CATHOLIC SCHOOL PARENTS AND FRIENDS GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Good Shepherd Catholic School

CATHOLIC EDUCATION
COMMISSION OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

This document was developed in consultation with Catholic School Parents WA (CSPWA) and has been endorsed by CSPWA as the preferred operating framework for all Parents & Friends Groups within WA Catholic Schools.

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The vision for Catholic Education Western Australia Limited (CEWA) is to be a Christ-centred, child-focused community of engaged learning environments, inspiring all to actively live the Gospel. Through Quality Catholic Education, as the elaboration of CEWA's vision, Catholic schools are called to operate in accordance with the four pillars of Catholic Identity, Education, Community and Stewardship.

As part of the Church's mission, Catholic schools contribute to parish life. Therefore, the close and mutually beneficial working relationships between school leaders, parents and the parish are essential.

A Catholic School Parents and Friends Group (P&F) provides the opportunity for parents, caregivers and friends of the school to meet, share and become a community that supports and encourages our students and staff in realising the shared vision. The P&F can add strength to their school through community engagement and fundraising initiatives, in addition to being positive advocates for its school.

The P&F operates in accordance with these Terms of Reference and is accountable to and works in close cooperation with the school Principal.

1. NAME

The name of the P&F is:

Good Shepherd Catholic School Parents and Friends

2. AUTHORITY

2.1 The Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia (CECWA) has established the Catholic School Parents and Friends Group (P&F) to provide local and contextual support for all Principals to build strong, positive Catholic school communities.

2.2 For CECWA to fulfil its governance and strategic functions, the P&F must operate in accordance with Quality Catholic Education (QCE), CECWA's Strategic Directions 2019–2023, CECWA Policies, Executive Directives and the Delegations of Authority, as amended from time to time.

2.3 These Terms of Reference (TOR) are issued by CECWA, in consultation with Catholic School Parents Western Australia (CSPWA) and will be reviewed collaboratively as the need arises.

2.4 The purpose of this TOR document is to establish and provide consistency for the governance and operation of the P&F.

2.5 If the P&F or any member breaches the TOR, CECWA may dismiss the P&F or the member on the recommendation of the Executive Director of CEWA.

2.6 In the event of any uncertainty as to the meaning or intent of any clause in this TOR document, the matter must be referred to the Executive Director for interpretation and decision.

3. FUNCTIONS

3.1 The P&F is established to support the Principal to fulfil their responsibilities in leading the Catholic Identity, Education, Community and Stewardship functions of the Catholic school in pursuit of CEWA's vision to be Christ-centred and child-focused.

3.2 The P&F has an important role to support QCE element *3.2 Parents and Caregivers – Catholic Education partners with and supports parents and caregivers as the first educators of their children.*

3.3 The P&F should carry out the following functions in the context of their school community:

(a) collaborate with the Principal to plan, organise and promote social, sporting, cultural, educational and faith formation activities for the interaction of parents, school staff, parish and students and in doing so provide opportunities for community engagement, where relevant;

(b) support the Principal in the facilitation of fundraising events for the benefit of the students; these funds provide opportunities for students and complement the school budget;

(c) encourage parental participation in school programs, particularly those related to parent engagement in learning;

(d) act as a forum for ideas and discussion on any relevant issue that will benefit the students;

(e) act as a channel to CSPWA to seek advice or express opinion;

(f) liaise with CSPWA and/or parish and other parties to organise guest speakers for the P&F members on current and suggested educational programs, faith development and other matters of interest;

(g) in consultation with the Principal, conduct an annual P&F event planning session to establish focus for the year ahead (support guidelines to be developed);

(h) be positive advocates for the school in the local community;

(i) represent the P&F as an invited member of the Catholic School Advisory Council; and

(j) follow the CEWA Guidelines for P&F Groups in a Catholic School.

3.4 Requests to change the functions of the P&F to suit local context must be submitted through the Principal to the Executive Director of CEWA.

4. INSURANCE

4.1 All Catholic schools must hold an appropriate insurance policy with Catholic Church Insurance to cover the P&F members and CEWA against losses for any unintentional wrongful act committed.

5. MEMBERSHIP

All parents of enrolled students at the school are considered **general members** of the P&F.

Friends are persons affiliated with the school community who do not have children enrolled at the school and who are identified as **associate members.**

The P&F is led by a volunteer group of parents, each of whom are elected to office bearer positions. These people are identified as P&F Committee members.

5.1 The P&F Committee membership conditions are:

(a) a commitment and desire to promote Catholic education;

(b) a commitment and desire to give service to the school;

(c) a commitment to the safety, wellbeing and pastoral care of all students and staff;

(d) an ability to work cooperatively and constructively with the Principal, school leadership team, the School Advisory Council and other members of the P&F; and

(e) a sufficiency of time to devote to P&F duties.

5.2 The P&F Committee should be comprised of four to six persons (relevant to the needs/context of the school community) plus the Principal or their delegate.

5.3 The Principal of the school shall be an ex-officio member of the P&F committee but may not be elected as an office bearer.

5.4 P&F Committee must consist of the following office bearers:

(a) Chair;

(b) Deputy Chair;

(c) Secretary; and

(d) Treasurer.

Note: After approval at the Annual Community Meeting, the positions of Secretary and Treasurer may be held by one person.

5.5 P&F Committee membership is reviewed annually at the Annual Community Meeting (ACM).

5.6 P&F Committee members are appointed to the role for two years. P&F Committee members can serve no more than six consecutive years (three terms) in that role.

5.7 P&F Committee members may resign at any time during their term. This notice should be in writing to the P&F Chair and the Principal.

5.8 Should a position within the P&F Committee become vacant, the P&F Committee can co-opt a replacement until the next election.

5.9 P&F Committee members must advise the Chair of their absence from any meeting.

5.10 Any elected or co-opted P&F Committee member who is absent from two consecutive meetings without an apology, must be contacted by the Chair and advised that if the member is absent from a third consecutive meeting, they will be deemed to have vacated their position.

5.11 P&F Committee members should be independent and avoid conflicts of interest. Therefore, a person, or a spouse of a person, employed by the school is discouraged from being nominated to the P&F Committee. When this is not possible, permission from the Executive Director is required.

5.12 With the agreement of the Principal, the Chair may invite Catholic school staff or others to attend any meeting in an ongoing or ad hoc manner, as appropriate.

5.13 The P&F, through the Principal, may request membership conditions to be varied subject to approval by the Executive Director.

5.14 Friends of the P&F:

(a) must register their membership with the P&F Committee, including name and contact details; this should be reviewed annually;

(b) must identify their connection with the school;

(c) cannot be a P&F Committee member or hold an office bearer position; and

(d) should be invited to the ACM.

5.15 With the approval of the Executive Director, membership conditions can be varied to reflect the school context.

6. CATHOLIC ETHOS AND FAITH FORMATION

6.1 The P&F must support the Catholic ethos of the school and operate within Catholic social teaching principles.

6.2 P&F Committee members should participate in an initial school-based formation, which may include commissioning of P&F Committee members, at the commencement of each year.

6.3 P&F Committee members should undertake appropriate ongoing faith formation, including formation regarding the Catholic social teaching principles.

7. P&F COMMITTEE MEMBER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

7.1 P&F Committee members are identified as regular volunteers, as defined in the *Registrations Standards and Other Requirements for Non-Government Schools in Western Australia (July 2022)*.

7.2 P&F Committee members must provide a current National Police Clearance check upon their appointment to an office bearer position, with the cost to be borne by the school.

7.3 All P&F members – Committee, general and associate members – must comply with the school's Code of Conduct.

7.4 P&F Committee members must participate in learning opportunities, at least annually, regarding the school's Code of Conduct, CEWA's Child Protection Procedures, and any child safe practices within their Catholic school community.

7.5 P&F Committee members should participate in a CEWA approved information session in their initial year of membership (e.g. CSPWA online induction).

8. ANNUAL COMMUNITY MEETING (ACM) AND ELECTION OF P&F COMMITTEE MEMBERS

8.1 The P&F must conduct a meeting to be called "the [School/College] P&F Annual Community Meeting" each year between 1 November in one year and 28 February of the following year inclusive. The P&F and Advisory Council, if local circumstances provide, can hold a joint ACM.

8.2 The P&F Chair must ensure that:

(a) the notification of the ACM and any P&F Committee vacancies arising are provided at least 21 days prior to the meeting;

(b) the preparation of the ACM agenda is undertaken by the Chair and the Principal and shared with the school community;

(c) the determination of P&F Committee membership eligibility and vacancies is undertaken with notification provided to the school community;

(d) at the ACM, nominations will be called for membership for the vacant P&F Committee positions and that if nominations exceed the number of vacant positions, a vote to be a member of the P&F Committee must occur;

(e) the election to the vacant office bearer roles is undertaken in a fair and transparent manner and must occur within two weeks of the ACM nomination; all general and associate members attending this meeting will be eligible to vote.

9. MEETINGS AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE P&F COMMITTEE

9.1 The P&F Committee must determine the meeting schedule, with a minimum requirement of one meeting per school term plus the ACM. Special meetings may be held as often as deemed necessary.

9.2 The P&F meeting must only go ahead if the Principal, or their delegate, and two elected P&F Committee members are in attendance.

9.3 No decision can be made without a quorum (one half plus one of all committee members) and must include the Principal or their delegate.

9.4 Through the request of any P&F Committee member the Chair, in consultation with the Principal, may call a special meeting of the P&F. No less than three days' notice is required.

9.5 In the absence of the Chair, the Deputy Chair must preside over the meeting.

9.6 All P&F Committee members, office bearers, general members and associate members (including the Chair) have equal voting rights. Decisions will be determined by a majority of votes. In the case of a voting deadlock the motion will be considered to have been lost. The Chair does not have a casting vote.

9.7 Minutes of the meetings of the P&F must be taken, with the final minutes signed by the Chair and stored securely. The Executive Director may request a copy of the minutes of any meeting.

10. SUB-COMMITTEES OF THE P&F COMMITTEE

10.1 The P&F Committee is empowered to appoint sub-committees as it deems necessary from time to time.

10.2 The Chair of the sub-committee must report to the P&F Committee.

10.3 The Principal or their delegate must be invited to be a member of the sub-committee.

10.4 Prior to the establishment of a sub-committee, a brief should be established to identify the purpose, membership, meeting structure and a timeline for the sub-committee's work.

11. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

11.1 The collection and distribution of the P&F's finances must be in accordance with CECWA Policies, Executive Directives and CECWA Delegations of Authority.

11.2 The funds collected by the P&F via a parent levy or fundraising are under the stewardship of the P&F. This stewardship requires the use of funds to be for the benefit of the students and school.

11.3 Decisions relating to the use of funds for the benefit of the students and school must be supported at a general meeting, minuted and endorsed by the Principal.

11.4 The P&F should aim to spend funds collected (levies and fundraising) in the same year in which they are received, unless funds have been designated for a future purpose e.g. a nature playground.

11.5 A P&F parent levy is an option for a P&F in lieu of, or in conjunction with, conducting fundraising activities. The value of the levy must reflect the school context and be determined in a consultative process between the P&F and the Principal.

11.6 The introduction of a P&F parent levy must be endorsed by the P&F Committee, Catholic School Advisory Council and the Principal.

11.7 P&F receipt and payment of monies must be transacted through the school operating bank account. The P&F funds will be quarantined for P&F endorsed use only.

11.8 If a P&F/school believes they cannot meet the requirements of clause 11.7 due to school context, permission from CEWA's Director – Finance, Infrastructure and Digital Technology, is required. (Please refer to the Finance Practice Guidelines for further information).

11.9 The P&F Committee must prepare a plan of how fundraising income received and P&F levies (if applicable) will be spent. The plan should be prepared in consultation with the School Leadership Team and the School Advisory Council.

11.10 With assistance from school finance staff (as required), the P&F Treasurer, must present a summary of receipts/income and payments/expenses at each P&F meeting.

11.11 The P&F financial year will be for a period of 12 months commencing 1 January.

11.12 The P&F transactions will form part of the school's annual financial audit process.

12. COMMUNICATIONS

12.1 The Principal will keep the P&F informed of the relevant school activities and events, CEWA system information and changes in CECWA Policies and Executive Directives, as appropriate.

12.2 The P&F, in consultation with the Principal, should be an effective liaison agent between the Catholic school and the community served by the school.

12.3 The P&F Committee, in consultation with the Principal, should disseminate information about P&F meetings and decisions to the wider school community, the Parish Council (where applicable), the School Advisory Council and other groups interested in the Catholic school.

12.4 All communications from the P&F must be made with the knowledge and approval of the Principal and must be actioned through the Principal or their delegate.

13. REVIEW

13.1 Any elected or co-opted P&F Committee member may be removed from their role, for reasons including not adhering to the Terms of Reference.

13.2 In collaboration with the Principal and CSPWA (if a member), the P&F Committee must establish a process for the periodic review of the effectiveness of its operations.

13.3 If for any reason the P&F Committee does not function effectively, advice may be sought from the schools Regional Officer (RO) or School Improvement Advisor (SIA) and/or CSPWA. If this does not provide the desired outcome, the advice and assistance of the Executive Director must be sought.

13.4 If, after receiving assistance from CSPWA and CEWA, the P&F Committee is still unable to operate effectively, it may be dismissed by CECWA on the recommendation of the Executive Director. After consultation with the ex-officio members and CSPWA, new members may then be appointed by the Executive Director.

13.5 If a P&F Committee is dismissed and not reformed:

(a) the action must be endorsed by the Executive Director;

(b) all funds in the P&F bank account (if applicable) must be donated to the school, after payment to creditors;

(c) notification must be made to the school community within 28 days of being dismissed; and

(d) all records of the P&F must be appropriately stored by the school including minutes, correspondence and financial documents.

APPENDIX - DEFINITIONS

Advisory Council means the Catholic School Advisory Council of the school.

Bishop means a Roman Catholic Archbishop or Bishop for a Diocese for the time being or, if there is no Archbishop or Bishop, an Archdiocesan or Diocesan Administrator of a Diocese.

CEWA Ltd means Catholic Education Western Australia Limited. The Bishops of Western Australia have established CEWA Ltd, a company limited by guarantee, which is governed by CECWA.

CECWA means the Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia.

CEOWA or ***CEO*** means the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia.

Catholic School means those Diocesan schools in Western Australia which:

(a) are members of the school system of which the Company is specified as the governing body in an order made in accordance with section 169 of the School Education Act from time to time; and

(b) a competent ecclesiastical authority or a public ecclesiastical juridic person directs or which an ecclesiastical authority recognises as such through a written document.

Complement means a thing that contributes extra features to something else in such a way as to improve or emphasise its quality.

CSPWA means Catholic School Parents Western Australia Incorporated. CSPWA is recognised as the peak body representing and advocating on behalf of Catholic school parents in WA.

Diocesan school means a primary, secondary or composite school as designated by the Executive Director of Catholic Education Western Australia.

Diocese means any Roman Catholic diocese in Western Australia, which as at the date of these Terms of Reference means the Archdiocese of Perth, and the Dioceses of Broome, Bunbury and Geraldton.

Executive Director means the Executive Director of Catholic Education Western Australia Limited appointed by a Special Resolution of the Members to perform certain duties and exercise certain power in accordance with the company constitution.

Ex-officio means a member of the P&F by virtue of one's office or official position (i.e. Principal, Parish Priest).

Friend means a person who is not currently a parent of the school, but who is keen to support the school community in the best interest of the students. Examples of friends would be teachers, grandparents, carers or other community members.

National Police Clearance means a nationally coordinated Criminal History Check Screening Clearance Number (SCN), as processed by the Department of Education (DoE).

Parent means a child/student's primary caregiver.

P&F means the Parents and Friends of the Catholic school community.

P&F Committee means those parents/carers elected by the school community to effectively manage the affairs of the group.

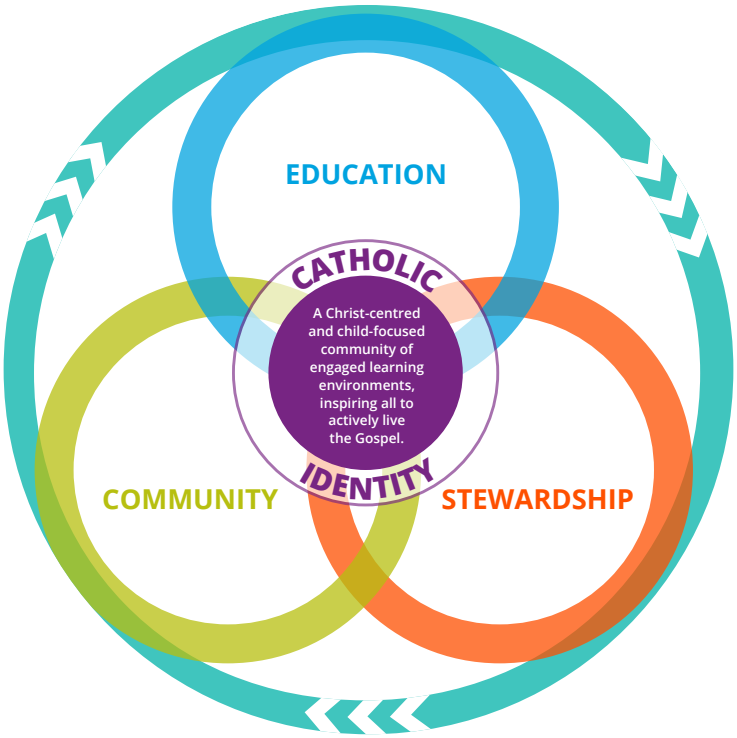
Principal means the Principal of the school or person in charge of the school.

Quorum means one half plus one of all committee members and must include the Principal or their delegate.

School Community means the community of parents served by the school and other persons interested in or sharing responsibility for the welfare of the school.

Terms of Reference means all clauses, terms and conditions as outlined in this document as amended from time to time.

Catholic Education Western Australia is a Christ-centred and child-focused community of engaged learning environments, inspiring all to actively live the Gospel



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COMMISSION OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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