



## **THE CONSTITUTION OF THE PARENT ASSOCIATION OF SCOIL ASICUS NAOFA/STRANDHILL NATIONAL SCHOOL**

### **Preamble**

The constitution of the Parents Association of Scoil Asicus Naofa/Strandhill National School has been developed by the 2022/2023 Parents Association Committee, with guidance from the National Parents Council (NPC) of Ireland. The Scoil Asicus Naofa/Strandhill National School Parents Association has been affiliated to the National Parents Council since 2022 through an annual subscription.

The Education Act of 1998 gives a legislative basis for the existence, recognition, and purpose of a Parent Association. From the Act we can then assert that:

- A Parent Association is the structure through which the parents in a school can work together for the best possible education for their children.
- The Parent Association works with the principal, staff, and the Board of Management to build effective partnership between home and school.

### **The Role of the PA**

Although the Parent Association may organise many activities, these activities should all assist the association to achieve its two main roles within the school:

1. To work in partnership with the Principal, Board of Management, and the whole school community for the betterment of the children in the school
2. To support and empower parents to be active in the best interests of their children's educational lives.

### **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 Strandhill 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.

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.



3. (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.

### **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 commits to supporting activities that are inclusive, environmentally friendly, and sustainable.

As and when issues arise, the Parent Association can advise the Principal and Board of Management on policy issues and incidents that may require a review of school policy, e.g., Bullying, Safety, Homework, Enrolment, Behaviour problems etc. Also, the Parent Associations can suggest and/or organise extra-curricular activities.

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

All parents or guardians of children attending Strandhill National School will be deemed to be members of the Parent Association.

### **The committee of the Parent Association**

The members of the Parent Association will elect a committee with a maximum of 9 and a minimum of 5. This committee will have responsibility for representing the parents of Strandhill National School and managing the activities of the Parent Association.

### **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; they always remain 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 Parent Association which takes place at the beginning of the school year (end of September).

Each member will be elected for one year. At the AGM, all committee members step down, but they can be re-elected if 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.

The committee will ensure that places are available for new members each year.

Parents' representatives elected to the Board of Management are automatically members of the committee.

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

### **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.

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 Board of Management when planning the programme of activities for any particular year.

The committee will arrange with the Principal and Board of Management a system for ongoing communication.

At the annual general meeting (AGM) the committee will report to the parent body (the members) about its work.

The committee will manage and account for any funds raised, collected or expended by the Parent Association.



### **Finance**

The Parents' Association is required to be self-financing and will not be supported by or dependent on school funds. This will be enabled by the retainment of 10% of any funds raised by the Parents' Association and funds will be used for upkeep of the account and other funding needs that may arise.

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 maintain proper books of account, file all invoices, bank statements and other documents relating to the transactions of the Association and make a financial report to the general body of parents each year. 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 requires two signatures. The Treasurer and at least one other assigned member of the committee must sign all cheques drawn on the account.

### **Financial Management**

The bank statements for the Parents Association should be addressed to the Parents Association treasurer at the address of the school. A financial report should also be submitted to the school's board at the end of each school year and all financial documentation should be made available to the school's external accountant for inclusion in the annual accounts of the school.

Any funds raised by the PA will be lodged to the school account and ring-fenced for the specific purposes for which those monies were raised. All monies raised or generated for an agreed project for the school should be transferred to the school bank account as soon as is practicable and in accordance with the agreed timeline for the transfer of funds as set out in the agreement between the Board of Management and the Parents' Association.

### **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.

The approval of the board is needed prior to these funds being raised. It is essential that proper controls and procedures are put in place to safeguard such funds and in this context the following criteria apply:

- Any proposal to raise funds should be formally sanctioned in advance by the board.



- The board is responsible and ultimately accountable for all fund-raising carried out in the name of the school.
- Only the board can authorise the use of the school's name for fund-raising or any other external activity.

The PA committee will record the agreement reached between the Board of Management and the Parents' Association in relation to any fundraising, including;

- the purpose for which the funds are being raised,
- the manner by which the funds are to be raised,
- the timeline for the transfer from the Parents' Association bank account to the board of any funds raised and the estimated timeframe for the agreed project

The agreement will be recorded in the minutes of the Parents' Association committee meetings.

The following general conditions apply:

- The Parents' Association will consider the cost and expected income all fund-raising activities before commencement and give a brief summary to the board when requesting approval.
- A separate financial record will be maintained to manage and control all transactions associated with the fund-raising activity.
- Once completed, a full report setting out the income and expenditure for the activity will be submitted to the board.
- The financial records for all fund-raising activities should be available for examination by the external accountant and inclusion in the school's annual accounts.
- Only the board can authorise the expenditure of this money and this is carried out in accordance with the financial practice which applies to all other school expenditure.

### **Membership of National Parents Council Primary**

The Parent Association will maintain membership of National Parents Council Primary by annual subscription paid for from funds raised by/through the Parents Association.

### **Changing the Constitution**

Changes to the constitution can be made at the AGM or, if for an urgent reason, an Extraordinary General Meeting (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.