



Bord Oideachais & Oiliúna
LUIMNIGH & AN CHLÁIR
LIMERICK & CLARE
Education & Training Board

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE PARENTS ASSOCIATION OF COLÁISTE IÓSAEF COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The Purpose of the Parent Association

The purpose of the Parents Association is to provide a structure through which the Parent(s)/guardian(s) of children attending Coláiste Iósaef can work together for the best possible education for their children. The Parents Association will work with the Principal, staff, Board of Management and Limerick and Clare Education and Training Body (LCETB) to build effective partnership between home and school.

Under the Education Act, 1998 Section 26. –

(1) The parents of students of a recognised school may establish, and maintain from among their number, a parents association for that school and membership of that association shall be open to all parents of students of that school.

(2) A parents association shall promote the interests of the students in a school in co-operation with the board, Principal, teachers and students of the school and for that purpose may

- (a) advise the Principal or the board on any matter relating to the school and the Principal or board, as the case may be, who shall have regard to any such advice, and
- (b) adopt a programme of activities which will promote the involvement of parents, in consultation with the Principal, in the operation of the school.

(4)

(a) A parents association shall, following consultation with its members, make rules governing its meetings and the business and conduct of its affairs.

(b) Where a parents association is affiliated to a national association of parents, the rules referred to in paragraph (a) shall be in accordance with guidelines issued by that national association of parents with the concurrence of the Minister.

The Aim of the Parents Association

The aim of the Parents Association is to enable parents to play their part in ensuring provision of the best possible education for their children and that this is achieved through the Association's programme of activities. The Parents Association will promote the interests of the students in co-operation with the LCETB, Board of Management, Principal, teachers and students, in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act, 1998.

Rules of the Parents Association

This body shall be known as the Coláiste Iósaef Parents Association. The affairs of the Association shall be conducted by the Parents Council.

Membership of the Parents Association

All parents or legal guardians of students enrolled in the school shall automatically be members of the Association, unless they notify the secretary of the Association in writing that they do not wish to be members. In the constitution, parents refer to both parents and guardians.

The association shall be autonomous, non-party political and non-denominational.

Parents interested in being involved in any/all of the activities of the PA are welcome to attend any meeting during the school year. A schedule of meeting dates will be published at the beginning of each new school year. Ideally each year group should be represented. The principal or his/her designated representative will be invited to every meeting by the PA. The PA shall have two parent representatives on the Board of Management. Their brief is to reflect the opinions of all parents at board meetings and to report the views of the Board, as appropriate, at PA meetings.

Objectives of the Parents Association

The objectives of the Association shall be:

1. to promote the educational and general welfare and social interests of the students of the school
2. to promote good relations, communication, understanding and co-operation between parents, teachers, students and the school authorities
3. to encourage parents to take an active interest in the school
4. to support and promote the ethos of the school
5. to promote and support the role of parents and guardians as the prime carers and educators of their children
6. to provide opportunities for discussion, information and consultation about matters of common or topical interest to parents, teachers and students of the school
7. to inform and consult parents about the Association's plans and activities
8. to inform, consult and promote debate amongst parents on education issues
9. to represent the views of parents on school policies and activities
10. to elect Parent Nominees to the school Board of Management

11. to fundraise when necessary to provide teaching aids, resources, equipment, etc. for the benefit of teaching and learning in the school.
12. to support and administer the school book rental scheme in cooperation with school management.

The PA recognises that the examination and resolution of problems in relation to individual students and/or parent(s)/guardian(s) will be for determination between the individual student and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s), the school authorities and the Board of Management.

In furtherance of the objectives, the committee may affiliate the Association to appropriate national and regional parents' bodies. Therefore the PA will be associated with the National Parents Council for Post Primary Schools.

Officers of the Parents' Association

While all parents are part of the PA, not all can, or wish to be involved in the day-to-day business of organising work. It is for this reason that an officer committee (executive) is delegated with responsibility for co-ordinating the programme of work on behalf of the parent body. The officers work as a team in order to be effective and communicate with, consult and involve as many parents as possible in the activities of the Association. A major focus of this committee should be to involve parents who do not wish to/are unable to attend meetings.

Nominations for the officer positions should be sought from the parent body prior to the first meeting of the year. Sufficient notice should be given to allow for all interested parents/guardians to express an interest. In the event of more than one nomination being received of any/all roles, an election will take place at the AGM of the PA each year. Voting will be by secret ballot and those wishing to vote must attend this meeting.

The officer positions are Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Sub Committee Co-ordinator (when required) and PRO. Officer positions may be held for a one year term. Individual representatives may not hold different positions for more than three consecutive terms.

In the event that it is not possible to fill a vacancy, the Board of Management may sanction an individual officer holding a position for two consecutive terms in the interest of continuity.

Definition of Roles:

Chairperson:

- Chairs meetings and liaises with the principal
- Represents the PA in meetings with new parents
- Co-ordinates the AGM
- Sets the agenda after consultation with the principal and the Chairperson of the Board of Management
- Liaises with the Secretary to ensure that all PA members are aware of the contents of the agenda prior to the meeting
- Ensures that the minutes are agreed and circulated to the PA by the Secretary
- Ensures that items outside the remit of the PA are not discussed at PA meetings and are forwarded to the relevant person or group
- Can convene special PA meetings if necessary to discuss issues of serious significance

Secretary:

- Minutes the proceedings of each meeting and that of the AGM
- Ensures that the agenda for each meeting is circulated to members at least one week before each committee meeting via the parents' page on the school website
- Forwards the minutes to the PA within one week of the meeting
- Deputises for the Chairperson when the Chairperson is unable to attend a meeting

Treasurer:

- Keeps the accounts of the PA
- Provides each PA meeting with a statement of account
- Details fundraising proceeds and the disbursement of funds at each PA meeting
- Provides a copy of accounts to the first meeting in September, outlining expenses incurred and not yet paid, and income received from the previous school year.

Sub-Committee Co-ordinator

- Acts as a link between the PA and any sub-committees and groups working in the school.
- Submits a written report on the activities of the sub-committees as often as deemed appropriate by the PA executive.

PRO

- Highlights the activities of the PA and the school in the media

The Work of the Parents' Association:

(a) The PA will hold a minimum of four meetings in the academic year where activities will be discussed and planned in consultation with the wider parent body.

(b) A schedule of meetings will be published on the school website at the beginning of the school year.

(c) The PA is responsible for seeing that activities are run efficiently and effectively.

(d) The PA maintains effective communication with the school principal and Board of Management.

(e) The PA reports on its work at the Annual General Meeting and by publishing meeting agendas and minutes to all parents.

(f) The PA manages and accounts for any funds collected by its fundraising activities. This will be in line and accordance to the LCETB financial guidelines.

(g) The PA may, at its discretion, establish sub committees for whatever specific purpose it deems necessary. Each sub-committee should provide an update to the PA. It is not the role of the PA or its officers to pursue a complaint on behalf of an individual or a group of parents. However, in the case of a parent approaching the PA with a concern, they may refer the parent to the school's complaints procedure.

5. General Meetings

The annual general meeting (AGM) shall be held during the first two months of the academic year.

The PA committee shall call an extraordinary general meeting (EGM) when it deems it desirable, on a majority decision, or when a written request to call an EGM is received by an officer of the committee, signed by at least 50 parents and stating the purpose of the proposed meeting. The secretary shall, within one month of receiving such a request, summon the meeting, stating its purpose.

School Management if required, can propose a meeting to discuss matters which they believe are pertinent to sharing with the parent body.

EGMs, as for AGMs, shall be held during term time, to allow as many members as possible to attend.

Notice to parents shall be given fourteen days in advance of all general meetings.

General meetings shall be chaired by the chairperson or, in the chairperson's absence, by the secretary. In the absence of both, the committee shall elect one of its members to chair the meeting.

The quorum for general meetings shall be at least twelve members, including at least one officer (from chairperson, secretary, treasurer, Sub-Committee Co-ordinator, PRO and any other named officer). At least one officer shall be required to attend a properly convened general meeting. Matters arising at general meetings will be decided by majority vote, unless otherwise stated in this constitution.

Amendments to the constitution may be made at a general meeting, provided the amendments are notified to parents at least 14 days before the meeting and are passed by a two-thirds majority at that meeting.

The business of the AGM shall include:

1. Noting attendance and apologies
2. Agree minutes of previous AGM
3. Chairperson's report
4. Secretary's report
5. Treasurer's report
6. Election of committee members
7. Principal's report
8. Other matters notified to the secretary prior to the AGM

Notices

All notices and communications from the Association may be posted, hand-delivered, transmitted electronically or given to a member's child. Any such notice shall be deemed to be duly delivered.

Finances

The treasurer shall keep correct accounts and books showing the financial affairs, receipts and disbursements of the Parents Association.

Parents' Nominees to the Board of Management

The Association shall, at the request of the Board of Management (the Board), nominate two representatives, one female and one male, to the Board of Management. All Parents of children enrolled in the school at the time are eligible for nomination and are entitled to vote should an election be required whether they are members of the Parents Association or not.

Parent representatives on the school Board of Management must be elected through a ballot. This must be carried out separately to the Parents Association AGM. Any parent interested may put their name forward. All parents can fill a nomination paper to elect their parent of choice.

Parents' nominees shall serve for the term of the board to which they are appointed. Vacancies for parent Nominees during the term of the Board shall be filled in accordance with the procedures detailed above.

Official Statements, Representations and Functions

No member of the Association, other than the chair, PRO or a member nominated by either the chair, PRO or the committee, shall make any official or public statement or representation on behalf of the Association.

The Association shall not involve itself in the day-to-day running of the school or any contractual arrangements between the school authorities and the staff.

The Association recognises that matters concerning the school curriculum and its implementation are the function of the school authorities.

The Association shall not deal with complaints against members of the school staff or the Principal.

Winding Up of the Association

Winding up of the Association shall only be valid if accepted at a general meeting convened for this purpose.

In the event of the winding up of the Association, any assets on hand shall be presented to the LCETB for school purposes.