



GOVERNANCE POLICY

Rationale

Good governance is a key component of the mission of all involved with the school in ensuring the stewardship of resources to enable quality Catholic Education. The culture, values and accountabilities within the school are integral to the mission of the Church and Parish school to proclaim and to spread the Kingdom of God and satisfy the various legislative requirements.

Aims

Ensure a transparent, equitable and compliant Governance policy and procedure.

Implementation and Components

Mt St Patrick College Charter

Mission

As a Catholic school, our core mission is to witness the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the students in our care. We endeavour to nurture the development of our children in partnership with families in a safe and caring environment where each child is valued for their uniqueness. We aim to provide an excellent education, so that all children can attain their full potential spiritually, academically, socially, culturally and physically.

Vision

Embedded in a Catholic educational experience for all members of the school community, Mt St Patrick College strives to be an innovative learning community by providing diverse opportunities for all students.

Governance

The School Charter also outlines the respective authority, role and responsibilities of each 'responsible person' in the school and any other person or body concerned in the school's management. These are outlined below:

Principal

The Principal is the designated 'responsible person', accountable for the overall leadership and direction of the school in order to provide for the effective care and education of its students. Principals take responsibility for the effective operation of the school including compliance to various State and Federal legislation, financial budgeting and ensuring the values and culture of the school contribute to the mission of the Church.

Assistant Principal(s)

The Assistant Principal(s) deputises for the Principal in his/her absence, which includes being the designated 'Responsible Person'.

School Bursar/Business Manager

The School Bursar/Business Manager is responsible for the payment of accounts and assists the Principal with budgets and finances.

Parish Priest

The Parish Priest is the Pastoral Leader and guide of the whole parish community. In partnership with the Principal he bears responsibility for implementing Diocesan Educational Policy, school finances and for the safety of students.

Parish Business Manager

The Parish Business Manager assists the Parish Priest to manage the Parish finances and as part of this assists schools to prepare budgets and oversee finances.

Parish Finance Council

The Parish Finance Council assists the Parish Priest in approval of school budgets and major capital projects involving the school.

Parish Schools Office

The Parish Schools Office is responsible for the billing and collection of school fees.

Catholic Schools Office (Lismore)

The Catholic Schools' Office has overall responsibility for the operation of the school, under the direction of the Bishop.

Delegations Schedule

Principal

The Principal is responsible for the effective operation of school including the day-to-day finances, budget outcomes, capital works, safety, educational outcomes, staffing and compliance to various relevant legislation. The Principal must approve all payment of accounts for the operation of the school. These accounts are to be prepared by the School Bursar.

Principals are not to enter into long term financial commitment (including loans) on behalf of the school without first consulting the Parish Priest. The principal is obliged to discuss any significant alteration of the budget with the Parish Priest. All significant capital works need to be approved by the Parish Priest and approved in advance. The Parish Priest consults the Parish Business manager and the Parish Finance Council for advice in budgeting and finance matters.

Parish Priest

The Parish Priest bears responsibility for the overall operation of the school including the financial and budgeting aspects. He is assisted by the Parish Business Manager and Parish Finance Council in approving budgets and ensuring the financial viability of the school.

School Bursar

The School Bursar has authority to prepare account for payments and billing (eg for school camps) but needs the approval of the Principal prior to payment. The Bursar assists in preparing the annual budget and in meeting ongoing budget targets throughout the year.

Teachers and other staff

All purchases must be pre-approved by the Principal prior to payment.

In the event of a change of Principal, the delegation of authority is transferred to the new Principal.

Supervisory Arrangements

The Principal as the designated 'Responsible Person' has responsibility for the payment of all accounts and finances, assisted by the School Bursar. The School Bursar is responsible for supervising all payments of accounts, after the approval of the Principal. These accounts are supervised by the Parish Business Manager on an ongoing basis. The Catholic Schools' Office also oversees accounts via the School Accounting System (SAS). The Annual Budget must be approved by the Parish Finance Council. All school fee billing and collection is conducted by the Parish Schools' Office. After fee collection the Parish Business Manager assists the Parish Finance Council in allocating fee income to the school. All accounts are independently audited on an annual basis. Audits also cover the school's compliance to relevant legislation eg 83C. In the event of a change of Principal, the delegated authority is transferred to the new Principal.

Code of Conduct

The Principal as the designated 'Responsible Person' is obliged to set and maintain high ethical standards that reflect the importance of the mission of the school, acting with integrity, honesty and transparency. In addition to be compliant with relevant legislation, the Principal is responsible for setting and maintaining a culture of good governance.

Register of Governance Decisions

All governance decisions and actions made by the school's 'responsible persons' are to be recorded in a register and be maintained for at least 7 years. In addition to this minutes of governance meetings are to be kept for a similar time. These will be held on a digital document for future reference.

Compliance Schedule

The school aims to be compliant to all legal requirements at all times. The process and associated documentation is part of the ongoing School Review and Improvement program facilitated by the Catholic Schools Office. As part of this Strategic Management Plans and Annual Plans are in place. Policy review is scheduled to happen each year as review dates of policies become due.

Risk Management

The school keeps an updated document that outlines its Governance Risk Management framework that plans for developing, implementing and reviewing risk management strategies involving strategic direction, governance, operation and finance.

Online Notification

The school must provide details of the 'responsible persons' to NESAs and provide notification of a change of 'responsible person' within 28 days of the change. This process is handled by the Catholic Schools' Office.

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Related Policies

- Responsible Persons Policy
- Related Party Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Financial Viability Policy
- Governance Risk Management Policy
- Mt St Patrick College Handbook