
1. Name

The name of the organisation shall be the membership of Parents and Friends Associations of Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Cairns.

2. Commencement

- 2.1 This Constitution shall be operative from the date upon which approval thereto is given in writing by the Bishop of the Diocese of Cairns.
- 2.2 The following rules shall provide for the establishment, government and management of a Diocesan Council of Parents and Friends Associations of Catholic Schools in the Cairns Diocese.
- 2.3 Each association of Parents and Friends in Catholic Schools in the Cairns Diocese that is financially affiliated with the Federation of Parents and Friends Associations of Queensland on the day immediately prior to the date of commencement of this Constitution shall be members of the Cairns Diocesan Council at the commencement of this constitution. Each of the said affiliated associations shall be deemed to be an "Affiliated Association" within the meaning of this Constitution.

3. Interpretations

- 3.1 In this Constitution unless the context otherwise requires:-
 - (a) "A Parents and Friends Association" means a school-based parent/carer organization which draws its members from a Catholic school community and has as its objectives the promotion and furtherance of the interests of the Catholic School and its supporting community.
 - (b) "Affiliated Association" - means an Association granted affiliation by payment of the Federation membership fee or levy subsequent to the previous Annual General Meeting. Unless otherwise stated "Association" means "Affiliated Association".
 - (c) "School" means any institution of pre-school, primary, or secondary education conducted in accordance with canon 803 in Canon Law.
 - (d) "Financial Year" means the calendar year commencing on and including the first day of January in any year and ending on and including the thirty-first day of December in that year, unless otherwise defined.
 - (e) "The Council" means the Council of the Parents and Friends Associations of Catholic Schools representing parents of the Diocese through the Parents and Friends Associations in the Diocese of Cairns.

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- (f) “Diocesan Management Committee / Executive” means the Executive Committee of the Cairns Diocesan Council of the Parents and Friends Associations.
 - (g) "Diocese" means the Diocese of Cairns.
 - (h) "Federation" is the collective body representing all Parents and Friends Associations in Catholic schools in Queensland through their respective Diocesan Council.
 - (i) "State Committee" means the representative body of the Federation of Parents and Friends Associations Queensland. Delegates to this committee are drawn from Arch/Diocesan Councils in a manner which is agreed by the Federation from time to time.
 - (j) "The Bishop" means the Bishop of the Cairns Diocese or competent ecclesiastical authority according to canon 414.
 - (k) "Canon" refers to the Code of Canon Law 1983.
 - (l) “Meeting” can be consultation by assembly or by other forms of telecommunication.
 - (m) “Delegate” is the delegate appointed by the respective Diocesan Council to the State Committee.
 - (n) “Representative” is the appointed representative of the Archdiocesan/Diocesan Council to other related bodies other than the State Committee, the appointment and tenure as deemed as appropriate by the nominating body.
 - (o) “Conférence” is a meeting of the Diocesan Council and nominated delegates, from each Catholic School P&F Association, both primary and secondary, held on a biennial basis and includes the Annual General Meeting of that year.
 - (p) “Annual General Meeting” is described as the annual reporting meeting.
 - (q) “Cluster” or “Zone” is a grouping of school Parents and Friends Associations from a designated geographical region and/or having a common interest as decided by the Diocesan Council from time to time.

3.2 Any reference in this Constitution to a clause or sub-clause shall be a reference to a Clause or sub-clause, as the case may be, of this Constitution.

4. Objectives

- 4.1 The objectives of the Diocesan Council are those which accord with the content of such documents as, *"The Catholic School"*, (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education. Rome 1977), the *"Code Of Canon Law"* 1983, the *"Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium"*, Congregation for Catholic Education, Rome 1998, *"Lay Catholics in Schools – Witness to Faith"* 1982, and *"Religious Dimension of Education in Catholic Schools"* 1988.

In particular, the Council will participate in the optimum spiritual, intellectual, social, physical, moral and emotional development of pupils in Catholic Schools:-

- (a) to promote the interests of parents in respect of the education of their children in the Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Cairns;
 - (b) to foster and promote the quality of education for children in the Catholic Schools of the Cairns Diocese;
 - (c) to safeguard the right of parents and to facilitate, where possible, this right;
 - (d) to promote and represent the interest of children in Catholic Schools; and
 - (e) to promote the role and advance the interest of Catholic schools in the community:-
 - I. by fostering a distinctive Christian environment in those schools;
 - II. by developing maximum co-operation between parents and school staffs;
 - III. by utilizing those structures which are established to promote the principles of Christian education;
 - IV. by providing a medium for the information and participation of parents.
- 4.2 The Cairns Diocesan Council of the Parents and Friends Associations promotes the interests of schools and associations by establishing and maintaining links with Catholic Education Authorities, parent organizations and other bodies at Archdiocesan/Diocesan, State, and National as deemed appropriate from time to time by Diocesan Council.
- 4.3 Notwithstanding the generality of the above objectives the Cairns Diocesan Council shall not:-
- (a) have any control, nor shall it purport to exercise any control over the administration of any school or school Parents and Friends Association;
 - (b) affiliate with any political body or party.

5. Membership

- 5.1 The membership of the Council shall consist of delegates drawn from affiliated schools within the Cairns Diocese. Each school may nominate two(2) delegates to the Annual Meeting.
- 5.2 A spiritual Director shall be appointed by the Bishop. The spiritual director will be an ex-officio member.

6. Life Membership

- 6.1 A person may be appointed to life membership of the Cairns Diocesan Council of the Parents and Friends Associations of Catholic Schools by a decision of two-thirds of delegates at the Annual Conference. Such a person must be recommended to Conference by the Diocesan Council. Members of a school Parents and Friends Association may make nominations to the Diocesan Council for consideration.
- 6.2 A person recommended for Life Membership of the Cairns Diocesan Council must normally have served at least three years on the school Parents and Friends Association and must be considered to have rendered extraordinary service to the Diocesan Council.

7. Funds

- 7.1 The income and property of the Council shall be used in the promotion of its objectives.
- 7.2 The Cairns Diocesan Council shall have the power to raise additional funds as agreed from time to time by the members of the Diocesan Council. These funds are additional to the Federation fee rebated by the State Committee of the Federation.
- 7.3 All monies of the Council shall be banked in the name of the Cairns Diocesan Council of the Parents and Friends Associations in such bank or financial institution as the Executive may from time to time direct.
- 7.4 Proper books and accounts shall be kept and maintained either in written or printed form in the English language showing correctly the financial affairs of the Council and the particulars usually shown in books of a like nature.
- 7.5 All monies shall be banked as soon as practicable after receipt of them.
- 7.6 All amounts shall be paid by cheque signed by any two of the chairperson, secretary, treasurer or other person authorised from time to time by the Diocesan Management Committee.
- 7.7 Cheques shall be crossed "not negotiable" except those in payment of allowances or petty cash recoupments which may be open.
- 7.8 The Executive shall determine the amount of petty cash which shall be kept on the impress system.
- 7.9 Accounts for payment shall be presented and passed at an Executive meeting.
- 7.10 An annual budget showing estimated receipts and disbursements shall be prepared by the Treasurer not later than two months before the start of each financial year and such budget

shall be submitted to Council for approval not later than one month before the start of each financial year.

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- 7.11 As soon as practicable after the end of each financial year the Treasurer shall cause to be prepared a balance sheet containing particulars of-
- a the income and expenditure for the financial year just ended; and
 - b the assets and liabilities of all mortgages, charges and securities affecting the property of the Council at the close of that year.
- 7.12 All such statements shall be examined by the Auditor who shall present his/her report upon such audit to the Secretary prior to the holding of the Annual General Meeting next following the financial year in respect of which such audit was made.

8. Conference and Annual General Meeting of the Cairns Diocesan Council

- 8.1 Conferences of the Cairns Diocesan Council shall be held at such times and places as may be determined by the Executive of the Council provided that at least a Biennial Conference shall be held. It will be held within three months of the close of the financial year in December and notification to all Parents and Friends Associations to be made at least three (3) months prior to the meeting.
- 8.2 In a year where a conference is not held, an Annual General Meeting will be held for reporting purposes.
- 8.3 The business to be transacted at every Conference or Annual General Meeting shall be:-
- the receiving of the Diocesan Management Committee's report and the statement of income and expenditure, assets and liabilities affecting the property of the Association for the preceding financial year;
 - the receiving of the auditor's report upon the books and accounts for the preceding financial year and the appointment of an auditor for the following financial year;
 - Special topics which may be included:-
 - Spiritual formation
 - Federation State and National issues
 - Diocesan policy development
 - Formation of leadership teams
 - Social interaction
- 8.4 Conference or Annual General Meeting shall be attended by the members of the Cairns Diocesan Council and delegates - the numbers to be decided from time to time by the Council from the school P & F Associations. Observers to the Conference may attend following written advice to the Council prior to the Conference.
- 8.5 Delegates of school Parents and Friends Associations shall be entitled to two votes at conference or Annual General Meeting. Associations will have the power to substitute or replace such delegates between Conferences or Annual General Meetings.

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- 8.6 Votes may be cast by any delegate or delegates attending conference on behalf of the school Parents and Friends Associations.
- 8.7 In the event of an equality of votes the Chairman may exercise a casting vote as well as any deliberative vote to which he/she is entitled.
- 8.8 Each Conference delegate shall be elected by his or her school Parents and Friends Association in such manner as may be decided from time to time by it.
- 8.9 Subsequent to the Annual General Meeting of the Cairns Diocesan Council, the Executive shall elect persons from within its delegates to State Committee of the Federation in accordance with provisions of membership of the Federation State Committee.
- 8.10 The appointment of an Auditor shall form part of the business to be conducted at an Annual General Meeting as described in 3.1(p).
- 8.11 The Secretary shall within fourteen days after the date of a Annual General Meeting of the Council deliver or cause to be delivered to the Bishop a report in writing of the proceedings of that meeting.
- 8.12 Proxy votes shall not be permitted.

9. Meetings of the Cairns Diocesan Council

- 9.1 The frequency of such other meetings of the Council shall be determined by the Executive after the Conference or Annual General Meeting provided that no fewer than two other General Meetings be convened during the calendar year.
- 9.2 In each calendar year, an Annual General Meeting shall be held before the end of March
- 9.3 At meetings of the Diocesan Council, voting rights shall be held by no more than two School Delegates of each of the Affiliated Associations within the Archdiocese.
- Proxy votes shall not be permitted.
- 9.4 Observers from P & F Associations are invited to attend Council meetings.
- 9.5 With respect to each meeting of the Cairns Diocesan Council the Executive shall:-
- a) appoint such time and place for the meeting as appears to it to be convenient
 - b) give not less than fourteen days notice of the meeting to each member of the Cairns Council representatives of the Council and to the Association observers within the Archdiocese/Diocese.
 - c) state in such notice any special purpose for which the meeting is called.
- 9.6 Meetings of the Council shall be conducted in accordance with Standing Orders adopted by the Council.

9.7 At any Meeting of the Council, the number of delegates required to constitute a quorum shall be that decided upon by the Executive of the Council.

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- 9.8 A special meeting of the Council shall be convened by the Secretary:
- a) when directed to do so by the Executive
 - b) on the requisition in writing of not less than 25% of Affiliated Associations which requisition shall clearly state the reason or reasons why the special meeting is being requested and the nature of the business to be transacted thereat.
 - a) the Cairns Diocesan Council shall arrange a special meeting within six weeks of such a request.

10. Diocesan Management Committee / Executive

- 10.1 At the Biennial Conference of the Cairns Diocesan Council members of the Council shall elect a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer to be known as office-bearers, and an executive committee of _____ delegates from the clusters / zones to hold office for the following two years. A Spiritual Director will be nominated by the Bishop of Cairns.
- 10.2 Except for the Spiritual Director, the members of the Executive shall hold Office from the conclusion of the Biennial Conference of the Diocesan Council at which they are elected until the conclusion of the following Conference.
- 10.3 Only delegates can be nominated for executive positions.
- 10.4 Membership of the Executive will consist of the office bearers and no more than ordinary members and the Spiritual Director.
- 10.5 The Executive may, by an absolute majority of the Executive, co-opt an additional member to the Executive. Such a co-opted member shall be a member of a school Parents and Friends Association, shall have the same rights and powers of an ordinary member of the Executive. The term of office for a co-opted member of the Executive will be decided.
- 10.6 The term of tenure of the elected office bearers will be for two years with an option of a further term of two years. Following a break of two years such a person may stand for re-election to an office-bearers position on the Executive.

11. Meetings of the Executive

- 11.1 The Executive shall meet as often as determined necessary to carry out the functions of that Office but not less than six occasions during its term of office. A majority of the Executive shall constitute a quorum.
- 11.2 The Executive shall meet at least once per school term. Notice to members of meetings shall be at least fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting.

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- 11.3 A special meeting of the Executive shall be convened by the Secretary on the requisition of not less than one-third of the members of the Executive, which requisition shall clearly state the reason why such special meeting is being convened and the nature of the business to be transacted thereat.
- 11.4 At every meeting of the Executive a simple majority of a number equal to the number of members elected and/or appointed to the committee as at the close of the last ordinary meeting of the members, shall constitute a quorum.
- 11.5 Subject as previously provided in this clause, the Executive may meet together and regulate its proceedings as it thinks fit; provided that questions arising at any meeting of the Executive shall be decided by a majority of votes and, in the case of equality of votes, the question shall be deemed to be decided in the negative.

12. Filling of Casual Vacancies

Any casual vacancy may be filled by the Executive by the appointment of any person who is a member of a school Parents and Friends Association of Catholic schools in the Cairns Diocesan Council.

13. Termination of Membership of Management Committee

- 13.1 A member of the Executive shall be deemed to have resigned from the executive if being a member elected to the Executive in accordance with 10.1, he/she:-
- a) resigns in writing to the Secretary. The resignation shall take effect at the time such notice is received by the Secretary unless the date is specified in the notice when it shall take effect on that later date.
 - a) ceases to be a member of a Financial Affiliated Association; or
 - b) has failed to attend three consecutive meetings without indicating cause for such absence.
- 13.2 A member may be removed from office at an ordinary meeting of the Diocesan Management Committee if that member -
- a. fails to comply with any of the provisions of this constitution; or
 - b. conducts him/herself in a manner considered to be injurious or prejudicial to the character or interests of the Council.
- 13.3 The member concerned shall be given a full and fair opportunity of presenting his/her case, and if the committee resolves to terminate his/her membership it shall instruct the Secretary to advise the member in writing accordingly.

13.4 Nothing in this Clause shall affect the continuity of the appointment of the Spiritual Director to the Council.

14. Functions and Powers of the Executive

- 14.1 The Executive shall be expected generally to give effect to the objectives of the Cairns Diocesan Council in accordance with this constitution including without derogation:-
- a) the formulation of Standing Orders for the conduct of Executive Council meetings;
 - b) the establishment of those Sub-Councils as deemed necessary to give effect to the objectives of the Council;
 - c) the interpretation of the meaning of these rules and, subject to the authority of the Council, to rule on any matter on which these rules are silent.
- 14.2 Except as otherwise provided by this Constitution and subject to resolutions of the delegates of the Council carried at any general meeting the Executive Committee -
- a. shall have the general control and management of the administration of the affairs and funds of the Council and
 - b. shall formulate advice for consideration by the Council on any issue involving new policy or a significant deviation from existing policy.
- 14.3 Subsequent to the Annual General Meeting of the Cairns Diocesan Council, the Executive appoint delegates to State Committee of the Federation in accordance with provisions of membership of the Federation State Committee

15. By-Laws and Standing Orders

The Executive shall be responsible for establishing and maintaining adequate By-Laws for the Cairns Diocesan Council and Standing Orders for the conduct of business consistent with this Constitution, provided that these By- Laws and Standing Orders may be subject to review at any Annual General Meeting and any By-Law and Standing Order may be set aside by vote of a majority of those present and entitled to vote.

16. Amendments to the Constitution

- 16.1 This Constitution may be amended, rescinded or added to from time to time by a special resolution carried at an Annual General Meeting of the Cairns Diocesan Council, by a three-fourths majority of those delegates present and entitled to vote, provided that notice of any proposed amendment shall have been given in writing to the Executive by a delegate on behalf of the school Parents and Friends Association least three months before such Annual General Meeting.
- 16.2 Within one month of the receipt of any such notice, the Executive shall circularize the terms thereof to each delegate of and to each school Parents and Friends Association.

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- 16.3 The Secretary of the Cairns Diocesan Council shall, within one (1) month after the passing of a motion to alter the Constitution, lodge notice of the motion with the Bishop of the Diocese of Cairns.
- 16.4 Notice of any proposed amendment shall have been given to the Diocesan Management Committee by an affiliated member at least three (3) months before such meeting.
- 16.5 An amendment to the Constitution of the Diocesan Council shall not take effect until such alteration is approved by the Bishop of the Diocese of Cairns.

17. Dissolution

- 17.1 The Cairns Diocesan Council shall be dissolved -
- (a) if a resolution to that effect is carried by a vote of a three-fourths majority of the Council at a meeting convened to consider the question.
 - (b) if the competent ecclesiastical authority, in accordance with canon 320, decides that it should be dissolved.
- 17.2 The property and other assets of the organization remaining, after the payment of all expenses and other liabilities, shall be handed over to the State Committee of the Federation of Parents and Friends Associations Of Catholic Schools in Queensland to be disbursed to the school Parents and Friends Associations of the Cairns Diocese, and in the event of there being no such body to the Bishop of the Diocese.

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