



DIOCESE OF SALE
CATHOLIC EDUCATION LTD.



DIOCESE OF SALE **CATHOLIC EDUCATION LTD**

St James
School Advisory Committee
Charter

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1. Profile of Our Parish and School

1.1 History of the Parish and School

St James Catholic School is a small primary school situated on 5 acres in the country town of Nar Nar Goon, 65km east of Melbourne. Established in 1975, St James has the advantage of close proximity to the urban growth corridor while still enjoying the positive communal aspects of a rural environment.

The church and school are on the same site, providing a close relationship between school and parish.

1.2 Vision Statement for the School

We are committed to our faith community, fostering an environment where ALL students and teachers reach their potential.

1.3 Mission Statement for the School

- We engage in continuous dialogue with each other, with students and the wider community
- We plan an evolving curriculum which has entitlement for all and promotes high expectations for every student
- We foster strong leadership which empowers every teacher to lead in learning and teaching
- We enact rich teaching through purposeful, creative and targeted approaches, using high quality data to personalise learning

2. Definitions

The **Bishop** is the Catholic Bishop of the Diocese of Sale or the person duly appointed to be Administrator of the Diocese.

The **Parish** is as defined by the Bishop in accordance with Canon Law.

The **School Advisory Committee** is the body responsible for advising the principal according to the provisions of this Charter.

3. Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Limited

Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Sale (excluding Lavalla Catholic College, Traralgon and Catholic College, Sale) are owned and operated by Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Limited (DOSCEL). The Board of DOSCEL is the governing authority and is committed to support and promote the principles and practice of Australian Democracy as outlined in the Victorian Registration and Qualification Authority Advice Standard.

As per the Constitution Clause 4.1 (a) DOSCEL is committed to support and promote excellence in Catholic education.

The sole Member of DOSCEL is the Bishop.

Please refer to the Constitution of DOSCEL. This is available on the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission (ACNC) website via the link below.

<https://www.acnc.gov.au/RN52B75Q?ID=D513009F-FA0B-4812-BBA7-97CC4882119C&noleft=1>

4. Parish and School

The relationship between the parish and the school in the provision of Catholic education is crucial to the faith development and learning outcomes of students, the enlivening of parish life and the development of community. It is important that schools and Advisory Committees:

- recognise, develop and maintain fruitful relationships within the parish
- recognise the role of the school in the overall mission of the parish
- recognise the contribution of parish to school
- understand relationship of school to parish
- play an active role in the life of the parish, including the education of all within the parish.

Catholic schools:

- practise and celebrate Christian values
- offer an outstanding education as schools of first choice for Catholic parents
- provide religious education and opportunities for faith development in communities where prayer and sacramental celebrations are integral
- partner the Church in faith education
- are welcoming communities and promote quality interpersonal relationships

- work in partnership with parents in the education of their children
- strive to be inclusive and safe, and to foster a strong sense of wellbeing for staff, students and parents
- employ qualified and caring teachers committed to the ethos of Catholic education
- educate students for engagement in civic and public life, involving community service and issues of social justice
- provide high quality academic, social and vocational education through expert teacher practice
- provide a high quality religious education curriculum
- build innovative learning environments that are focused on achievement, challenge, creativity and engagement
- are available to families across Victoria, in city, regional and remote areas
- are committed to the achievement of the public goals of excellence and equity
- provide a cost-effective service to the community
- are accountable for the proper expenditure of government funds and parent fees
- are accountable to parents and governments for student learning.

5. The Governing Principles for the School Advisory Committee

The establishment of the School Advisory Committee coincided with the changes brought about by Vatican II for the laity to take a more active role in the Church and the expansion of the Catholic education sector in the late 1960s and 1970s.

The Bishop and DOSCEL support the establishment of an Advisory Committee for schools which encourages partnership and participation of school, parish and the wider community in the life of the school and parish.

While the provision of a school environment that supports the Catholic ethos is ultimately the responsibility of DOSCEL, the priest, principal and school staff, and Advisory Committees share this responsibility and play a significant role in supporting the spiritual and educational welfare of students.

Governing authority rests with the Board of DOSCEL.

The School Advisory Committee operates as the principal consultative and advisory body in the school. The School Advisory Committee is advisory to the principal. This body acts as an adviser on strategic planning, support to the principal, school improvement and development, policy and general leadership, the sole purpose ultimately being to serve and work toward the mission and vision of the school.

6. Governance and Authority

6.1 Parish and Canon Law

Within the provisions of Canon Law, the parish priest—in consultation with the parish community—is responsible for providing for the Catholic education of parish children and young adults, as well as the catechetical formation of the faithful and outreach to those who are no longer practising their faith or who do not profess the Catholic religion.

The school is governed by DOSCEL as owner and operator of the school.

The School Advisory Committee provides advice to the principal within the context of this Charter and the vision statement of the school.

6.2 Diocese

With the approval and under the direction of the Bishop, the school has been established to provide Catholic education according to the precepts, teachings and practices of the Catholic Church.

This school is administered by DOSCEL as owner and operator of the school. The sole Member of the entity is the Bishop.

The governance of this school is undertaken by DOSCEL with the support of the executive team of the company and the principal.

The School Advisory Committee provides advice to the principal within the context of this Charter and the school's vision and mission statements.

DOSCEL reserves authority in matters relating to:

- the Catholicity of the school
- Diocesan regulations
- policy
- employment of staff
- the formation and dissolution of the Advisory Committee
- appointment of Advisory Committee members and office bearers
- the appointment and dismissal of the principal
- school finances
- school enrolments related to parish boundaries.

6.3 Advisory Committee Responsibility

The School Advisory Committee is responsible to the principal, who in turn is subject to the vigilance of DOSCEL.

6.4 Principal

The School Advisory Committee has no responsibility for the internal management and administration of the school, which are the responsibility of the school principal under the supervision and direction of DOSCEL.

7. Land and Buildings

7.1 Ownership

The ownership of land and buildings thereon is vested in the Roman Catholic Trusts Corporation for the Diocese of Sale, which shall hold such in trust for the parish or member parishes in accordance with Canon Law. This is set out in the following agreed formula for participating parishes.

8. School Advisory Committee Purposes

The purposes of the School Advisory Committee are to:

- act as an advisory body to the principal on matters concerning education in the school
- act as a forum for discussion on matters concerning education in the school
- provide a link between the parish priest, principal, teachers and parishioners in relation to the provision of Catholic education in the parish community
- promote community development by fostering a strong inter-relationship between the parish, the primary school and Catholic secondary colleges.

9. School Advisory Committee Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the School Advisory Committee are to:

- promote the Catholic ethos of the school
- provide feedback on and review of school policies
- plan for the future of the school and its ability to accommodate future enrolments
- provide advice on budget planning and finance-related matters
- contribute to the selection process for the school principal
- provide advice on the appropriate provision of faith development and Religious Education programs
- promote child safety in the school

10. The School Advisory Committee

10.1 Membership

10.1.1 The School Advisory Committee shall be composed of at least eight (8) members who appreciate value and share the educational mission and ethos of the Catholic Church. It shall consist of:

- a) the school principal (acts as chair, unless the Principal nominates a chair)
- b) the parish priest/priests (if they wish to be on this committee)
- c) four (4) parents of children attending the school elected by the parents of the school, including a nominee of the parent and friends association
- d) up to three (3) parishioner representatives nominated by the parish priest
- e) other persons co-opted by the principal for a period of time to serve a particular need on the School Advisory Committee.

10.2 Membership Requirement

- 10.2.1 All members of the School Advisory Committee must hold a current Working with Children Check or current Victorian Institute of Teaching registration.

10.3 Ordinary Meeting

- 10.3.1 The School Advisory Committee should meet at least five times per year and at least once in every two months.
- 10.3.2 A quorum comprises a majority plus one of School Advisory Committee members at the time of the meeting and members must be present at all times during a meeting.

10.4 Annual General Meeting

- 10.4.1 The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the School Advisory Committee shall be held once a year.
- 10.4.2 A school annual report is to be presented at the AGM and communicated to DOSCEL.

10.5 Office Bearers

- 10.5.1 The chair of the School Advisory Committee is the principal, unless nominated otherwise by the Principal.

10.6 School Advisory Committee Executive Committee

- 10.6.1 The School Advisory Committee shall form an Executive Committee which may comprise:
- a) Principal
 - b) chair (if this is not the principal)
 - c) deputy chair
 - d) parish priest (if on the committee)
 - e) non ex-officio member of the Committee
- 10.6.2 The School Advisory Executive Committee provides support to the principal and the School Advisory Committee.

11. Other Advisory Committees

Other committees, or working parties, may be established by the School Advisory Committee in response to identified needs of the school.

Examples could include:

- Fundraising Committee
- Faith Formation Committee
- New Building Committee
- Parents and Friends

A committee must have clear terms of reference and clarity in terms of accountability.

12. Appointment of School Advisory Committee

- The principal will appoint members nominated or elected under categories 10.1.1 (c) and (d).
- Any person appointed to a casual vacancy shall hold office for the balance of the term of the member who is vacating the position.
- The terms of appointment for members of the School Advisory Committee are as follows:
 - a) The four (4) parents of children at the school will be elected for up to three years and may be re-elected.
 - b) The parishioners per clause 10.1.1 (d) will hold membership for up to three years and may be re-nominated.
- If the Chair is not the Principal, the term of appointment for the Committee chair will be for two calendar years and may be eligible for re-election.

13. Advisory Committee Induction Handbook

Based upon this Charter, the school will produce an induction handbook to guide the operations and protocols of the School Advisory Committee.

14. Change of Charter

This School Advisory Committee Charter may be changed only if approved by the Board of DOSCEL and the Bishop of Sale.

15. Confidentiality and Solidarity

School Advisory Committee confidentiality and solidarity are key ingredients in building trust among members. At times, there will be a good reason to declare an issue, a paper and/or a discussion as confidential. This should be done by the chair prior to a School Advisory Committee meeting.

School Advisory Committee members should also respect the right of individuals to express their views freely at meetings without fear of being named outside the meeting as taking particular positions. A sense of trust and harmony among members is vital for the wellbeing and effectiveness of the School Advisory Committee.

16. Conflict of Interest

All members of the School Advisory Committee have an obligation to declare any pecuniary interests or conflict of interest with respect to the school and the proper exercising of their duties as School Advisory Committee members. This is in accordance with the DOSCEL Conflict of Interest Policy.

This Charter was ratified by DOSCEL on:

Date _____

Name **Maria Kirkwood, Chief Executive Officer, DOSCEL**

Signature _____

This Charter was ratified by the Bishop of Sale on:

Date _____

Name **Most Rev. Patrick O'Regan**

Signature _____