



Pinewood PS Parents' Club Policy

Purpose

Many government schools have a parent club. A parent club not only benefits students, but enriches and contributes to the wellbeing of the school community through positive interaction and support.

The role of the Pinewood Primary School parent club (Pinewood Parents Club) is to:

- provide support, in various forms, for the school, its students and community.
- work in co-operation with the principal, principal's nominee, staff and school council in building effective partnerships between home and school.

The Pinewood Parents' Club:

- is not a sub-committee of school council.
- has no formally prescribed powers or duties.

The parent club's aims and objectives should be consistent with the powers accorded to, and duties of, a school council.

Parents and school staff are partners in children's education. By interacting with the school and other parents, parent club members gain a firsthand understanding of how schools operate and the rhythm of school life. Parents participating in a school's parent club can use, and build on, their skills and confidence, develop friendships and work collaboratively with other parents interested in supporting the school.

Activities

Parent club members provide invaluable support and organisational input to the school in a number of ways, including:

- establishing valuable links between teachers and parents
- working in consultation and agreement with the principal or principal's nominee
- organising information and welcome events for new students and parents at the school
- helping with other school events and functions, such as a fun run, book fair, debutante ball



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- organising second-hand book and uniform schemes
- organising fundraising activities
- helping to cater or work at fundraising activities
- assisting in the preparation of school newsletters, handbooks and calendars
- channelling parent views to school leadership about school policies, such as anti-bullying, codes of behaviour, etc. that have been identified by the school for review.

The parent club works in co-operation and partnership with the school principal or principal's nominee. The principal has many roles including the responsibility for the day-to-day leadership and management of the school.

Principals or principal's nominees take an active interest in the activities and operations of the club and where possible, attend club meetings, in part, for the purpose of reporting on matters of interest to the club, to respond to questions and to give advice where necessary. Principals or principal's nominees also meet with the club's President, and other members, as needs require, to discuss events and activities.

Formation

The establishment and procedures for running parent clubs are governed by the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2007 and Department guidelines.

If there is no existing parent club at the school, and there is sufficient interest from a number of parents in forming a club, one or two interested parents should arrange to meet with the principal to discuss the possibility of formally establishing the new parent club.

The formal process is outlined below:

On receiving a written request signed by at least six parents of students at a Government school, the principal must:

- convene a meeting for the purpose of forming a parent club
- take reasonable steps to circulate a notice informing the school community of the meeting (at least 14 days before the meeting).



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Any member of the school community may attend the meeting. If the decision is to formally establish a club those present at the meeting must appoint an interim committee to:

- adopt the model constitution, see: Model Constitution (doc - 87kb)
- add the club's details and arrangements to the constitution
- seek the approval of the Minister for the formation of the club under the terms of that constitution, and
- conduct meetings necessary for the purposes of the above.

In adopting the constitution, interim committee members should note that a parent club's aims and objectives should be consistent with the powers accorded to, and duties of, a school council.

When the committee and the school's principal or principal's nominee receives notification that the constitution has been approved by the Minister, an inaugural meeting of the club is called and the principal or principal's nominee will conduct the election of office bearers. All future meetings will be called in accordance with the constitution.

Draft parent club constitutions should be sent for Ministerial approval to:

Manager
School Operations and Governance Unit
Regional Monitoring and Support Division
Department of Education and Training
GPO Box 4367
MELBOURNE 3001

Or by email to: community.stakeholders@edumail.vic.gov.au (preferred)

Operational Requirements

The operational requirements of the Parents Club are detailed in the Pinewood Parents' Club Constitution (adopted October 2016). These requirements include: membership, office bearers, meetings, voting and representation on School Council.



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Pinewood Parents Club Financial Members (also known as "Committee Members")

Any Parent/Guardian or Carer of a child currently enrolled at Pinewood Primary School may become a Financial Member of the Pinewood Parents Club by attending the Annual General Meeting and paying a small nominal fee (currently \$1).

In general it is important that all Financial Members are dedicated to the work of the Pinewood Parents Club by sharing the workload, participating in the activities and events of the Pinewood Parents Club when they can, and taking responsibility for the decisions it makes. Committee Members need to have common goals and shared interests as well as respect for one another's ideas and opinions.

Office Bearers (*See also Pinewood Parents Club Constitution 4. Office Bearers*)

Financial Members may be nominated or nominate themselves for an Office Bearer's position such as President, Secretary, Treasurer or another office as required. It is preferable that nominees have already sat on the committee as a financial member, not only to ensure they have an understanding of how the Parents Club is currently run, but also so they understand the level of commitment that is required and what is expected of them. This includes:

- Attending committee meetings on a regular basis (usually monthly)
- Respecting the rights of others to express their opinions and be heard
- Respecting the decisions made in meetings
- Acting honestly, in good faith, and in the interests of Parents/Guardians and Carers of students of Pinewood Primary School

Finance and Fundraising

When running a Parent Club, a separate financial account must be maintained for the purpose of:

- (a) the administrative functions of the parent club; and
- (b) the raising of funds by the parent club for the benefit of the school.

There are two different options available for the organisation of accounts: The Club account must be either:

- a separate subprogram maintained for the parent club within the school's official account (Option A) or
- a separate bank account maintained by the parent club (Option B).

Pinewood Parents Club currently use Option A.



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For details on financial arrangements for parent clubs see the *Finance Manual for Victorian Government Schools* (page 11), see: School Financial Guidelines - Finance Manual for Victorian Government Schools

Parent clubs that choose to operate under Option B, (with funds that are not held in the school council's official account), are required to seek advice from Consumer Affairs Victoria regarding registration as a fundraiser under the *Fundraising Appeals Act 1998*, see: Consumer Affairs Victoria - Clubs and not-for-profits

If a club plans to raise funds by means of a raffle or bingo or other minor gambling activities, permission and instructions must be obtained from the Victorian Commission for Gambling Regulation (VCGLR), see: Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation - Community and Charitable Gaming

Payment to Members

The club shall not be for profit or gain of its individual members.

Fundraising

The club may undertake fundraising activities, with the prior approval of the school council, having as their object the establishment or augmentation of school funds or funds for a particular school purpose.

The school council must not reject a fundraising activity until it has considered a recommendation by a committee consisting of:

- the President of the school council or the President's nominee, who must be the chairperson; and
- one other representative of the school council elected for the purpose by the school council; and
- 2 representatives of the parents club; and
- the principal.

Source: Education and Training Reform Regulations 2007

The club's finances will be audited along with those of the school.

Where funds raised are used to establish or augment school funds, the school council will determine how the funds are expended after consultation with the parent club and the principal as to what is most desirable in the interests of the school.



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Dissolution of a parent club

A club may not be dissolved unless:

- all reasonable steps have been taken to circulate a notice of the proposed dissolution generally throughout the school community; and
- a meeting to discuss the notice of dissolution is held not less than 14 days after the circulation of that notice; and
- at least two-thirds of those present at that meeting agree to the dissolution.

Following this meeting, if a decision is made to dissolve a parents' club under the Regulations the following actions must be taken:

- all property and other assets are to be transferred to the control of the school council; and
- a person present at the meeting must report the dissolution in writing to the school council as soon as practicable.

The school council must report as soon as practicable the dissolution to the Minister and advise him or her of the completion of actions outlined above.

When a school closes, the parent club is dissolved as a matter of course.

Where schools merge, the schools involved close and then form a new school entity. If the schools have parent clubs, the clubs will also close. A new parent club can be formed once the new school entity has been established. Any funds from the closed parent clubs go to the newly merged school entity. It is the school's decision how the funds are allocated.