

Naas Community National School (CNS) Parent Association

CONSTITUTION

The Purpose of the Parent Association (PA)

The purpose of the PA is to provide a structure through which the parents/guardians of children attending Naas CNS can work together for the best possible education & educational experience for their children. The PA will work with the principal, staff and board of management (BoM) to build effective partnership between home and school.

The Aim of the Parent Association

The aim of the PA 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 PA will endeavour to emulate the core values of the CNS ethos; excellence in education, being multid denominational, upholding equality & embracing community focus. The PA will promote the interests of the students in co-operation with the BoM, principal, teachers and students, in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act, 1998. (Ref 1).

The Work of the Parent Association

The PA will undertake a programme of activities which will promote the involvement of parents and which will support pupils, parents and school staff. In planning its activities, the PA will consult with the school principal.

The Membership of the Parent Association

All parents/guardians of children attending Naas CNS will be deemed to be members of the PA.

The Committee of the Parent Association

The members of the PA will elect a committee with a maximum of 16 and a minimum of 8. Additional committee members can be co-opted to the committee if necessary & will have the same rights as elected members. This committee will have responsibility for representing the parents of Naas CNS and managing the activities of the PA.

Subcommittees

Subcommittees can be set up for specific tasks. The subcommittees may also co-opt people to assist in their work. The subcommittees may not make decisions beyond their specific purpose; they remain, at all times, accountable to the main committee.

The Election of the Parent Association Committee

The members of the committee will be elected each year at the AGM of the PA to stand for 1 year. At the AGM all committee members step down, but they can be re-elected as long as they continue to be a parent or guardian of a child in the school. Priority will be given to ensure 2 parents from each class can hold committee places. In the event a particular class is not represented those positions on the committee can be filled by parents from other classes. The committee will ensure 2 places are available for new members each year. Parents' nominees elected to the BoM are automatically members of the committee as long as they are on the BoM but will not hold an officer position on the PA committee. No member of the committee will hold the same officer position for more than three consecutive years. At the first meeting of a newly elected committee the following Officer roles will be appointed:

* Chairperson * Vice-Chairperson * Secretary * Assistant Secretary * Treasurer *
* Assistant Treasurer * Communications Officer * National Parents Council Representative *

Committee Meetings

The quorum for any meeting is 50% of the elected committee to include at least 1 officer.

The Work of the Committee of the Parent Association

The PA committee will be responsible for ensuring that all parents are consulted on issues which are pertinent to the entire parent body. The PA committee may advise the principal and BoM on any matters relating to the school in accordance with the Education Act, 1998, 26 (2)(a) (Ref 1). The committee is the team that will manage the tasks of the PA on behalf of the parent body (the members). The committee will draw up a plan for the activities of the PA, in consultation with parents and in accordance with their wishes. The committee will be responsible for seeing that activities are run in an efficient and effective way. The committee will consult with the school principal and BoM when planning the programme of activities for any particular year. The committee will arrange with the principal and BoM a system for ongoing communication. At the AGM the committee will report to the parent body (the members) about its work. The committee will manage and account for any funds collected or expended by the PA.

Finance/Fundraising for the School

The PA committee will finance the activities of the PA through fundraising. A treasurer will be appointed from among the committee members and will be responsible for keeping account of the income and expenditure of the PA finances. The treasurer will give a statement of income and expenditure at each committee meeting. A written statement of income and expenditure will be given at the AGM and a copy will be forwarded to the BoM for their information. Any funds raised by the PA will be lodge to the school account & ring-fenced for the specific purposes for which those monies were raised. Fundraising for the school by the PA will be done with the prior agreement of the BoM. The PA committee will agree with the BoM as to the specific purposes for which funds are to be raised by the PA.

Membership of National Parents Council Primary

The PA will maintain membership of National Parents Council Primary by annual subscription.

Changing the Constitution

Changes to the constitution can be made at the AGM or, if for an urgent reason, an EGM can be called for that specific purpose. Proposals to change the constitution must be submitted in writing to the PA committee. The PA committee will then circulate these proposals to all parents before the AGM/EGM. All parents of children in the school at the meeting are eligible to vote on the proposals.

Ref 1

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.

Naas Community National School (CNS) Parent Association OPERATING GUIDELINES

Committee Roles

A comprehensive description of the roles of Chairperson, Secretary & Treasurer are set out in the NPC document "Working Effectively as a Parent Association". The PA will adhere to these & in addition the following:

- Chairperson: will ensure meetings are scheduled to suit the majority & to maximise attendance & participation of all committee members.
- Vice-Chairperson: will assume the role of Chairperson in the event of absence.
- Secretary: as per the above referenced document.
- Assistant Secretary: will assume the role of Secretary in the event of absence.
- Treasurer: as per the above referenced document, with the exception of any activity which relates to a bank account. See special notes on finance below.
- Assistant Treasurer: will assume the role of Treasurer in the event of absence.
- Communications Officer: will be responsible for communicating on behalf of the committee to the wider parent body via database for email/hardcopy distribution, social media, text messages or by any other means with due consideration for GDPR regulations & within the boundaries of the schools Communication Policy.
- National Parents Council Representative: will be responsible for liaising with the NPC Primary on membership, NPC correspondence/surveys/events & NPC supported training/speakers for Naas CNS events.

Meetings/Agendas/Minutes

- We welcome the principal/deputy principal, a teachers representative & a special needs assistant to attend & participate in all committee meetings.
- An AGM will be held every year, ideally in September but as soon as is practical once children & parents have settled into the new school year.
- Committee meetings will be held twice a term as a minimum & as required after that.
- Committee meetings will be scheduled according to the maximum availability of committee members & can be held on different days/times to ensure flexibility.
- Sub-Committee meetings will be held as necessary.
- Agendas will be prepared for all regular committee meetings & the AGM.
- Attendance for all regular committee meetings & the AGM will be recorded.
- Minutes will be recorded/distributed/retained for all committee meetings & the AGM.
- Agendas & minutes will be issued in soft copy & stored in soft copy & hard copy.
- In the event a meeting is not quorate no decisions may be taken, however in case of an urgent decision required, proxy voting will be permitted.
- In all meetings, events & correspondence our PA members are expected to be courteous, respectful, punctual & to work together as a team for the greater good of our children in Naas CNS.

Sub-Committees

- Sub-Committees will be established & tasked with specific projects/purposes which will be agreed by the committee.
- Any decisions required, which deviate from the scope of the original sub-committee project/purpose, must be referred to the committee for approval.

Electing Members & Co-Option

- At the AGM committee election, the first 2 places will be automatically filled by the BoM nominees. The subsequent 14 places will be elected by proposing & seconding. Any additional volunteers/nominees for the committee will be proposed & seconded for co-option.
- The committee or sub-committees may recruit parents with specific skills/expertise when required & may bring them on board by co-option also.

Activities

The PA activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Organising/supporting school events/projects/activities
- Policy development
- Encouraging meaningful parental involvement in our children's education

Finance

- Monies raised by the PA will be counted by 2 committee members & handed over to the school office at the earliest opportunity to be lodged to the school bank account.
- The treasurer will keep an account of all monies raised & all monies spent, as will the principal/school secretary & accounts will be reconciled every year in advance of the AGM.
- Any fundraising efforts must set out, to the wider parent body, the specifics for which monies are being sought.
- All expenditure must be approved in advance by the committee.
- All expenditure must be receipted.
- A petty cash float (maximum €200) may be kept in the school for sundry purchases, all of which must be approved by the committee.

Notes

- These operating guidelines are intended to compliment the constitution of Naas CNS PA.
- This document, along with our constitution, are living/evolving documents.
- Every year our parent body changes & we always welcome new ideas/suggestions/comments to reflect our progressive school community.
- Our constitution must be changed formally but our guidelines can be amended, whenever required, with approval of the committee.
- The NPC document "Working Effectively as a Parents Association" is our key reference document used to prepare our constitution & guidelines.

Exceptional Note

Due to the AGM for the 2018-2019 school year being held on 28/02/2019 & in order to provide continuity & stability to get the new PA established, the new in-coming committee will remain in place until the AGM of September 2020. In September 2019 an AGM or an open committee

meeting will take place to ensure junior infant parents & any other new parents are welcomed & have an opportunity to join the committee. It is expected that this exceptional note will be removed at the AGM of September 2020.