

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE PARENTS AND FRIENDS ASSOCIATION OF ST JAMES AND ST JOHN CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Purpose of the Parents and Friends Association

The purpose of the Parents and Friends Association (PFA) is to provide a structure through which the parents/guardians of children attending St. James and St. John Church of England Primary School can work together. The PFA will work with the Head Teacher, staff and Board of Governors to build an effective partnership between home and school.

Under the Education Act, 1998 Section 26. – (1) the parents of students of a recognised school may establish, and maintain from among their number, a parents' association for that school and membership of that association shall be open to all parents of students of that school. (2) A parents' association shall promote the interests of the students in a school in co-operation with the board, Head Teacher, teachers and students of the school and for that purpose may (a) advise the Head Teacher or the board on any matter relating to the school and the Head Teacher or board, as the case may be, who shall have regard to any such advice, and (b) adopt a programme of activities which will promote the involvement of parents, in consultation with the Head Teacher, in the operation of the school.

(4) (a) A parents' association shall, following consultation with its members, make rules governing its meetings and the business and conduct of its affairs. (b) Where a parents' association is affiliated to a national association of parents, the rules referred to in paragraph (a) shall be in accordance with guidelines issued by that national association of parents.

The Aim

The aim of the PFA is to enable parents*:

- to play their part in assisting in furthering the objectives of the school as laid out in the School Improvement Plan
- to provide an opportunity for parents to work with the school through the organisation of fund raising activities which contribute to the best possible education for the children.
- to promote the interests of the students and the school
- to help to develop co-operation and understanding between parents and the School
- to enable parents and staff to build community spirit through social events

*"parents" to mean parents, friends and supporters of the school - see membership section below.

The Work

The PFA will undertake a programme of activities that will promote the involvement of parents and which will support pupils, parents and school staff. In planning its activities, the PFA will consult with the Head Teacher.

Membership

All parents and guardians of children attending St. James and St. John Church of England Primary School will be deemed to be members of the PFA. Membership will also be open to friends and supporters of the school.

The Committee

The members of the PFA will elect a committee with a maximum of 12 and a minimum of 6. This committee will have responsibility for representing the parents of St. James and St. John Church of England Primary School and managing the business of the PFA. The committee must ensure all areas of the school are adequately represented.

Subcommittees

Subcommittees can be set up for particular tasks. Subcommittees may also co-opt people to assist in their work. Subcommittees may not make decisions; they remain at all times accountable to the main committee.

Election of the Committee

The members of the committee will be elected each year at the AGM of the Parent Association. 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.

Parent representatives elected to the Board of Governors are automatically members of the committee, but will not hold an officer position on the PFA committee.

No member of the committee will hold the same officer position for more than three consecutive years.

Roles of the Committee

At its first meeting each year, the committee will elect, for a term of one year, a Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer from amongst its members. A simple majority will determine the outcome of the election for those posts. In the event of a tie the matter will be decided by the drawing of lots. The Officers may hold the positions for a maximum of three successive years but must be re-elected by the members of the committee each year. If for any reason an officer is unable or unwilling to continue to act the committee will elect a replacement from amongst its members at the next available opportunity. Until that time, the committee may co-opt a parent/guardian to the vacancy until the next AGM.

If a member does not attend three consecutive committee meetings, without prior notification to the Secretary, he/she will be deemed to have resigned from the committee. The committee does not have to accept any apologies.

The Work of the Committee

The PFA committee will be responsible for ensuring that all parents are consulted on issues which are pertinent to the entire parent body. The Parent Association committee will advise the Head Teacher and Board of Governors on any matters relating to the school in accordance with the Education Act, 1998, 26.- (2)(a).

The committee will:

- draw up a plan for the activities of the association, in consultation with parents and in accordance with their wishes
- be responsible for seeing that activities are run in an efficient and effective way
- consult with the Head Teacher and Board of Governors when planning the programme of activities for any particular year
- arrange with the Head Teacher and Board of Governors a system for ongoing communication
- manage and account for any funds collected or expended by the Parent Association.

The committee will hold at least one meeting each term. The Chairperson or, if the Chairperson is unavailable, a committee member chosen by the members present is in charge at each committee meeting. The Secretary will record the minutes of the meeting for approval at the next meeting. For decision-making purposes, a quorum at a committee meeting will be six members.

All decisions of the committee (save for the election of officers) will be decided by a simple majority of all members voting on an issue and in the event of a tied vote the Chairperson will have a casting vote.

Annual General Meeting

An Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the members of the PFA will be held at the beginning of the Autumn Term each year. At least three weeks' notice of the date of the AGM will be given, in writing, to the members of the PFA. The notice will include the agenda for the AGM and notification of upcoming vacancies on the committee. Twenty parents will constitute a quorum for the AGM.

Any parent or guardian interested in seeking election to a vacancy on the Committee should inform the Chairperson of the Association in writing at least two weeks before the AGM. Each member of the committee will be entitled to vote in elections in respect to vacancies arising.

At the AGM the committee will report to members about both the activities of the PFA and its financial position, including the accounts for the previous financial year.

Any amendment to the constitution should be passed by a simple majority of those attending the AGM. Notice of any proposed amendments should be submitted in writing to the Secretary, not later than two weeks before the due date of the AGM.

Finances

The PFA committee will finance the activities of the Association through fundraising. The committee will apply all funds raised by it to further the aims of St. James & St. John Church of England Primary School. All funds include any surplus of income over expenditure. The committee will endeavour to maintain a modest surplus at the end of each financial year.

The financial year for PFA accounts will be 1 September to 31 August.

The Treasurer will be responsible for keeping account of the income and expenditure of PFA finances. The Treasurer will give a statement of income and expenditure at each committee meeting.

A written statement of income and expenditure will be given at the AGM and a copy will be forwarded to the Board of Governors for their information and to the school for auditing.

The PFA will keep a bank account in its name. Each cheque issued requires two signatures: the Treasurer or Chairperson and the Head Teacher.

In the event of the dissolution of the PFA, all its assets will pass to the Board of Governors.

Fundraising for the School

Fundraising for the school by the PFA will be done with the prior agreement of the Head Teacher. The PFA committee will agree with the Board of Governors and Head Teacher as to the specific purposes for which funds are to be raised by the PFA.

Changing the Constitution

Changes to the constitution can be made at the AGM or, if for an urgent reason, an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) can be called for that specific purpose.

Proposals to change the constitution must be submitted in writing to the PFA committee. The committee will then circulate these proposals to all parents before the AGM/EGM. All parents of children in the school at the meeting are eligible to vote on the proposals. The constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast.

Emergency General Meetings

An EGM may be called at the written request of either not less than twenty current members or by any two officers of the committee or by the Head Teacher. The request should state clearly the reason for the meeting. Such a meeting will be convened within 30 days of receipt of a properly constituted request. Twenty parents will constitute a quorum for the EGM.

Adopted by St. James & St. John Church of England Primary School Parents and Friends Association on:

Signature of Chairperson:

Signature of Secretary (witness):