

DIOCESE OF ARMIDALE CATHOLIC SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL CONSTITUTION

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6. Appendices	Page 12
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Bishops Commission Policy



Catholic Schools Office
Diocese of Armidale

St Paul St Paul (1 Cor 12) exhorts the early Christian communities to recognise their own gifts, to utilise them for the good of the community, for the spreading of the Gospel message and for the affirmation of these gifts in one another.

All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and He distributes them to each one, just as He determines.

This exhortation can be expressed in the life of the Catholic school community and the parish.

Catholic School Advisory Councils advise Parish Priests and Principals with pastoral leadership, and leadership responsibility in Catholic schools, in ways that are described in this constitution. School Advisory Council members are called to a particular service in Catholic education which is both a privilege and an opportunity to serve the children, the young people and their families who seek a Catholic education.

This document is designed to be viewed as a framework within which a School Advisory Council is able to function authentically and effectively. It is a resource which transmits a vision for school community members to be empowered and to participate in a collaborative service through the sharing of wisdom.

The philosophy and practice of sharing wisdom can be summarised as follows:

*“To each the Lord gives a piece of the wisdom.
To no one does He give all of the wisdom of God.
We all get different pieces and, as a consequence,
we must share our wisdom.
We must hear, respect, and treasure one another’s wisdom.
We must work for a climate that is open and respectful.”*

Sister Mary Benet McKinney osb Sharing Wisdom 1986.

The Catholic principles of the Primacy of God, the Sanctity of Life, Fidelity in Relationships, and the Common Good support the mission statement of the Diocese of Armidale Catholic Schools Office “To Proclaim Witness and Serve”. These principles provide the basis for articulating how Catholic schools are different, provide an understanding of what it is to be Catholic, what principles we live by and the contributions we can make as Catholics to the world. An understanding of these Catholic principles will enable School Advisory Councils to develop a meaningful framework to guide their work.

In holding positions of leadership within Catholic school communities, School Advisory Council members:

- Are faithful to the Mission of Catholic education and the Church
- Value and respect the Catholic identity of the school, its relationship to the parish community and the expression of its ethos through Word and Sacrament, traditions, symbols and the teaching of Catholic beliefs
- Work constructively with the Parish Priest, the Principal and the wider school community • Act as role models within their school communities by reflecting the values and ethos of the school
- Focus on building a learning community
- Value and respect the diversity of faiths and cultures within the school community • Build and nurture a sense of community.

TERMS OF THE CONSTITUTION

1.0 Name

- 1.1 The name of this Council is the Catholic School Advisory Council of (insert full name and address of school).

2.0 Definitions

- 2.1 The following definitions will apply in this constitution

ACNC Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission

Advisory Giving advice, information or opinion regarding action to be taken and is not managerial in nature

Advisory Council Catholic School Advisory Council

AGM Annual General Meeting

Bishop The Bishop of the Diocese of Armidale

BCCS The Bishop's Commission for Catholic Schools

BOSTES Board of Studies Teaching and Education Standards NSW (now known as NESA – NSW Education Standards Authority)

CSNSW Catholic Schools New South Wales

Church The Catholic Church

CSO The Catholic Schools Office of the Diocese of Armidale

Committee School Advisory Council committee or working party or task force established for a specific purpose

Diocese The Diocese of Armidale

NCEC The National Catholic Education Commission

NESA New South Wales Educational Standards Authority

Parent The parent or guardian of a child enrolled at the school

Parish The Parish of (insert name)

Parish Priest The Parish Priest/Administrator of (name of parish)

Principal The Principal of (insert name of school)

School (insert name of school)

School Community All members of the school community.

WWCC Working With Children Check

3.0 Authority

- 3.1 Catholic School Advisory Councils have been approved by the Bishop for the service of the Church and the Catholic school communities in the Diocese of Armidale.
- 3.2 The Constitution is issued by the Bishop's Commission for Catholic Schools, Diocese of Armidale, with the authority of the Bishop.

4.0 Purpose

- 4.1 The purpose of the Constitution is to establish and provide regulations for the operation of The Catholic Schools Advisory Council as specified below.

5.0 Mission and Objective

- 5.1 The Catholic School Advisory Council, in accordance with the delegation entrusted to it by the Bishop, is to assist the school to fulfil its mission in accordance with the Code of Canon Law, Diocesan directives, guidelines and policies of the Bishop's Commission for Catholic Schools and the Catholic Schools Office.

6.0 Role

- 6.1 The Catholic School Advisory Council provides the opportunity for members of the school and parish community to support the mission of Catholic education in the school. Working with the Principal and the Parish Priest, the members of the Council and its committees provide guidance and support to the wider school community.
- 6.2 The Catholic School Advisory Council has an advisory role; it has no mirror in secular society. The policies of the school are always set within the mission of Catholic education. In areas where it has an advisory role in the development and monitoring of school policy, the Council operates within the policies and procedures determined by the CSO.
- 6.3 The Principal has responsibility for the day to day leadership and management of the school.

7.0 Functions

- 7.1 The School Advisory Council has responsibility to advise in the following areas:
 - 7.1.1 The development of the Catholic identity, ethos and mission of the school.
 - 7.1.2 The pastoral care strategies in the school community.
 - 7.1.3 Promotion of the school in the local community.
 - 7.1.4 Preparation and monitoring of the annual budget.
 - 7.1.5 Ensuring compliance with the ACNC Regulations by school associations and committees such as the P&F.
 - 7.1.6 Development of local strategic plans (finance, buildings, resources) and contributing to diocesan educational strategic planning.
 - 7.1.7 Facilitation of school community responses in conjunction with Catholic system leadership

by the NCEC, CSNSW, BCCS and CSO in engaging with governments on school funding and other relevant issues.

- 7.1.8 The preparation and publication to the parish and school community of an Annual School Advisory Council Report.
- 7.1.9 Supporting opportunities for parent engagement in student learning.
- 7.1.10 The provision of opportunities for parents for social, community and parish interaction and for parents to form supportive networks.
- 7.1.11 Other matters as requested by the Principal or Parish Priest.

8.0 Membership

- 8.1 Parish Primary, K - 10, Secondary College School Advisory Councils shall be comprised of the following:
 - 8.1.1 The Parish Priest is an ex-officio member.
 - 8.1.2 The Principal is an ex-officio member.
 - 8.1.3 Up to two members drawn from the staff.
 - 8.1.4 Community members.
 - 8.1.4.1 The numbers of members from the parents and community shall be at least equal to the number of staff and ex-officio members.
 - 8.1.5 Co-opted members
 - 8.1.5.1 With the approval of the Parish Priest and the Principal, up to two members may be co-opted to the Advisory Council. These will be chosen by ex-officio, staff and community members and invited to take an equal place on the Advisory Council.
 - 8.1.5.2 Co-opted members will be chosen to bring to the Advisory Council a special skill, service or experience.
- 8.2 Size of the School Advisory Council
 - 8.2.1 The pattern of membership will reflect the school size and local needs and generally will have membership of not less than six and not more than ten members.
- 8.3 Criteria for membership
 - 8.3.1 In Collaboration with the Parish Priest the local school communities will ensure that members of the School Advisory Council maintain a critical mass of practising Catholics.
 - 8.3.2 The Chairperson of the Advisory Council will be a Catholic and a member of the Catholic parish.
 - 8.3.3 All Advisory Council members should maintain themselves in spiritual motivation,

commitment and competence according to the values and traditions of the Catholic Church.

- 8.3.4 An understanding of local Church policies relevant to Catholic schools.
- 8.3.5 A genuine desire to be of service to the school community.
- 8.3.6 Have the necessary skills to contribute to the work of the School Advisory Council.
- 8.3.7 The ability to work collaboratively and constructively with other members of the School Advisory Council.
- 8.3.8 Adequate time to give to School Advisory Council duties.
- 8.3.9 Willingness to act within the code of ethics for School Council members.
- 8.3.10 Hold a Volunteer Working With Children Clearance (WWCC) as a condition of membership of the School Advisory Council.
- 8.4 Term of Office
 - 8.4.1 Only ex-officio members may remain as members of the School Advisory Council for more than six consecutive years.
 - 8.4.2 A term of membership of the Advisory Council shall be for a period of two years for all other members.
 - 8.4.3 Members of the Advisory Council may be appointed for a maximum of three consecutive terms.
 - 8.4.4 Members may not hold the same position of Chair or Secretary beyond two consecutive terms.
 - 8.4.5 School Advisory Councils will be mindful of the need for renewal of membership. Retiring members shall be eligible for re-election up to a maximum of three consecutive terms.
- 8.5 Vacancies
 - 8.5.1 Should a position of a member of the School Advisory Council become vacant, the Parish Priest and Principal shall appoint a replacement from the same category of membership for the unexpired term of the retired member.
- 8.6 Removal from Office
 - 8.6.1 Any staff, community or co-opted member of the Advisory Council may be removed from membership by formal resolution passed at a properly convened meeting of the Advisory Council at which at least three quarters (75%) of School Advisory Council members present vote in favour of the removal. Such a person shall be ineligible for reappointment to the School Advisory Council until authorised by an Ordinary Resolution of the Advisory Council, following representation to the Catholic Schools Office.

- 8.6.2 Any School Advisory Council member can be removed by the Bishop on the advice of the Parish Priest, school Principal and Director of Schools.
- 8.7 Absenteeism
 - 8.7.1 Any appointed member of the School Advisory Council who is absent from three consecutive meetings without sufficient reason will be deemed to have resigned from the School Advisory Council. In such instance, the School Advisory Council will notify the member of loss of membership of the School Advisory Council and will arrange for a replacement from the same category of membership until the next election for membership of the Advisory Council.

9.0 Appointment to the School Advisory Council

- 9.1 Appointment protocols
 - 9.1.1 The protocols for appointing members to the School Advisory Council are as determined by the BCCS and publicised to the school community during Term 3 with final nominations called two (2) weeks prior to the Annual General meeting.
 - 9.1.2 These protocols are included as Appendix 2 to this constitution.
- 9.2 A staff member who is also a parent of a student at the school is only eligible for appointment to the School Advisory Council as a staff member because of the potential for conflict between the staff member's parental and staff role.
- 9.3 Time of Annual General Meeting
 - 9.3.1 The procedure for appointing members to replace retiring members shall be held at the Annual General Meeting.
 - 9.3.2 The Annual General Meeting shall be held in the month of November.
 - 9.3.3 In the event of a vacancy or resignation occurring between Annual General Meetings, the Parish Priest and Principal will appoint a replacement from the same category of membership until the next AGM.
- 9.4 Office Bearers
 - 9.4.1 Parish Priest

The Duly Appointed Parish Priest is the leader of the parish community of which the school is an integral part and has a vital role in the education of all parishioners. He has the responsibility for promoting the spiritual and moral development of all Catholic adults and children entrusted to his care.

- 9.4.2 Chairperson

The Chairperson of the School Advisory Council shall be elected every year by the Council members. A retiring Chairperson may offer for re-appointment but a continuous term of office shall not exceed four years. An ex-officio or staff member shall not be the Chairperson.

9.4.3 Secretary

The Secretary shall be elected annually by the School Advisory Council. A retiring Secretary may offer for re-appointment but a continuous term of office shall not exceed four years. An ex-officio or staff member shall not be the Secretary.

10.0 Responsibilities of Office Bearers

10.1 The Chairperson

10.1.1 The Chairperson is responsible for the leadership of the School Advisory Council and will preside at all regular and special meetings of the Advisory Council.

10.1.2 The agenda for the meeting shall be prepared by the Chairperson in consultation with the Principal and Parish Priest at least eight days prior to the meeting.

10.1.3 The Chairperson will ensure all members of the School Advisory Council complete and sign the Disclosure of Conflict of Interest Statement (attached in Appendix 1).

10.1.4 The Chairperson will ensure the Register of Interests (attached in Appendix 1) is updated annually and will be formally tabled at the first School Advisory Council meeting of the year.

10.2 The Secretary

10.2.1 The Secretary will record accurately the minutes of the meeting, filing one copy with the school, one copy with the Advisory Council records, and one copy to be forwarded to the Deputy Director CSO.

10.2.2 The Secretary will ensure that agenda items are forwarded to the Advisory Council members at least seven days prior to the meeting, together with any other preparatory material.

10.2.3 The Secretary will handle all correspondence as directed by the meeting.

10.2.4 The Secretary will use the Conflicts of Interest Disclosure statements to maintain the Register of Interests.

11.0 Meetings and Procedures

11.1 The School Advisory Council will meet at a minimum of once a term during the school year.

11.2 A simple majority of the members will constitute a quorum.

- 11.3 No meeting of the School Advisory Council will be held without a quorum.
- 11.4 All meetings will begin and end with prayer led by a member of the Council.
- 11.5 Ordinary meetings of the School Advisory Council will be convened by giving not less than seven days' notice to each member stating the date, time and place of each meeting and any special business to be considered at that meeting.
- 11.6 Special meetings may be held when deemed necessary. Special meetings of the Advisory Council may be called
 - 11.6.1 When agreed to by a quorum including ex-officio members.
 - 11.6.2 When requested by an ex-officio member.
 - 11.6.3 When requested by the BCCS or the CSO.
- 11.7 Whenever possible recommendations of the School Advisory Council should be reached by Consensus.
- 11.8 The Secretary will take minutes of all School Advisory Council meetings. A copy of the minutes will be maintained by the Secretary in the Council records and passed to the next elected Secretary. A second copy will be kept by the Principal for inclusion in the school file. A third copy will be forwarded to the Deputy Director CSO.
- 11.9 All correspondence to the School Advisory Council will be tabled for perusal by all Council members.
- 11.10 In the absence of the Chairperson, the School Advisory Council will elect an acting Chairperson to carry out the duties of the Chairperson.

12.0 Committees

- 12.1. The School Advisory Council may appoint committees as it deems necessary and appropriate depending on local school circumstances and in accordance with local need. These committees may be for special projects and/or ongoing activities.
 - 12.1.1 These committees are not separately constituted bodies.
- 12.2 Committees will be represented at Advisory Council meetings at the request of the Council.
- 12.3 All committees function under the direction and policy of the School Advisory Council.
- 12.4 The School Advisory Council, in consultation with the school P&F Association, will determine the responsibilities of these committees and the duration of the operation of each committee.
- 12.5 These committees will include at least one Advisory Council member. Other committee members will be invited to attend Council meetings as required.
- 12.6 The committee contact person does not have decision making responsibilities on the Advisory Council.
- 12.7 When attending School Advisory Council meetings, the committee contact person must

abide by the Code of Ethics for School Advisory Councils.

13.0 Compliance with Diocesan System Policy

- 13.1 The School Advisory Council shall not endorse any activity that conflicts with the policies of the BCCS or the CSO.
- 13.2 The School Advisory Council has no authority over school staff and all communication should be through the Principal.
- 13.3 A person shall not receive any remuneration for serving as a member of the School Advisory Council or any committees.

14.0 Amendment

- 14.1 The Bishop through the BCCS retains the right to amend this Constitution as the need arises and after consultation with the School Advisory Council and the Director CSO.

15.0 Dispute

- 15.1 Any dispute or uncertainty concerning the meaning or intention of this Constitution will be referred to the CSO for interpretation and decision.
- 15.2 If for any reason the School Advisory Council does not function effectively, the assistance of the Deputy Director CSO will be enlisted promptly.

16.0 Dissolution

- 16.1 The School Advisory Council, on the advice of the Parish Priest, Principal and the Director CSO, may be dissolved at the direction of the Bishop at any time.

17.0 Ethical Standards for Catholic School Advisory Council Members

- 17.1 A School Advisory Council member will acknowledge that the school is a significant expression of the teaching mission of the Catholic Church and function within its structures.
- 17.2 A School Advisory Council member will give the necessary time, thought and study to the work of the School Advisory Council, so that he/she may render effective service.
- 17.3 A School Advisory Council member will base his/her personal recommendation upon

all available facts in each situation, unswayed by partisan bias.

- 17.4 A School Advisory Council member will abide by and uphold the advice of the School Advisory Council regardless of the position he/she took on any issue
- 17.5 A School Advisory Council member will work with other Council members in a spirit of harmony and cooperation in spite of differences of opinion that may arise during discussions.
- 17.6 A School Advisory Council member will keep in mind that while the primary function of the School Advisory Council is to advise the Parish Priest and the Principal on policies that give direction to the school, the implementation of these policies is a function of the Principal and staff.
- 17.7 A School Advisory Council member who may be approached with a problem that is of an internal school administrative nature, will refer the person to the Principal and must not attempt to perform functions that are out of his/her field.
- 17.8 An appointed member of the School Advisory Council will realise that as an individual he/she has no status outside the meetings of the School Advisory Council and must, therefore, conduct his/her relationships with all members of the local community on the basis of this.
- 17.9 A School Advisory Council member will never use his/her position on the Council to benefit either him/herself or any other member or agency apart from the total interest of the school.
- 17.10 A School Advisory Council member will keep all confidences shared with him/her during meetings of the Council.
- 17.11 As a School Advisory Council member provides advice and makes recommendations to the Parish Priest and Principal in relation to a variety of matters, the situation may arise where a member has a conflict of interest in relation to such matters.
 - 17.11.1 The conflict of interest could be potential, reasonably perceived or real. School Advisory Council members must give notice as soon as practicable of conflict of interest in relation to matters about which the Advisory Council is or will provide advice or recommendations.
 - 17.11.2 Upon appointment School Advisory Council members will be given a copy of the Conflict of Interest Policy and Disclosure Statement and the completed and signed forms will be retained by the school.
 - 17.11.3 The Conflict of Interest Policy, Statement of Disclosure and Supporting Checklist is included in Appendix 1 to this Constitution.
- 17.12 At meetings a School Advisory Council members will pray with and for other members of the School Advisory Council, the school executive and staff, and the Catholic school community.

We acknowledge the traditional carers and Elders, past and present, from across our Diocese with particular acknowledgement of the traditional custodians of lands where Catholic schools are located. As we journey together

we pay respect to the spirituality, knowledge and traditions embedded forever within the Aboriginal Custodianship of Country.

The overall education of children is a most serious duty and at the same time a primary right of parents. This is not just a task or burden, but an inalienable right that parents are called to defend and of which no one may claim to deprive them. Schools do not replace parents, but complement them.

Amoris Laetitia, Apostolic Exhortation on Love in the Family. March 2016.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- Armidale Diocesan Schools Commission Policy Statement: Schools Boards, the Roles and Functions of, in the Diocese of Armidale.
- The Management Role of the Parish Priest in a Catholic Systemic School in the Diocese of Armidale.
- The Role of the Principal in a Catholic Systemic School in the Diocese of Armidale.

APPENDIX 1

- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement
- Review of Conflict of Interest Disclosure of Statement by Chairperson School Advisory Council
- Checklist to help identify conflicts of interest.

APPENDIX 2

- Process of Discernment, Nomination and Election Appointment process.

APPENDIX 3

- Induction process for new members