

## **The Marist Catholic College Parents and Friends Group (P&F) Guidelines**

***All parents and carers whose children are enrolled at the College are automatically members of the P&F Group.***

The P&F is an integral part of the College and provides a formal structure and support network for parents to participate in the activities and decision making processes at the College and to work for the benefit of the College and the children.

- The P&F represents the interests of the whole parent body
- It helps parents engage with the College
- It works to support the College and the education of the children.

### **Participating in the decisions and objectives for the school**

The P&F is flexible in its operation, with parents, the Principal and teachers seeking the most appropriate ways of addressing the needs of the College community.

The P&F has an advisory and advocacy role, providing a voice and support for families.

It assists the College in activities which help form and promote the College community and participates in decisions and the development of future goals and aspirations of the College.

It is important to note that our P&F does not conduct fundraising activities of any type, such as trivia nights, BBQ's, chocolate sales etc, and as such does not hold, manage or control any funds whatsoever.

### **Some P&F activities**

- Support and work in partnership with the Principal and staff
- Create a forum for discussion
- Provide parent representatives to the College, when required, to attend Sydney Catholic School events, interview panels, College based committees and various forums
- Welcoming new families
- Promote the College in the wider community.

### **Meetings**

The P&F meets 4 times per year and welcomes suggestions and comments from anyone who is a part of the Marist Catholic College community.

The dates and times of each meeting will be published in the College Newsletter, on the Parents & Friends page of the College website and the P&F Facebook page.

### **How to Contact the P&F**

Email – [mccppandf@gmail.com](mailto:mccppandf@gmail.com)

[MCCP P&F Facebook page](#)

## **The Structure of the P&F**

The P&F consists of an elected committee of 6 people comprising a President, two Vice Presidents, a Secretary (the Executive team) and two Committee Members who work on behalf of the whole P&F (which includes all the parents) acting at all times for the benefit of the College and the College community.

## **Formation of the P&F Committee and the Executive Team**

The election of P&F representative positions will take place at the last meeting of each year. These office bearers must be the parent or carer of a child enrolled at the College. No more than one office bearer position can be held by the same person. Two people from the same family cannot hold office bearer positions at the same time.

A meeting will be called which will include the election of 3 office bearers. Notice of the meeting must be given to the College community in all available mediums at least 30 days prior to the meeting and include the list of representative positions to be elected at the meeting and details of how to nominate.

The role of President, one Vice President and one Committee Member will be elected in alternating years to those of the Secretary, the other Vice President and another Committee Member. The term of each position is 2 years. Positions can be held for multiple terms.

If required, a ballot is conducted by the Returning Officer. This position is determined by the meeting and is someone who plays no part in the election (i.e. does not stand for a position). The Principal or their nominated representative often takes this role.

To be eligible to vote you must be a parent or carer of a child enrolled at the school and be present at the meeting. Absentee votes or proxy votes are not accepted.

At the completion of the election the new office bearers take their positions on the P&F Committee and the meeting continues. The Minutes record the new office bearers.

Should a position become vacant during the term of an office bearer the position is to be advertised in all available mediums and filled at the next available meeting.

## **Roles and Responsibilities of the Parents and Friends Group**

### **President**

#### **Role**

The key task of the President is to ensure that the needs and wishes of the parent body are given a voice and that good relationships are established with the Principal and teachers.

#### **Duties and Responsibilities**

A President leads the P&F by:

- Planning agendas and chairing meetings in consultation with the Principal and the P&F Committee
- Ensuring -
  - meetings are organised and run according to the agenda
  - there is fair discussion - give all an opportunity to speak
  - there is transparency in decision making
  - decisions are carried out – follow up action items from the previous meeting
  - minutes are published
- Obtaining reports from sub-committees
- Encouraging parents to get involved
- Helping parents feel welcomed at the College
- Striving for an effective and inclusive P&F
- Developing a strong collaborative relationship with the College Principal.

### **Vice-Presidents**

#### **Role**

The Vice Presidents will support the President by:

- Chairing meetings in his/her absence
- Sharing duties and responsibilities as agreed e.g. being responsible for coordinating the activities of sub-committees.

#### **Duties and Responsibilities**

- Being supportive and attending meetings
- Monitoring parent feedback received via all mediums
- Providing input into meeting agendas
- Guide and advise the President
- Playing a constructive role – not just an understudy.

### **Secretary**

#### **Role**

The Secretary's main functions are:

- Ensuring meetings are properly minuted
- Maintaining effective records
- Communication and correspondence.

#### **Duties and Responsibilities**

- Provide input into meeting agendas
- Confirm attendance of the Executive and other appropriate people at meetings
- Check the minutes of the previous meeting that items have been actioned
- Write up the meeting minutes and distribute to the P&F Committee and Principal for comment
- Publish the finalised minutes

- Keep good records and be organised
- Guide and advise the President.

### **P&F Committee positions**

#### **Role**

The Committee members main functions are:

- Providing support and assistance to the P&F Executive
- Work towards shared decisions.

#### **Duties and Responsibilities**

- Providing input into meeting agendas
- Attending meetings
- Guide and advise the P&F Executive.

### **The Principal (or their nominated representative)**

The P&F can only work well if it has a positive relationship with the College. The Principal is the manager of the College.

The Principal works in partnership with the parents and the P&F to achieve the best outcome for the children that attend the College. He/she is an ex-officio member of the Parents and Friends Group so the connection with the P&F is strong.

While the Principal has the final decision making role, parents expect that they will be based on good consultation. Decisions made at P&F meetings must have the support of the Principal as he/she has ultimate responsibility for the College.

Key aspects of the Relationship:

- Provides leadership, guidance and support
- Has a collaborative and cooperative approach
- Works with the President and the P&F Committee (as well as all parents)
- Provides information to the College community
- Is accessible to parents
- Develops the College profile - enrolment trends, demographics, priorities, facilities
- Assists in providing resources when necessary.

### **Sub-Committees**

Sub-committees can save time and ease the workload of the regular P&F meetings by dealing with particular projects and reporting back to the P&F meeting. Sub-committees must be set up by the decision of a P&F meeting and their task should be clearly defined and recorded in the minutes of that meeting.

The sub-committee structure is recommended because it:

- Spreads the authority and responsibility
- Enables more people to contribute in areas suited to their interests and skills
- Enables parents and teachers to work together
- Allows for meetings to be arranged at times convenient to the sub-committee group.

### **Duties and Responsibilities**

- Meet with your sub-committee colleagues to obtain an outcome
- Report back to P&F meetings
- Attend meetings regularly and send apologies if unable to attend
- Be cooperative at all times
- Responsibility for what has been agreed should be shared by all group members.

### **P&F Meetings**

Meetings will be held four times per year with the meeting dates and times to be established between the Principal and President at the beginning of the first College term. The dates and times are to be regularly published in all available mediums.

An agenda must be prepared and published for the College community one week prior to each meeting. It is important that all of the College community members know what is going to be discussed and decided at P&F meetings.

Meetings provide a:

- Means for collaboration and partnership between parents, the Principal and staff
- Democratic way of sharing ideas and discussing issues
- Medium to build support, group unity and commitment
- An avenue for P&F planning and decision making.

### **Duties and Responsibilities**

- Join in, be positive and take an active part in your College community
- Support and respect P&F and College decisions and protocols
- Be tactful, diplomatic and listen to the views of others
- Discuss
  - items listed on the agenda
  - general issues of concern
  - general questions of the Principal
- Avoid discussing
  - Specific issues relating to particular staff or a particular student
  - Personal grievances.