

Parents Association Constitution



Courtenay National School
Newcastle West
Co. Limerick

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The Aim of the Parents Association

The aim of the Parents Association is to provide a forum for the parents/guardians of children attending Courtenay National School to work together, in partnership with the Principal, Board of Management and the whole school community, to help provide the best possible education for children attending the school, in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act, 1998. The Parents Association will also take the pupil voice into account in all school related matters.

The Role of the Parents Association

1. To provide input and feedback to the Principal and/or the Board of Management in relation to school policy formation.
2. To support the school with various school events and activities as requested by the Principal and/or the Board of Management.
3. To support the parent body through dissemination of information pertaining to parenting and supporting your child in primary school.
4. The Parents Association may, upon request by the principal and/or Board of Management, advise the Principal and the Board of Management on any matters relating to the school in accordance with the Education Act 1998, (2)(a).
5. To support the school through fundraising and to utilise the funds as deemed appropriate by the Parents Association, Principal and the Board of Management. Fundraising for the school by the Parents Association may only be carried out with the prior approval of the Board of Management.

The Membership of the Parents Association

Membership is only open to parents or legal guardians of children attending Courtenay National School. All parents and legal guardians will be deemed to be members of the Parents Association.

The Parents Association Committee will make every effort to encourage active membership by parents/legal guardians, especially for new families or families whereby language or cultural backgrounds may present an obstacle to participation.

Though not a member of the Parents Association, the Principal, or a delegate may be invited to attend and address any meeting of the Parent Association Committee, Executive Committee or any sub-committees.

The Committee of the Parents Association

Members of the Parents Association will elect a committee of 6 parents/legal guardians. This committee will have responsibility for representing all the parents/legal guardians of Courtenay National School and managing the activities of the Parents Association. Not all parents/legal guardians may be able to become involved on the Parents Association Committee but instead, may wish to be involved on a specific fundraising or school event. The Committee will endeavour to provide opportunities for parents/legal guardians to volunteer their support when required for fundraising and school events. The Committee must positively support the work of the Parents Association and positively support the work and policies of the school.

Elected officers of the Parents Association

The Committee must have the following elected officers.

❖ Chairperson – Executive Committee

- The Chairperson will assume full responsibility for ensuring the business of the Parents Association is conducted in accordance with the Constitution of the Parents Association.

- The Chairperson will positively support the work of the Parents Association and the work and policies of the school.
- The Chairperson has sole responsibility for calling Parents Association meetings. In exceptional circumstances, the Board of Management may instruct the Parents Association Committee that a Parents Association meeting will be held.
- The Chairperson will hold the deciding vote on matters of split-decision.
- The Chairperson will notify the Secretary of meeting date, time and venue for circulation to all members.
- The Chairperson will agree and circulate the agenda before each meeting and provide to the secretary who will distribute the agenda for each meeting to each member at least one day before the meeting.
- The Chairperson will conduct meetings in accordance with the Constitution of the Parents Association.
- The Chairperson will meet with the principal upon request by either party.

❖ **Deputy-Chairperson - Executive Committee Member**

- The Deputy-Chairperson will assume the role of the Chairperson upon the non-availability of the Chairperson, upon request by the Chairperson or the Principal.

❖ **Secretary - Executive Committee Member**

- The Secretary will assume responsibility for communicating Parents Association business to the Chairperson, Parents Association committee and parent body when required. The Chairperson may assume this duty in the absence of the secretary.
- The Secretary will communicate meetings to all members following instruction from the Parents Association Chairperson.
- The Secretary will pass all proposals received for inclusion on the Agenda to the Parents Association Chairperson.
- The secretary will distribute the agenda for each meeting to each member at least one day before the meeting.
- The Secretary will record meeting minutes and circulate to all members 1 week following the meeting.

- The Secretary will meet with the principal upon request by the principal.
- The Secretary will act as Public Relations Officer (PRO) for the Parent Association and will arrange all communiques in this regard following sanction and approval by the Parents Association Chairperson.

❖ **Assistant Secretary – Executive Committee Member**

- The Assistant Secretary will assume the role of the Secretary upon the non-availability of the Secretary, upon request by the Chairperson or the Principal.
- The Assistant Secretary may be called to assist the Secretary with meeting minutes and agendas.

❖ **Treasurer - Executive Committee Member**

- The Treasurer will keep detailed and accurate financial records of all funds raised, held, and expended by the Parents Association.
- The Treasurer will ensure the duties of the Treasurer as outlined in the Parent Constitution are met in full.
- The Treasurer will make available all financial records to the principal and/or the Board of Management upon request.
- The Treasurer will make funds available to the principal and or Board of Management upon request and without delay.
- The Treasurer will arrange for certification of accounts at the end of each school year.

❖ **Assistant Treasurer**

- The Assistant Treasurer will assume the role of the Treasurer upon the non-availability of the Treasurer, upon request by the Chairperson or the Principal.
- The Assistant Treasurer may be called to provide updates relating to the accounts of the Parents Association.

❖ **Child Safeguarding Officer (CSO) -**

- The CSO will assume responsibility for ensuring the Parent Association maintains and adheres to the Courtenay School's Child Safeguarding Statement.
- The CSO will ensure that all Parents Association activities comply with Children First guidelines.

Subcommittees

Subcommittees can be set up to work on a particular task. The subcommittees may also co-opt people to assist in their work. All membership of the subcommittee must be sanctioned by the main committee. The subcommittees may not make decisions; they remain at all times accountable to the main committee.

The Election of the Parent Association Committee

The members of the committee will be elected every year at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Parents Association. At least 10 days written notification of this meeting will be sent to all parents/legal guardians of children in the school. At the AGM the Chairperson will invite any interested members to form the committee. Each member will be elected for 1 year, but they can be re-elected if they continue to be eligible to serve, that is as long as they continue to be a parent or legal guardian of a child in the school. Those elected to the committee must be active members of the Parents Association.

A Committee member will cease to remain on the Committee if they have no child attending Courtenay National School i.e., their child has been removed permanently from the school register.

At the AGM an Executive Committee will be elected to the following positions:

- ❖ Chairperson,
- ❖ Deputy Chairperson,
- ❖ Secretary,
- ❖ Assistant Secretary,
- ❖ Treasurer,
- ❖ Assistant Treasurer.
- ❖ Child Safeguarding Officer

In the event of a vacancy arising during the year the committee will have the power to co-opt additional members to the committee.

The committee shall meet at a minimum of 3 times in any one year.

Parent Nominees on the Board of Management

Every four years the PA, at its AGM, nominates a mother and father to sit on the Board of Management. These individuals are not parent representatives but Parent Nominees. It is not their duty to represent parents as a collective body nor the individual opinion or views of a parent/legal guardian. These members represent the Board of Management as a statutory body.

Requirements of Committee Members

- ❖ Members are required to attend all committee meetings unless prior notice is given to the secretary via text/e-mail or phone call. Where a member misses two consecutive meetings without due notice to the Secretary, that person will be deemed to have resigned.
- ❖ Members are required to actively attend and participate in any fundraising and supervision of any event hosted by the Parents Association unless prior notice of non-attendance has been made to the secretary by text/e-mail or phone call.
- ❖ Members are required to positively support the activities of the Parents Association Committee and school policy.

Meetings of Committee

- ❖ All meetings are to be held following due notice provided to all members of the committee via text or email, with not less than 7 days' notice to be given in advance of this meeting.
- ❖ All committee meetings will be held in the school or other designated location if the school premises are unavailable. Prior notice must be given to the principal of the meeting. The meeting room may be booked through the principal/deputy-principal.
- ❖ Committee members may suggest items for inclusion on the agenda. All suggestions for inclusion should be made through the Secretary. The Chairperson will agree the agenda.

- ❖ All meetings will be held in a formal manner, and all matters will be raised and discussed through the Chairperson. The Chairperson will ensure fair procedures in relation to speaking time.
- ❖ The agenda will be distributed at least one day before the meeting.
- ❖ The minutes of each meeting must be kept by the Secretary and read and agreed at the subsequent meeting.
- ❖ The agenda will follow the following format;
 - Minutes of previous meeting (to be agreed and signed by Chairperson following proposal and seconding)
 - Correspondences
 - Chairperson's Update
 - Treasurer's Report
 - Safeguarding Children Report/ Safety Officer's Report (where applicable)
 - Subcommittee Report (where applicable)
 - Fundraising Items
 - School Support Items
 - Agree items for Communication to Parents through Newsletter/Alladin App
 - AOB

- ❖ Confidentiality must be maintained at all times. Breach of confidentiality may lead to a vote of no-confidence in a member and dismissal from the committee. Only items agreed for communication to parents, as per agenda, are acceptable items of information to discuss.

National Parents Council

The Parent Association of Courtenay National School will maintain annual registration with the National Parents Council.

Safeguarding Children/Child Protection

The Parents Association will maintain and adhere to the Courtenay National School Child Safeguarding Statement. The Parents Association will appoint a Child Safeguarding Children (CSO) who will liaise with the School Designated Liaison

Person (DLP), Principal of the School or the Deputy DLP, Deputy-Principal of the school.

The CSO will ensure that all Parents Association activities comply with Children First guidelines.

Use of School Premises

The Parents Association will adhere to all conditions of use as outlined by the Board of Management in relation to the use of the school for Parents Association activities.

Communications from the Parent Association

No member of the Parents Association Committee will represent the committee in communications with the Principal, Board of Management, parent body or outside agencies other than the members outlined below:

With the Principal

- ❖ The Chairperson of the Parents Association will normally communicate all relevant information to the principal.
- ❖ The principal will meet with the Chairperson and/or Deputy Chairperson and Secretary (when required) on Parents Association matters.
- ❖ The Treasurer will communicate all matters relating to finances to the principal when requested.
- ❖ No other Committee member may communicate Parents Association business to the principal.

With the Board of Management

- ❖ The Chairperson will arrange for a Report by the Parent Association to be provided to one or both Parent Nominees on the Board of Management.
- ❖ The Board of Management will nominate one of their committee members to act as a liaison person between the Board and the Parents Association.

- ❖ On occasion, the Chairperson and other members of the Executive Committee of the Parents Association may be called to appear before the Board.

With the Parent Body

- ❖ The Parents Association will communicate regularly with the parent body through the School Newsletter, Alladin App and School Email system.
- ❖ The Chairperson and Secretary of the Parents Association is responsible for arranging these communications to occur.

With Outside Agencies & Businesses

- ❖ The Chairperson will arrange for the appropriate committee members to communicate with outside agencies & businesses.

Critical Incidents & High-Profile Events

- ❖ The Parents Association will adhere to the school's Critical Incident Management Plan in relation to communications in this regard.
- ❖ No member of the Committee will make a statement or utterance, on or off the record, in this context. All such statements must be sanctioned by the Chairperson of the Board of Management

Finance

- ❖ At the beginning of the school year, the Parents Association Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer should meet with the principal, who is a member of the Board of Management and together they will decide what PA expenditure will be of most benefit to the school.
- ❖ The Parents Association committee will finance the activities of the Parents Association through fundraising. No finances may be expended for the purposes of fundraising unless sanctioned by the Board of Management through the Principal.
- ❖ A member of the committee must not make any commitment regarding expenditure without the sanction of the Parents Association Committee.
- ❖ Where a request for expenditure is required before the next Parents Association Committee meeting takes place, the request may be sanctioned

by the combined approval of the Chairperson and Treasurer of the Parents Association once the expenditure is deemed reasonable and justifiable. The Principal should be consulted if the expenditure is not reasonably connected to items of expenditure agreed with the principal.

- ❖ All fundraising must only take place following prior sanction by the Board of Management.
- ❖ The Treasurer will be appointed from among the committee members and will be responsible for keeping account of the income and expenditure of the Parents Association finances. The Treasurer will give a statement of income and expenditure at each committee meeting. Accurate and detailed accounts and receipts must be kept.
- ❖ The Parents Association will not keep a bank account in its name. All monies associated with the Parents Association will be held in the accounts of the Courtenay National School.
- ❖ The Parents Association funds will be recorded separately within the main account records of the Courtenay National School. These will be referenced separately on the end of year accounts.
- ❖ Approval to spend Parents Association funds will be made through the Executive committee to the Principal and the Board of Management.
- ❖ In the interest of all committee members, all cash raised must be counted by at least two members of the committee on the day of or after the collection and lodged into the Courtenay National School account without delay. This lodgement will be made through the school and must be signed as received from the Parents Association by the school Principal, Vice Principal or school secretary.

Complaints & Grievance Procedure

A. Informal Stage

It is expected that all complaints and grievances in relation to the work or conduct of the Parents Association will be made to the Parents Association Chairperson and dealt with on an informal basis and that an informal response to a complaint or grievance at this stage will be sufficient to resolve

same. It would be usual that the Chairperson of the Parent Association would respond to all such matters on behalf of the Parents Association Committee.

B. **Formal Stage**

Where a complaint or grievance was not resolved at the informal stage, the complaints, or grievances in relation to the work or conduct of the Parents Association must be made in writing to the Parents Association Committee through the Chairperson of the Parents Association. The complaint should be signed and dated by the complainant before it is processed through the procedure.

The Secretary will read the correspondence at the next Parents Association Committee meeting, and a written response will be agreed by the Committee and sent to the complainant within 5 working days of the meeting. The secretary should keep a copy of the correspondence and the response with the minutes of the meeting.

Vote of No-Confidence in a Committee Member

Any Committee member who brings the committee or the school into disrepute or whose conduct is negative towards the work of the committee, or the school will be asked to resign from the committee if the Chairperson ascertains that a majority of the committee wish this to occur. If a member chooses not to resign, a member of the Parents Association Committee will be removed following a vote of no confidence by the majority of the Parents Association Committee.

- ❖ A vote of no confidence may only be made following a motion of no confidence by a member of the committee which is supported by two other members of the committee.
- ❖ The Chairperson must ascertain that there is the required support from the minimum of three members for a motion of no-confidence to proceed.
- ❖ A motion of no-confidence may not be tabled at a meeting without prior notice.
- ❖ All motions of no-confidence must only occur as the sole item on a committee agenda.

- ❖ The Chairperson will ask the Secretary to call the meeting of the members. The members must be informed of the sole item on the agenda and the member against whom the motion is being tabled.
- ❖ The Chairperson should inform the member against whom the motion is being made of the reasons for the motion and the names of those proposing and supporting the motion. All committee members must be given 7 days' notice of the meeting.
- ❖ At the meeting, the member making a motion of no confidence must outline the reasons for the motion.
- ❖ The member of the committee against whom the motion of no confidence has been tabled will be entitled to respond to a motion of no confidence.
- ❖ Any committee member present at the meeting will also be entitled to speak on the motion.
- ❖ All speakers will be given no more than ten minutes to speak on the motion.
- ❖ The committee will then vote on the motion by a show of hands in favour and then against the motion.
- ❖ The Chairperson will count the show of support for or against the motion and this will be recorded in the minutes by the secretary.
- ❖ Where the motion is passed, the Chairperson will thank all members for their input and inform the committee member that their membership of the committee is terminated, and the meeting will be closed immediately.
- ❖ Where the motion is not supported, the Chairperson will thank all members for their input and ask all members to move forward in a positive manner for the benefit of the school and the pupils. The meeting will be closed immediately.
- ❖ Any member who loses their committee membership will not be allowed hold a position on the committee for 3 consecutive terms.

Petitions

The Parents Association does not accept petitions. Petitions are not viewed as a written complaint and will not be processed through the Complaint & Grievance Procedures, above mentioned.

Amendments to the Constitution

- ❖ The constitution of the Parents Association and all amendments therein requires the approval of the Board of Management.
- ❖ Amendments to the Constitution may only be made at an AGM or EGM. Amendments then require sanction and ratification of the Board of Management.
- ❖ The constitution should be cited at the first meeting of the Parents Association in each school year to ensure all members are cognisant of the Constitution and the responsibilities of the Committee and the officers of the Executive Committee. Copies of the constitution shall be made available to new and existing members throughout the year upon request.

Signature Page

Signature of Chairperson of the Parent Association

Tracy Doolan

25th March 2026

Date:

Signature of Chairperson of the Board of Management

[Handwritten Signature]

25/3/26

Date: