



Stella Maris Primary School  
Education Board  
GUIDELINES FOR OPERATION

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## **Introduction**

Stella Maris is a Catholic Parish Primary School, where Catholic values, ideals and attitudes are taught, practised and valued within a Christian community. We are committed to respecting the individuality of all children, while aiming to develop their physical, social, intellectual, moral and spiritual capabilities. Our broad curriculum, based on the Victorian and Australian Essential Learning Standards, is relevant and challenging and encourages excellence. Children are encouraged, in a positive manner, to be optimistic, focused, independent learners and parents are encouraged to be involved in the development of their child's learning. Specialist programs are offered in the Japanese Language, Visual Arts, Physical Education, Information and Communications Technology, Performing Arts and Library. Reading Recovery is available for selected Year 1 students and Maths Intervention for selected Year 1, 2 and 3 students.

### **Location and Composition of the School**

Established in 1956, Stella Maris is located in the Melbourne bayside suburb of Beaumaris, 22 kilometres from the City of Melbourne. In 2008, the parishes of St. Joseph's in Black Rock and Stella Maris merged to become the Catholic Parish of Nazareth, Rickett's Point.

Most students remain at Stella Maris from Prep until Year 6. Stella Maris' students mainly attend the following secondary schools; Kilbreda College Mentone, Star of the Sea Gardenvale, St Bede's College, Mentone.

The school itself is located amongst natural vegetation, including many attractive gum trees. Our school grounds include a mainly hard surfaced upper playground and a school oval. The upper playground has a basketball/netball court, a climbing adventure playgrounds as well as passive playing areas. The school oval includes a productive vegetable garden, a barbeque and playground equipment. Portable AFL goalposts and soccer goals allow the children to practice their skills. The oval adjoins the Parish Tennis Courts and some P-3 children are involved in private tennis lessons, at lunch time.

## **1. Vision Statement**

### ***Potential, Learning, Energy, Faith, Courage***

At the heart of Stella Maris is the desire to develop the infinite potential of every person.

Learning is a journey of endless possibilities where we are energised to seek and explore questions about the world around us.

Nourished by a strong sense of belonging is the foundation upon which our community can flourish.

Through Jesus Christ, learning enlivens our Catholic Faith, so that we can live, learn and grow with 'courage always'.

## **2. Mission Statement**

At Stella Maris our mission is to:

- Develop and nurture a deep understanding of Catholic Faith- its teachings, traditions, liturgy and the celebration of the sacraments and feasts. We come to know Jesus through Scripture and each other, as we follow His mission in our day to day lives.
- Provide the environment, skills and opportunities where individuals can develop a positive sense of self and foster healthy relationships.
- Interpret and design the curriculum so that it is inclusive, purposeful and challenging while demonstrating best teaching practice, so all learners will realize their full potential.
- Promote open, active and honest communication and democratic processes in a spirit of inclusiveness.
- Invite the community to participate in school and Parish based initiatives and seek ways in which we become active global citizens.

#### **4. Statement of Purpose**

Stella Maris' School Education Board has as its central purpose the realisation of the Vision of Stella Maris' School. The Board brings together the Parish Priest, Principal, parents, teachers and the parish community in a spirit of cooperation to serve and meet the needs of our children both now and for future generations.

#### **5. Aims**

- 1) To act as a forum for discussion on matters concerning education in the school.
- 2) To act as an advisory body to the Parish Priest and Principal, on matters concerning education in the school.
- 3) To provide a link between Parish Priest, Principal, parents and teachers in relation to the provision of Catholic education in the Stella Maris' Parish Community.
- 4) To promote community development by fostering a strong interrelationship between parish and school.

#### **6. Functions**

The Board's functions are outlined as follows:

- 1) Celebrating the integration of faith and life through parish and school experience.
- 2) Assisting in the formulation and review of school policy, in conjunction with the Parish Priest, Principal, school staff and parents.
- 3) Monitoring of the school's fees and levies.
- 4) Planning for the future and ensuring that the parish school can accommodate future enrolments.

- 5) If required, assisting the Parish Priest in the selection of a lay principal (b) when such an appointment is being made.
- 6) Working in collaboration with parish and school auxiliary groups to promote effective communication, and contribute to building the parish community by realising the school's vision and achieving its aims.
- 7) Developing strategies for the local promotion of Catholic education.
- 8) Delivering annual Parish Priest, Chairperson and Principal reports to the community at the AGM.
- 9) Enabling individual parents to speak on educational matters through their representatives.
- 10) Fostering adult education in faith.

The Parish Priest reserves his authority in matters relating to the functions of the Board.

*(a) The Parish Priest delegates the administration of the school to the Principal*

*(b) This appointment happens in accord with Diocesan Guidelines.*

In summary, the functions of the Board are carried out in relation to the following areas of responsibility:

- Education and Religious Education
- Building and Maintenance
- Policy and Planning
- Finance and Fundraising
- Welcome and Hospitality
- Enrolments
- Communication and Accountability

## **7. Membership**

(a) Attendance

Ordinary and extraordinary meetings are open to School Education Board members only. The Annual General Meeting is open to all members of the school community.

(b) Representation

Through membership on the School Board each person assumes a leadership role in the parish. Members must be committed to the values and principles outlined in the Statement of Purpose.

Members contribute equally to all discussions. In the final analysis, decisions are taken to build community through consensus and, if this is not achieved, by majority vote. The Parish Priest and Principal reserve the right to make any final decisions about recommendations made by the Board.

The membership of the Board shall be as follows: -

#### Ex-Officio Members

- Parish Priest
- Principal

#### Nominated Members

- Parish Priest's nominee
- Principal's nominee
- Parents' and Friends' Association President
- 4 Parents with children attending the school, elected by the parent community or asked to join to bring their skills to assist the Board. E.g. Building, finance, I.C.T.
- Other persons co-opted for a period of time to serve a particular need on the Education Board.

#### (c) Elections

All members of the Board, except ex-officio members, are to serve a three-year term. No Board member may serve more than two consecutive terms.

The Nominated representatives are to be annual appointments.

Parent representatives must resign from the Board when their children leave the school.

### **8. Office Bearers**

When the role of Chairperson is vacated, a new chairperson will be appointed at the first meeting after the AGM. The term of appointment for the chairperson is 2 calendar years. No Chairperson shall serve more than two terms consecutively.

The Board will appoint a Secretary who will be responsible for the minutes of each meeting and for other administrative tasks as may be necessary from time to time.

The Parish Priest, Chairperson, Secretary, Principal and a non- ex officio member form the Executive of the Board. The Executive will meet as required.

### **9. Sub Committees**

The Stella Maris' School Board may create Sub Committees from its membership. These Sub Committees have the option to co-opt additional members from outside the Board. Their work is to address specific tasks and perform specific functions from time to time on the Board's behalf.

Sub Committee should have at least one member of the Board among its membership. Each Sub Committee should be chaired by a Board member.

## **10. Nominations and Elections**

Written nominations for the relevant number of vacant parent representative positions are sought via the school newsletter.

If more nominations are submitted than places available, it will be up to the Parish Priest and Principal to allocate that vacancy to the nominee that best meets the need of the current Board. Things to consider include: demonstrated support of the parish and school, balanced parental representation across the school, the needs of the Board in regards to 'special projects', expertise of nominees and variety of expertise already on the Board.

### **10.1 Induction**

New School Board members will have an induction that helps them understand their individual duties and responsibilities, the aims and functions of the board and the processes and operations of the board. The induction will include:

Persons eligible to seek nomination to the School Board will be provided with a copy of the Federated Schools Board Guidelines. These documents must be returned to the school when they submit their application.

Within 21 days of their appointment new School Board members will be provided with a written package including:

- A copy of the School Education Board Guidelines
- A copy of the most recent Annual Report.
- A copy of the current School Improvement Plan and Annual Action Plan.
- A copy of the Meeting Minutes for the previous 12 months

Newly appointed School Board members will be encouraged and assisted to attend appropriate in-service at the CEM. A buddy mentoring system will operate within the board. The School Board Chairperson will, in consultation with members, allocate existing School Board members to advise, mentor and support new School Board members as required.

## **11. Resignation and / or Removal from the School Board**

Any member may resign from the Board by notice in writing. The Board may remove any elected representative who fails to attend three consecutive Board meetings without reasonable excuse. With permission from the Parish Priest and Principal, members are able to attend virtually, using Skype, if they are unable to attend in person. A parent member shall resign if his/her child/ren ceases to attend the Parish School. The Parish Priest has the power to remove any Board members who do not follow the Guidelines in relation to confidentiality or undermines the work of the Board.

## **12. Meetings of the Board**

### ***12.1(a) Annual General Meeting***

The Annual General Meeting of the School Board shall normally take place in Term 1 of the school year. The school community will be notified 14 days prior to the meeting by the calling for nominations to fill the positions which become vacant.

The Agenda will be published for the whole school community. At the meeting the Chairperson and Principal will provide an Annual Report. There should be an opportunity for those in attendance to ask questions. Written reports will be available to all parents on the school website.

Agenda items are determined by the Parish Priest and Principal, but generally include:

- Prayer
- Welcome
- Apologies
- Minutes of previous Annual General Meeting
- Actions from the previous meeting
- Parish Priest's Report
- Principal's Report
- P & F President's Report
- Questions
- Elections

Where there is more than one nomination for a vacancy, the Chairperson will call for a ballot amongst those present.

### ***12.1 (b) Ordinary Meetings***

The School Board shall meet for ordinary meetings no less than 3 times during the year. These may be attended by the members of the Board only. Meetings will be scheduled in the annual school calendar and agenda papers will be circulated no less than one week prior to the scheduled date. Agenda items are determined by the Parish Priest and Principal, but generally include:

- Prayer
- Welcome
- Apologies
- Minutes of previous meeting
- Actions from the previous meeting
- Parish Priest's Report
- Principal's Report
- P & F President's Report
- School Policies
- Other Business

### **12.1(c) Extraordinary Meetings**

Boards may call extraordinary meetings, if required. These may be attended by the members of the Board only. Minutes may be kept private and confidential.

Agenda items are determined by the Parish Priest and Principal.

### **12.2. Quorum for Meetings**

- For a quorum to be achieved a majority of Board members, plus one, must be present.
- If at the end of 30 minutes after the appointed time for a meeting of the Board, there is no quorum present, the meeting will stand adjourned to a time and place determined by the Board members present.
- A member of the School Board may be present at a meeting, in person or by video conferencing or teleconferencing.

### **12.3. Length of Meetings and Extensions of Meeting Times**

If business has not been concluded within 2 hours, the Chairperson shall ask the members whether they wish to defer the rest of the business until the next meeting or to extend the meeting. A motion is necessary if council wants to extend the meeting. The meeting will be extended for no more than 15 minutes.

If necessary, a motion to close the meeting early may be called by the Parish Priest or the principal.

### **12.4. Minutes**

- The Principal will ensure a draft minutes are kept by the Secretary are prepared after each Ed Board meeting and distributed to the Principal for approval and then forwarded to Ed Board members prior to the next meeting.
- The minutes will record the type of meeting (regular, extraordinary or executive); date, time and venue of meeting; names of attendees and apologies received from members; a record of the business of the meeting.
  - When minutes are submitted for confirmation, only questions regarding their accuracy as a record of the meeting are to be raised. Once the minutes have been accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting, it is recorded in the current minutes.

### **12.5. Correspondence to the Board**

In general, correspondence to the Board via email is sent to [info@smbeaumaris.catholic.edu.au](mailto:info@smbeaumaris.catholic.edu.au) The school admin officer will pass correspondence to the Principal and Parish Priest, who will then pass to the Board Secretary for distribution to members.

### **12.6. Conflict of Interest**

If an Ed Board member or a member of his or her immediate family has any direct conflict of interest (including a financial interest) in a subject or matter under discussion at an Ed Board meeting, they:

- must declare the conflict of interest
- must not be present during the discussion unless invited to do so by the person presiding at the meeting
- must not be present when a vote is taken on the matter
- may be included in the quorum for that meeting.

## **13. Grievance Procedure**

### **13.1. Objective:**

The objective of the Grievance Procedure is to resolve any disputes under the rules between:

- (a) a member and another member, or
- (b) a member and the Board.

### **13.2. Grievance Sub Committee:**

If required, a Grievance Sub Committee will be established to investigate and facilitate the resolution of any disputes of the nature described above.

The Grievance Sub Committee shall comprise (3) persons drawn from the Board of which one will be the Chairperson. The Board may change the composition of the Sub Committee at any time provided the Sub Committee remains constituted by Board members.

### **13.3. Grievance Officer**

A Grievance Officer will be appointed from the Grievance Sub Committee. The role of the Grievance Officer is to receive any grievances submitted to the Board and to ensure the Procedure described below is carried out.

### **13.4. Procedure:**

A member may initiate a grievance in respect of a dispute of a type described above by reducing the grievance to writing and lodging it with the Grievance Officer.

Upon receipt of the grievance, the Grievance Officer must call a meeting of the Grievance Sub Committee within 14 days.

Prior to the meeting the Grievance Officer must investigate the grievance including interviewing any persons whom may be the subject of the grievance or have some knowledge relevant to it.

The Grievance Sub Committee must offer the member who lodged the grievance and any member who may be the subject of the grievance, an opportunity to be heard and to submit any other matters relevant to it.

The parties to the dispute must meet and discuss the matter in dispute, and, if possible, resolve the dispute within 10 business days after the dispute comes to the attention of all the parties.

If the parties are unable to resolve the dispute at the meeting, or if the party fails to attend that meeting, then the parties must, within 10 days, hold a meeting in the presence of a mediator. The mediator must be a person chosen by agreement between the parties.

The Grievance Sub Committee must decide whether any action under the rules or otherwise should be taken arising from the grievance and advise the Board of such action.

The Board at the next scheduled meeting, may confirm, modify, or reject the decision of the Grievance Sub Committee. The decision of the Board will be final.

All parties to the dispute including the member who lodged the grievance must be advised in writing of the Board's decision.

### **13.5. Proviso:**

This Procedure is not intended to alter a member's right arising out of any other rules under the Guidelines for Operation.

## **14. Confidentiality**

At certain times matters before the Board may be considered confidential. Confidential matters should be identified as such, and any documents must be marked accordingly.

Once this has occurred, members must refrain from discussing, outside the meeting situation, the information and dialogue shared at the Board meeting.

In general, the opinions shared by Board members should not be reported outside the meeting by reference to any one person.

Any matters regarding the competence of staff, or about individual student progress, should be referred immediately to the Principal or the Parish Priest.

Complaints are referred to the Complaints Management Policy.

It may be appropriate to discuss matters outside the meeting during the consultation or information gathering stage prior to any decision on the advice being reached that the School Board is offering the Parish Priest and Principal.

Once a decision is made, it is expected that School Board members will represent that decision, regardless of their personal opinion.

Members of the school community may request an issue be added to the agenda however as the SMSEB is advisory in nature, the principal and parish priest will decide whether it is added to the

agenda. Issues may be suggested by submitting a brief written request to the Principal, at least 10 business days prior to a School Board Meeting. If the School Education Board does not have the authority to deal with the issue, the person will be advised that it will not be discussed by the Board.

The issue should be written in dot points and be no longer than one page in length. It should include the nature of the issue, including possible outcomes sought by the relevant person.

If the issue is discussed by the Board and where practicable, the School Principal and/or School Board Chairperson undertake on behalf of the School Board to provide initial feedback to the person submitting the issue within 14 days of it being discussed by the School Board, and thereafter as appropriate.

Nothing in this formal process prevents persons within the school community from having informal discussions with School Board members at any time.

### **15. Board Solidarity**

It may be quite appropriate to discuss matters outside the meeting during the dialogue or information gathering stage prior to any decision being reached.

Once any decision is reached it is expected that Board members will represent that decision regardless of their personal opinion.

### **16. Conflict of Interest**

If a member of the School Education 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 School 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 the meeting
- must not be present when offering advice to the Principal and Parish Priest
- may be included in the quorum for that meeting.

### **17. Member Folio**

Each Board member will be issued with a folio to file all relevant correspondence. All members must bring along this folio to meetings. It is a point of common reference. Folios will be passed on to new members to assist with the induction process.

### **18. Amending these Guidelines**

The School Board has the power to amend this document by agreement through consensus of its members. If consensus cannot be reached a majority will suffice by vote.

Appendix 1: **School Education Board Nomination Form**

**Nominee**

I hereby nominate for a position on the Stella Maris School Education Board:

Print Name:		Telephone:	
Address:			
Signature:		Date:	
Commencing:		Board Position:	

**Secunder**

(A seconder supports the nominee's application and is from another family to the nominee)

Print Name:		Telephone:	
Address:			
Signature:		Date:	
Commencing:		Position:	

**Nominee**

I wish to nominate for a position on the School Education Board for the following reasons:
If selected, I believe that I would bring the following qualities to the School Education Board:
I have demonstrated support of the parish and school in the following ways: