

# St. Leonard's Catholic Primary School

*Aspiring to Excellence*



## St. Leonard's Parish Education Advisory Board Constitution

### 1. Profile of Our Parish and School

The first Parish Priest of St Leonard's was Fr. Leo Ryan. From 1955 to 1970, he took the fledgling parish of barely 200 people and steered it through an amazing period of growth. During his fifteen years at Glen Waverley, Fr. Leo set in place the infrastructure that allowed St. Leonard's to grow and enable it to meet the needs of the community into the future.

St Leonard's school was established in 1959 from funds provided by the Parish Community. The four-classroom brick building had an enrolment of 130. Miss Rosemary Rodriguez was appointed as Principal. From 1960-1975 the Presentation Sisters assumed responsibility for the school with Sister Marie Therese Jones PBVM appointed as Principal. From 1974 the first lay principal had responsibility for the school. In partnership with the parish, the school has a proud history of nurturing many thousands of Catholic children from the Parish.

#### Vision and Mission Statement for the school

##### Our School Vision

Aspiring to Excellence.

##### Mission

To provide a Gospel based Christian educational environment for the children of St. Leonard's Parish.

##### Values & Beliefs

- We believe that God is the centre of our faith, life and existence and that our words, actions and curriculum should reflect the teachings of the Gospel.
- We aim to provide a learning environment, which is friendly, welcoming and secure, where children, parents and teachers work in unison to support and nurture each individual. We endeavour to provide educational resources and physical facilities, necessary to enhance this learning environment.
- We value each individual within our school community and commit ourselves to assist and challenge them to realise their spiritual, intellectual, emotional, social and physical potential. We strive to contribute to the development of students' sense of self-worth, enthusiasm for learning and optimism for the future.
- We acknowledge that learning is a perpetual process that continues throughout one's life. We offer our children and staff an environment in which learning is embraced and celebrated.
- We acknowledge the role of parents as the prime educators of their children and encourage collaboration of parents and teachers in the development of each child.

- We believe that teachers are role models who are called upon to provide rich opportunities for students to become effective learners, to develop skills and strategies and to competently manage the different learning disciplines.
- We value the rich cultural and social diversity that exists in our society and encourage students' greater understanding, tolerance and acceptance of others.
- We believe that we are called to care for all in our community and support the concept of social justice through our promotion of the Gospel values.
- We commit ourselves to a learning environment that is technologically and academically progressive by providing the opportunity to experience success in the pursuit of excellence.
- We appreciate that our school is an integral part of the St. Leonard's Parish community and encourage children and their families to participate and contribute to the life of our parish.
- We affirm the school's adherence to the principles and practices of Australian democracy, including a commitment to: elected Government; the rule of law; equal rights for all before the law; freedom of religion; freedom of speech and association; the values of openness and tolerance

## **2. The Governing Principles for the Parish Education Advisory Board**

The Parish Education Advisory Board is advisory by nature and the primary forum for sharing information, discussion, and making recommendations to the principal and parish priest regarding all aspects of the schools' operation. The following principles shall be observed: -

- Open and honest communication
- Respect for alternate points of view
- Willingness to listen to feedback
- Efficient and effective meeting procedure,
- Preparedness to act, outside of meetings, to achieve outcomes that facilitate the school vision, and
- Engagement of the school and parish community

## **3. Governance and Authority**

### **Parish**

- 3.1 Within the provisions of Canon Law, the parish priest in consultation with the parish community is responsible for providing for the Catholic education of parish children and young adults as well the catechetical formation of the faithful and outreach to those who are no longer practising their faith or who do not profess the Catholic religion.

The Parish Education Advisory Board provides advice to the parish priest within the context of this Constitution and the vision statement of the school.

### **Parish Primary School**

- 3.2 With the approval and under the direction of the Archbishop of Melbourne, Archbishop Peter Comensoli, this school has been established to provide Catholic education, according to the precepts, teachings and practices of the Catholic Church.

This school is administered by the parish priest of St. Leonard's under the supervision of the Archbishop of Melbourne and is acknowledged as Catholic by his authority.

The governance of this school is undertaken by the parish priest with the support of the principal.

The Parish Education Advisory Board provides advice to the principal within the context of this Constitution and the school's vision and mission statements.

The parish priest reserves his authority in matters relating to:

- the Catholicity of the school
- diocesan regulations
- employment of staff
- the formation and dissolution of the board
- appointment of board members and office bearers
- the appointment and dismissal of the principal
- school finances.

3.3 Within the provisions of Canon Law, the Parish Education Advisory Board is responsible to the parish priest, who in turn is subject to the vigilance of the Archbishop of Melbourne.

3.4 The Parish Education Advisory Board has no responsibility for the internal management and administration of the school, which are the responsibility of the school principal.

#### 4. Definitions

The **Archbishop** is the Catholic Archbishop for the time being of the Archdiocese of Melbourne or the person duly appointed to administer the Archdiocese.

The **parish** is as defined by the Archbishop of Melbourne in accordance with Canon Law.

The **parish priest** is the parish priest for the time being of the parish of St Leonard's or the person duly appointed to administer the parish.

The **Parish Education Advisory Board** is the body responsible for advising the parish priest and principal according to the provisions of this Constitution.

#### 5. Land and Buildings

5.1 The ownership of land and buildings thereon is vested in the Roman Catholic Trusts Corporation for the Diocese of Melbourne, which shall hold such in trust for the parish in accordance with Canon Law.

5.2 The costs of all land and buildings, comprising buildings equipped to satisfy the requirements of a parish school, shall be underwritten by the parish.

#### 6. Parish Education Advisory Board purposes

The purposes of the Parish Education Advisory Board are to:

- (a) act as an advisory body to the parish priest and principal, on matters concerning education in the parish
- (b) act as a forum for discussion on matters concerning education in the parish primary school
- (c) provide a link between the parish priest, principal, teachers and parishioners in relation to the provision of Catholic education in the parish community
- (d) promote community development by fostering a strong interrelationship between parish and the parish primary school, Catholic secondary colleges and pre-schools.

#### 7. Parish Education Advisory Board responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Parish Education Advisory Board are to:

- (a) promote the Catholic ethos of the school and to support the Religious Education programs
- (b) provide advice on the development and review of school policies
- (c) plan for the future of the parish primary school and its ability to accommodate future enrolments
- (d) provide advice on budget planning and finance-related matters
- (e) contribute to the selection process for the school principal
- (f) ensure the appropriate provision of faith development and RE programs for children attending Government schools
- (g) foster adult education in faith.

## **8. The Parish Education Advisory Board**

### **Membership**

- 8.1 The Parish Education Advisory Board shall be composed of ten (10) members who appreciate, value and share the educational mission and ethos of the Catholic Church. It shall consist of:
- (a) the parish priest (ex officio)
  - (b) the school principal (ex officio)
  - (c) the school deputy principal (ex officio)
  - (d) four (4) parents of children attending the parish primary school elected by the parents of the school
  - (e) three (3) parishioners nominated by the parish priest
  - (f) other persons co-opted for a period of time to serve a particular need on the education board.

### **Ordinary Meeting**

- 8.2 The Parish Education Advisory Board should meet at least 5 times per year.
- 8.3 A quorum comprises a majority plus one of Parish Education Advisory Board members at the time of the meeting and members must be present at all time during a meeting.

### **Annual General Meeting**

- 8.4 The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Parish Education Advisory Board shall be held once a year.
- 8.5 An annual report is to be presented at the AGM and communicated to the school community.

### **Extraordinary Meeting**

- 8.6 Education Advisory Boards may call extraordinary meetings, if required. These may be attended by the members of the Education Advisory Board only. Minutes may be kept private and confidential.
- 8.7 Agenda items are determined by the parish priest and principal.

## **9. Office Bearers**

- 9.1 Following the AGM, the Parish Education Advisory Board will elect from its own members a chair. Ex officio members and employees of the parish or school shall not be eligible to hold the office of chair.
- 9.2 The Parish Education Advisory Board will elect a deputy chair who will carry out the duties of chair in his/her absence.
- 9.3 The Parish Education Advisory Board will appoint a secretary from among its members. The secretary attends board meetings and prepares necessary documentation under the direction of the executive officer or chair.
- 9.4 The Parish Education Advisory Board will appoint an executive officer.

## **10. Other Committees**

10.1 Other committees, or working parties, may be established by the Parish Education Advisory Board in response to identified needs of the Parish Education Advisory Board.

## **11. Appointment of Parish Education Advisory Board Members**

11.1 The parish priest will appoint Parish Education Advisory Board members nominated or elected under categories 8.1 (d), (e) and (f).

11.2 In the event of a casual vacancy, the vacancy will be filled by appointment of the parish priest. Any person appointed to a casual vacancy shall hold office for the balance of the term of the member who is vacating the position.

11.3 The terms of appointment for members of the Parish Education Advisory Board are as follows:

- The four (4) parents of children at the school will be elected for three years, and may be re-elected
- The three (3) parishioners will hold membership for three years, and may be re-nominated

11.4 The term of appointment for the board chair will be for two calendar years and may be eligible for re-election.

## **12. Board Handbook**

Based upon this Constitution, the Parish Education Advisory Board shall produce and follow a Handbook to guide the operations and protocols of the Parish Education Advisory Board.

## **13. Change of Constitution**

13.1 This Constitution may be changed only if the parish priest, after consultation with the Parish Education Advisory Board, decides upon alterations or accepts any alterations proposed by two-thirds of the members of the Parish Education Advisory Board.

13.2 Notice of any proposed change to the Constitution must be given to Parish Education Advisory Board members, in writing, 14 clear days in advance of an extraordinary Parish Education Advisory Board meeting called specifically for the purpose of discussing the matter.

13.3 Notwithstanding the above, the parish priest may direct change(s) to the Constitution at any time.

## **14. Confidentiality and Solidarity**

Parish Education Advisory Board confidentiality and solidarity are key ingredients in building trust among members. At times, there will be a good reason to declare an issue, a paper and/or a discussion as confidential. This should be done by the chair prior to a Parish Education Advisory Board meeting.

Parish Education Advisory Board members should also respect the right of individuals to express their views freely at meetings without fear of being named outside the meeting as taking particular positions. A sense of trust and harmony among members is vital for the wellbeing of the Parish Education Advisory Board.

## **15. Conflict of Interest**

If a member of the Parish Education Advisory Board or a member of his or her immediate family has any direct conflict of interest in a subject or matter under discussion at a Parish Education Advisory Board meeting that member:

- must declare the relevant interest to the School Board
- must not be present during the discussion unless invited to do so by the person presiding at the meeting

- must not be present when offering advice to the Principal and Parish Priest
- may be included in the quorum for that meeting

This document was last updated in June 2019.

This Constitution was ratified by the parish priest on

Dated \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_