

Parents' Association Terms of Reference

Mercy Convent Primary School, Naas

The purpose of the Parents' Association ("PA")

The purpose of the PA is to provide a structure through which the parents/guardians of children attending Mercy Convent Naas Primary School can work together for the best possible education of their children. The PA will work with the principal, staff and Board of Management to build an effective partnership between home and school.

The Aims of the PA

The aims of the PA shall be:

1. To act as a channel of communication between the parents and staff on matters of interest to both.
2. To foster greater involvement and awareness by parents in the education of their children
3. To represent the views of parents on matters of local educational significance.
4. To raise funds and organise events for the benefit of pupils.
5. To encourage networking amongst parents through social events.

The PA shall have no power to discuss individual cases. It is not authorised to interfere with the duties or discipline carried out by the principal.

Membership of the PA

All parents / guardians of children attending Mercy Convent Primary School, Naas, the principal and teaching staff will be deemed to be ordinary members of the PA ("ordinary members").

Membership of the PA Committee

While all parents/guardians are ordinary members of the PA, not all can, or need to, be involved in the day-to-day business of the PA. The committee is the team of people who carry out the tasks of the PA on behalf of all parents ("committee

members"). Parents/Guardians wishing to join the PA can do so by emailing the PA email at mercyconventnaaspa@gmail.com

Electing the Officers of PA committee at the AGM

The PA committee shall be led by four (4) elected committee members - a Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary - who will be responsible for the management of the affairs and remit of the committee for the relevant school year ("officers").

All officers will be elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) which is held as close to the beginning of the school year as is practicable.

Each officer will be elected for one year. At the AGM, all officers step down, 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 guardian of a child in the school.

- Officers must be proposed and seconded by any members of the association. The school teaching staff shall nominate one of the teachers to become a member of the committee.
- The chair will be decided at the AGM. The previous secretary will do the minutes for the AGM and step down at the end of the meeting.
- The following officer posts will also be decided at the AGM: Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. Officer posts may be held for no longer than 3 consecutive years.
- At least 1 parent representative on the Board of Management is automatically a committee member(s) of the PA but may not hold an officer post.
- Subcommittees:
 - The PA committee will also be supported by subcommittees as deemed necessary throughout the year. These will be established and tasked with specific projects/purposes which will be agreed by the committee e.g. Table Quiz.
 - Any decisions required, which deviate from the scope of the original subcommittee purpose, must be referred to the officers and committee for approval.
 - Any expenditure arising from a subcommittee's activities must be pre-approved by the PA officers.
 - Any funds raised by the subcommittee's activities will be lodged in the bank account by the treasurer as soon as is practical. Subsequent expenditure of these funds raised will be reviewed at PA committee meeting and agreed in a manner as set out in the "decision making" section below.

- Membership of these subcommittees will be decided at the AGM or subsequent PA meetings, and only committee members can participate.
- A PA committee member will lead the subcommittee and will update the committee at each PA meeting.
- A PA officer may attend a subcommittee meeting & the PA email address will be notified of all subcommittee meetings.
- The PA email address must be copied on any correspondence by a subcommittee member to the school management or external party.
- All communication to the parents of the school via Aladdin or class WhatsApp must be approved with the officers.
- The subcommittee(s) will not be involved in the management of the PA.

EGM

An Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) may be held during the year in the event of any important decisions or other urgent business which need to be brought to the attention of all members of the PA. An EGM may be called either by a majority decision of the Committee or by a written request signed by the majority of committee members. All members may attend an EGM and will be given at least 2 (two) weeks' notice of the date of same.

Work of the Committee

The officers will draw up a plan for the activities of the association, in consultation with the committee members and in accordance with their wishes. The officers will be responsible for ensuring that activities are run in an efficient and effective way. The officers will consult with the school principal and or teacher representative on the PA committee when planning the programme of activities for the year. The officers will arrange a system for ongoing communication. At the AGM the officers will report to the members about its work.

It is a requirement for all members - whether officers or committee members - to be fully Garda vetted if they wish to assist with any school activities where there is direct contact with the school children. Garda vetting, once completed, is valid for 3 years after which time the individual must go through the vetting process again.

The PA officers will provide a list of committee members to the teacher representative of the school, who will arrange Garda vetting. This will be

completed at the start of school year for any participating new members or any vetting renewals.

Meetings

There will be approximately one general committee meeting a month during term time plus the AGM at the start of the school year. All members will be invited to attend the AGM or any EGM as set out above.

A quorum of ten committee members is required for a meeting to go ahead; this includes a school representative.

Two weeks' notice of all meetings will be given to all PA committee members.

Items to be included on the agenda must be given in writing to the PA secretary via the PA email address (mercyconventnaaspa@gmail.com). The agenda for all meetings will be circulated approximately 2 days before the meeting.

The minutes of each meeting will be kept by the Secretary and circulated to all committee members as soon as possible after each meeting.

Committee Members that fail to attend 3 consecutive meetings shall be given written notice of non-attendance. If they fail to attend the next meeting, they will be removed from the distribution list and PA WhatsApp group.

In all meetings, events and correspondence, our PA members are expected to be courteous, respectful, and work together as a team for the greater good of our children in Mercy Convent Primary School.

Decision Making:

A simple majority is needed for PA decisions to be agreed. The voting is limited to one vote per family, and it is necessary to be present at the meeting to vote. If there is a tied vote, the chairperson has the deciding vote.

Communication:

All communication to officers must be via the PA email: mercyconventnaaspa@gmail.com

A WhatsApp Group will be set up each September following the AGM, with all committee members added. This will serve as a notice board for ongoing communication around school events and organising rotas or polls.

Please be mindful all PA committee members are on a voluntary basis so please consider time of day, before reaching out via email or WhatsApp.

During midterms, holidays and summer break, the PA email is not monitored and an out of office message is switched on during these periods.

Finance

The PA committee will finance the activities of the PA through fundraising.

Moneys of the PA will be held in a bank account in the name of the PA, which will be kept in credit at all times. All money shall be used solely to further the objectives of the association.

On appointment from the committee members at the AGM, the Treasurer will be responsible for keeping an account of the income and expenditure of the PA and providing an update at each meeting. The signatories for the bank account are the Treasurer with either the Chairperson or the Secretary. The PA must complete and submit a form to the bank to validate the names of those who are entitled to sign cheques or lodge or withdraw money to/from the PA bank account; this is normally done each year when/if there is a change of officer personnel on the committee.

For sundry items (e.g. Coffee mornings) under 50 Euro no prior approval is required. All expenditure must be approved by the committee in advance and must be receipted. A written statement of the finances will be presented at the AGM and provided to the Board of Management.

Fundraising for the School

Fundraising for the school by the PA will be done with the prior agreement of the school authorities.

For Any funds raised by the PA must be used for the purposes for which the money was collected. In any event, the funds must be used for the benefit of the children of the school.

Membership of National Parents Council Primary

The Parents' Association will affiliate to National Parents Council Primary annually.

Changing the Terms of Reference

Changes to the Terms of Reference can be made at the AGM. Proposals/motions to change the terms of reference must be submitted in writing to the PA officers up to two weeks before the AGM. The PA officers will then circulate these motions to all committee members before the AGM, and a vote will be taken on proposed changes at the AGM in the manner set out in “decision making” above.

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Version Control

Author	Amendments	Date Ratified
Maura Fleming, Michelle Gaffney, Mary Feighan, Jenni Dunne	First Draft	28 th November 2024