Stella Maris Primary School
Education Board
GUIDELINES FOR OPERATION

The Education Board Guidelines should be read in conjunction with the Stella Maris School Education Board Constitution.
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1. Introduction

As our vision and mission statements articulate, 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. In 2016 there are 14 classes from Prep to Year 6, with an enrolment of 330 students, from 213 families comprising of 144 girls and 186 boys. Most of our families live locally and walk, ride or drive to school. Our class structure includes 2 grades of Prep, Year 1, Year 2, Year 3, Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6.

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 Prep children are involved in private tennis lessons, at lunch time.

2. Vision Statement

Stella Maris is a school where:

- Catholic traditions and Gospel values are central to all that we believe, value and teach.
- We aim to build a community that embraces these values within relationships that are Christ centred.
- Every person feels safe, nurtured and valued as we build relationships and celebrate individual differences. We also develop life-long personal, social and emotional skills so that every person can develop, thrive and contribute to their world.
- Students engage in relevant, contemporary learning to become successful contributors to their world within a global context. Learning styles and individuals are valued and students are inspired to become lifelong learners.
- All individuals are considered to be leaders demonstrating relationships and processes which are supportive, consultative and guided by a clear moral purpose.
Stella Maris is a friendly and welcoming Catholic community which encourages and fosters active partnerships within the Parish and wider community.

3. 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.
- In a spirit of inclusiveness, promote open, active and honest communication and democratic processes.
- 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 all 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. (a)

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) 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.

(b) 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. Meetings of the Board

10.1(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 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.

10.1 (b) Ordinary Meetings

The School Board shall meet for ordinary meetings no less than 3 times during the year. 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

10.1(c) Extraordinary Meetings

Boards may call extraordinary meetings, if required. These may be attended by the members of the Board only.

Agenda items are determined by the Parish Priest and Principal.

10.2. 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.

10.3. 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.

10.4. 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.

10.5. Correspondence to the Board

In general, correspondence to the Board via email is sent to info@smbeaumaris.catholic.edu.au. The school admin officer will pass correspondence to the Board Secretary for distribution to members.

10.6. 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.

11. Grievance Procedure

11.1. 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.

11.2. 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.

11.3. 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.

11.4. 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 14 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.

11.5. Proviso:

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

12. 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 Resolving Complaints and Concerns policy.

13. 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.

14. 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.

15. 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.