

The Constitution of Stepside Educate Together National School Parents' Association

1 AIM:

The Parents' Association is the structure through which the parents and guardians of Stepside Educate Together National School can work together for the best possible education for their children.

2 WHO WE ARE:

All parents and legal guardians of children attending Stepside Educate Together National School are deemed to be members of the Parents' Association.

The members of the Parents' Association elect a number of members who will be known as the PAC (Referred to in this document as PAC).

3 PAC RESPONSIBILITIES:

The PAC will:

- 1) Represent the views of the parents/legal guardians of Stepside Educate Together National School.
- 2) Promote the interests of the students in co-operation with the Board, Principal, teachers and students, in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998.
- 3) Design and manage a programme of activities (PAC Roadmap) that will promote the involvement of parents in the school and advance the aims and objectives of the school in consultation with parents and in accordance with their wishes. Not all parents/legal guardians will be in a position to become involved on the PAC 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.
- 4) Provide opportunities for discussion, information and consultation about matters of common and/or topical interest to parents, teachers and pupils of the school.
- 5) Support the school through fundraising. Fundraising for the school by the PAC may only be carried out with the prior approval of the Board of Management.
- 6) Work with Board of Management to identify how money fundraised by PAC is invested for the benefit of our children.
- 7) Support the school with various school events and activities for children of SETNS and/or their parents/legal guardians as requested by the Principal.
- 8) Support the parent body through dissemination of information pertaining to parenting and supporting your child in primary school through talks, etc.
- 9) Manage Extracurricular Activities on behalf of the Board of Management.
- 10) Welcome new parents/legal guardians and create an environment where parents can get to know each other. Coffee mornings and other events may be held by the PAC to engage with the wider parent body.

- 11) The PAC will communicate regularly with the parent body in line with the school communications policy.
- 12) The PAC will be responsible for ensuring that all parents are consulted on issues which are pertinent to the entire parent body.
- 13) The PAC 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). Any new policies or policy reviews should be provided to the PAC for comment/feedback.
- 14) Consult with the school Principal and Board of Management when planning the programme of activities or roadmap for any particular year.
- 15) Arrange with the Principal and Board of Management a system for ongoing communication as per School Communications Policy.
- 16) Report to the parent body (the members) about its work at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).
- 17) Manage and account for any funds collected or expended by the PAC. These will be passed to the Board of Management as agreed however the Committee are responsible for documenting these funds.

4 RESTRICTIONS:

- 1) The PAC shall not involve itself in matters relating to the internal administration of the School.
- 2) The PAC shall not involve itself in the day to day running of the School.
- 3) The PAC recognises that issues relating to individual pupils or parents and/or teachers are a matter for determination between the individual pupil and/or parents/guardians and the school authorities.

5 PAC STRUCTURE:

- 1) The PAC is structured in a way that will allow for new parents to join and choose their level of engagement during the year. There are officer roles, that will require a more continuous commitment, and subcommittee roles that might have a more defined requirement at specific times of the year. If people are interested, they may join more than one subcommittee. Anybody in any role in the PAC may also be the lead or a member of a subcommittee or activity. In this way, there is room for more people to get involved (or people can double-up if there are fewer volunteers some years).
- 2) Please see document titled: **Roles and responsibilities PAC 2019 WIP** for the detailed description of the roles of The PAC.

6 PAC MEMBERSHIP:

- 1) The members of the Committee will be elected each year at the AGM of the Parents' Association.
- 2) 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.
- 3) No member of the Committee will hold the same officer position for more than three consecutive years.

- 4) Parents/Guardians interested in joining the PAC are invited to put themselves forward at the PAC yearly AGM and they will need to be seconded in order to join the PAC.
- 5) The minimum number of members is 7. If there are less than 7 volunteers, the PAC will call an EGM where parents will be asked to step forward or the PAC might need to be dissolved and all PAC activities will need to be cancelled.
- 6) At the first PAC meeting, PAC members will be asked to put their names forward for the different roles. If there is more than one candidate per role, an election must be held where a simple majority of the votes will decide which candidate will be elected.
- 7) A Committee member will cease to remain on the Committee if they have no child attending Stepside ETNS, i.e. their child has been removed permanently from the school register.
- 8) Any Committee member absent for more than three consecutive committee/subcommittee meetings without apologies shall be deemed to have resigned from the committee.
- 9) If a vacancy arises during the year of office of the Committee such vacancy may be filled by another PAC member or if an election took place at the first PAC meeting, the co-option will follow election results. If a vote is required, a simple majority will suffice.
- 10) Parent representatives elected to the Board of Management are automatically members of the Committee but will not hold an officer post.
- 11) Before the first PAC meeting, all members will receive a copy of the constitution and PAC Roles and Responsibilities. At the first meeting, members will be asked to sign a document confirming that they have read both documents in full in order to be officially accepted to the PAC. This is to ensure all members are signatory of the Constitution and the responsibilities of the Committee.

7 SUB COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTIES:

- 1) The Committee may delegate work to subcommittees as it chooses and set up for particular tasks.
- 2) All subcommittees must be led by members of the PAC but not all members of the subcommittee must be PAC members.
- 3) The subcommittees may not make decisions; they remain at all times accountable to the main Committee. Subcommittees shall report to the Committee at the monthly meetings of the Committee.
- 4) The Committee may at any time, at its sole discretion, dissolve a subcommittee.

8 REQUIREMENTS OF ALL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- 1) Members are required to positively support the activities of the PAC and school policy.
- 2) Members are required to actively attend and participate in any Fundraising and Supervision of any event hosted by the PAC that they are available for and to give notice of whether or not they will attend.
- 3) Members should be Garda vetted.
- 4) Members have no authority to take important decisions that might impact the PAC structure or events when meeting members of the Board of Management or School Principal. Key PAC decisions need to be made at the PAC meeting or at least with the knowledge and agreement of Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary.

9 ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS OF OFFICER ROLES

As well as the requirements described in section 8 above, the committee members who have an officer role also must:

- 1) Attend Monthly Committee meetings and report on progress/delegate another member of the Committee to provide updates at the monthly meetings.
- 2) Ensure their duties are met in full as outlined in this Constitution and the “PAC Roles and Responsibilities” document.

10 MEETINGS

10.1 Monthly Committee Meetings:

- a) A Monthly Committee meeting shall be held each month except during the school’s holidays, or in some exceptional cases, as often as the business of the PAC requires.
- b) As there is no maximum number of people that can join the PAC, and in order to keep meetings effective, a maximum of 16 members (including one of the BOM Parent Reps and Teacher Rep) will be invited to the monthly meetings.
 1. Chairperson (Officer role)
 2. Deputy Chairperson (Officer role)
 3. Secretary (Officer role)
 4. Treasurer (Officer role)
 5. Extra-Curricular Activities (ECA) Officer*
 6. Fundraising Officer*
 7. Parent Involvement Officer* (PIO)
 8. Special Event Officer*
 9. Communications Officer*
 10. Class Reps Lead*
 11. Teacher Rep
 12. BOM parent Rep
 13. Special Event Lead* (Event1)
 14. Special Event Lead* (Event2)
 15. Special Event Lead* (Event3)
 16. Special Event Lead* (Event4)

* May lead a subcommittee

- c) Leads of specific events/activities shall attend *some* of the PAC monthly meetings to give updates on their areas (e.g. calendars / engineering week). This way, there is a regular group at every meeting, then a number of additional volunteers on a rotating basis.
- d) The quorum required for a meeting to go ahead is 6.
- e) Motions proposed at the Committee meetings shall be passed by a simple majority of those present at the meeting and entitled to vote, the Chairperson having in addition to his or her ordinary vote a casting vote. The Chairperson or in his/her absence the Vice-Chairperson, shall have power to preside at all general meetings and Committee meetings.
- f) All meetings are to be held following due notice provided to all members of the Committee via text or email, with not less than 7 days’ notice to be given in advance of this meeting.
- g) All Committee Meetings will be held in the school.

- h) The Agenda will be distributed at least one day before the meeting.
- i) The Minutes of each meeting must be kept by the Secretary and sent to PAC members and agreed at the subsequent meeting.
- j) The Agenda may follow the following format:
Minutes of Previous Meeting (to be agreed and signed by Chairperson following proposal and seconding)
Correspondences
Chairperson's Report
Treasurer's Report
Subcommittee Report (where applicable)
Fundraising Items
School Support Items
Any other issues or concerns
Agree items for Communication to Parents through Newsletter/Notes
- k) Confidentiality must be maintained at all times. Breach of confidentiality may lead to a Vote of No-Confidence in a member and dismissal from the Committee. Only items agreed for communication to parents, as per agenda, are acceptable items of information to discuss.

10.2 Term Committee Meetings:

- a) A meeting for all members of the PAC (including subcommittee members) shall be held approximately 3 times a year, that is near the beginning of each term, or in some exceptional cases, as often as the business of the PAC requires.
- b) Anyone who is on the wider PAC group is invited to attend this meeting.
- c) There will be a recap of the activities held the previous term.
- d) There will be planning/brainstorming for the term ahead to ensure that everyone agrees we are on track.

10.3 Annual and Extraordinary General Meetings:

- a) An Annual General Meeting of the Parents' Association shall be held at a venue to be decided by the Committee.
- b) The Annual General Meeting shall be called every year. It is recommended to have this meeting before October 31st each year.
- c) Extraordinary General Meetings will be called by the Committee when it deems it necessary to do so or when it receives a written request by Parents and/or Guardians of 20% or more of the pupils enrolled in the School.
- d) Fourteen days' notice shall be given of any Annual General Meeting.
- e) Seven days' notice shall be given of any Extraordinary General Meeting.
- f) The Secretary and Treasurer will submit Annual Reports for consideration by the members attending the Annual General Meeting.
- g) At the AGM, the PAC will give an overview of the work they did over the last 12 months and the work planned for the following school year. Parents have the opportunity to ask questions or give feedback on the roadmap.

10.4 BOM/PAC Meetings:

- a) The BOM and PAC will aim to meet twice a year (Sept/Oct & Feb).
- b) At a minimum the following roles will be invited to attend: Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and ECA Officer. Depending on the agenda, other roles may also attend.

11 FINANCE:

- 1) The PAC will finance its activities through fundraising specifically for the work of the PAC. Fundraising for the school by the PAC will be done with the prior approval of the Boards of Management.
- 2) Other than for the reimbursement of costs and ongoing functional expenses of the PAC, no funds shall be disbursed or spent by the PAC without the prior approval of the Board of Management of the School.
- 3) A member of the Committee must not make any commitment regarding expenditure without the sanction of the PAC treasurer and chair. They need to ensure the expenditure is in line with approved items by BOM and deemed reasonable and justifiable.
- 4) The PAC will agree with the Board of Management as to the specific purposes for which funds are to be raised by the PAC.
- 5) All funds raised should be transferred to the BOM as soon as is practicable.
- 6) All income and expenditure of the PAC should be documented on an on-going basis and regular updates should be provided to the BOM treasurer and always on request.

12 CONSTITUTION AMENDMENTS:

- 1) Constitution should be reviewed in each school year.
- 1) Changes to the constitution can be made at the AGM or an Extraordinary General Meeting.
- 2) Proposals/motions to change the constitution must be submitted in writing to the PAC. The PAC will then circulate these motions to all parents before the AGM/EGM. All parents of children in the schools at the meeting are eligible to vote on the proposals.
- 3) The Constitution of the Parents' Association and all amendments therein requires the approval of the Board of Management.

13 MEANS OF OPERATION:

- 1) The Parents' Association may affiliate to the National Parents Council Primary each year by annual subscription.
- 2) The Parents' Association may elect the appropriate number of Member delegates to the County Branch of the National Parents Council.
- 3) The PAC will remain independent, but may affiliate to other bodies and associations, where such affiliation will be deemed to be of benefit to the Parents' Association and the schools.

14 INSURANCE AND LIABILITY

The PAC of Stepside Educate Together National School will ensure an adequate level of insurance is maintained at all times to cover liabilities which may arise through the execution of all PAC Activities.

15 HIRE OF SCHOOL PREMISES

The PAC will adhere to all conditions of use as outlined by the Board of Management in relation to the use of the school for PAC activities.

16 COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PAC

No member of the PAC will represent the Committee in communications with the Principal, Board of Management, parent body or outside agencies other than the members outlined in the roles and responsibilities listed in the PAC Roles and Responsibilities document.

17 COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

1) Informal Stage

It is expected that all complaints and grievances in relation to the work or conduct of the PAC will be made to the PAC Chairperson and dealt with on an informal basis and that an informal response to a complaint or grievance at this stage will be sufficient to resolve same. It would be usual that the Chairperson of the PAC would respond to all such matters on behalf of the PAC.

2) Formal Stage

- a. Where a complaint or grievance was not resolved at the informal stage, the complaints or grievances in relation to the work or conduct of the PAC must be made in writing to the PAC through the Chairperson of the PAC. The complaint should be signed and dated by the complainant before it is processed through the procedure.
- b. The Secretary will read the correspondence at the next PAC meeting and a written response will be agreed by the Committee and sent to the complainant within 5 school days of the meeting. The Secretary should keep a copy of the correspondence and the response with the minutes of the meeting.

18 VOTE OF NO-CONFIDENCE IN A COMMITTEE MEMBER

- 1) Any Committee member who brings the Committee or the school into disrepute or whose conduct is negative towards the work of the Committee or the school will be asked to resign from the Committee if the Chairperson ascertains that the majority of the Committee wishes this to occur. If a member chooses not to resign, a member of the PAC will be removed following a Vote of No-Confidence by the majority of the PAC.
- 2) A Vote of No-Confidence may only be made following a Motion of No-Confidence by a member of the Committee which is supported by two other members of the Committee. The Chairperson must ascertain that there is the required support from the minimum of three members for a Motion of No-Confidence to proceed.
- 3) A Motion of No-Confidence may not be tabled at a meeting without prior notice. All Motions of No-Confidence must only occur as the sole item on a Committee Agenda. The Chairperson will ask

the Secretary to call the meeting of the members. The members must be informed of the sole item on the Agenda and the member against whom the Motion is being tabled.

- 4) The Chairperson should inform the member against whom the Motion is being made of the reasons for the Motion and the names of those proposing and supporting the Motion. All Committee members must be given 7 days' notice of the meeting.
- 5) At the meeting, the member making a Motion of No-Confidence must outline the reasons for the Motion.
- 6) The member of the Committee against whom the Motion of No-Confidence has been tabled will be entitled to respond to a Motion of No-Confidence.
- 7) Any Committee member present at the meeting will also be entitled to speak on the Motion.
- 8) All speakers will be given no more than ten minutes to speak on the Motion.
- 9) The Committee will then vote on the Motion.
- 10) The Chairperson will count the show of support for or against the Motion and this will be recorded in the minutes by the Secretary.
- 11) Where the motion is passed, the Chairperson will thank all members for their input and inform the Committee member that their membership of the Committee is terminated and the meeting will be closed immediately.
- 12) Where the motion is not supported, the Chairperson will thank all members for their input and ask all members to move forward in a positive manner for the benefit of the school and the pupils. The meeting will be closed immediately.
- 13) Any member who loses their Committee membership will not be allowed hold a position on the Committee for three Consecutive Terms.

Signed this day __ / __ / ____

Signature of Chairperson of the PAC _____