



MOUNT ANVILLE MONTESSORI JUNIOR SCHOOL
PARENTS' COUNCIL CONSTITUTION
(Ratified at the AGM in October 2016 and effective from the AGM)

PREAMBLE

The Society of the Sacred Heart was founded in 1800 by St. Madeline Sophie Barat. The Society passed the trusteeship of Mount Anville Montessori Junior School and Mount Anville Secondary School to the Mount Anville Sacred Heart Education Trust (MATCH) in 2007. The Trust is responsible for providing an education for our pupils in the tradition and philosophy of the Society of the Sacred Heart.

This responsibility is fulfilled by committing to the following set of goals:

- a living faith in the Catholic tradition
- personal growth
- intellectual values
- building community
- active social awareness

Mount Anville Montessori Junior School is a Catholic School and an important feature of Sacred Heart Education is the active involvement of parents and guardians in the school community. This involvement is highly valued as we recognise that parents and guardians are the primary and most important educators of our children.

MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of the Parents' Council is to provide a structure through which parents and guardians of children attending Mount Anville Montessori Junior School can work together for the best possible education for our children. The Parents Council shall work with the pupils, principal, teachers and board of management to build an effective partnership between home and school and promote the interests of the pupils in accordance with provisions of the Education Act 1998 and the Ethos of the Society of the Sacred Heart.

1. TITLE

The Council shall be known as The Mount Anville Montessori Junior School Parents' Council (the "Council").

2. MEMBERSHIP

- (a) Membership of the Council shall be open to all parents and guardians of children attending Mount Anville Montessori Junior School (the "School");
- (b) The Principal, the Deputy Principal and the two Parent Nominees (the "Parent Nominees") of the Mount Anville Montessori Junior School Board of Management (the "Board") and such other Nominees as the Trustees from time to time think suitable shall be ex-officio members of the Council.

3. OBJECTIVES

- (a) To act as a forum for the expression of opinions, exchange of information and discussion of topics raised by parents and guardians including:
 - Bringing ideas, activities and proposals for new experiences for our children to the Principal for consideration
 - Provision of feedback for the School and external agencies
 - Enhance communication pathways with efficient dissemination of information to the parent body
- (b) To submit to the Principal, as it deems fit, for consideration by the Board, from time to time, matters arising from such opinions and topics.
- (c) To foster co-operation between parents, teachers, the Schools Administrator, the Principal, the Deputy Principal and others employed by the Board for the administration of the School (the "School Administration") and the Board.
- (d) To assist in the promotion of the Goals and the ethos of the Sacred Heart Community
- (e) To support activities within the School of a social, charitable or educational nature, as requested from time to time by the Principal or the Board.
- (f) To provide an Annual Report summarising the years events and hold an annual end of year think tank with a view to consider objectives for the year ahead.
- (g) To maintain a catalogue of all key school events in appropriate format for retention by the School Administration.

PROVIDED ALWAYS that in any discussion of any kind, no reference shall be made whether by name or otherwise to any specific pupil, parent, guardian, member of staff or member of the Board and recognise that individual problems arising between pupils or parents and /or teachers are a matter for determination between the individual and the School.

4. GENERAL MEETINGS

- (a) The Annual General Meeting (the "AGM") of the Council shall be held no later than the second week in October of each academic year.
- (b) Extraordinary General Meetings ("EGM") of the Council may be held at the written request of at least twenty members, such request to be addressed to the Chairperson of the Committee.
- (c) Each member must be notified in writing of any General Meeting at least 14 days prior to the meeting.
- (d) The presence of thirty members is required to form a quorum for a General Meeting.
- (e) All members shall be entitled to attend, speak and vote at any General Meeting.
- (f) The AGM will host the elections to select representatives to the Parent Council Committee and also when applicable two Parent Nominees to serve on the Board of Management of the school.

5. FORMATION OF THE COMMITTEE

- (a) The Committee of the Council (the "Committee") shall be formed annually at the AGM.
- (b) The Committee shall consist of eight parent/guardian representatives who have children in the School for at least one year:
 - i. Two parents/guardians representing all classes up to First class
 - ii. One parent/guardian representing each of the following classes from First class to Sixth class.
 - iii. The parent/guardian should have a child in the class they are representing at the time of election.
- (c) Nominations for representatives to the Committee shall be submitted in writing to the Principal in advance of the General Meeting. The Chairperson will also invite nominations from the floor of the General Meeting. All nominees must be in attendance at the General Meeting to be eligible for election. All nominations should be seconded.

- (d) Each parent/guardian shall have one vote only for as many candidates as there are vacancies, e.g. if there are four vacancies, they may vote for four people from those nominated etc., Each vote will rank equally. There will be no proxies and those voting must be present at the election.
- (e) Those elected in each category will be those carrying the most votes.
- (f) If there are nominations for representatives equal to the number of vacancies in any category, these nominees shall be deemed to be elected.
- (g) No person may remain a member of the Committee for more than two consecutive years.
- (h) Notwithstanding sub-clause (b) and (g), in exceptional circumstances, to ensure continuity, and with the approval of the Committee, the Council may consist of more than eight members and one member of the Committee can, having served for two years, put his/her name forward at the General Meeting to be elected as a representative for one additional year.
- (i) Former office holders may seek re-election after one year's absence from the Committee.
- (j) None of the eight elected officers can also act as class-Representatives during their term of office.

6. OFFICERS

- (a) Election of the Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and Secretary and such other officers as the Council considers necessary shall take place at the first meeting of the incoming Committee by open ballot. If there is more than one candidate, election shall be by way of secret ballot of the Committee members.
- (b) Committee meetings shall be chaired by the Chairperson. In the absence of the Chairperson meetings shall be chaired by the Deputy Chairperson, otherwise those members present shall elect a Chairperson for the meeting.
- (c) Elected officers shall hold office for one year and shall be eligible for re-election, providing they have a child in the school. No officer may hold the same office for more than two consecutive years.
- (d) The elected officers' names and members of the Committee along with details of the classes they represent in each academic year will be published on the Schools website.

7. EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS OF THE PARENTS COUNCIL COMMITTEE

- (a) There shall be four ex-officio members who attend all Committee meetings along with the eight elected officers. The ex-officio members shall be the Principal and Deputy Principal along with the two Board of Management Parent Nominees.
- (b) The role of the Principal and Deputy Principal in attending committee meetings is to:
 - i. Hear parents' views and feedback on matters for discussion.
 - ii. Use the Committee as a 'sounding board' for new or amended policies and practices.
 - iii. Use the Committee to enhance the communications within the school.
 - iv. Provide an update on recent activities and celebrations.
 - v. Be proactive participators at the Committee meetings on matters of discussion.
 - vi. Bring Council matters as advised by the Committee Chairperson to the Board. This pathway should be the primary conduit to the Board.
 - vii. They shall have no vote on any matter but shall have the ability to request items to be placed on the agenda for discussion at Committee meetings.
- (c) The role of the two Parent Nominees in attending committee meetings is to:
 - i. Participate in discussion including feedback and opinion.
 - ii. Inform their 'parent's point of view' to facilitate their role on the Board.
 - iii. Enhance the communication lines within the School structures.
 - iv. They shall have no vote on any matter but shall have the ability to request items to be placed on the agenda for discussion at Committee meetings.

8. PARENT NOMINEES ON THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

- (a) Two parents, ideally one mother and one father – of children enrolled in the school are elected to the Board of Management as 'Parent Nominees' for a three year term.

- (b) The two Parent Nominees are expected to contribute to and uphold the decisions and policies of the Board. This means that, other than the agreed report from each of the Board of Management meetings, all other matters must remain confidential (unless pre-agreed by the Board).
- (c) They have no function in bringing individual parental issues to the Board. Such issues can be dealt with the agreed procedure through the Principal and Deputy Principal.
- (d) The two Parent Nominees on the Board are entitled to be Ex-officio members of the Committee and attend all meetings.
- (e) Parent Nominees on the Board should not hold officer roles on the Committee.
- (f) The election process for the two Parents' Nominees on the Board which takes place every three years or at the discretion of the Trustees, shall follow the process as laid out below, which may be changed by the Chairperson of the Board of Management or the Trustees:
 - i. The Committee shall organize the election process for the two Parent Nominees to the Board, at its AGM.
 - ii. The two Parent Nominees term of office shall be for a three year term.
 - iii. All Parents who have a child enrolled in the school for at least one year shall be eligible for selection as Parent Nominees. This is subject to the Articles of Management of the Board which state that any elected Parent Nominee who ceases to have a child enrolled in the school shall cease to be a member of the Board except in the case of a parent of a child who completes his/her education at the School in the year that precedes the end of that Board's term of office.
 - iv. Notice of vacancies shall be sent by the Chairperson of the Board of Management to all Parents, giving four weeks' notice of elections.
 - v. Nominations are made using a specified Nomination Form. All nominations should be proposed and seconded by Parents or Guardians of the respective class groupings. Nominations should be forwarded in a sealed envelope to the Principal marked "BOM".
 - vi. Nominations will close one week prior to the date of the election.
 - vii. All nominees who wish to put themselves forward shall have their applications for nomination and outline CV displayed appropriately by the Welcome Office for parents to review.
 - viii. Any Parent or Guardian seeking nomination for election must be present at the AGM.
 - ix. If only one nomination is received for each position, each shall be deemed to be elected.
 - x. In the event of more than one nomination, each nominee will verbally address the AGM with speaking time limited to 5 minutes strictly. Subsequently a secret ballot shall be held at the AGM. Each Parent or Guardian shall have one, non-transferable vote for the relevant position. The votes shall be counted at the AGM by appointed tellers and the results shall be notified to the Parents or Guardians at the meeting.
 - xi. The voting results from the ballot may be retained for the purposes of a co-option, in order to fill vacancies occurring during the life of the Board where it is decided, having consulted with the Committee, not to hold a by-election.

9. COMMITTEE MEETINGS

- (a) During the academic year, meetings should normally be held monthly and there shall be a minimum of five meetings of the Committee in the course of the academic year of the School.
- (b) All Committee members must be given at least seven days prior notice of each meeting.
- (c) The presence of five Committee members is required to form a forum.
- (d) The Principal, the Deputy Principal and the two Parent Nominees shall be entitled to attend meetings of the Committee but shall not be members of same nor have a vote.
- (e) All business and minutes from the meetings are confidential, this means that, other than the summary report from each committee meeting, all other matters shall be considered confidential, save where all officers of the Committee agree otherwise.
- (f) Committee resolutions shall be passed by simple majority of those members present, all of whom are entitled to vote. The Chairperson will have a casting vote.
- (g) The Secretary shall keep minutes of all discussions and decisions agreed at the Committee Meetings, in the absence of the Secretary, those members present shall elect a Secretary for the meeting.

- (h) Minutes and amendments shall be signed and dated by the Chairperson and Secretary. A final draft shall be submitted into the Committee folder. An agreed summary report of Minutes of each meeting shall be emailed to all parents by the School and displayed appropriately by the Welcome Office.
- (i) The Committee may invite such persons as they wish to attend their meetings with prior notice of such attendee being given to the Principal.
- (j) The Chairperson of the Board may be invited to at least one Committee meeting annually.
- (k) Any elected officer, who is absent (without informing the Chairperson or the Secretary and without due cause) for three consecutive meetings, is deemed to have resigned.
- (l) All members of the Committee shall have a right to be informed of activities of the Committee.
- (m) Any matters concerning the business of the school can be placed on the agenda or discussed at the Committee meetings provided no teacher, extra-curricular activity organiser, pupil, board member, trustee member or staff member are named or identified.
- (n) If a vacancy arises during a period of office of the Committee (which shall be from AGM to AGM) such vacancy may be filled by co-option at the discretion of the Committee of a member representing the relevant year / class group.

10. SUB-COMMITTEES

- (a) The Committee shall have the power to appoint sub-committees with particular areas of responsibility or to assist with specific projects. Members of these sub-committees must be members of the Council but need not be members of the Committee.
- (b) Such sub-committees shall report monthly to the Committee and shall be clearly subject to the authority of the Committee.
- (c) The Committee may at any time in its sole discretion dissolve a sub-committee.
- (d) A sub-committee cannot make decisions but can make recommendations and is accountable to the Committee.

11. AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION

- (a) The Constitution of the Council may be amended with the prior approval of the Board and the Trustees.
- (b) The Constitution shall only be amended at the AGM or EGM by the following procedure:
 - i. A proposal to change the Constitution should be submitted in writing to the Committee. The proposed changes shall bear the names of the proposer and seconders and shall also be communicated in writing to the Chairperson of the Board.
 - ii. Notice of the proposal should be circulated by the Committee to all parents, at least two weeks prior to the General Meeting. Notice shall be given in the same manner as notice of the meeting.
 - iii. A two thirds majority of those present and voting at the General Meeting voting in favour of the amendment.

12. ANNUAL REPORTS

The Chairperson shall submit a written Annual Report for consideration by the members attending the Annual General Meeting. The Chairperson of the Committee will consult with the Principal in advance of finalising the Annual Report. A copy of the Annual Report will be made available to the Board of Management in advance of the AGM and a copy of the Annual Report will be posted on the Schools website.

13. THE SCHOOL

The Parents' Council and the Committee should not interfere with the day to day running of the School nor allow itself to be used as a forum for complaints or problems relating to individual pupils.

14. DISSOLUTION

In the event of dissolution of the Parents' Council Committee, any assets shall pass to the Board of Management.