

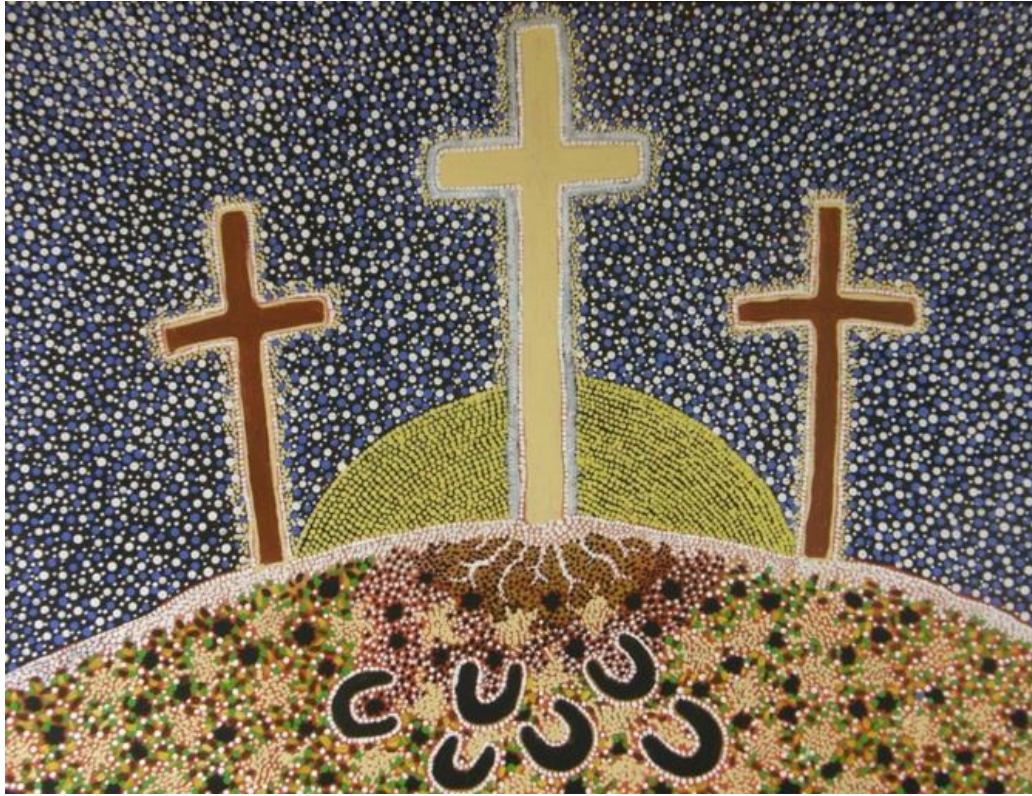
A guide for implementing a **P&F Association** or a **PEG** in schools

FOR PRINCIPALS and PARENTS/CARERS



Federation
of Parents & Friends
Associations
DIOCESE OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

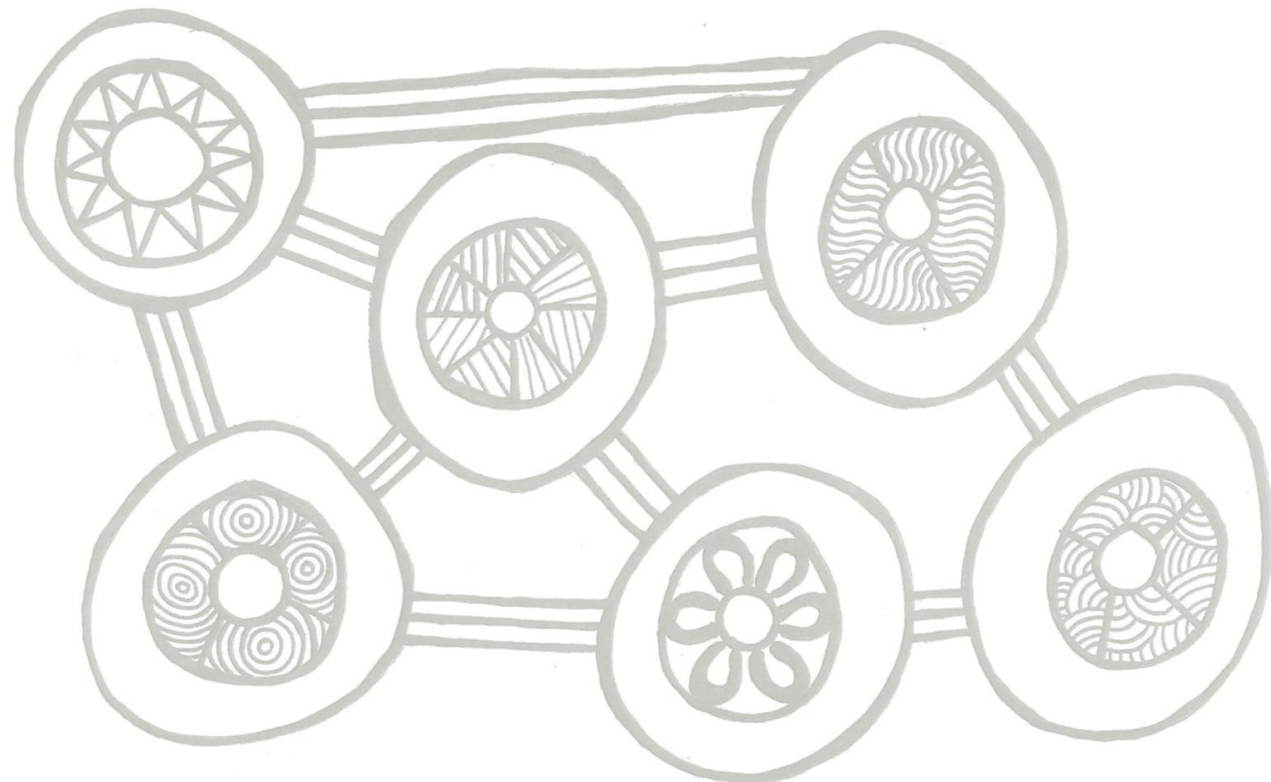


We acknowledge and respect the traditional custodians of the land we have gathered on today.

We acknowledge the spiritual relationship that Aboriginal people have with this Country.

We pay our respects to the Elders past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the nation.

May we walk gently on this land.





Opening Prayer

Lord, thank you for the opportunity to meet today.

May we engage with each other with faith and perseverance.

May we manage each situation with wisdom and value.

May we speak and serve with integrity and purpose.


Lord, we invite you to work within us today.

Amen.

Our Catholic schools are places that understand, respect and value the dignity of each child and their family. As part of their nature and purpose, Catholic schools in the Maitland- Newcastle Diocese commit to fostering partnership between parents and staff in the education of their children.

Catholic schools acknowledge and deeply support the role of parent and carers as first educators and seek to partner with families to ensure each child is nurtured to their potential.

Parent and carer groups established within schools offer an opportunity for families, school staff and Clergy to gather, explore, discuss, imagine, implement, support, encourage and journey together as we work in community for the benefit of the children and young people enrolled in our schools.



Schools do not
replace parents,
but complement
them

Pope Francis, Amoris
Laetitia, 2016

Parents must cooperate closely with the teachers of the schools to which they entrust their children to be educated; moreover, teachers in fulfilling their duty are to collaborate very closely with parents, who are to be heard willingly and for whom associations or meetings are to be established and highly esteemed.

Canon 796–2



P&F Associations

P&F Associations are the formal, traditional model for parent groups in schools. In our Diocese, P&Fs are governed by the Parents & Friends Association Constitution, a 'rule book' which provides direction on how to run a P&F meeting and guidance for members who nominate and are elected to Executive roles.

Each P&F Association elects parent or carer members to act in the following roles:

- President
- Vice President
- Treasurer
- Secretary



Each P&F Association also elects two (2) Federation Delegates to be their representatives at the diocesan peak parent body – the **Federation of P&F Associations.**

A New Constitution and Model

In 2020, the **P&F Associations Constitution** was reviewed to ensure it reflects the current needs and dynamics of family and school life, including a focus on family engagement in student learning to strengthen the partnership that exists between home and school.

Uppermost in discernment was ensuring any new Constitution and new model supported improved outcomes for students and allows parents and carers to be authentically engaged in their child's education.

As a result, an alternate model to a traditional P&F Association, called a Parent Engagement Group (PEG), was developed as an option for school communities. Voting to endorse these changes took place at the 2020 AGM and were ratified by Bishop Bill in December 2020.

Our school communities now have a choice and can decide whether they have:

1. A formally constituted **Parents and Friends Association (P&F)**

OR

2. A **Parent Engagement Group (PEG)**

Both options allow for parents and carers to gather and work in partnership with their child's school to share the work and decision making in the education of their child.

The PEG model focuses on supporting authentic family engagement in student learning to strengthen the partnership that exists between home and school.

Parent Engagement Groups at a Glance

- ▶ The PEG operates using a structured meeting with a published agenda
- ▶ The PEG is led by the Principal or their delegate
- ▶ Note/Minute taking to be managed by the Principal or a volunteer to be identified for this purpose
- ▶ The focus of the forum is to be authentic community engagement and include an educative component, to build capacity amongst parents and carers
- ▶ The group will maintain an ability to fundraise if desired by the community
- ▶ Any use of funds will need to be managed in accordance with Sections 4, 5 ,17 and 19 of the P & F Constitution to ensure s83c of the Education Act and appropriate governance requirements are complied with
- ▶ 'Project groups' can be developed based on need and the interests of the school and parent body
- ▶ The forum will allow the promotion and deeper understanding of policy and procedure within schools and offer an opportunity for collaboration and feedback regarding policy development and review as required
- ▶ Federation Delegate(s) are to be elected as this maintains a diocesan parent presence
- ▶ Any funds remaining following the dissolution of a P & F Association are to be held in the school account in a separate dissection account titled 'PEG' and the acquittal of funds is to be treated using the rules set out in the Constitution

Choosing the Right Parent Group for Your School

The school community determines whether their needs are best served by implementing a **Parents & Friends Association (P&F)** or a **Parent Engagement Group (PEG)**.

This may be best achieved by arranging a meeting of parents and carers and inviting the parish priest so that together all stakeholders can identify the needs of the community and make a collaborative decision regarding the most appropriate group.

The following diagram is designed to assist the meeting decision-making process.

Does your school have a functioning P&F Association?

Yes
↓

Does your school want to continue to hold P&F Association meetings or strengthen the Association?

Yes
↓

Great!
A new Constitution was voted on during the 2020 AGM, it is included in this document

No
↓

No problem!
Your school community can adopt the Parent Engagement Model (PEG)



Note: Your current P&F Association will need to be appropriately dissolved. The Constitution offers guidance for this.

No
↓

Does your school community want to reinvigorate your P&F Association?

Yes
↓

Great!
A new Constitution was voted on during the 2020 AGM, it is included in this document

No
↓

No problem!
Your school community can adopt the Parent Engagement Model (PEG)

Setting Up a PEG

If, following appropriate consultation, the community chooses to dissolve their P&F Association and establish a PEG, the following steps should be taken:

A resolution proposed at a P&F Association meeting by at least two members of the P&F Association should be circulated to the community with details of a Special General Meeting called for the purpose of dissolving the P&F Association and implementing a PEG. A period of 21 days' notice in writing (using the schools' usual channels of communication) of this meeting should be given to the community. (Ref: Section 23 – Parents and Friends Constitution 2020).

Any funds remaining in the P&F Association account following the dissolution of the Association and the payment of any expenses or liabilities accrued by the P&F Association are normally transferred to the school account.

School communities may choose to adopt a **Memorandum of Understanding** allowing residual funds to be transferred to a separate school account for the purpose and use of the PEG.

These funds will be able to drawn down by the Principal following agreement at a PEG meeting and given they are only used for the purposes outlined in the P&F Association Constitution i.e. for the purposes outlined in Section 4 of the Parents and Friends Association Constitution 2020.

Parent Engagement Group Guidelines

RATIFIED BY

BISHOP WILLIAM WRIGHT

Date: 4 December 2020



Purposes

The purposes of the PEG are:

- a) promoting the interest of the school and Catholic education generally by bringing together parents, students, clergy and teaching staff, both religious and lay, in a spirit of collaboration and close cooperation;
- b) providing a forum for members to raise and discuss issues related to the spiritual, social and academic development of their children, at school, diocesan, state and national levels;
- c) ensuring funds raised by the PEG are acquitted in accordance with section 83(c) of the Education Act 1990 (NSW). Funds of the PEG must be used:
 - I. in consultation with school leadership to provide resources and opportunities for enriching the learning environment; and,
 - II. in consultation with school leadership for helping the school acquire materials and equipment which otherwise could not be provided.
- d) reaching out to all associated with the school to build a friendly and welcoming community which seeks to involve all its members;
- e) providing a parental perspective to assist the Principal, Parish Priest and school staff in furthering the educational endeavours of the school;
- f) acting as a mechanism for representing parents when it is appropriate to do so;
- g) supporting parents in their involvement in their children's learning at home and school;
- h) providing opportunities for parents to gain insights into the life of the school, current developments in education and Catholic education in particular;
- and i) undertaking any other activities in furtherance of the above.

Limitation

- a) The PEG has no legal identity separate from the school. It is a consultative body established under the auspices of the Principal, who is responsible for carrying out the policies and directives of the Bishop, the Diocese and the Catholic Schools Office.
- b) The PEG has no authority in the day-to-day operation or management of the school.
- c) The PEG must seek the consent of the Principal, who may consult with the Parish Priest for activities of the PEG. In circumstances where the activity impacts the property of the parish, the Principals must consult with the Parish Priest. Consent must be in writing or recorded in the Minutes.
- d) The PEG has no capacity whatsoever to enter into contracts in its own name.
- e) The PEG must not distribute any income or assets, directly or indirectly to its members.
- f) All expenditure must be in keeping with Diocesan procurement policies particularly with regard to, but not limited to, Modern Slavery.
- g) Funds must only be used for the purposes of the PEG as set out in clause 4.2 of the Parents and Friends Association Constitution 2020.
- h) Fundraising must only be undertaken after consultation with the Principal. All correspondence regarding fundraising must be co-signed by the Principal.

Membership

All parents of students attending the school are the ordinary members of the PEG.

Meetings

- a) The focus of the meeting group is to be on authentic community engagement and include an educative component that builds capacity amongst parents and carers.
- b) The educative component is to be determine in collaboration with the Principal and may reflect goals or implementation strategies articulated in School Plans or the Annual School Improvement Plan (SIP).
- c) The group will allow the promotion and deeper understanding of policy and procedure within schools and offer an opportunity for collaboration and feedback regarding policy development and review as required.
- d) Meetings of the group should be held regularly. They may be held each month during the school term or once a Term. This decision should be made at the Inaugural PEG meeting and agreed to by the majority.
- e) The PEG operates using a structured meeting with a published agenda (see following agenda template).
- f) Note/Minute taking is to be managed by the Principal or a volunteer to be identified for this purpose. The Principal will maintain and store copies of Minutes. Copies of the Minutes shall be made available to the community
- g) Notification of the meeting should be provided through the usual channels of school communication allowing at least 7 days' notice of the meeting. A yearly calendar may be produced to identify dates for PEG meetings.
- h) Meetings may be held using technology in circumstances where a face-to-face meeting is not possible, or it is the preference of the Principal and community. Anyone using this technology to attend the meeting is taken to be present in person at the meeting.

- i) At the first or Inaugural meeting, the group should co-construct group operating norms to ensure empowerment of all.
- j) The group will maintain an ability to fundraise if desired by the community. Subgroups can be formed for this purpose and will report directly to the Principal (or their delegate). A report will also be made available to the PEG.
- k) “Project groups” such as garden, craft, hospitality groups can be developed based on need and the interests of the school and parent body. These groups will report directly to the Principal (or their delegate). A report will also be made available to the PEG.
- l) For the purpose of funds management for the PEG, the school Principal will maintain and report on the financial records for the PEG with these records to be made available at PEG meetings. Auditing of the funds will be included as part of the routine auditing process by the CSO.
- m) The Principal will deposit all fundraising monies into the school Catholic Development Fund (CDF) account with use of any funds to be made following collaborative decision making and recording of such decisions at a PEG meeting.
- n) The Principal may seek the assistance of parent/ carer volunteers to manage counting and recording of funds following a fundraising event. All funds are then to be held in the school safe until depositing into the school account coded as “PEG Fundraising”.

- o) The Principal (or their Delegate) will provide to the PEG the balance of the account at each meeting as well as any expenditure in line with decisions made at previous meetings.
- p) If funds are to be used for the purpose of holding a fundraising event (such as a BBQ), the school can cover the cost of these expenses with the monies to be reimbursed following the event unless the PEG agree to monies being used for this purpose.
- q) For the purpose of funds management for the PEG, the school Principal will maintain and report on the financial records for the PEG with these records to be made available at PEG meetings. Auditing of these funds will occur as part of the normal routine auditing processes carried out by the diocese
- r) Any use of funds will need to be managed in accordance with Sections 4, 5 and 19 of the P&F Constitution to ensure s83c of the Education Act and appropriate governance requirements complied with.
- s) Up to two (2) Federation Delegates are to be elected at an ordinary PEG meeting to represent the group at the meetings of the Federation of P&F Association. Names and contact details of the Federation Delegates are to be forwarded to the Family Engagement Officer at the CSO.
- t) In the event of a dispute, Section 18 of the Parents and Friends Association Constitution – DoMN (2020) applies.

Parent Engagement Group (PEG) Agenda Template

1. OPEN MEETING

2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

3. PRAYER (INAUGURAL MEETING – CO-CONSTRUCT GROUP OPERATING NORMS TO ENSURE EMPOWERMENT OF ALL)

4. APOLOGIES

5. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

6. PEG FINANCIAL REPORT

7. ANY PROJECT GROUP REPORTS

8. EDUCATIVE COMPONENT (INFORMED BY PARENT/CARER COMMUNITY) The Educative Component is intended to be an opportunity for parents and carers to engage more deeply in their child's learning. A presentation about an aspect of the curriculum such as Stage 3 Math work, supporting early reading or what is happening in Stage 4 Science or an opportunity to review and discuss policy and procedures implemented at the school can be included based on the community's needs. This supports parents and carers to partner with the school regarding decisions impacting their child as well as learn more about outcomes taught and ways they can support their child's learning at home.

9. AGENDA ITEMS

10. QUESTIONS (SUBMITTED PRIOR TO THE MEETING TO THE PRINCIPAL)

11. DETAILS OF THE NEXT MEETING (WHAT DO WE WANT TO LEARN ABOUT?)

12. MEETING CLOSES



Resources

The documents below are a selection of resources that you can use within your own school's P&F Association or Parent Engagement Group (PEG). These documents have been produced by the Federation of Parents & Friends Associations, Maitland-Newcastle Diocese.

- A Guide for Implementing a P&F Association or a PEG in Schools
- **For school use:** Constitution for P & F Associations (2020) - current as at 4.12.2020
- **For diocesan Federation use:** Federation of P & F Associations (2020)
- Resource Manual for P & F Associations 2022
- School Canteen Policy (2017)
- Council of Catholic School Parents (CCSP)