

**THE CONSTITUTION OF THE PARENT ASSOCIATION OF URLINGFORD NATIONAL SCHOOL  
(SCOIL AN CHROÍ RÓ-NAOFA)**

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**The Purpose of the Parent Association**

The purpose of the Parent Association is to provide a structure through which the parents/guardians of children attending Urlingford National School can work together for the best possible education for their children. The Parent Association will work with the Principal, staff and Board of Management to build effective partnership between home and school.

**The Aim of the Parent Association**

The aim of the Parent 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 Parent Association will promote the interests of the students in co-operation with the Board of Management, Principal, teachers and students, in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act, 1998.

## **The Work of the Parent Association**

The Parent Association 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 Parent Association will consult with the school Principal.

The Parent Association is not a forum for complaint against either an individual teacher or parent. The Complaints Procedure is the mechanism for this.

## **The Membership of the Parent Association**

All parents or guardians of children attending Urlingford NS will be deemed to be members of the Parent Association. This includes teachers or Principal if they have children attending the school.

Though not a member of the Parent Association, the Principal, at his/her own discretion, may attend and address any meeting of the Parent Association Committee, Executive Committee and all sub-committees.

## **The Committee of the Parent Association**

The members of the Parent Association will elect a committee with a maximum of 15 and a minimum of 7 persons. This committee will have responsibility for representing the parents of Urlingford NS and managing the activities of the Parent Association. The committee makes the decisions with regard to how that is done but always with prior agreement of the Board of Management before action is taken.

Not all parents/legal guardians will be in a position to become involved on the Parent Association Committee but instead, may wish to be involved on a specific fundraising or school event. The Committee will endeavour to provide opportunities for parents/legal guardians to volunteer their support when required for fundraising and school events. The Committee must positively support the work of the PA and positively support the work and policies of the school.

## **Subcommittees**

Subcommittees can be set up for particular tasks. The subcommittees may also co-opt people to assist in their work. The subcommittees may not make decisions; 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 Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Parent Association. A notification of the AGM must be sent to parents at least 10 days prior to the meeting. An agenda for the meeting must also be circulated.

Each member will be elected for one year. At the AGM all committee members step down, but they can be re-elected as long as they continue to be eligible to serve, that is as long as they continue to be a parent or guardian of a child in the school. Where a new person is stepping into a role, the existing officer remains in their role until the end of the meeting, at which point all relevant information is passed to the incoming officer.

Parents' representatives elected to the Board of Management are automatically members of the committee, but will not hold an officer position on the Parent Association Committee.

No member of the committee will hold the same officer position for more than three consecutive years.

A committee is elected by asking for nominations from those present; nominations may also be requested, in advance of the meeting. All members elected **must be present** at the AGM and nominations **must be seconded** at the meeting. It should be noted that all parents have the right to nominate and be nominated.

The committee will consist of its executive officers (chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary and treasurer), BOM nominees and other parents wishing to serve on the committee. As per NPC guidelines, and to have a true reflection of the entire parent body, nominations to the committee will be specifically asked for

- A junior class parent (Junior Infants – 2<sup>nd</sup> Class)
- A senior class parent (3<sup>rd</sup> Class – 6<sup>th</sup> Class)
- A country based parent
- A town based parent

These viewpoints can be represented by the same person e.g. a junior class parent from the town.

A quorum of 12 must be present to elect a committee. If the quorum is not reached another meeting must be called within 2-3 weeks.

### **The Work of the Committee of the Parent Association**

The Parent Association committee will be responsible for ensuring that all parents are consulted on issues which are pertinent to the entire parent body. The Parent Association committee may advise the Principal and Board of Management on any matters relating to the school in accordance with the Education Act, 1998, 26.- (2)(a).

- The committee is the team that will manage the tasks of the association on behalf of the parent body (the members).
- The committee will draw up a plan for the activities of the association, in consultation with parents and in accordance with their wishes and will execute that plan, including but not limited to fundraising activities, organising speakers or workshops, extra-curricular activities for students, providing support for parents etc.
- The committee will consult with the school Principal and Board of Management when planning the programme of activities for any particular year.
- The committee will agree a communication process with the Principal and BOM.
- 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 Parent Association.

The Parent Association is not a forum for complaint against either an individual teacher or parent. The Complaints Procedure is the mechanism for this.

A quorum for a meeting of the Committee shall consist of five members that includes the chairperson or vice-chairperson and the secretary or treasurer.

Day to day running decisions of the Parent Association is by the agreement of the Executive Committee. Decisions of the Committee requiring a vote shall be decided by a simple majority of all members present at the meeting; in the event of a tied vote, the meeting chairperson shall have a second or casting vote.

Roles of the Executive Committee are outlined in Appendix I.

## **Finance**

The Parent Association committee will finance the activities of the Parent Association 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 Parent Association 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 Board of Management for their information.

The Parent Association will keep a bank account in its name. Each cheque issued will require two signatures. The Treasurer and at least one other assigned member of the committee must sign all cheques drawn on the account.

It should be noted that the expenditure of the funds raised is by the Board of Management, in consultation with the Parent Association. Receipts should be given to the Parent Association from the Board of Management/Principal for all items/services purchased with funds received from the Parent Association. Any funds must be used for the purpose/s for which the money was collected.

The Parent Association will maintain its own working capital in its bank account to facilitate its own activities.

## **Fundraising for the School**

Fundraising for the school by the Parent Association will be done with the prior agreement of the Board of Management.

The Parent Association committee will agree with the Board of Management as to the specific purposes for which funds are to be raised by the Parent Association.

Moneys raised will be given to the Board of Management to be spent for the purposes they were intended.

## **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 Parent Association committee. The Parent Association 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.

## Appendix I

Committee officers have the following responsibilities.

### 1. Chairperson – Executive Committee Member

- Lead and guide the committee in planning and delivering on their activities. This should involve:
  - Chairing meetings
  - Helping the committee to have a clear vision and clear goals
  - Keeping the work of the Parent Association to agreed targets
  - Ensuring all members are respected, listened to and are encouraged to have their say
  - Facilitating people to work well together ensuring that the work of the committee is shared
  - Reviewing the work of the committee
- Ensure that everyone has a clear understanding of their roles within the committee
- Delegate the work of the committee to ensure all work is not the responsibility of one or two people
- Work closely with the Secretary to plan the agendas and meetings
- Ensure that the minutes are signed, dated and kept safely
- Encourage the committee members to be prepared for the meetings
- Ensure meetings start and finish at the agreed times
- Make sure that, as each item is finished, the group is clear about what has been decided
- Ensure that all decisions are taken democratically and with respect for everyone's opinions
- Check on responsibilities taken on by members of the committee and make sure they have been clearly understood and allocated
- Summarise all decisions at the end of the meeting Ensure that at the end of term of office all relevant documentation is passed on to the incoming Chairperson

### 2. Deputy-Chairperson - Executive Committee Member

- The Deputy-Chairperson will assume the role of the Chairperson upon the non-availability of the Chairperson, upon request by the Chairperson or the Principal.

### 3. Secretary - Executive Committee Member

The role of the Secretary of the Parent Association committee is to:

- Take minutes at each meeting
- File all correspondence and minutes safely - *Minutes should be brief and should be a record of decisions made and actions to be taken; they may also record a brief outline of issues discussed*
- Agree the agenda for committee meetings with the Chairperson. It is important that all committee members have a right to have items included on the agenda, therefore they must be given adequate time to pass these items on to the Secretary

- Make sure all committee members have the agenda prior to the meetings so they can be adequately prepared
- Make sure all committee members receive a copy of the minutes of meetings, including committee members who had been unable to attend
- Appropriately administer incoming and outgoing correspondence
- Ensure the minutes are approved at each meeting. *It is important at committee meetings that the minutes are agreed by those that attended to be a true and accurate record of what happened. Once this has been agreed by the committee the Chairperson should sign the minutes for the committee's records. This process is especially useful if there is any confusion in the future regarding any decisions made.*
- Assist the Chairperson with clarification of decisions made at meetings
- Ensure that at the end of term of office all relevant documentation is passed on to the incoming Secretary

#### 4. Treasurer - Executive Committee Member

The role of the Treasurer of the Parent Association committee is to:

- Lodge and record all financial transactions
- Manage and maintain books/record of income and expenditure
- Give monthly reports on the Parent Association finances to the Parent Association committee
- Issue receipts for all financial transactions
- Ensure that the committee has the necessary information to understand the Parent Association's financial needs
- Advise on how the resources can best be used to fulfil the aims and work plan of the committee
- Liaise with a bank or other financial institutions on behalf of the Parent Association
- Present a full account of the year's income and expenditure at the Parent Association AGM. A copy of these records should also be submitted to the Board of Management for their information
- Ensure that at the end of term of office all relevant documentation is passed on to the incoming Treasurer