitors
- Circulating the agenda and following it as far as possible
- Explaining any major deviation from the prepared agenda
- Ensuring all business is dealt with formally by motions and amendments expressed in clearly understood terms or written down and related to the business before the meeting
- Allowing free-ranging discussion as appropriate prior to requiring a formal motion, but exercising careful restraint and at all times ensuring that the speakers recognise the chair
- Insisting that the speaker addresses the business of the motion or amendment and requiring the person resumes his/her seat if the order is not complied with
- Using a casting vote when equal numbers support or reject a motion put forward at a meeting
• Making certain that as many sides of opinion as possible are heard, particularly when contentious matters are being debated
• Making sure that speakers are not interrupted and private conversations don’t take place during debate
• Encouraging wide participation in debates by addressing a question occasionally to new or more reserved members
• Not wasting time seeking extra speakers on a subject if it is clearly obvious that a large majority are of one opinion
• Arriving at consensus

In summary, a Chairperson should:

• Rule on points of procedure
• Determine who shall address the meeting and refuse to allow discussion on matters which are not within the scope of the notice of meeting
• Put the question to the vote
• After impartially hearing all views, and with the consent of the meeting, declare that discussion is closed and put the question to the vote
• Rule on voting - The Chairperson can exercise a casting vote if the rules permit and voting is tied. The chair also has the power to declare the vote on a show of hands. This is conclusive unless a poll is demanded
• Request that disorderly persons leave the meeting.
• Adjourn the meeting. The meeting may be adjourned for a number of reasons, e.g. failure to retain a quorum during a meeting, to arrange a poll, or because the business for which the meeting was convened cannot be completed in one sitting. A specific date must be set for the continuation of this meeting

Qualities of an Effective Chairperson

The following basic qualities are desirable in a Chairperson.

Leadership

While great leaders are endowed with natural gifts which suit their specific area of excellence, most people don’t plan to be the person out front and usually require some assistance on how to do the job.

Vision

A leader must have a vision of where the organisation is heading and how it will succeed. A vision of the road ahead is a great source of energy and power and will ensure that the leader is out front, showing the way and attracting the support of followers and supporters.
Teamwork

Establishing a good working relationship with the Principal of the school and, in the case of a parish school, with the Parish Priest, is essential to achieving a common direction and to building a community team. It is fundamental to the success of community-building that each party understands and respects the rights and responsibilities of the other parties. An effective leader, particularly in a Christian context, is not on about power play regardless of his or her official position and authority.

Impartiality

Disadvantages as well as advantages exist in any proposal. The Chairperson must carefully consider propositions put to the meeting as he/she may be called upon to exercise his/her casting vote or to vote personally as a member of the group.

To remain impartial and to rule objectively requires a fair-minded and rational person.

Firmness

Chairpersons have the power to act as they see fit within reason and within the rules of the organisation. Considerable psychological pressure is sometimes placed on them and, in such circumstances, they must possess sufficient confidence in themselves to be decisive in their rulings.

Tact

Successful Chairpersons never forget that they have been elected by the members. They are usually more conversant with procedure than the other members but, as emotions rise on debatable issues, they should never deliberately embarrass a member nor encourage others to do so.

Common sense

When all else fails, the Chairperson should have this very necessary quality to save the day. Rules and regulations cannot cover all situations and the meeting will be quick to recognise and respect the person who possesses a high degree of common sense.

Confidence

The Chairperson must have confidence in the aims of the organisation and in its members.
Respect

Conversely, the chair should strive towards winning the respect of the members. It makes life as a Chairperson much less difficult. Determination of the success or otherwise of a Chairperson will take into account the Chairperson’s knowledge, personality and basic qualities as outlined.

In summary, a good Chairperson should:

- Open the meeting on time
- Ensure that it is constitutional and properly convened
- Introduce items clearly so that everyone understands
- Be familiar with rules and standing orders
- Administer the rules tactfully and impartially
- Assure orderly debate and discussion by competent use of procedures
- Sum up the discussion and points at issue
- Introduce guest speakers appropriately with due deference to qualifications, the topic and its relevance
- Close the meeting punctually

Useful phrases for the meeting Chairperson

- "Are you saying that..................?"
- Do you mean.............?
- Let me see if I understand. You're saying that.......?
- No one mentioned..........?
- What do you think of Jill’s point?
- Would what (Jack/Jill) was saying help us more if we put it differently?
- Should we go back to (Maria’s) suggestion?
- We decided earlier that.........
- Have we changed our minds?
- How will this help us work towards ...............?
- How could we do that?
- What would the rest of us think about that?
- Is this what we think?
- Can we agree on something like this?
- Did we go over this before.............?
- I’m hearing............. Is that right?"
Vice President

The main role of the Vice President is to fulfill the role of President in his or her absence or when required. Key responsibilities include acting as a representative of the Parents and Friends Association of the school, as well as advising the President and Executive in matters pertaining to the Association.

Secretary

The Secretary is vitally important to the efficient operation of any organisation. The voluntary Parents and Friends Association is usually involved in a diverse range of issues which can be quite demanding. Therefore being well informed and working closely with the President/Chairperson is critical to the association’s success.

An effective Secretary needs common sense, initiative and an ability to collaborate with the Chairperson on major matters. Also needed is the ability to establish a good working relationship with the office staff of the school. Concerns and “doings” of the parent body are vital to the school community, and it is usually up to the Parents and Friends Association Secretary to liaise with the office staff on: display of minutes of the meetings; promotion of events (posters, fliers); collection of mail; items and dates for the school newsletter etc. The staff will be welcoming and inviting, and a letter of thanks to the school staff at the end of the year, on behalf of the committee, would be appreciated.

The function of a Secretary is to arrange and record meetings - simple statements which require a rare blend of an alert, versatile and totally impartial observer.

Tasks of an Effective Secretary

Plan for meetings:

What is required for an effective meeting?

- Reports
- Notes for the Chairperson
- Agenda
- Venue and alternate venue in case of emergency
- Seating
- Materials required.

Record in detail the action of the meeting, avoiding:

- Interpretation
- Opinion
- Prejudice
Writing up and distribution of minutes. Ensure that you:

- Carry out all orders from the meeting
- Write letters
- Make phone calls
- Send of accounts and payment of bills
- Make any arrangements that the meeting requires to be done
- Take care of all correspondence

An effective Secretary is unobtrusive, supports and monitors the Chairperson and only joins discussions with the Chairperson’s consent.

Preparation for meetings

The Secretary must:

- Ensure that members are notified of date, time and venue of meeting
- Draw up an agenda in consultation with the Chairperson, making sure relevant documents are available at the meeting
- List pertinent correspondence that requires the meeting’s attention
- Advise the Chairperson of any visitors and list apologies
- Organise information for the introduction of any guest speaker/s
- Be prepared for other matters, e.g, vote of thanks, election, ballots, special visitors

At the meeting

The Secretary must:

- Circulate the attendance book
- Take notes of all important discussions and in particular accurately record motions, amendments etc, including names of movers and seconders and the decision of the meeting
- Be prepared to read minutes and correspondence
- Assist the Chairperson with the agenda
- Have available any documents that relate to the agenda
- Distribute important reports and other incoming material to interested members of the Association
ACTION BETWEEN MEETINGS

The Secretary should write up minutes as soon as possible after the meeting; minutes should be concise and accurate while adequately reflecting the meeting. Copies of the minutes should go to all Executive members, the Principal and the Parish Priest. It is helpful to display a copy of the minutes close to the school office, or in the canteen, for those parents unable to attend meetings. Also the Secretary should:

- Attend to all correspondence required by the meeting or Chairperson
- List all inward and outward correspondence in a record book and file copies of all letters written
- Record the association’s property and co-operate with the Treasurer on all relevant matters
- Regularly clear mail and keep the President fully informed on all issues

TREASURER

The Treasurer carries a task that requires both trust and responsibility. Management of the association’s finances can be demanding and sometimes complex, particularly where there is involvement in a number of fundraising and social events.

As with the position of Secretary, the Treasurer will need to establish a friendly working relationship with the office staff of the school (collection of bills, invoices etc; direction of raffle tickets to students etc).

DUTIES

The Treasurer should always:

- Keep an accurate record of receipts and expenditure
- Issue receipts for all money received
- Bank money promptly and maintain proper financial records
- Pay all accounts authorised by the meeting as soon as possible
- Prepare financial report and balance sheet for the Annual General Meeting
- Prepare books of account and organise for the auditing

ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES

The following items are suggested as well-tried practices.

- Seek advice from the person who audits the books in order to comply with his/her requirements; if necessary seek guidance on a system of bookkeeping
- Arrange for monthly bank statements and reconcile deposit and cheque books with the
statements

- Keep the cash book up to date so that it can provide information if and when required
- Pay all accounts by cheque and record all payments
- Petty cash is best managed by an imprest system whereby the association authorises a cheque for a certain amount for the Secretary. The Secretary provides receipts for expenditure to the Treasurer who in turn draws a cheque to maintain the agreed level of petty cash
- Maintain separate profit and loss accounts for major functions, e.g., social events, fundraising projects, and for regular trading, e.g., tuck-shop, uniform sales
- Prepare a budget for the financial year as a means of forward planning and determine a cash flow. The association then knows what its fixed commitments are and whether there are funds available to meet them

Diocesan Delegates

The role of the Diocesan Delegate is to be the representative of your school’s Parents and Friends Association to the Diocesan Parent Body – the Diocese of Wollongong Parents and Friends Forum.

The key responsibility for any Diocesan Delegate is to act as a conduit between the Forum and your Parents and Friends Association. It is important for the Diocesan Delegate to bring ideas to the Forum as to how to better develop partnerships between parents, children, school and parish, and, at the same time, to be informed on progress with various information topics as may arise.

It is important for ALL Parents and Friends Associations from within the Diocese to have an elected Diocesan representative. While not absolutely essential, it would also be advisable to have these representatives as part of the elected Executive of your Association.
1.5 Committees

When looking at committees it is important to remember:

- Heads of committees and members of committees do not form part of the Parents and Friends Association Executive
- Committees report their progress either at the regular General Meeting, or at the invitation of the Executive, or may be required to provide updates directly to an Executive Meeting.
- Committees should have limited and well-defined areas of responsibility
- As far as possible, committee members should be appointed for their special interest in and knowledge of the special functions of the committee
- Specialist committees may be given a high degree of responsibility but care should be taken that their work is within the limits of the overall objectives of the Association
- Members of the Association Executive can, and should where possible, act as Ex-Officio members of key committees
- All money raised are part of the funds of the Parents and Friends Association and must go through the treasurer for reporting purposes

Two common types of committees

- **Standing Committees** are appointed or elected to carry out specific, ongoing activities or functions, e.g., a finance committee is established to work with school and parish to determine financial needs and priorities. Or you could also have uniform and canteen committees.

- **Ad hoc Committees** are established for specific limited purposes and go out of existence when the job is completed, e.g., a committee may be set up to look at the effectiveness of parent-teacher evenings and to report their findings back to the Parents and Friends Association.

1.6 Ex-Officio

Ex officio is a Latin term meaning ‘by virtue of office or position.’ Ex-officio members of Parents and Friends Associations, therefore, are persons who are members by virtue of some other office or position that they hold. For example, the Principal, Assistant Principal or Parish Priest are deemed to be an ex-officio member of the Association, since they are automatically a member of that committee by virtue of the fact that they hold the office of Principal, Assistant Principal or Parish Priest.

According to the Diocesan approved Parents and Friends Association constitution, ex-officio members of Parents and Friends Associations do not have the right to vote.
Section 2

The Diocesan Parent Body

2.1 What is the Parents and Friends Association Forum?

2.2 Who does the Forum Represent?

2.3 What is the Council of Catholic School Parents (CCSP)?

2.4 How are the CCSP, the Forum and Your Parents and Friends Association Interrelated?
2.1 What is the Parents and Friends Association Forum?

“Partnership between a Catholic School and the families of the students must continue to be strengthened; not simply to be able to deal with academic problems that may arise, but rather so that the educational goals of the school can be achieved.” (#42)

The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School

“Parents have a particularly important part to play in the educating community, since it is to them that primary and natural responsibility for their children’s education belongs. Catholic schools are called to assist parents in fulfilling their obligations for the Christian formation and education of their children. The Catholic school respects parents’ fundamental human right to know, to understand to share in decisions that affect the education of their children”

Pope John Paul II
“Ecclesia In Oceania” 2003

With this in mind, in 2003, Bishop Peter Ingham and the Wollongong Catholic Education Office committed to the establishment of a Diocesan Parent’s and Friends Forum. This parent group was charged with the identification and development of structures that will initiate and sustain parental involvement in education. This involvement is essential in that it enables parental self-confidence, improved communication between school and home, and better understanding and support between teachers and parents.

The Forum is made up of a group of parents from throughout the Diocese and covering several primary and secondary schools. Established in a similar format to most Parent and Friends Associations, the Forum operates with an Executive of a President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and CCSP representative.

The aims and objectives of our Forum, as described in our constitution, are as follows:

- To assist in the development of meaningful and authentic partnerships between parents, school communities and parishes, and identify common goals based on shared values
- To be a visible body where co-operation and collaboration continually grow
- To be the connection point allowing both parents and teachers to better understand and respect each other’s perspective, allowing a fully student-focused approach
- To be a representative and advocate of the Catholic schools parent perspective
- To act as a conduit for Parents and Friends Associations throughout the Diocese
- To liaise with Diocesan Delegate representatives from Parent and Friends Associations throughout the Diocese
- To be, where appropriate, a voice for parents on matters of religious education, learning and teaching, and issues relating to general life in our schools
It is the aim of the Forum to ensure that everything we do as the Diocesan parent body is geared towards the achievement of these aims and objectives.

2.2 Who does the Forum represent?

Most Catholic schools have their own Parents and Friends Association. The Diocese of Wollongong Parents and Friends Association Forum offers a structure for partnership of these school-level parent bodies across the Diocese. The Forum therefore represents all parents across the Diocese.
2.3 What is the Council of Catholic School Parents (CCSP)?

What is the Council?

The Council of Catholic School Parents (CCSP) was established in 1995 and officially incorporated under NSW law on May 7th, 1997. The Council is a private association within the church and has the due autonomy which Canon Law gives to such associations.

The members are the Diocesan Parent Organisations each of which represent the parents of children in Catholic schools within the respective Dioceses.

Individual schools affiliate with their Diocesan Parent Organisations not directly to the Council. Each Diocesan Parent Organisation authorises, in writing, a parent to act as its Representative on the Council.

Membership of the Council requires each Diocesan Parent Organisation to demonstrate that it effectively represents the parents, guardians and care-givers of children enrolled in all Catholic schools in their respective Diocese.

The Council is funded by an annual affiliation fee, paid by the member organisations, and an annual grant from the State Government.

Who makes up the Council?

The CCSP is made up of representatives from each of the Dioceses in NSW. Each Diocese has one representative on the council.
The names of each Diocesan Parent Body are:

- Diocese of Armidale School Boards Association.
- Diocese of Bathurst Catholic Schools Parents Association.
- Diocese of Broken Bay Catholic School Parents Council.
- Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn Parent Network.
- Diocese of Lismore Catholic Schools Parent Assembly.
- Federation of Parents and Friends Associations for the Diocese of Maitland/Newcastle.
- Parents Representative Council of Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Parramatta.
- Archdiocese of Sydney Federation of Parents and Friends Associations of Catholic Schools.
- Diocese of Wagga Wagga Parents Committee.
- Diocese of Wilcannia-Forbes Parents Association.
- Diocese of Wollongong Parents and Friends Forum.

Why does the Council exist?

Most Catholic schools have their own Parents and Friends Association or some other school-level parent body.

Diocesan-level parent organisations offer a structure for partnership of these school-level parent bodies across each Diocese.

The Council provides a wider forum for discussing education issues and for articulating a parent position which can be incorporated into state level considerations.

The Council is represented on the Catholic Education Commission, NSW, and through it has significant access to and involvement in mainstream education issues as well as input into policy and financial decisions.

Governments seek state level parental representation in consultations and on review panels, committees of enquiry and statutory boards. The Council fulfilts this important role on behalf of parents of children in Catholic schools.

What are the main roles of the Council?

The main roles can be summarised as:

- Representation and advocacy of the Catholic school’s parent perspective
- Networking and communicating with and for Catholic school parent groups
- Monitoring policies and agencies for their impact on Catholic schools
- Promoting partnerships and collaboration in the interests of Catholic education
2.4 How are the CCSP, the Forum and your Parents and Friends Association Interrelated?

Using the following diagram, the relationship between your school Parents and Friends Association, the Diocesan Parent Forum and the Council of Catholic Schools Parents can be easily explained.

Our Bishop, Bishop Peter Ingham, is in regular contact with the Diocese’s Parish Priests as well as the Wollongong Catholic Education Offices Director of Schools. This communication, as should all communication between all parties, is two way. This same communication continues with all of the Diocese’s Primary and Secondary Schools.
As mentioned previously, each school should have in existence a school Parents and Friends Association and it should be apparent that each parent can be a part of that Parents and Friends Association. Each Parents and Friends Association is affiliated with the Diocese of Wollongong Parents and Friends Association Forum. The key link between the two is each Association’s Diocesan Delegate. The Diocesan Delegate acts as a two-way conduit between the Diocesan parent body and the school’s parent Association.

School associations, via each Diocesan Parent Body, are affiliated to a State Body – The Council of Catholic School Parents (CCSP). The key link to the CCSP is the Diocese’s representative, who also makes up part of the Parents and Friends Association Forum Executive.
Section 3

Meetings

3.1 Meeting Structure

3.2 Meeting Agenda

3.3 Meeting Procedures

3.4 Making Meetings Work – Helpful Hints

- Meeting preparation and procedure
- Some golden rules for meetings
- Ice breakers
- Meeting manners
- Take the yawn out of meetings

3.5 Process for the Election of Office Bearers
3.1 Meeting Structure

General Meetings are the regular monthly meetings that deal with the ongoing business of the association. Most decisions are made at this meeting as other committees, unless empowered by the general meeting, only make recommendations to the general meeting which are then discussed and voted upon.

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the association is concerned mainly with:

- Hearing reports of the association’s activities during the past year
- Election of officers
- Decisions such as changes to policy affecting the organisation's constitution or rules

When should meetings be held?

The following gives you an indication of approximately when, and how often, meetings should be held:

- **Annual General Meetings** must be held annually – either at the beginning of the school year or at the end of the preceding school year. It is important that these meetings be held at this time to ensure that the incoming Executive has sufficient time to settle in and get activities happening in the earliest possible time frame.

- **Executive Meetings** are held at the discretion of the Executive members. They meet to ensure the smooth running of the association and that the decisions made at the general meetings are carried out. These Executive meetings can be held either just prior to the normal General meetings or at a separate time all together.

- **General Meetings** are normally held a minimum of once per term. Some schools hold these monthly, usually on a specific day of the week each month – for example: the first Monday of each month.

- **Special Meetings** (also known as Extraordinary General Meetings). These meetings may be called at any time by written request of 10 members or on the authority of the Executive Committee. The meeting must have a clearly stated purpose and written notice must be circulated to all members seven days in advance.
3.2 Meeting Agenda

An Agenda is a MUST!

All types of meetings have a basic agenda. For a Parents and Friends Association, this agenda MUST consist of:

1. Open meeting with Prayer
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of previous meeting
4. Business arising from previous meetings
5. Correspondence In/Out
6. Guest speaker (if one in attendance)
7. Principal’s report
8. President’s report
9. Treasurer’s report
10. Committee reports (if any)
11. General business
   - Questions of which due notice is given
   - Notice of motion
   - General items of discussion from parents

SUPPER!

While Supper is optional, interaction and the opportunity for people to meet and share ideas and experiences help the community-building role of the Parents and Friends Association and the parent community of the school. A cup of tea/coffee following the meeting helps this process considerably.

Remember!

It is important to keep parents informed of what is going on. Display the agenda a week before where all parents can view it – either on a specific Parents and Friends Association notice board, in the school newsletter or on the school or Parents and Friends Association website.
An example of an agenda may look something like the following:

<Enter School Name>
Parents and Friends Association
GENERAL MEETING
May 3, 2004

1. OPENING MEETING - PRAYER
2. APOLOGIES
3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING
4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES
5. CORRESPONDENCE IN/OUT
6. GUEST SPEAKER (Optional)
7. PRINCIPAL’S REPORT
8. PRESIDENT’S REPORT
9. TREASURER’S REPORT
10. DIOCESAN DELEGATE
11. COMMITTEE and SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS
   (Examples might include)
   a. Fundraising
   b. Social
   c. Fete
   d. Mother’s/Father’s Day
12. GENERAL BUSINESS
   a. Financial assistance school football teams
   b. Formulation of uniform committee
   c. Social get together
   d. Planning for Father’s Day stall
3.3 Meeting Procedures

What makes a good meeting?

The essential characteristics of a good meeting are:

• Respect for the equality of all members
• A strong Chairperson who can maintain order and keep the meeting moving
• The following of “commonly accepted” meeting procedures and rules

Why have rules for meetings?

The purpose of rules in relation to meeting procedures is very simple. They ensure:

• That every person at the meeting has an equal right to be heard and to have her/his point of view considered
• That every person at the meeting has an equal right to vote on any issue
• That any decisions that need to be made or business that needs to be attended to are handled efficiently and fairly

What are commonly accepted meeting procedures?

General Meetings

Opening

The Chairperson declares the meeting open, welcomes members and leads the group in prayer. It is important to commence the meeting at the advertised starting time.

Apologies

The Chairperson calls for any apologies that are to be noted or may ask members to write the name of those who have sent their apology in the attendance book.

Minutes of the previous meeting

These need to be formally accepted by the meeting. This can be done in one of the following ways:

• The Secretary may read the minutes aloud to the meeting, or
• If the minutes have been circulated beforehand, the Chairperson may ask that someone move that the minutes be taken as read, then calls for a seconder and a vote
Note: If any error exists in the minutes it must now be brought to the attention of the meeting. The Chairperson makes the correction and initials it on the original copy which MUST BE filed and kept as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Only after all corrections are made the Chairperson then asks “Would someone move that these minutes be accepted as a true record of the last meeting?” When someone moves this, the Chairperson then asks “Would someone second this?” The Chairperson then asks “Those in favour? Those against? Motion carried. Thank you.” Note: The mover and seconder must have been present at the last meeting.

Business arising from the previous meeting’s minutes

After the minutes have been accepted, the Chairperson then allows for any “business arising from the minutes” to be brought before the meeting. Any minor matters are dealt with here but those requiring further discussion are best held over to general business. This process is at the discretion of the Chairperson who states that the matter be held over for discussion in general business and gives his/her reason for this decision.

Correspondence

Correspondence is divided into incoming and outgoing correspondence.

- **Incoming**: the Secretary may read aloud all letters received since the last meeting or to save time may simply list the correspondence and give a brief summary of content. Those letters which require some attention are best listed for discussion in general business. Once all inward correspondence has been presented, the Chairperson asks, “Would someone move that all incoming correspondence be received? Would someone second this? All those in favour? Thank you.”

- **Outgoing**: the Secretary may read aloud all letters sent since the last meeting or to save time may simply list who the letters have been sent to and give a brief summary of content. Once all outward correspondence has been presented, the Chairperson asks, “Would someone move that all outgoing correspondence be endorsed? Would someone second this? All those in favour? Thank you.”

Note that the Chairperson can also ask someone to move that all correspondence be endorsed rather than separating it into incoming and outgoing.

Guest Speakers

These are optional. It is always a good idea to keep parents up-to-date with information from a variety of sources. This can come from a number of different areas such as:
• Heads of Key Learning Areas (KLA’s) from within your own school. These people can update you on what your children are being taught, how money spent on resources is benefiting the children, and could even demonstrate how additional funding could benefit their KLA
• Community groups from around the region
• Staff from Wollongong Catholic Education Office
• Local politicians

Reports

During this section of the meeting, the Chairperson calls for reports from persons and/or sub-committees from within the group. These will usually include:

• The Principal, who may give a brief account of relevant activities within the school since the last meeting. If the Principal has any issues he or she wishes to raise for discussion, these are best listed in General Business and therefore are best brought to the notice of the President before the meeting

• The Parish Priest, who may give an account of parish activities or any issues that may be of interest to the parents and school community

• The President may want to report on activities of the Association since the last meeting

• The Treasurer, who presents the financial statement and any accounts for payment. S/he ends the report by saying “I Move that this financial report be accepted and that the accounts presented be passed for payment”. The Chairperson then asks for a seconder, and then conducts the vote.

• The Diocesan Delegate, who present a report on the business conducted by the Diocese of Wollongong Parents and Friends Association Forum

• Sub-committees such as maintenance, uniform, canteen, fete, mothers’ club and policy, which report back to the meeting a summary of their activities and bring before the meeting any recommendations for motion.

It is a good idea, although may not always be practical, if the Chairperson can receive a copy of the various reports prior to the meeting for review.

All reports need to be received and passed by the meeting. This can be done individually, or to save time, all together by the Chairperson saying “Would someone move that all reports be received? Would someone second this”, etc. It is also an acceptable and efficient practice to present written reports. The Treasurer’s report needs to be done separately because it involves the payment of accounts.
General business

This section of the meeting is reserved for business that is carried over from the previous meeting, notices of motion, items listed on the agenda or held over from previous sections of the meeting so that adequate discussion may take place and new ideas/motions heard from members present at the meeting. It is important that adjourned business from previous meetings and notices of motion are dealt with first. After all matters listed on the agenda have been attended to, the Chairperson asks the meeting if there are any further matters which members wish to discuss or to give notice of for the next meeting. It is more appropriate that the Principal be given notice of questions requiring detailed answers or relating to controversial issues. These questions are then held over to the next meeting.

Closing the meeting

After all business has been dealt with, the Chairperson states the date of the next meeting and declares the meeting closed.
Annual General Meeting

As stated in the section on constitutions, an Annual General Meeting (AGM) **MUST** be held at the beginning or end of each school year. This is a critical meeting for the successful running and management of the Association.

The procedures for this meeting are as follows:

1. The outgoing President welcomes all members and special guests

2. Apologies are called for

3. The minutes of the last AGM are read and accepted

4. Business (if any) arising from these minutes is dealt with

5. Correspondence - only matters dealing with aspects of the AGM are to be mentioned, e.g., letters of apology or good wishes for the meeting itself

6. The outgoing President presents the annual report which makes mention of the activities of the association during the year, makes recommendation for further directions and acknowledges those who have assisted in the work of the association over the past 12 months.

7. The outgoing Treasurer presents the annual financial report and moves that it be accepted

8. Other standing committees, e.g., canteen, uniform etc. present their annual reports

9. The President asks that all reports be accepted

10. The returning officer declares all positions vacant

11. The elections begin with the returning officer calling for nominations for the positions of President. He/She then calls for a seconder for each nomination and whether each person accepts the nomination. In the event of only one person being nominated, the returning officer declares the position filled and offers congratulations to the successful candidate. If there is more than one nomination, a secret ballot must be held. The scrutineers count the votes and report the result to the returning officer who announces the successful candidate

12. The above process is repeated for all office-bearers. Key office bearers that must be elected are as follows:
a. President
b. Vice President (some associations may have two VP positions)
c. Secretary
d. Treasurer
e. Diocesan Delegate

13. Volunteers for standing committees are then called for. These positions DO NOT need to
be elected. Some Associations simply prepare lists with separate headings for the various
committees or subcommittees. They may ask for person’s name, address, phone number
and child’s name and class (so if notes need to be sent home it can be done through their
child at school). These are then placed around the meeting room and parents can
volunteer there assistance in whichever area they want

14. Once all positions are filled, the returning officer asks the either the returned President or
President elect to take the chair

15. The President thanks the returning officer and scrutineers and the general meeting for
their vote and the general monthly meeting begins

NOTE: For a more comprehensive understanding of the process of holding elections,
please refer to Section 3.5 (in this section) “Process for the Election of Office Bearers”

It is important that matters for the general meeting not be confused with those for the AGM.
The AGM is when annual reports are presented and elections carried out. It is not a time to
deal with the monthly business of the association.

Note:

• All positions are open for re-election even though office-bearers may spend up to three
consecutive years in any one position.

• It is recommended that, due to the role itself, parents should not nominate or accept the
position of President without having held another role on the Executive previously

• Special guest’s may be those invited to be the returning officer and scrutineers

• Annual financial statement is a summary of the income and expenditure of the association
for the past 12 months

• The person invited to conduct the election of office bearers must be ex-officio – Principal,
Assistant Principal or Parish Priest
What is This Thing Called a Motion?

A motion is any proposal put to the members of a meeting for the purpose of gaining a decision. It is best expressed in the affirmative and begins with the words “I move that.....” It is advisable the person moving the motion keeps the motion as short and simple as possible. In some cases it is good practice for the mover to write the motion out and hand it to the Chairperson.

Any member of the Association can put a motion.

Once the motion has been put to the meeting (in order that it may be discussed and voted on) it needs someone to “second” it, i.e., to state that they support the motion. The Chairperson asks “Will someone second the motion?” If no-one will second the motion the motion lapses and no discussion follows. (The motion may be proposed at a future meeting)

Once the motion has a mover and a seconder, the Chairperson repeats the motion and states that it is now “open for discussion”. Discussion is conducted along similar lines to a debate. The Chairperson first allows the person who moved the motion to speak for the motion then asks for a speaker against the motion. This continues until all points of view have been heard. No member may speak more than once, for or against the motion, or repeat any point of view already stated. The member who moved the motion has a right to reply at the end of the discussion.

When all points of view have been heard, the Chairperson repeats the motion and calls for “all those in favour? All those against?” and then announces if the motion has been carried. Members may indicate their vote by a show of hands or by “aye” or “nay”.

An Amendment

An amendment slightly alters the wording of the motion. It may be used to modify a motion in such a way as to increase its acceptability or to present to the meeting a different proposition as an alternative to the original motion.

Amendments may:

- Leave out certain words
- Leave out certain words in order to insert or add others
- Insert or add certain words

If the amendment seeks to change the motion radically, it is really another motion being foreshadowed and should not be accepted by the chair.
Example: The motion is “that we hold a Fete on Saturday, 4 December at 3 p.m. The amendment (which also needs a mover and a seconder and voting) is “at 2 p.m”. The Chairperson then hears argument for and against the amendment and calls for a vote. If the amendment is carried, the Chairperson then reads the amended motion “That we hold a Fete on Saturday, 4 December at 2 p.m.” If there is no further amendment, the motion is put to the meeting and voted on. It would be considered a different motion if the amendment was to propose a bush dance rather than fete.

Notices of Motion

A notice of motion is advice given at one meeting of a motion to be discussed at the next. It must therefore form part of the agenda for the next meeting. If a vital matter such as alteration of policy, amendment of the constitution or standing orders or disposal of funds is concerned, the Chairperson should insist that notice of motion be given so that all members may have the opportunity of considering it. (Notice need not be given of any item arising out of the agenda.) Giving notice of a motion also allows each member time to think about the subject and therefore ensure that there is a good debate and that the will of the majority is found.

At the subsequent meeting, a seconder is called for and if one is found, the matter then comes under discussion. If a seconder is not found, then the motion lapses.

Point of Order

This is a term used to point out (to the Chairperson) any incorrect procedure at a meeting. If at any stage during the meeting the Chairperson misses a point that ought to have been picked up or queried, a floor member may stand and simply say “Point of order” and then explain what has been missed.

Example: One member has spoken twice to the same motion and the Chairperson has failed to notice this. A member from the floor notices this and says “Madam Chairman, point of order. John Jones has already spoken to the motion”. The point is taken by the Chair, the offending member is called to order, and the meeting proceeds as before.

Rescission Motion

This is when a motion is moved to overturn a resolution that has been accepted by the members. It cannot be moved at the same meeting which passed the original motion because adequate notice must be given to all members.
3.4 Making Meetings Work

Helpful hints

Meeting preparation and procedure

Before the meeting:

- Decide on issues you want covered (don’t try to attempt too much at one meeting)
- Determine what you want to achieve, and what structure, what procedure you want to follow
- Write out a plan for yourself
- Be logical in sequence
- Arrive prepared - do your homework and have the information that the meeting will need to make decisions
- Have equipment ready - tapes, overheads, butchers’ paper, pens, Blu Tack etc
- Have handout material ready and in order
- List items you need to take with you

At the meeting:

- Arrive early to set up venue
- Check equipment, tapes, videos etc
- Be welcoming, use people’s names
- Begin on time or advise the group what is happening if delayed
- Be clear in direction and purpose, speak clearly and with confidence
- Be aware of your body language - Smile
- Keep the flow of the meeting moving
- Watch the time
- Use exercises that involve everyone

At the close of the meeting:

- Summarise
- Restate jobs/activities that were taken on by group members
- Organise responsibilities for next meeting (e.g. who does what – for and at, next meeting, (if needed)
- Leave venue as you found it
- On the way home reflect on the meeting
- Congratulate yourself on your success
Some golden rules for meetings

1. Do not discuss other children or parents. No discussion of individuals should be entertained or accepted as the business of the meeting whether reference is direct or by implication. People have a right to privacy

2. Do not discuss particular incidents unless they are of a general nature - affecting all children (these are not the subject of a general meeting and are best left to another time and another place)

3. Where personal matters are raised, the individuals should be discretely given information on other more appropriate processes or forums to “be heard”

4. Act impersonally - address the meeting rather than the person who has just spoken

5. Avoid self-interest - address the consequences of proposals rather than take a “we want” approach

6. Act openly and frankly - the meeting is the place for discussion, not the car park afterwards. Business raised at the meeting should be left at the meeting

7. Act unselfishly - be willing to listen to other viewpoints. Seek first an understanding of contrary views rather than simply looking for “holes” in an argument

8. Try to seek a win/win situation - most extreme positions do not meet people’s needs. Creative thinking can often find a way to achieve solutions that meet both sets of needs

9. Avoid invading another member’s authority - if it falls within the Secretary’s role, let the Secretary do it
Ice Breakers

Quick introductions to create harmony and interaction at the beginning of meetings

Suggested ideas:

- Meet one person you have not talked to before
- Discuss:
  - Name, ages of children, where they go to school etc
  - Hassles getting out of the house tonight
  - How your Parents and Friends Association works
  - What activities you are involved with in the school
  - What you think about…. (agenda item)
  - The most enjoyable activity you do at school for your child

- Group parents according to the following suggested groups:
  - Cluster areas - meet and chat as above
  - Three groups - primary children, secondary and combined group
  - Split the above if too large, e.g. Years 7 and 8, 9 and 10, 11 and 12, etc

For times of irritation/aggravation when participants require calming, use the metaphor of eliminating the baggage. Visualise image/source of irritation, focus on the image, breathe calmly, when ready, throw baggage over shoulder and be ready to move on.

NB: Icebreakers to be used prior to prayer.
Meeting manners

A guide to ensure pleasant meetings

1. Welcome all (new) members – you may like to use name tags

2. Make sure you introduce the Executive and put people at ease

3. Start on time. If members anticipate a late start they will not show up on time at each subsequent meeting

4. Expect members to arrive on time. Latecomers create confusion and break the flow. Allow latecomers to slide in quietly but address the issue if necessary

5. Establish a set meeting time frame and stick to it. If there is a need to extend due to a complex issue, let the members vote on extending the time

6. Maintain attention. Whispering, or side comments to a neighbour distract the meeting

7. Express your opinions and feelings. Discuss issues, not people - be careful that your remarks are not personal attacks

8. Stay calm when discussing difficult issues - speak clearly and enable others to speak and share ideas

9. Include everyone – don’t let dominant members control the flow

10. Stay until the end. Important follow-up plans are often made during the final minutes of a meeting
Taking the yawn out of meetings

Be prepared:

- Know the purpose of the meeting
- Review the agenda
- Acquaint yourself with the issues beforehand

Participation:

- Support the group’s purpose
- Have a positive approach
- Listen carefully
- Get involved in discussion
- Think out your ideas before sharing
- Offer suggestions and consider others’ input
- Take notes

Decision making:

- Avoid overprocessing issues
- Establish sub-committees and working parties to research complex issues
- Hold over unresolved issues until the next meeting
- Establish action and know:
  - WHO is responsible for carrying out the decision
  - WHAT is to be done
  - HOW it is to be carried out
  - WHEN the work should be completed

Concise conclusions:

- Summarise the decision - refresh members’ memories about decision and actions
- Plan the next meeting. Set date, place, issues for the agenda
3.5 Process for the election of officer bearers

The election of officers for any organisation is an extremely important process, and it is no less important as a process of a school Parents and Friends Association. The process of election of office bearers MUST take place at the Annual General Meeting.

As mentioned several times through this manual, the importance of taking on an Executive position cannot be understated. Some consideration should be given to things such as:

- Do you have the time to take on a role?
- Do you have the support of your family
- What are your work commitments?
- Have you worked on this, or other committees before?
- It is recommended that first-time parents at either primary or secondary school not stand for the role of President. This is important as you need to see what is involved and you may not have a working knowledge of the school
- It is also recommended that if you are considering standing for a position on the Executive for the very first time, you ease yourself into the process. Maybe stand for Secretary, Diocesan Delegate or Vice President that you can see the workings and interworking relationships of the group prior to taking on the President’s role.

When it comes to the actual election, the following general process should be followed:

1. At the appropriate time in the meeting agenda, the outgoing President will call for an election of officer bearers for the schools’ Parents and Friends Association for the coming year.

2. The period of time in office for an elected Executive is no less than eight and no more than fifteen months

3. At this time the outgoing Executive will vacate their positions as Executive members.

4. The returning officer will then run the meeting, and therefore the election.

5. The returning officer should say something like:

   “In accordance with the Constitution of the Parents and Friends Association of <School Name>, I would now like to declare all positions on the Parents and Friends Association Executive vacant”.

   “The process of our election this evening will be as follows:
Advise the number of Executive positions to be finalised tonight. Generally this will be only the roles of:

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Diocesan Delegate

However some Associations may have other positions that make up their Executive.

The returning officer must advise the attendees at the AGM the following:

- Each role will be filled for a period of 12 months
- Members of the Executive must be members of the Parents and Friends Association. They can in fact be any member of the school parent community so long as they are interested in the attainment of the goals of the Association as set out in the Constitution
- Each position will be elected separately
- Nomination forms would already have been distributed with the invitations to the AGM
- In the event that no nominations for a particular position have been received, nominations can be made and will be accepted from the floor
- In the event that there is more than one nomination for a specific position, the position will be decided by secret ballot
- If a vote (secret ballot) needs to be taken, only members of the Parents and Friends Association are eligible to vote
- In the event that a position remains unfilled after nominations are called for a particular position that position will remain unfilled until a time when someone is prepared to take on that role
- If a position does remain unfilled, the outgoing holder of that role may be asked if he/she would consider standing in that position in an interim role, until a suitable replacement can be found or is elected

6. The Returning Officer now should say something like: “I will now call for nominations for the position of President of the Parents and Friends Association of <School Name>” for that particular year. If any written nominations have been received, advise who they are and who nominated them.

7. Ask the meeting for someone to second that nomination(s). Note who seconds the nomination(s).

8. Ask nominee(s) if he/she/they are prepared to accept the nomination.

9. On gaining acceptance, ask if there are any other nominations from the floor for the position of President. Ask a couple of times
10. If only one nomination has been received, declare the position filled, congratulate the successful nominee

11. If there is more than one nomination, advise that a secret ballot will be held.

12. Ask each of the nominees to step forward and address the meeting as to what they bring to the position

13. When finished, hand out individual slips of paper and pencils to all eligible voters. Voters need only write the name of their preferred person on the paper

14. Arrange for the collection of the papers and count the votes

15. Thank all candidates and then announce and congratulate the successful nominee for that position

16. If there are no nominations for any particular position, declare the position open and advise that the incoming Executive will seek out other nominations for the role and announce at some future time when they have found someone for the role. The outgoing office bearer for that particular role may be asked to fill the vacancy in an interim capacity

17. For the position of Vice President repeat steps 6 – 16

18. For the position of Treasurer repeat steps 6 – 16

19. For the position of Secretary repeat steps 6 – 16

20. For the position of Diocesan Delegate repeat steps 6 – 16

21. For any other position needed to finalise the Executive, repeat steps 6 – 16

22. Once all the positions have been filled, invite the new Executive back to the front of the room, ask the meeting attendees to once again congratulate the members of the Executive elect and ask them to resume the meeting.

NOTE: Immediately following the election of officers, the form on the following page – Parent and Friends Committee Contact list – should be completed. All position details should be noted. The completed form MUST be forwarded to the Diocesan Parents and Friends Association Forum. Please fax to Executive Officer, Parents and Friends Association Forum (02) 4253 0808
Parents and Friends Committee Contact List

School: __________________________________________ Year ________

To keep our records up to date, immediately following your Association’s Parents and Friends Association AGM, the following details MUST be provided and returned to the Diocese of Wollongong Parents and Friends Forum

Please return to President, Parents and Friends Forum (Fax: 02 4253 0808)

**Parents and Friends Association President:**
Name: __________________________________________________________________________________
Mailing address: __________________________________________________________________________
Ph: ______________________ Email address: _____________________________________________

**Parents and Friends Association Vice President:**
Name: __________________________________________________________________________________
Mailing address: __________________________________________________________________________
Ph: ______________________ Email address: _____________________________________________

**Parents and Friends Association Vice President 2:** (If required)
Name: __________________________________________________________________________________
Mailing address: __________________________________________________________________________
Ph: ______________________ Email address: _____________________________________________

**Parents and Friends Association Secretary:**
Name: __________________________________________________________________________________
Mailing address: __________________________________________________________________________
Ph: ______________________ Email address: _____________________________________________

**Parents and Friends Association Treasurer:**
Name: __________________________________________________________________________________
Mailing address: __________________________________________________________________________
Ph: ______________________ Email address: _____________________________________________

**Diocesan Delegate:**
Name: __________________________________________________________________________________
Mailing address: __________________________________________________________________________
Ph: ______________________ Email address: _____________________________________________
Section 4

Finances

4.1 Parents and Friends Association - Financial Matters

4.2 Financial Accountability of Parents and Friends Associations

4.3 Role of the Treasurer

4.4 Control of Income – Monies Received

4.5 Control of Expenditure – Monies Paid

4.6 Petty Cash

4.7 Cash Floats

4.8 Trading Activities

4.9 Annual Audit

4.10 GST Impact on School and the Parents and Friends Association

4.11 Parents and Friends Associations and Levies

4.12 Fundraising Lotteries and Games of Chance

4.13 Parent Associations and Employment

4.14 Sample Forms and Examples of Key Documents
4.1 Parents and Friends Association – Financial Matters

The following information is provided for the guidance of Parents and Friend Association Executive Committees and in particular the Treasurer, who is ultimately responsible for all the funds received and expended by the Association. Independent schools outside the systemic system will need to seek advice of their Principal as much of this document applies specifically to CEO systemic schools.

It is essential that all Parents and Friends Associations act at all times for the benefit of the school and school community. One of the roles of a Parents and Friends Association is to raise funds to assist in the provision of resources and opportunities for enriching the learning environment of the school. It also needs to be a self-supporting entity, raising sufficient funds to allow it to effectively implement strategies to help it fulfill its stated aims.

Every Parents and Friends Association should have a bank account and should consider banking with the Catholic Development Fund (CDF), the preferred financial agency of the Diocese of Wollongong. The bank account should be titled “(name of school) name of association”, E.g., “XXX Primary School Parents and Friends Association”. The account should be operated by any two of the following signatories signing jointly – President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. For practical purposes it is advisable that the Treasurer always be one of the signatories.

The Executive Committee of the Association is to ensure that financial records are properly maintained and that the accounts are audited as at December 31 each year (or the applicable financial year). The audit report and a statement of receipts and payments for the financial year should be supplied to the Principal.

The President of the Association is to be satisfied that all accounts are kept in a proper manner and are subject to accountability and reporting procedures.

Expenditure from the account is only for normal operating expenses of the Association’s activities.

Financial support for the school is to be by way of transfer of funds into the school working account. To ensure that GST input tax credits are obtained by the school, physical resources and equipment are not to be purchased from Parents and Friends Association funds.
4.2 Financial Accountability of Parents and Friends Associations

Financial records should include the following:

- Bank cheque account with at least three (3) signatories – requirement that two (2) signatures must sign all cheques and bank deposit book(s)
- Receipt book in duplicate – listing date, details of money received, name of person giving money, amount received and signature of person issuing receipt
- Cash book payments - listing date, cheque number, details of payment and amount paid
- Cash book receipts – listing date, receipt number, details of funds received and amount banked
- Petty cash book and duplicate petty cash receipt book if applicable
- Monthly bank reconciliation to ensure that all money has been recorded
- Treasurer’s report to Parents and Friends Association meetings listing all payments and receipts since the last Parents and Friends Association meeting for ratification/approval and all invoices received
- Minutes of Parents and Friends Association meetings – showing approval or ratification of payments
- Annual Audit of accounts by an independent and qualified accountant, i.e., neither an Executive Member nor related to an Executive Member
4.3 Role of the Treasurer

Responsibility for Parents and Friends Association finances rests with the Treasurer. He/she is responsible for ALL financial dealings of the Association including its subcommittees e.g., fundraising, social events, and trading activities such as canteen, uniform shop etc where operated by the Association.

The Parents and Friends Association Constitution (refer to Section 5 of this manual) guides the operation of the Association and gives specific information on the function of the Treasurer. The Constitution must stipulate the appointment of an auditor and confirm the end of the financial year as December 31. The audited accounts should be presented at the Annual General Meeting normally held sometime during February or early March the following year (depending on the financial year of the Parents and Friends Association).

To safeguard Parents and Friends Association funds, a Treasurer has a number of key functions to perform:

- Prompt receipting and banking of all money intact – never use cash received to pay bills
- Pay all expenses by cheque – establish and maintain petty cash by drawing cheques
- Ensure that all accounts are paid promptly after authorisation and approval at general meetings.
- Never allow blank cheques to be signed
- Keep a record of income and expenditure – refer to pages 15 and 16 for sample
- Prepare a monthly bank reconciliation – refer to page 13 for sample
- Present an up-to-date financial report at every general meeting – refer to page 14 for sample
- Ensure that minutes of meetings appropriately and accurately reflect decisions relating to any financial matter
- Ensure the financial records are audited.
- Present a record of audited accounts to the Annual General Meeting
- Pass on financial records to the succeeding Treasurer in good order
4.4 Control of Income – Money Received

Either a manual cashbook, an Excel spreadsheet cashbook or a simple accounting package (e.g. MYOB) can be maintained – see pages 15 and 16 for samples. The income section of the cashbook should have provision for: date, receipt number, details of receipt, amounts received, and separate columns or each type of recurring activity such as: discos, fete, raffle, golf day, Mothers’ Day, other significant activities, sundry income (e.g., bank interest).

All money received should be receipted separately. Where trading activities are operated through the Parents and Friends Association bank account, it is recommended that receipts are to be made in a separate cash book. To ensure accuracy and security, it is suggested that, where possible, money be counted by two people and a daily cash record be kept and reconciled to the banking figures. This procedure helps to avoid errors and to ensure that there are no concerns about the handling of money.

Security is important and money MUST NEVER be taken home – it is not covered by insurance. All money should be banked over the counter on the date of receipt. If this is not possible, the Parents and Friends Association should negotiate suitable arrangements with the Principal for the security of money…

- Through the school’s cash security company; or
- Locked in a Parents and Friends Association cash box placed in the school safe; or
- Locked in a Parents and Friends Association safe on school premises

For an evening event or a fete, a security guard might be worth considering. To ensure the security of cash, a night safe deposit could be pre-arranged. Alternatively, if the function is being held on Parish grounds, an approach could be made to the Parish Priest for possible use of the Parish safe if the school safe is not available.

4.5 Control of Expenditure – Money Paid

The expenditure section of the cashbook should contain date, cheque number, details of payment, amount paid, and separate columns for each type of recurring activity.

Each cheque drawn needs to be substantiated by either an invoice or a receipt for expenses incurred. Adequate details should be recorded on the cheque butt. Where no invoice or receipt is available, the person requesting the money must provide a written explanation of the amount claimed.
4.6 Petty Cash

Petty Cash is a useful mechanism that allows for purchases to be made between meetings – it also limits the time people have to wait for reimbursement. A realistic limit should be agreed to at the first General Meeting and an initial petty cash cheque should be drawn for that amount. The usual practice is for people to claim reimbursement from petty cash only after they have paid and have a receipt to present. Individual disbursements from the fund should not exceed $100. A separate petty cash receipt book must be maintained with a receipt being completed and signed by the person receiving the cash. When the petty cash is almost depleted, the petty cash receipts are totalled and a cheque for that amount is drawn to bring the petty cash back to the agreed limit. This can be done as often as is necessary. Note that petty cash is normally referred to as cash-in-hand on financial statements.

4.7 Cash Floats

A cash float is usually made available for major one-off events such as fetes or trivia nights. For a fete, multiple cash floats may be necessary. Approval of a float or floats should be formally moved and minuted at a meeting prior to the money being needed.

4.8 Trading Activities.

The traditional Parents and Friends Association trading activities of canteen and uniform shop are increasingly being handled through the school working account. However, where Parents and Friends Associations are responsible for trading activities, a separate cash book should be maintained for each trading activity.

Details required in the cash book include:

- Gross daily takings
- Change float held
- Drawings for cash purchases
- Amount banked
- Receipt numbers

A yearly stocktake must be conducted to establish the value of year-end stocks and to assess the profitability of the activity. A copy of the stocktake should be included in the Treasurer’s report presented at the AGM.

Trading activities are often viewed as a service for the school community; however, they are not to be run at a loss.
4.9 Annual Audit

The Parents and Friends Association account(s) must be audited as at the end of the financial year of your specific Association. This must be completed each year to comply with basic accounting Principals and Catholic Education Office reporting requirements.

The Auditor must be independent, i.e., neither a member of the Executive nor a relative of any Executive member. The Auditor must be a qualified accountant and a member of one of the professional bodies listed below:

- The Institute of Chartered Accountants
- The Australian Society of CPA
- The National Institute of Accountants

The Treasurer is responsible for contacting the Auditor at least one month prior to the Annual General Meeting of the Parents and Friends Association. Prior to the books being given to the Auditor, the Treasurer needs to ensure that:

1. All outstanding invoices are paid
2. The paid invoice file is complete and in cheque order sequence
3. All supporting details for income received are provided
4. Cashbook is completed, additions checked and sundry column details completed
5. Bank statements file is complete, and reconciliation is performed as at December 31
6. Current term deposit confirmation has been received – if applicable
7. Copy of stock take for all trading activities is available for stock held – if applicable
8. Income and Expenditure Statement has been prepared – or request Auditor to do so
9. Balance Sheet has been prepared or request the Auditor to do so

In addition to the above documents, the Auditor will require the following:

10. Bank deposit books
11. Receipt books
12. Petty cash book and receipts
13. Cheque books

14. All Parents and Friends Association minutes

15. All outstanding invoices

The Auditor’s report, statement of income and expenditure, balance sheet and any trading activity stocktake are formally accepted at the next Annual General Meeting. A copy of the above documents is given to the school Principal. The suggested format of the Auditor’s report, statement of income and expenditure and balance sheet is included at the end of this document.

### 4.10 GST Impact on School and the Parents and Friends Association

Parents and Friends Association are an unincorporated sub-entity of the school for GST purposes. As such, they cannot charge GST on income received and cannot claim back GST included in payments.

Should a Parents and Friends Association purchase goods or assets to be given to the school, the practical impact is that they will cost more because the GST paid cannot be claimed back. When the school purchases goods and assets, generally a GST credit can be claimed back on a monthly basis, which is deposited into their bank account in the middle of the following month. This is why the Wollongong CEO has stipulated that Parents and Friends Associations must only donate (or “grant”) money to the school and not goods and assets.

### 4.11 Parents and Friends Associations and Levies

In recent times, a number of Parents and Friends Associations have made a decision to introduce a parent levy as an alternative way to raise money. This can work well when it is done in full consultation with the whole school community, is fully documented, and reviewed on an annual or bi-annual basis in light of the changing school population.

If a Parents and Friends Association and school Principal agree to a Parents and Friends Association parent levy, it can only be collected by the school. If a decision is taken to introduce or continue with a levy, the Principal and Parents and Friends Association, in consultation, should agree on whether the funds are transferred to a Parents and Friends Association account at appropriate intervals or remain in the school account.

If the funds remain in the school working account, arrangements need to be made to ensure appropriate accountability and reporting to the Parents and Friends Association regarding details of income and expenditure.
It is the view of the Diocese of Wollongong Parents and Friends Association Forum that a parent levy should ONLY be used when arrangements have been made for the Parents and Friends Association to have input into the allocation of funds regardless of whether the funds remain in the school account or are transferred to the Parents and Friends Association account.

In the opinion of the Forum, if a Parents and Friends Association has no control over a parent levy, the Levy has been incorrectly named and is, in fact, a special purpose levy of the school, and should be named accordingly.

4.12 Fundraising Lotteries and Games of Chance

Information can be gained through the Department of Gaming and Racing or through their website under the section Gaming / Community Gaming which includes a number of other fact sheets and permit application forms. The conduct of fundraising lotteries and games of chance for charitable purposes must comply with the Lotteries and Art Unions Act of 1901. This Act is administered by the:

Department of Gaming and Racing and Office of Charities
Level 7, Corner Hay and Castlereagh Streets, Sydney
GPO Box 7060, Sydney, NSW 2001
Phone: (02) 9995 0666 Fax: (02) 9995 0611
Email: lottery.inquiries@dgr.nsw.gov.au
Website: www.dgr.nsw.gov.au

Raffles

A raffle is a lottery where the total value of prizes does not exceed $25,000. Prizes are distributed by the conduct of a draw of tickets or marbles from a barrel or similar device. Raffles may be conducted without the need for a permit. However, you must comply with the requirements of the Lotteries and Art Unions Act. It is imperative that a copy of “fact sheet 1 - raffles” be obtained from the above website.

A lottery where the total value of the prizes exceeds $25,000 is called an art union. An art union can only be conducted under an authorising permit.

Lucky Envelopes and Chocolate Wheels

Lucky envelopes are games of chance in which participants win a prize if they expose a hidden number that is the same as a winning number displayed on a chart at the point of sale. They are not to be confused with break open or scratch-type lotteries.
Chocolate wheels are games of chance where participants are sold numbered tickets. A wheel that has numbers corresponding with those on the tickets is spun. After the wheel comes to rest on a specific number, the participant holding the numbered ticket corresponding with the number on the wheel receives the prize.

Lucky envelopes and chocolate wheels cannot be conducted unless a permit has been issued under the provisions of the Lotteries and Art Union Act. It is suggested that a copy of Fact Sheet 4 – Lucky Envelopes/Chocolate Wheels be obtained from the above website.

Application for a Permit to Conduct Fundraising Games of Chance

Please note that there are no fees for these permits, which are normally issued promptly (normally within a week). Applications are obtainable from the above website.

The permit covers the following games:

- Housie
- Chocolate wheels
- Lucky envelopes
- Other (with description to be provided)

Note: This information is correct as at March 23, 2004

4.13 Parent Associations and employment

The Principal and the Catholic Education Office have a joint responsibility to ensure that all employment conditions are strictly administered in accordance with current salary regulations (especially workers’ compensation, superannuation, child protection, annual leave and long service leave), awards and enterprise agreements. All staff employed in systemic schools come under a negotiated award and/or enterprise agreement. This ensures that salaries and related employment conditions are administered consistently and fairly throughout the system.

It is imperative that no salary or wage-type expense/allowance be paid directly by schools or by Parents and Friends Associations either by cash or cheque. The payroll services unit of the Catholic Education Office administers all salaries/wages centrally.
Where can I get help?

In the first instance, the school Principal should be contacted.

Alternatively, the Diocese of Wollongong Parents and Friends Association Forum has the skills and contacts to be able to offer assistance. Contact details are as follows:

Diocese of Wollongong Parents and Friends Association Forum
Executive Officer
Phone (02) 4253 0980; Fax (02) 4253 0808
Email: pandfforum@ceo.woll.catholic.edu.au
Electronic copies of the sample reports are available on request. Suggest copies be kept in Section 9 - Forms
4.14 Sample Forms and Examples of Key Documents

The following pages contain samples and examples of key documents that are essential to the efficient financial running of any Parents and Friends Association. Additional copies of the various forms can be found in Section 9 – Forms.
**MONTHLY BANK RECONCILIATION**

The bank reconciliation is an internal procedure to ensure that all income and expenditure has been recorded. This is particularly important where people other than the Treasurer may have made deposits.

A sample format for monthly bank reconciliation follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/3/2004</td>
<td>Outstanding Deposit</td>
<td>$250.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/3/2004</td>
<td>Outstanding Deposit</td>
<td>$875.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Outstanding Deposits</td>
<td>$1,125.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sub-total</td>
<td>$13,648.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Less Unpresented Cheques</td>
<td>$3,045.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Available Bank Balance as at 29/2/2004</td>
<td>$10,603.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Treasurer’s Financial Report for General Meetings

A Treasurer’s Report should be prepared for all General Meetings to show all payments and receipts since the last Parents and Friends Association meeting and all payments required for invoices received.

A sample format of the Treasurer’s Financial Report follows:

**Treasurer’s Financial Report**

**Bank Balance as at last meeting**

$12,523.25

**Receipts**

Mothers’ Day Stall $1,125.25

**Total Available**

$13,648.50

**Less Payments Made**

Chq. No. 011236 (raffle tickets) $1,000.00
Chq. No. 011238 (tasty lamingtons) $1,545.50
Chq. No. 011233 (gold day deposit) $500.00

**Total Payments**

$3,045.50

**Balance Available**

$10,603.00

Less invoices received requiring approval

Fred’s Family Fotos $1,500.00

**Final balance available at (date of current meeting)**

$9,103.00
## PARENTS AS PARTNERS – LEADING, LEARNING, SUPPORTING, GROWING

### SAMPLE CASHBOOK RECEIPTS FOR YEAR 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Banked</th>
<th>Interest</th>
<th>Drive</th>
<th>Fete</th>
<th>Disco</th>
<th>Raffle</th>
<th>Mothers</th>
<th>Fathers</th>
<th>Ball</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>2,500.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31/12/04</td>
<td>Choc Drive</td>
<td>$300.00</td>
<td>300.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31/12/04</td>
<td>Disco</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
<td>500.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31/12/04</td>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
<td>500.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>31/12/04</td>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
<td>1,000.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31/12/04</td>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
<td>1,000.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31/12/04</td>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
<td>1,000.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31/12/04</td>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
<td>1,000.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### CASH BOOK RECONCILIATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Banked</th>
<th>Interest</th>
<th>Drive</th>
<th>Fete</th>
<th>Disco</th>
<th>Raffle</th>
<th>Mothers</th>
<th>Fathers</th>
<th>Ball</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31/12/03</td>
<td>Balance</td>
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<td>5,467.95</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31/12/03</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### DIocese OF WOLLONGONG

PARENTS & FRIENDS FORUM
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cheque Number</th>
<th>Payments/Working Dinner Amount</th>
<th>Social Event/Parent Christmas Party Amount</th>
<th>Comment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>01/06/05</td>
<td>Lucky Dip Cookie</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30/10/05</td>
<td>J. Worker W Bee exp</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>31/11/05</td>
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<td>2,000.0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>30/12/05</td>
<td>J. Worker W Bee exp</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>2,000.0</td>
<td>2,000.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31/01/06</td>
<td>XXX Primary School</td>
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<td>2,000.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>30/02/06</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>31/03/06</td>
<td>XXX Primary School</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>2,000.0</td>
<td>2,000.0</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>30/04/06</td>
<td>J. Worker W Bee exp</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31/05/06</td>
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<td>138</td>
<td>2,000.0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>30/06/06</td>
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<tr>
<td>31/07/06</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>30/08/06</td>
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<tr>
<td>31/09/06</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>30/10/06</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>31/11/06</td>
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<td>2,000.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30/12/06</td>
<td>J. Worker W Bee exp</td>
<td>145</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>31/01/07</td>
<td>XXX Primary School</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>2,000.0</td>
<td>2,000.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30/02/07</td>
<td>J. Worker W Bee exp</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>2,000.0</td>
<td>2,000.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31/03/07</td>
<td>XXX Primary School</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>2,000.0</td>
<td>2,000.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30/04/07</td>
<td>J. Worker W Bee exp</td>
<td>149</td>
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<td>2,000.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31/05/07</td>
<td>XXX Primary School</td>
<td>150</td>
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<td>2,000.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30/06/07</td>
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<tr>
<td>31/07/07</td>
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<tr>
<td>30/08/07</td>
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<tr>
<td>31/09/07</td>
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<td>154</td>
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<td>2,000.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30/10/07</td>
<td>J. Worker W Bee exp</td>
<td>155</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>31/11/07</td>
<td>XXX Primary School</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>2,000.0</td>
<td>2,000.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total:** $3,451.00
FORMAT of Auditor’s Report to be used by Auditor

Cover Sheet

(Name of school) Parents and Friends Association

AUDITORS’ REPORT

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

BALANCE SHEET AS AT DECEMBER 31, 2003

FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2003 TO DECEMBER 31, 2003
FORMAT of Auditor’s Report to be Used by Auditor

(Name of school) Parents and Friends Association

AUDITOR’S REPORT

I HAVE AUDITED THE ACCOMPANYING statement of income and expenditure and statement of assets of the (name of school) Parents and Friends Association for the 12 months ended December 31, 2003.

My audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian auditing standards. My procedures included examination on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial report. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion whether, in all material respects, the financial report is presented fairly in accordance with the cash basis of accounting, whereby revenue is recorded when it is received, expenses are recorded when they are paid, and no assets or liabilities, other than cash and bank balances, are recorded.

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

In my opinion, the accompanying statement of income and expenditure and statement of assets present fairly, in accordance with the cash basis of accounting as described above, the financial position of the (name of school) Parents and Friends Association for the year ended December 31, 2003.

Signature of Auditor
(Printed name of Auditor), (qualifications of auditor)
(Member of name of accounting body – See page 5)

Honorary Auditor
Date
Address
Phone: (work)
Phone: (home)

NOTE: It is to be expected that the auditor of a Parents and Friends Association will express a qualification in the audit report on the income raised from fundraising activities due to a lack of controls.
FORMAT of Auditor’s Report to be Used by Auditor

(Name of school) Parents and Friends Association

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2003 TO DECEMBER 31, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INCOME</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chocolate drive</td>
<td>874</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents’ dinner dance</td>
<td>4,200</td>
<td>4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School disco</td>
<td>737</td>
<td>650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fathers’ Day</td>
<td>1,611</td>
<td>1,752</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fete proceeds</td>
<td>16,500</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest received</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mothers’ Day</td>
<td>1,450</td>
<td>1,485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raffle</td>
<td>2,515</td>
<td>2,315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sundry</td>
<td>720</td>
<td>610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL INCOME</td>
<td><strong>$28,666</strong></td>
<td><strong>$25,982</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|                |       |       |
| EXPENDITURE    |       |       |
| Dinner dance   | 3,800 | 3,650 |
| Disco          | 300   | 250   |
| Donations to school (refer note 2) | 14,450 | 10,500 |
| Fathers Day    | 836   | 653   |
| Fete           | 5,901 | 5,414 |
| Maintenance and working bees | 1,392 | 1,775 |
| Mothers’ Day   | 714   | 1,000 |
| Raffle         | 285   | 250   |
| Social events  | 363   | 359   |
| Subscriptions  | 50    | 50    |
| Sundry         | 330   | 658   |
| Trolley, ladder and barrow | n/a | 710 |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURE | **$28,421** | **$25,920** |

SURPLUS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE

|                |       |       |
| SURPLUS        | **$ 245** | **$ 692** |
FORMAT of Auditor’s Report to be Used by Auditor

(Name of school) Parents and Friends Association

BALANCE SHEET AS AT DECEMBER 31, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash at bank – (name of bank and branch)</td>
<td>5,713</td>
<td>5,486</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fixed term deposit - (name of bank and branch)</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL ASSETS</td>
<td>$10,713</td>
<td>$10,468</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTES:

Note 1:

Bank Statement Balance at December 31, 2003 | 6,130 | 5,372 |
Add outstanding deposits | 0 | 300 |
Less unpresented cheques | 417 | 204 |
Cash book balance at December 31, 2003 | $5,713 | $5,468 |

Note 2: Donations to the school

Funds were provided to the school to purchase the following resources as agreed at March 4 Parents and Friends Association meeting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom computers</td>
<td>5,600</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>4,600</td>
<td>4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources K - 6</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadecloth</td>
<td>1,750</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demountable air conditioning</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total funds donated to the school</strong></td>
<td><strong>$14,450</strong></td>
<td><strong>$10,500</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SURPLUS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 245</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 692</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 5

Constitutions

5.1 What is a Constitution?

5.2 Why Must We Have a Constitution?

5.3 The Approval Process

5.4 Making Changes to Your Constitution

5.5 Draft Constitution
5.1 What is a Constitution?

A constitution is usually a written document defining and limiting the duties and powers of an organisation/association.

A constitution is a system, often defined in a written document, which establishes the fundamental rules and principles by which an association or organisation is governed.

A constitution DOES NOT provide the processes for how a particular task should be done. For example, the draft constitution (section 5 – point 5.5) states that each Parents and Friends Association must have an election at the Annual General Meeting each year. However, it does not step out the process by which those elections are held. That is one of the fundamental purposes of this manual – to assist Parents and Friends Associations with the how, who, what, where and when of running an Association.

5.2 Why Must We Have a Constitution?

As a Catholic Primary or Secondary school belonging to the Diocese of Wollongong, there is an expectation that, within each of those schools, a Parents and Friends Association is in existence.

There is also an expectation of the Bishop that each and every one of our schools Parents and Friends Associations operates under the guidelines that an established constitution will provide.

5.3 The Approval Process

The use of the draft constitution provided (section 5 – point 5.5) is the model which the Bishop expects all Parents and Friends Associations to use. The approval process for any constitution of all Parents and Friends Associations must follow the process as mapped out in Section 5.4 – Making Changes to your Constitution.

Once the changes have been agreed to by at least a two-thirds majority of the parent community, the proposed amended constitution, as well as a previous copy of the original constitution, together with a letter requesting approval of the constitution also advising that the correct approval process was followed, must all be forwarded to the Bishop via the Diocese of Wollongong Parents and Friends Forum.

Notification will be forthcoming regarding the acceptance or otherwise of the proposed changes. The proposed changes cannot come into effect until this approval has been received.
5.4 Making Changes to Your Constitution

From time to time, making changes to your constitution may be necessary. Maybe you have an old constitution and want to update and adopt the Diocesan approved version. Maybe your association wants to include a new clause on the handling of money. Whatever the reason for the change, the following process must be followed at all times.

1. Changes to your constitution can only be discussed, voted on and adopted at either an Extra-ordinary General Meeting or at an Annual General Meeting

2. Notice of any proposed alteration to the constitution shall be submitted in writing to the Executive at least fourteen (14) days before it is intended to submit such proposed alteration to a meeting of the association

3. The proposed changes to the constitution must then be provided to members of the Association at least twenty one (21) days before the proposed meeting set down to discuss proposed changes

4. Notices of proposed changes can be provided either via the school newsletter, notes written to each parent, or by advice that copies of the proposed changes have been made available at the school office for review. The key point here is that every member of the Association is given fair and equal opportunity to preview the proposed changes prior to the meeting date

5. At the meeting set down to discuss the changes, the process of discussing motions etc (refer to section 3.3.4 – What is this thing called a motion?) should be followed at all times

6. At the conclusion of the discussion, a vote should be taken

7. Changes to the constitution shall not be altered unless the proposed alterations are carried by a two-thirds majority at either of the above two meetings of the Association

8. In the event of any notices of motion being defeated, three (3) months shall elapse before any further notice of motion dealing with the same matter can be dealt with

9. No proposed alteration that has been voted on and passed by the required majority can come into effect until approval of the Bishop or Bishop’s delegate (Diocese of Wollongong Parents and Friends Association Forum) has been sought and granted

10. On final approval by the Bishop, the changes should be amended in the constitution and copies made available for all parents

11. Your copy in the Parents and Friends Association manual should also be updated.
5.5 Draft Constitution

The following is the Diocesan approved draft constitution that has been modeled to suit both Primary and Secondary Wollongong Diocesan schools. When considering updating your current constitution, please contact the Diocese of Wollongong Parents and Friends Association Forum either via email – pandfforum@ceowoll.catholic.edu.au – or contact the Executive Officer (Kay Blundell) on 02 4253 0980.
Proposed Constitution

Of the

<Insert School Name>

Parents and Friends Association

Dated – Month / Year
1. NAME:

This body shall be known as <Insert School Name> Parents and Friends Association”.
(“The Association”)

2. AIMS & OBJECTIVES:

The Association shall:

2.1 promote the faith life and educational goals of the school in the context of its particular role within the mission of the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Wollongong;

2.2 foster effective partnerships involving parents, students, staff, parish, and diocese for the provision of authentic Catholic education within a quality learning environment;

2.3 work at all times in a cooperative manner with the Principal of the school and consult with them in matters relating to the educational needs of the school;

2.4 in consultation with the Principal and Parish Priest, raise funds to provide material assistance in equipping, maintaining and developing the school;

2.5 be represented by the Diocesan Delegate, who has previously held or presently holds a position on a school P&F Executive, at various and appropriate public meetings and gatherings as guided by the Diocesan Parents and Friends Forum;

2.6 promote appropriate social contact among the parents and friends of the school;

2.7 where appropriate, be a voice for parents on matters of education.

3. EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

The following may be ex-officio members of the Association – the Parish Priest / Administrator of the Parish, the Principal and the Assistant Principal.
4. LIMITATIONS:

4.1 This Association cannot make decisions concerning the property of the school without consulting with and receiving the consent of the administrator of the school property; the parish in the case of primary schools. Such consultation will be undertaken through the principal.

4.2 This association shall have no authority over the patrimony of the school nor its teaching staff, nor shall it interfere in any way with the control or management of the school.

5. MEMBERSHIP:

5.1 Membership will be open to:
- parents / care givers of all pupils attending the school
- all friends within the parish that the school services on the proviso that they are actively involved in the life of the school
- the staff of the school

5.2 Members of the P&F when engaged in authorised P&F activities (e.g. working bees, fetes) are covered by the volunteer policy held with Catholic Church Insurance (CCI).

6. MANAGEMENT OF THE ASSOCIATION:

6.1 The management shall be vested in an Executive Committee of not less than five (5) including:
- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Diocesan Delegate

6.2 The Executive Committee shall normally be elected at the Annual General Meeting and will hold office until the next Annual General Meeting. The committee shall have the power to fill any casual vacancy occurring on the committee.
6.3 Members of the executive can serve on the Executive Committee for up to a total of five (5) years, no matter which position is held within that period.

6.4 Members of the P&F Executive Committee are deemed to be volunteers when performing their duties as office holders and as such are covered by the volunteer policy held with Catholic Church Insurance (CCI).

7. **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:**

7.1 The Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be held in the month of February each year when the Annual Report and Financial Report shall be presented and the Executive elected.

7.2 In special circumstances a period of no longer than fifteen (15) months and no shorter than eight (8) months is permitted between any two (2) Annual General Meetings. At least twenty one (21) day’s notice of the time appointed for the Annual General Meeting shall be forwarded to each family attending the school as well as being noted in the Parish Bulletin.

7.3 An invitation to the AGM should be extended to all Ex-Officio members of the Association.

7.4 The Parish Priest is welcome to address the AGM if he wishes to do so.

8. **BUSINESS AT THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:**

8.1 Opening Prayer
8.2 Apologies
8.3 Confirmation of minutes of previous year’s AGM
8.4 Principal’s Report
8.5 President’s Annual Report (and business arising, if any)
8.6 Adoption of audited Financial Report
8.7 Election of Office Bearers and Auditor
8.8 Correspondence
8.9 General Business
8.10 Dates for Executive and Ordinary Meetings shall be decided
9. **AUDITOR:**

9.1 The Treasurer shall hand the financial accounts to an appointed independent external Auditor after the last ordinary meeting of the year so that they are ready to be incorporated into the Annual Report to be tabled at the AGM.

9.2 An auditor shall be appointed to examine all accounts, vouchers, receipts etc and to complete the Annual Audit which is presented at the AGM.

10. **PRESIDENT’S & AUDITOR’S REPORT:**

A copy of the President’s Annual Report and a copy of the Auditor’s Financial Report shall be forwarded to the Parish Priest and Principal each year prior to the Annual General Meeting.

11. **CONDUCT OF ELECTIONS:**

11.1 A Returning Officer, normally an executive member not standing for re-election for any position, shall be appointed at least fourteen (14) days prior to the Annual General Meeting. The Principal, or representative of the Principal, shall act as chairperson and conduct the election at the AGM. Any candidate for the Executive shall be nominated and seconded by a member of the P&F. The nominee must indicate his or her consent. If required, the election may be by ballot. Self-nomination is acceptable.

11.2 Proxy votes for executive positions are not acceptable. Only members present at an Annual General Meeting, or an Ordinary Meeting, can cast a vote in an election for any committee position.

11.3 No ex-officio members, or their representative, may be elected to an executive position.
12. VACATION OF OFFICE:

12.1 The term of Executive and Committee Members will be one year, at the conclusion of which period they shall vacate their position, but shall be eligible for re-election subsequent to point 6.3 above.

12.2 A person shall not hold the same executive position for more than three (3) consecutive years.

12.3 Committee members who wish to resign during their elected term may do so providing they give one (1) month’s written notice to the Committee.

13. ORDINARY MEETINGS:

13.1 Shall be held at least one per school term being held within the precincts of the school.

13.2 The quorum for an ordinary meeting shall be a minimum of six (6) of which two (2) will be executive members.

13.3 Should a quorum (13.2 above) not be available, the meeting may be adjourned to such other time as the majority of voters present may resolve.

13.4 The President / Chairperson at all meetings shall have a deliberate vote and in the case of a tied vote, a casting vote.

13.5 Proxy votes on motion with notice will be accepted provided they are presented in writing at commencement of the meeting.

13.6 Minutes shall be taken of all rulings and proceedings of ordinary meetings and shall be open to inspection by any member of the Association who applies to the Secretary.

14. EXECUTIVE MEETINGS:

14.1 The Executive Committee shall meet at a minimum, twice per school term to examine the accounts and arrange the affairs of the Association.

14.2 Three (3) members of the executive committee shall form a quorum, with one of those being an Association ex-officio member.
14.3 Minutes shall be taken of all rulings and proceedings of the executive committee and shall be open to inspection by any member of the Association who applies to the Secretary.

15. SUB-COMMITTEES:

When and if needed the Executive Committee may form sub-committees. They will be given whatever powers and duties as deemed necessary. Such sub-committees shall periodically report their proceedings to the Executive Committee and shall conduct their business in accordance with the directions of the Executive Committee.

16. FUNDS OF THE ASSOCIATION:

16.1 The purpose of the P&F budget is to maximise educational benefits to the students.

16.2 All funds of the Association shall be banked promptly in the name of the Association at the Catholic Development Fund, Wollongong.

16.3 All cheques need the signature of two (2) of the following executive members; President, Vice-President, Secretary and/or Treasurer.

16.4 Expenditure will normally be authorised by a simple majority vote at an Ordinary Meeting. The exceptions to this are:

16.4.1 Normal recurrent expenditure

16.4.2 Unforeseen expenditure required prior to a scheduled meeting. This can be authorised by the Principal and any two (2) of the President, Vice-President, Secretary and/or Treasurer. Such expenditure must be ratified at the next Executive/Ordinary meeting.

16.4.3 A numbered receipt will be issued where appropriate for all amounts received

16.4.4 Money for Petty Cash may be kept by the Secretary and Treasurer for the purpose of defraying Petty Expenses. An account of monies spent shall be tabled at each General Meeting.
16.4.5 The outgoing Executive Committee shall each year make provision for a suitable balance to remain in the Association’s fund.

16.4.6 Any funds available for investments shall be first banked then transferred to the nominated investment account. This account shall be nominated at an Ordinary Meeting and all deposits and withdrawals duly approved. All funds shall be banked with the Catholic Development Fund, Wollongong Diocese.

17. FINANCIAL YEAR:

The financial year of the Association shall end on the last day of the school year and all relevant financial statements will be presented at the next AGM held in February of the following year.

18. ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION:

18.1 This constitution shall not be altered unless the proposed alterations are carried by a two-thirds majority at any meeting of the Association other than Executive meetings;

18.2 Notice of any proposed alteration to the Constitution shall be submitted in writing at least fourteen (14) days before it is intended to submit such proposed alteration to a meeting of the association

18.3 Notice of proposed changes to the Constitution must be provided to members of the Association at least twenty one (21) days before proposed meeting set down to discuss proposed changes.

18.4 In the event of any Notice of Motion being defeated, three (3) months shall elapse before any further notice of motion dealing with the same matter can be dealt with

19. DISSOLUTION:

19.1 Dissolution of the Executive Committee can take place only with the approval of the Director of Schools, after due process of consultation.
19.2 Any monies held by the Association at the time of the dissolution shall, after payment of all outstanding accounts, be transferred into Parish funds for use in the school. If the school ceases operations, all monies are to be transferred to the Bishop for the purpose of education in the Diocese.
Your Constitution

Insert a copy of your constitution here.
Section 6

General Information

6.1 List of Wollongong Catholic Education Schools – Primary and Secondary

6.2 Diocese of Wollongong – CEO School Location Map

6.3 Prayers for use
### 6.1 List of Wollongong Catholic Education Schools – Primary and Secondary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WOLLONGONG</th>
<th>MACARTHUR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>St Joseph’s Albion Park (PS)</td>
<td>St John the Evangelist – Camden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Mary’s Star of the Sea – Albion</td>
<td>John Theophylact – Rosetrail (EB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corpus Christi – Oak Flats (EB)</td>
<td>Mt Carmel – Yarrawarrah (EB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Paul’s – Albion Park</td>
<td>St John the Evangelist – Camden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Joseph’s Bulgara</td>
<td>Mary Immaculate – Eagle Vale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Columbkille’s Central</td>
<td>Holy Family – Ingleburn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St John’s – Deepwater</td>
<td>St Teresa’s Picton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Joseph’s – Gerringong</td>
<td>Our Lady of Prompta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Francis of Assisi – Wollongong</td>
<td>St Thomas More Farnborough</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| St Paul’s Moss Vale | St Francis Xavier – Wollongong

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SHOAHAVEN</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>St John the Evangelist – Nowra (EB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Mary’s Star of the Sea – Albion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corpus Christi – Oak Flats (EB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Michael’s – Milton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Family – Ingleburn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Teresa’s Picton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Lady of Prompta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Francis Xavier – Wollongong</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.2 Diocese of Wollongong – CEO School Location Map
6.3 Prayers

**LIVE LIFE TO THE FULLEST**

*LIVE EACH DAY TO THE FULLEST.*

*GET THE MOST FROM EACH HOUR, EACH DAY AND EACH AGE OF YOUR LIFE.*

*BE YOURSELF - BUT BE YOUR BEST SELF.*

*DARE TO BE DIFFERENT - AND TO FOLLOW YOUR OWN STAR.*

*AND DON'T BE AFRAID TO BE HAPPY. ENJOY WHAT IS BEAUTIFUL. LOVE WITH ALL YOUR HEART AND SOUL.*

*BELIEVE THAT THOSE YOU LOVE, LOVE YOU.*

*FORGET WHAT YOU HAVE DONE FOR YOUR FRIENDS AND REMEMBER WHAT THEY HAVE DONE FOR YOU. DISREGARD WHAT THE WORLD OWES YOU, AND CONCENTRATE ON WHAT YOU OWE THE WORLD.*

*WHEN YOU ARE FACED WITH A DECISION, MAKE THAT DECISION AS WISELY AS POSSIBLE - THEN FORGET IT.*

*THE MOMENT OF ABSOLUTE CERTAINTY NEVER ARRIVES.*

*AND, ABOVE ALL, REMEMBER THAT GOD HELPS THOSE WHO HELP THEMSELVES. ACT AS IF EVERYTHING DEPENDED UPON YOU, AND PRAY AS IF EVERYTHING DEPENDED UPON GOD.*

*IF YOU HAVE OF FAITH IN YOUR HEART, IT WILL BE HEARD BY THE LOOK ON YOUR FACE.*

*Allan Dykastra*
OPENING PRAYER

Today we gather.
Meeting together to consider
where we stand
and who we are

We come to order ourselves
into a new sense of order according to our progress from the last gathering to this one.

We work in prayer and dialogue.
In going back to see where we have been,
we steady ourselves
for the journey forward today.

Each step along the way we clear the stones and obstacles, healing and refreshing each other. We listen openly to each tale of travel and hear each one's proposal for the time ahead.

Knowing you are here, God,
we are freer in our interaction,
more daring in the sharing of our personal visions,
loving in our confrontation,
deeply silent in consideration, and
accepting in the choices that for a little while will help to define our actions until broader definitions draw us on.
In this your presence, we meet to order ourselves anew,
to consider where we stand and who we are.

To day we gather.

Amen
Prayer used by Diocesan Schools Council

Leader:
Heavenly God; Guide us in our meeting today. Hold us in your loving hands. Be gentle and know that we are capable of love.

A reading from John 15:5-12

“I am the vine, and you are the branches. Whoever remains in me, and I in him, will bear much fruit, for you can do nothing without me. Whoever does not remain in me is thrown out like an branch and dries up; such branches are gathered up and thrown into the fire; where they are burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, then you will ask for anything you wish, and you will have it. My Father’s glory is shown by your bearing much fruit, and in this way, you become my disciples. I love you, just as the Father loves me; remain in my love. If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father’s commands and remain in his love.

“I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My commandment is this: love one another, just as I have loved you”

Petitions:

1. We Pray for the children and young people of our Catholic Schools. May they always experience a loving environment of care, welcome and inclusion. Loving God, Hear Us.

   Response: 
   Hear our Prayer

2. We pray for the teachers and support staff in our Catholic schools. May they be guided in their work and be given the wisdom and understanding necessary to guide the children and young people placed in their care. Loving God, Hear Us.

   Response: 
   Hear our Prayer

3. We pray for the parents and families associated with our Catholic Schools. May they feel confident that their children are being cared for and taught well and may they be given all the assistance needed to help them in the raising of their children. Loving God, Hear Us.

   Response: 
   Hear our Prayer

4. We pray for the Clergy, called upon to minister to the pastoral needs of the Parish community. May they be guiding lights to the young people in our schools. Loving God, Hear Us.

   Response: 
   Hear our Prayer

5. We especially pray for your blessings on this <insert group name> of advisors. Loving God, Hear Us.

Leader: We thank you Holy One, God of all Creation, for bringing us together. Be with us as we deliberate. May our conversation be lively, our reflection be genuine and our learning be fruitful. We ask this prayer through Christ, the Savior of all. Amen.
Please feel free to insert copies of Prayers that you particularly like into this section. You may also want to consider passing these on to the Parents and Friends Forum for inclusion in the Parents and Friends Association manual at all schools.
Section 7

Frequently Asked Questions
1. Who decides the frequency of the meetings?

The constitution stipulates that there should be at least one meeting per school term. The regularity of meetings can be decided by the Parents and Friends Association. Consultation with the parent community should be a major factor in deciding the frequency of meetings.

2. What kind of matters should be on the Parents and Friends Association agenda?

The Parents and Friends Association aims and objectives are outlined in the constitution, therefore any items that relate to them in any way are a matter for the agenda.

Items concerning the curriculum of a school, which includes matters such as religious knowledge, skills, attitudes and values both spiritual and secular, can be placed on the agenda if they are a concern to Parents and Friends Association.

3. What happens if there are matters of disagreement between parents and the school Principal?

Where there are matters of disagreement or potential conflict between parents and teachers, or parents and the Principal, they should not be raised with the Parents and Friends Association in the first instance. Direct consultation between parties should first be attempted to resolve the issue. If this fails and the issue is still unresolved, the parents concerned should feel comfortable in approaching the President of the Parents and Friends Association for guidance. If the outcome is that the issue is to be raised at the Parents and Friends Association, notice should be given to the Principal and President before the matter is placed on the agenda of the next meeting.

4. On what can a Parents and Friends Association spend its money?

The Parents and Friends Association brings together the parents, parish clergy and the school Principal. All parties can contribute to the discussion on fundraising and expenditure in the school.

Spending, in relation to school/parish property, will be appropriately authorised in accordance with the rules set out by the Catholic Education Office.

5. Who decides on which items a Parents and Friends Association spends its money?

Refer to point 4 above. The Parents and Friends Association exists for the benefit of the school and its students; an agreement between all parties is ideal when considering which items should be purchased.
6. What role does the Parish Priest or school Principal have on this decision?

The Diocesan Bishop gives the Parish Priest under Canon Law responsibility for the affairs of the parish as entrusted to him. He also has the final responsibility for the affairs of the school, although in most circumstances these are left to the Principal.

Each Parish has a finance committee to help the Parish Priest administer the goods of the parish.

The Parents and Friends Association constitution signed and agreed by the Bishop allows for the Parents and Friends Association to manage its own financial affairs. However, common sense requires that the Priest, Principal and Parents and Friends Association collaborate to achieve the best decisions for the students attending the school.

7. Who do the Parents and Friends Association represent?

The school Parents and Friends Association Executive is elected to represent the interests of the whole school community. That is a major task and responsibility and requires close collaboration with the school Principal to ensure that the voice of parents is heard and understood.

8. What happens when not enough people turn up at the Parents and Friends Association?

The quorum of the meeting is six (6), two of which are Executive members. If the quorum is not reached, the meeting should be declared terminated. Discussion can continue but there will be no minutes or decisions made. Outcome of discussions can be taken to the next meeting.
Section 8

Local Procedures and Processes
This section has intentionally been left blank. Its purpose is for you to include all the general processes and procedures peculiar to your Association as they relate to your school. For example, you may have particular processes as to the coordination of your fete or Mother’s Day stall.

The purpose is to keep in one location all these procedures that have a tendency to disappear with departing parents.
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Section 9

Forms
This section has intentionally been left blank. Its purpose is for you to include all the standard forms that are regularly needed by your Parents and Friends Association. For example, we have included the Parents and Friends Committee Contact List form that is required to be completed at the conclusion of each and every AGM or where a change to your Executive has occurred.

The purpose is to keeping one location all the forms that have a tendency to disappear with departing parents.
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