PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Collaborative Learning Community

“Parents, teachers and children working together to facilitate learning.”

Barry Dwyer

Working Together
The primary role of a Catholic school is to support parents in the faith education of their children. Parents play an integral role in the life of the school and can contribute in many positive ways to the education of their children. When children see their parents and teachers sharing common beliefs, attitudes and goals, they feel more secure and demonstrate a greater sense of self-worth.

Parental Involvement
Parents are involved at Notre Dame Catholic Primary School:

• as parent helpers in the classroom, particularly in areas such as literacy activities, art and craft and physical education.
• as volunteer helpers for various activities such as canteen, library, uniform committee, busy bees, or helpers on excursions.
• as members of the school community they elect, and may be elected, as members of the School Board.
• as parents in the school they are members of the Parent Representative Council and may be elected to serve on the council each year.
• by supporting various social functions and fund raising activities held throughout the school year.

Parents, as outlined in the Enrolment Policy, commit to an active participation in the life of the school.
Philosophy
The staff of Notre Dame Catholic Primary School recognises the value of utilising the skills and talents of volunteers in the classroom and appreciates the assistance that volunteers give to teachers in providing a wide range of activities for their students.

Objectives
The PALS program:
• endeavours to capitalise on the skills, knowledge and experience of the wider school community who are willing to volunteer their time to assist students and teachers.
• aims to provide an additional and otherwise unobtainable level of practical support and assistance for students.
• aims to provide the volunteers with the necessary understandings and a range of techniques and strategies that will enhance the skills and capabilities they are already able to offer.

Role of the Volunteer
• To provide direct and indirect support to students through tasks and activities that are planned, directed, allocated, coordinated, monitored and evaluated by the classroom teacher.
• Are at all times under the direction and supervision of the teacher.
• Will encourage and expect appropriate behaviour, provide friendship, support and general help in building self-esteem in the students and will offer genuine praise and admiration when it is earned.

The Importance of Confidentiality
Any quality interaction with others in the course of day to day living requires respect for their dignity and privacy. Confidentiality, commitment, consistency, trust and respect are all essential elements in establishing and maintaining effective relationships and meaningful interactions.

These principles are of particular importance for any person involved in the welfare and education of children. It is the responsibility of any person involved with children and consequently, his or her family, to have respect for the dignity and the privacy of the child and the child’s family. Whether that involvement stems from a formalised paid position or from a less formalised and voluntary capacity, it is essential that trust and confidentiality is preserved and protected at all times.

There is a greater awareness today, generally, on the part of the community, of the ethical and moral issues involved in dealing with information concerning others. There are several generally accepted guidelines and principles that organisations and professionals abide by or utilise. Within the Catholic Education system of Western Australia, policy guidelines on the use of confidential and sensitive information in school were developed and endorsed by the Catholic Education Commission in 1993. All persons working with children and their families in Catholic schools in Western Australia are required to adhere to these guidelines at all times.

The basic principles underlying confidentiality of information relate to trust, discretion and respect. Often students, parents or caregivers are willing to provide information because they trust those with whom they are dealing. All personal information must be respected and, in the majority of instances, be regarded as confidential.

The privacy of the individual should be respected, preserved and protected at all times.
Every effort is made to maintain an open line of communication between home and school. Trust and openness is needed by all parties in the best interest of all members of the school community.

Parent Information Evenings
At the beginning of each school year, each year level holds a Parent Information Evening. The purpose of this is to inform parents what is expected of their children in each of the different year levels.

Teacher and Parent Interviews
Formal opportunities for communication between the school and parents exist throughout the year. The Principal and teachers are available to answer any queries regarding your child’s education, but we ask you make an appointment through the office so that a mutually convenient time can be arranged.

Newsletter and Term Calendar
The weekly newsletter is uploaded to the school website every Thursday afternoon during term time and hard copies are available in the office. A term calendar outlining important dates is published at the beginning of each term; please refer to this regularly. Any other important notices will be sent home with the eldest child.

Progress Reports
Throughout the year, teachers will endeavour to keep parents fully informed about their child’s progress through student work books, student outcomes, interviews and reports. Regular communication from parents is also encouraged.

Detailed formal reports are sent home at the end of Term Two and Four. Teachers ensure parents have the opportunity of an interview if requested. A photocopy of each report is filed in the child’s school Record File, kept in the Office.

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Prayer Assemblies
Praying as a community is an important part of the Catholic identity of Notre Dame Catholic Primary School. As such, the children gather in the covered assembly area every Monday morning for a short prayer assembly conducted by the teachers. At this time, any messages for the week may also be issued to students. Parents are most welcome to attend these assemblies. We request that parents remain reverent during the prayer and refrain from talking to children or other parents.
Class Assemblies
Assemblies are another way through which parents are informed about what happening in the classrooms and what children are achieving. School assemblies, at which classes present items and merit certificates are given to students, are held on Fridays at 8.50am. The dates for these assemblies are on the term calendar and in the school newsletter. Attendance by parents at assemblies is strongly encouraged.

School Board
The School Board is responsible for the financial management and future planning of the school. The School Board administers all the finances associated with the school and is responsible to the Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia. Income received by the school consists of parent paid school fees, levies, State and Commonwealth Government Grants and Parish contributions.

Functions of the School Board:
(a) Planning for the present and future operation of the school.
(b) Providing membership on selection panels for the employment of staff to the school in accordance with Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia policy.
(c) Providing membership on the panel that recommends the appointment of a Principal in accordance with Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia policy.
(d) Disseminating information about the school and about Catholic education to persons and organisations in the school community.
(e) Liaising in all matters relating to the financial management of the school with persons and organisations in the local Catholic community.
(f) Managing all the finances associated with the school.
(g) Advising the Principal with respect to school policy.

The School Board members can include the principal, the parish priest, representatives of the Parent Representative Council, the Parish Council and six other parents who are elected at the Annual School Community Meeting.

The School Board meets monthly, on the second Tuesday. The Annual General Meeting is held in November of each year. A report by the Board Chairperson is given, the provisional budget for the ensuing year is presented and new Board Members are elected.
The School Board for 2016 will consist of the following elected members of the community:

Fr Nelson Po (Ex-officio)
Mr Darryl Winsor (Ex-officio)

Mario Fisicchia- Chairman
Brynsley Chilton- Secretary
Tanya Secker- Treasurer
Jocelyn Jancik
Leonard Lau

Parent Representative Council (PRC)
The Parent Representative Council consists primarily of all parents and guardians of pupils enrolled at Notre Dame Catholic Primary School. It forms an integral part of the life of the school.

In 2011, the inaugural Parent Representative Council was formed to work in collaboration with the Principal and Leadership Team. The council was formed with the following objectives in mind:

Consultative
1. To facilitate a climate of open communication between parents and the school through the Parent Representative
2. To be a forum in which the school can express the opinions of parents and obtain feedback about the formulation and implementation of educational policies and practices

Educational
1. To assist parents to achieve the goal of being the primary educator of their children by providing opportunities for their personal and faith development.
2. To organise activities to meet the developmental needs of parents

Social
1. To provide opportunities for social interaction between members of the school community
2. To contact and encourage new members of the community to participate in school activities
**Fundraising**

1. To organise fundraising activities for resources that would not normally be able to be provided in the school budget
2. To establish sub-committees to organise any fundraising functions deemed necessary

Parents on the council are required to be involved in three ways:

1. At class level, as a class representative – building class community, welcoming new families and school-parent liaison
2. At school level – organizing community building, fundraising or parent education activities
3. At community level- organizing volunteers for *Notre Dame Care*, a parish/school based initiative in community care

The Parent Representative Council devised a *Code of Conduct* for all parents at the school in 2011.

In valuing the link between home and school we invite parents to share in school celebrations and activities such as:

- Parent help in the classroom (PALS)
- School masses and Liturgies of the Word
- School assemblies
- Sporting events
- Excursions
- Guest speakers
- Parent Information Evenings

These are only a few examples of how parents can be involved with their children at school.
CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PARENTS OF NOTRE DAME CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

(Established by the Parent Representative Council 2011)

As parents of Notre Dame Catholic Primary School, we work collaboratively and constructively with the principal, the staff and the wider community.

We, therefore:

• are supportive with attendance and participation at school events e.g. Masses and Liturgies, canteen, classroom activities, sporting activities and excursions.
• are proactive with offers of help and assistance at school events.
• encourage other parents to be involved in school events.
• approach the right person with concerns and offer a positive solution or compromise.
• reinforce school rules to our children and follow them ourselves.
• are supportive of the school and be positive. Sell our great school to others.
• have open lines of communication between parents and staff.

As parents of Notre Dame Catholic Primary School, we value and respect the Catholic identity of the school, the relationship with the parish and the expression of the Catholic ethos and Catholic beliefs.

We, therefore:

• encourage families to attend Masses, liturgies and parish events.
• involve children and parents in parish functions and events.
• speak positively in front of children and others in the community about the school and the parish.
• discuss the Religious Education topics the children are studying at school in the home.
• become informed about parish and church issues in order to guide our children.
• accept and respect the Catholic identity of the school.
• encourage prayer at home.
• reinforce the religious practice and teachings of the school.
• reinforce and show Christian values by being a good role model.
As parents of Notre Dame Catholic Primary School, we contribute to a welcoming and inclusive community.

We, therefore:
- encourage participation in community events and community services.
- adopt a buddy system for new parents.
- take the lead with ‘outside’ social gatherings for parents and families.
- display friendliness.
- model good manners.
- utilise the parent representatives to inform parents of their role.
- encourage parent participation in the school as well as in parent social get-togethers.
- attend community building and social events.
- acknowledge parents by greeting them e.g. in the morning, at pick-up time.

As parents of Notre Dame Catholic Primary School, we model Christian values in word and deeds with all members of the community.

We, therefore:
- set an example to children, which flows through the community.
- minimize gossip.
- encourage attendance at Masses and liturgies.
- model good manners.
- are friendly to all community members.
- support the wider community programs e.g. donation drives, parish events.
- say ‘hello’ to everyone.
- include others in your conversations.
- are positive when talking to others, especially around children.
- participate in fundraising events for the less fortunate.