

# **ST GERARD'S SCHOOL PARENTS' ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION**

## **PREAMBLE**

We the Parents and Guardians of pupils at St. Gerard's School acknowledge that St. Gerard's School is an Irish lay Catholic educational institution recognised as a centre of learning wherein the traditions and values of the catholic faith are enshrined and is managed by a Board of Directors.

## **1. NAME**

- 1.1 The name of the Parents Association shall be the St Gerard's School Parents' Association (the "PA").
- 1.2 The address of the PA shall be St Gerard's School, Thornhill Road, Bray, Co Dublin.
- 1.3 All references to a parent or parents shall be deemed to include a guardian or guardians.

## **2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The PA will be organised, managed and run by parents of the school in keeping with the agreed aims and objectives as follows:

- 2.1 To promote the education and welfare of the pupils in accordance with the ethos and objectives of St Gerard's School while not becoming involved with the process of management of the school. The PA recognises that problems or issues relating to individual students and/or staff are issues for the St Gerard's School management and cannot be discussed or raised at any meeting of the PA or of any of its committees.
- 2.2 To provide opportunities for discussion, information and consultation about matters of common and/or topical interest to parents, teachers and pupils of the school.
- 2.3 To assist the school in recruiting volunteers to help with programs as requested by the school principals but in compliance with any Garda vetting requirements.
- 2.4 To facilitate effective communication between parents and St Gerard's School management on issues relating to school plans, policies and activities.
- 2.5 To promote and support the role of parents and guardians as the prime educators of their children.
- 2.6 To support the catholic ethos of the school and respect for other faiths.
- 2.7 To give practical assistance to support the school and educational activities of the school, such assistance to include the review of school policy documentation.

2.8 To promote other activities which may enhance the development of pupils and assist the staff of the school.

2.9 To give due respect to the individual pupils, parents and staff in pursuit of its objectives.

2.10 To pursue these objectives in consultation and collaboration with St Gerard's School management. The PA will support the school in the formation of specific purpose committees to assist with activities outside the normal activities of the PA such as the (Annual) Ball, the (Annual) Golf Day, fundraising and other such matters as arise.

2.11. To endeavour each year to spend the total monies received from family annual subscriptions, see Clause 4.1 below, subject to ensuring that there is always a float of no less than €2,000 remaining in the PA bank account.

### **3. MEMBERSHIP**

3.1 Membership of the PA, with full voting rights, shall be open to all parents of pupils attending St Gerard's School.

### **4. ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION**

4.1 The annual subscription per family will be €25 and this will be included annually in the St Gerard's School first term fee account.

4.2 Any changes to the annual subscription must be approved by the AGM and in consultation with St Gerard's School management.

### **5. COMPOSITION OF THE PA COMMITTEE**

5.1 The affairs of the PA shall be conducted by a committee ("the PA Committee) made up of volunteers from the parent body.

5.2 The PA Committee shall comprise a minimum of 11 and a maximum of 14 parent members of the PA, at least 4, and a maximum of 5, of whom shall be parents of St Gerard's School junior school children.

5.3 New members shall be recruited each year, subject to reaching the minimum or maximum number of members required.

5.4 The principals of St Gerard's School senior and junior schools, or their nominated representatives, shall be ex-officio members of the PA Committee.

5.5 The quorum at any meeting of the PA Committee shall not be less than seven voting members.

5.6 In the event of a vacancy, the PA, in consultation with St Gerard's School management, may co-opt a parent and/or parents to fill the vacancy/ or vacancies so as to ensure that the PA committee reaches its minimal constitutional number of members.

5.7 The first business of the incoming PA Committee at the first meeting after the AGM each year shall be to elect the officers of the PA Committee as follows:

Chairperson  
Honorary Secretary  
Honorary Treasurer  
Communications Officer.

5.8 Where possible, the Chairperson should be a parent who has had a pupil(s) in both the Junior School and Senior School and who has been on the PA Committee for not less than 1 year.

5.9 A PA Committee (or PA Sub-Committee) member who fails to attend three consecutive meetings without apologies shall be deemed to have resigned.

## **6. ELECTION OF MEMBERS OF THE PA COMMITTEE**

6.1 The PA Committee shall comprise a minimum of 11 and a maximum of 14 parent members of the PA elected by the parents present at the AGM of the Association, or at any adjournment thereof.

6.2 Parent members of the committee are elected for a one year term. A parent may be elected for 4 consecutive years. Parents who have served for 3 consecutive years may be re-elected or nominated to fill an officer vacancy during a fourth year at the discretion of the PA Committee. After a 4 year term, parents must wait at least 2 years before putting themselves forward for election the the PA Committee again.

6.3 Parents, when elected, must have a pupil attending the school for the duration of their term on the committee.

6.4 The PA will endeavour to ensure that there is as wide a representation of St Gerard's School years as possible.

6.5 The PA shall endeavour to ensure that there is an equal gender balance on the PA Committee.

6.6 Nominations for election to the PA Committee shall be sought at least 30 days before the AGM.

6.7 Nominations for election to the PA Committee must be accompanied by the names of the proposer and seconder.

6.8 All nominations shall be notified to the Honorary Secretary of the parents association in writing at least 14 days before the AGM.

6.9 Should more nominations be received than required, the new members shall be chosen by secret ballot. Should any ballot produce a tie, then the election shall be decided by the casting vote of the Chairperson of the PA Committee.

## **7. DUTIES OF THE COMMITTEE**

7.1 The PA Committee will organise the business of the PA in line with the aims and objectives outlined in Clause 2 above.

7.2 The Honorary Secretary shall keep minutes of all discussions and decisions agreed at the PA Committee meetings. A copy of such minutes shall be made available to all the PA Committee members including ex-officio members no later than 14 days after the meeting.

7.3 The PA Committee shall have the power to set up a sub-committee for specific purposes. The members of such sub-committees shall be appointed by the PA Committee. All sub-committee meetings must prepare minutes and, where practicable, must communicate these minutes to the PA Committee members prior to the holding of a PA Committee meeting. Such minutes are to be issued no later than 14 days after any sub-committee meeting.

7.4 The PA Committee will ensure timely, effective and ongoing communication with all parents which may include printed newsletters, texts, emails, social media and other electronic communications.

7.5 The PA Committee will convene ordinary meetings of the PA at least once a month where practicable, with a minimum of one meeting per term.

## **8. EXPENSES AND ACCOUNTS**

8.1 The PA shall keep a bank account in its name.

8.2 The Chairperson, Honorary Treasurer, and Honorary Secretary shall be signatories on the account and any two of these who shall be authorised to make payments on behalf of the PA.

8.2 All expenses of the PA shall be paid by bank transfer or cheque drawn on the account.

8.3 Where payment is made by bank transfer, the two stage authorisation process shall be carried out by two authorised signatories viz. one signatory shall access the on-line account to process the payment request and the second authorised signatory shall receive and enter the authorisation code to process the payment.

8.4 Any payment made by cheque drawn on the account must be signed by two authorised signatories.

8.5 The Honorary Treasurer will be accountable to the AGM and to the members of the PA for all monies which the PA and its' activities give rise to.

8.6 Audited accounts of the PA shall be presented to the AGM each year.

8.7 The St Gerard's School auditor shall be the auditor for the PA.

8.8 The financial year of the PA shall end on 31st of July each year.

## **9. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (“AGM”)**

- 9.1 An AGM of the PA shall be held no later than 31st October each year.
- 9.2 The venue for the AGM will be at St Gerard’s School, Thornhill Road, Bray, County Dublin. In the event that the venue is unavailable, an alternative venue may be decided upon by the PA Committee.
- 9.3 14 days notice of the AGM shall be given to each PA member in writing or by email.
- 9.4 The following shall be the agenda for the AGM
1. Report by the Honorary Secretary
  2. Statement of Accounts by the Honorary Treasurer
  3. Election of new members to the PA Committee
  4. Any other ordinary business
- 9.5 The quorum at the AGM shall be at least 40 members who are entitled to vote.

## **10. VOTING**

- 10.1 All parents members will have full voting rights.
- 10.2 St Gerard’s School management attending meetings do so in a non-voting capacity.
- 10.3 Except in the case of proposals for the amendment of the PA Constitution, see Clause 12 below, every proposal at the AGM of the PA or at PA Committee meetings shall be decided by a simple majority of those present and eligible to vote.

## **11. EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETINGS (“EGM”)**

- 11.1 An EGM may be convened at the written request of a minimum of 100 members of the PA stating the purpose of the proposed meeting.
- 11.2 100 members of the PA shall form a quorum for such meetings otherwise the rules of conduct shall be similar to those of the AGM.
- 11.3 The Honorary Secretary shall within one month of receiving a properly constituted request for an EGM, summon a general meeting of the PA, stating the purpose for which the meeting is called. This shall be the only business dealt with at such a meeting.
- 11.4 For any resolution to be passed at an EGM, it requires to be approved by not less than 75% of those attending and entitled to vote.

## **12. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

- 12.1 A Proposal for the amendment of the Constitution shall be made at an AGM, or at a properly constituted EGM.

12.2 The text of the proposed amendment must be approved in advance by the St Gerard's School management, such approval not to be unreasonably withheld or delayed, and must be made available to all parents at least one week prior to the AGM or EGM.

12.3 The proposal for the amendment of the Constitution shall be issued with the notice convening the AGM or EGM.

12.4 Any amendment of the Constitution must be approved by a resolution carried by a 75% majority of the votes recorded at the AGM or EGM.

12.5 The PA Committee shall ensure that a copy of the current Constitution is available to the parent body.

### **13. REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION**

13.1 In accordance with good governance, the PA shall review the Constitution on a bi-annual basis.

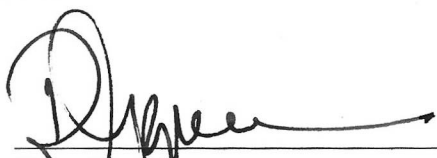
### **14. DISSOLUTION**

14.1 The PA shall not be dissolved except by an EGM convened for that purpose and approved by a resolution carried by a 75% majority of the votes recorded at the EGM.

14.2 Any surplus funds, which may be in hand at the time of dissolution, shall be handed over to the school with, if practicable, a detailed outline of how such funds are to be spent.

A true copy of the Constitution as amended at the Annual General Meeting held on 4th November 2020.

Signed:

  
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Rosalind Opperman  
CHAIRPERSON

Date:

6<sup>th</sup> November 2020