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School Advisory Council Charter

What are the Governance Arrangements of our School?

Good Samaritan Catholic Primary School (the School) is administered by the Parish Priest of Our Lady’s Parish, Craigieburn under the supervision of the Archbishop of Melbourne and is acknowledged as Catholic by his authority.

The Parish Priest reserves his authority in matters relating to:

* The Catholicity of the School
* Diocesan regulations
* Employment of staff
* The appointment and dismissal of the principal
* School finances

The Parish Priest has delegated responsibility for the overall governance of the School to the Principal. The Principal oversees the educational programs and developments in the School (and in the broader educational community) and must keep the Parish Priest abreast of these issues.

The Principal is also is responsible for the management and day-to-day operations and business of the School. The School Advisory Council has no responsibility for the internal management and administration of the School, which are the responsibility of the School principal.

An effective School Advisory Council is always underpinned by our Catholic identity and mission and therefore seeks to foster and support a community culture of:

* Engagement
* Learning
* Knowledge
* Responsiveness

What is the role of the School Advisory Council?

The fundamental purpose of the School Advisory Council is to ensure that all students receive the very best possible learning opportunities by engaging parents/carers as partners in an ongoing process of problem-solving and shared decision-making.

To fulfil this role the School Advisory Council strives to be a forum of discussion and ideas that represent the views of parents in relation to:

* Strengthening connections between families, children and the School staff
* Planning for future development of the School
* Planning of family engagement strategies and initiatives
* Engaging parents/carers in their child’s learning
* Promoting the work of the School within the Parish of Our Lady’s and the broader community of Roxburgh Park

Who are the members of the School Advisory Council?

Representatives of the parent/carer community who have voluntarily accepted a leadership role within the School Community so as to give parents/carers a voice in what’s going on at the School.

The Advisory Council is made up of no more than 12 parent/carer members who take on this role for a two-year period. The Principal and the two Deputy Principals are also members of the Advisory Council.

How do I become a member of the School Advisory Council?

To become a member of the School Advisory Council is easy.

1. The Principal will advertise for membership on the School Advisory Council via the School Newsletter.
2. Interested parents/carers complete an expression of interest form available from the School Office and return this to the Principal.
3. The School Management Team will review the expression of interest. If more expressions of interest are received than vacancies, the Principal will meet with all applicants to determine who is best suited.
4. The Principal will inform the interested parties of the outcome their expression of interest.
5. The Principal will inform the School community of the outcome via the School Newsletter.

Do I have to speak English to be a member of the School Advisory Council?

No. A translator will always be available to parents/carers who are not confident in speaking English. We want the School Advisory Council to be representative of the diverse cultural identity of our School community.

How does the School Advisory Council function?

The School Advisory Council:

* Takes on leadership roles for a range of activities and initiatives that assist to achieve our School goals.
* Advocates on behalf of the children and their families.
* Works collaboratively with all families and the School staff.
* Communicates regularly and effectively with all families.
* Builds trust within our School community through confidentiality, solidarity and transparent decision-making.
* Respects the right of individuals to express their views freely at meetings.
* Maintains an open invitation for all parents to attend meetings.
* Provides advice to the School Management Team to inform the effective and efficient running of the School

The School Advisory Council does not:

* Deal with issues of the day-to-day management of the School.
* Define School policy - it provides advice that is taken into account as policies are developed and reviewed.

When and how often does the School Advisory Council meet?

The School Advisory Council meets twice per School term, a maximum of eight times per School year.

The first meeting of each term is a ***workshop*** which runs from 6.30 - 8.00pm. This provides opportunity to collaboratively work on issues/tasks that are in development. All parents/carers are welcome to attend School Advisory Council workshops

The second meeting of each term is a ***meeting*** which runs from 7.00 - 8.00pm. This provides opportunity for reporting on progress, sharing information and consultation. These meetings are intended for members of the Advisory Council only.

Who sets the agenda for the School Advisory Council workshops and meetings?

Except for the first meeting of each year, the agenda for each workshop/meeting is set by the Council itself. This is done through a process of consultation at the end of each workshop or meeting. This ensures that the Council members have a strong sense of ownership and responsibility for setting the direction of the Council.

Where agreement cannot be reached, The Principal will make the final decision regarding the agenda.

What guides the work of the School Advisory Council?

The work of the School Advisory Council is guided by our School Values:

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| **Justice** | We recognise that each individual has both rights and responsibilities. We treat everyone fairly. |
| **Mercy** | We act with kindness and with a heart full of love. |
| **Compassion** | We seek to understand the needs of others and are willing to help them. |
| **Respect** | We value the sacredness and dignity of each person. |
| **Excellence** | We strive to be the very best we can possibly be. |

What are the priorities of the School Advisory Council?

During the period 2016-2018 the School Advisory Council will seek to support the School achieve its mission through focusing on the following five priorities:

1. **Be a living witness to the Gospel**

*Goal:* Inspired by the example of the Good Samaritan, we strive to be an inclusive community where all members of our School community have the opportunity to share in a living relationship with God

Good schools become better school when they are strongly connected with parents/carers as part of the learning community

1. **Achieving Excellence in Student Learning and Wellbeing**

*Goal:* Create a climate of inquiry and creative exploration of ideas so that students are supported and feel confident to engage in deep and powerful learning.

1. **Strengthen Community with Relationships**

*Goal:* Work in genuine partnership with our students, parents and caregivers, School staff, parish, and the wider community.

1. **Developing a Culture of Shared Leadership and Responsibility**

*Goal:* Promote collective and distributed leadership that builds a strong sense of community and shared responsibility for the future development of our School.

1. **Create a Contemporary Learning Environment**

*Goal:* Utilise our facilities and resources to the best possible effect and in the best possible combination to support improved student outcomes.

How will I know what work the School Advisory Council is doing?

The School Advisory Council will publish a report following each workshop/meeting via the School Newsletter. This report will detail:

* What the Council is working on
* What has been achieved so far
* What is planned for the next workshop or meeting

Review: February 2017