



TERMS OF REFERENCE

School/College Advisory Council

December 8, 2020

Vision

The vision for Catholic Education Sandhurst Limited (**CES Limited**) is to provide, in partnership with our families, stimulating, enriching, liberating and nurturing learning environments in each of the Catholic school communities within the Diocese. At the heart of this vision is our commitment to the ongoing duty of care that we have for the safety, wellbeing, and inclusion of all children and young people.

We believe:

- that the values of the Gospel are central to who we are, what we do, and how we act
- in leadership encompassing vision, innovation and empowerment.

1. Introduction

CES Limited is the new proprietor (owner and operator) of the existing fifty-two schools within the Diocese of Sandhurst which was previously governed under unincorporated governance arrangements. Accordingly, the Board of Directors of CES Limited (the Board) is the governing authority of **Sandhurst Catholic Schools** as defined under the CES Limited Constitution. CES Limited is committed to working with school leadership and school communities to build thriving Catholic education schools. A key dimension of this collaborative work is the establishment and effective operation of advisory councils to support the work of schools. These advisory councils are not part of the governance structure as such they sit separately from the delegation and reporting lines to the Board. They are formation created at a school level to assist the Principal with advisory functions.

This document provides the Terms of Reference for the St Joseph's Primary School, Benalla Advisory Council, hereafter referred to as the Council.



TERMS OF REFERENCE

School/College Advisory Council

December 8, 2020

The St Joseph's Primary School Advisory Council acknowledges the eight tribes of the Yorta Yorta people the original custodians of the land on which the School operates.

The St Joseph's Primary School Advisory Council is committed to the Victorian Child Safe Standards as provided in Ministerial Order 870, and acknowledges that every child has the right to feel safe and be safe all of the time.

2. Governing Principles

The St Joseph's Primary School Advisory Council is committed to democratic principles, consultation, dialogue and co-responsibility.

The Council is committed to the fundamental principles of Catholic school governance which can be articulated as follows:

- **The Love of Christ:** We are animated by and based upon the love of Christ for all people
- **Educational Quality:** To provide the best possible quality of education for all students
- **The Role of Parents:** The primary educators of their children with whom we work in partnership
- **Faithfulness to the Mission of the Church:** To bring the Good News and be faithful to Church teaching
- **Inclusivity and Social Justice:** To include and empower the most disadvantaged, vulnerable and marginalized
- **Subsidiarity:** Ensuring decisions are made where appropriate, by those closest to and most accountable to those affected



TERMS OF REFERENCE

School/College Advisory Council

December 8, 2020

- **Solidarity:** Recognition that we are all gifted in different ways, but called to work together for the one purpose
- **Stewardship of Resources:** We are entrusted to use financial and other resources responsibly, ensuring sustainability for future generations
- **Canon Law:** As part of the Church we are constituted and operate in accordance with Canon Law.

3. Vision Statement

At St Joseph's Primary School we strive to:

- Provide a safe, inclusive environment that fosters hope, respect, responsibility and reconciliation.
- Promote shared partnerships between home, school, parish and the wider community.
- Educate the whole person – spiritually, socially, emotionally, academically and physically.
- Provide a challenging, innovative and comprehensive curriculum that encourages life-long learning.

4. Student Outcomes

At St Joseph's Primary School we educate young people to:

- Grow in their personal relationship with God and others
- Value the beliefs, rituals and traditions of the Catholic faith
- Be committed to social justice
- Be engaged and resilient
- Be life-long learners, open to challenges and opportunities
- Be safe, respectful and responsible for themselves, others and the environment
- Achieve curriculum standards reflective of their individual ability



TERMS OF REFERENCE

School/College Advisory Council

December 8, 2020

5. Responsibilities

5.1 Catholic Education Sandhurst Limited

CES Limited is the responsible entity for the governance and management of St Joseph's Primary School including its legal and educational obligations. It is the employer of all staff within the St Joseph's Primary School and directly delegates to the Principal significant educational, administrative and operational responsibilities and accountabilities.

5.2 Parish Priest/Administrator

The Parish Priest is appointed by the Bishop of Sandhurst and is responsible for the pastoral care and canonical governance of the parish. He has a key role in working with and supporting the St Joseph's Primary School in accordance with the [Shared Mission Framework and Commitment Statement](#)

5.3 Principal

The Principal is appointed by the Executive Director of CES Limited and is delegated with key responsibilities in the educational, administrative and operational functions of the School/College in accordance with [CES Limited Delegations framework](#).

5.4 Advisory Council Scope and Purpose

The St Joseph's Primary School Advisory Council is the leading consultative and advisory group for the Principal, as an active forum for parent and community participation, providing support and advice principally in strategic planning and school improvement. As outlined in the CES Limited [Governance Charter](#) Advisory Council members do not have decision making powers.

The St Joseph's Primary School Advisory Council is intended to:



TERMS OF REFERENCE

School/College Advisory Council

December 8, 2020

- provide a voice for members of the school community
- actively support, in collaboration with the local parish, the Vision and Catholic Identity of the School/College
- provide input into and support for strategic planning and directions
- provide input and contribute advice in the processes of school improvement and school review
- support the Principal in meeting his/her responsibilities and accountabilities for educational outcomes, effective stewardship of resources, and annual reporting
- actively support the Principal in the encouragement of parent/guardian engagement
- support the ongoing sustainability of the Council and its members in its succession and learning.

5.5 Members of the School/College Advisory Council acknowledge that:

- All management and operational matters such as delivery of curriculum, human resource matters, parent complaints, programs and policies are the responsibility of the Principal who may seek the advice of Council members around these matters from time to time.
- Issues of a personal nature or issues involving individuals of the school community will not be raised at Council meetings
- The Principal is the spokesperson for the School/College for initiatives, announcements and issues raised in the local media. No Council Member has authority to speak on behalf of the School/College or Advisory Council, unless explicitly delegated and authorised by the Principal.
- Members of the Council do not have the authority to expend or commit School/College funds.

5.6 Code of Ethics



TERMS OF REFERENCE

School/College Advisory Council

December 8, 2020

The Council will be guided by the Members' Code of Ethics as developed and reviewed by the Council, and approved by the Principal.

All members of the Council must hold a valid Working with Children Check or equivalent. Members of the Council are bound by the School/College's Child Safe policies, and Child safe Code of Conduct.

5.7 Fit and Proper

The Board has determined that despite the fact that Members of the School Advisory Councils are advisory only and not recognized as part of the governance structure, they also must complete a [Fit and Proper Statutory Declaration](#).

6. Membership

The Council consists of the following members:

Ex officio

- Principal
- Parish Priest
- Deputy Principal
- Catholic Identity Leader
- Pastoral Wellbeing Leader

Elected or Appointed Members

- Up to 8 members elected from and by the School/College's parent/guardian community



TERMS OF REFERENCE

School/College Advisory Council

December 8, 2020

- if requested by the Parish Priest - 1 representative appointed by the Parish, in consultation with the Parish Priest

The term of office for each elected and appointed member will commence at the beginning of Term 2 in the relevant year.

All members should be inducted by the Council Chair and Principal.

7.1 Election of Members

Prior to the expiry of the term of office for elected members, nominations will be invited through the School/College's newsletter.

Nominations should be in writing and delivered to the Principal by the designated date.

If the number of nominations equals or is less than the number of vacancies, the nominees will be declared to be elected. Should the number be less than the number of vacancies further nominations may be invited or the Principal and Council Chair may approach other persons to request their nomination.

If there are more nominations than there are vacancies, a ballot will be held among the parent/guardian community in the manner determined by the Principal and Council Chair.

7.2 Tenure

The ex-officio members will be ongoing members for the term of their appointment to that role.

Other members will serve for a three-year term. Members may be re-appointed for a further consecutive term at the discretion of the Council Chair and Principal. Any mid-term vacancy will be filled by appointment by the Principal and Council Chair for the balance of the term.



TERMS OF REFERENCE

School/College Advisory Council

December 8, 2020

It is preferable that appointed members do not serve more than two consecutive terms. However, where the Principal and Council Chair consider it in the best interests of the School/College for a tenure to be extended, this may be done. Appropriate reasons may include stability of membership, for appropriate succession planning or for the achievement of a particular strategic direction.

7.3 Vacancies

A vacancy will be declared when a member:

- Reaches the end of a three-year term
- Resigns from office by notice in writing or verbally
- Fails to attend three consecutive meetings of the Council without proper excuse and/or apology

Should a vacancy arise outside the normal election cycle, the Principal and Council Chair may approach and appoint a substitute member for the balance of the former member's term of office, or leave the position vacant. Any period served in such a casual vacancy will not count as a term of office for the purposes of section 5.2.

7.4 Removal

The Principal and Council Chair may discern the need to terminate the membership of a Council member where serious concerns over capacity, integrity, communication style or alignment to the values of Catholic education are demonstrated. The advice CES Limited Executive Management Team members will be sought before such a decision is enacted.



TERMS OF REFERENCE

School/College Advisory Council

December 8, 2020

7. Council Chairperson

At the first meeting of the Council, the members will discern the appointment of a Chairperson from amongst themselves. This will be for a term of three years.

Upon the expiry of each three-year term or earlier if the Chair is no longer a member of the Council or resigns from that position, the members will discern the appointment of a chair for the following three years. A member cannot ordinarily serve more than two consecutive terms as Chair, unless the Principal determines there are extenuating circumstances. Should the appointment be outside the normal three-year cycle, the appointment will usually be only for the balance of the former chair's term, and that time will not count towards the maximum period of two consecutive terms.

The Council Chair will facilitate all meetings of the Council. In the absence of the Council Chair, this responsibility will be delegated to a person nominated by the Chair.

The Chair may also be involved in setting meeting agenda with the Principal, as deemed appropriate.

A formal meeting format should usually be followed however this may vary at the discretion of the members.

8. Executive Officer

The role of Executive Officer will be undertaken by the Principal, with responsibilities for preparation and distribution of agenda, minutes and other meeting papers.

The recording of minutes may be delegated to another member of the Council or School/College's staff.



TERMS OF REFERENCE

School/College Advisory Council

December 8, 2020

9. Council Meetings

The Council will meet according to a schedule developed at the commencement of each school year, at a time and place convenient to members. It should meet at least once per term and its meetings should not ordinarily exceed a maximum duration agreed by the Council.

The agenda will be developed by the Principal, in consultation with the Chair and members as needed.

The Agenda should be provided to members seven days prior to the meeting. The agenda will include meeting time, date, location and all items for discussion. Where possible, supporting documentation will be forwarded with the agenda.

Meetings will be conducted at a time mutually agreeable to members, but consideration should be given for this time to be sufficient to allow appropriate time for discussion.

A quorum will consist of a simple majority of all current Council Members. If a quorum is not present by 15 minutes after the scheduled starting time, the meeting will be cancelled or re-scheduled as determined by the executive.

Whenever possible, recommendations of the Council are to be reached by consensus. Though full consensus may not always be possible, members are encouraged to reflect, consult, generate ideas, give consideration to the best interests of the School/College, and trust in the collective wisdom of the group.

Members must declare any potential conflict of interest and refrain from contributing to discussions if required by the Chair.

Recommendations of the Council may be revisited where new information or advice becomes available, an error becomes apparent or a situation changes to the significant degree.



TERMS OF REFERENCE

School/College Advisory Council

December 8, 2020

Any differences in views that the Council feels unable to resolve following a period of discernment and prayer, will be referred to the management of CES Limited for advice. Discernment may continue at the next meeting by those present, if deemed appropriate.

10. Communication

The Council will keep minutes of meetings for circulation to members prior to the next scheduled meeting. Minutes will record discussion summaries, resolutions and names of those present. Minutes of meetings are confidential and not for circulation outside Council membership.

A summary of meaningful and non-confidential outcomes from each meeting will be circulated within the School/College community by the Principal in the School/College Newsletter.

Deliberations at Council meetings are confidential to the Council with recommendations made by the Council to be fully supported by all Council members outside of meetings.

11. Dispute Resolution

Council Members will observe and respect the following Grievance Procedures:

- Where there is a difficulty, dispute or grievance involving a student or parent/legal guardian with a teacher, the issue will not be raised at a Council meeting. The parent/legal guardian will be requested to raise the matter directly with the Principal.
- Where there is a difficulty, dispute or grievance between the Principal and Member of the Council, the issue will not be raised at a Council meeting. The



TERMS OF REFERENCE

School/College Advisory Council

December 8, 2020

matter will be dealt with privately between the Member of the Council and the Principal.

- If an issue concerns more than one Member of the Council, the issue will not be raised at a Council meeting. The issue will be raised individually with the Principal.
- If resolution is still required, the matter should be referred to the Executive Director, CES Limited.

12. Review

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed every 5 years by the Council, usually as part of the School/College's Full School Review, ensuring alignment with relevant policies, guidelines or legal requirements.

Date of Commencement: January 1, 2021

Date Reviewed: February, 2023

Due Date for Next Review: February, 2023