

Gorey Educate Together Parent Teacher Association

Proposed Constitution

1. Name

The name of the organisation shall be Gorey Educate Together National School (GETNS) Parent/Teacher Association (PTA), referred to as “the PTA”.

2. Aim of the PTA.

The aim of the PTA is to build an effective partnership in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act (1998) with the Principal, Teachers and Board of GETNS to create a caring atmosphere that promotes learning and nurtures the ethical, moral, personal, social, cultural and physical development of the child while taking into account the ethos of GETNS at all times. The PTA is the structure through which parents/guardians/caregivers (referred to collectively as “Parents”) in the school can work together for the best possible education for their children. The PTA works with the Principal, Teachers and the Board to build effective partnership in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act (1998) (Appendix A) and this constitution.

3. Activities of the PTA

The PTA shall:

- in consultation with the Principal, adopt and organise a programme of activities, including regular after-school activities, which will promote the involvement of Parents in the school’s continued development;
- in consultation with Teachers and the Principal, support and improve the quality of Teacher-led extra-curricular activities and events subject to the resources of the PTA;
- promote the importance of Parent class representatives amongst Parents, and coordinate the Parent class representatives where necessary in the above programme of activities and Teacher-led extra-curricular activities and events; and
- fund all expenses related to the activities of the PTA through its own fund-raising activities.

The PTA may:

- organise talks and training courses of items of interest to Parents of relevance to engagement with children;
- discuss matters, or make suggestions to the Principal and/or Teacher representatives which they want discussed at the Board;
- support specific fund-raising activities as requested by the Principal;
- in consultation with the Principal, survey members of the PTA and Teachers outside of meetings of the PTA for input as to the PTA’s activities.

The PTA recognises:

- that the examination and resolution of problems relating to individual pupils, Parents, and/or Teachers shall not be a matter for the PTA and shall be managed as per school policy; and
- the Principal is the point of contact between the PTA Committee and the Board.

4. Membership of the PTA

All parents /guardians/caregivers (referred to collectively as “Parents”) of children attending GETNS, and Teachers may become members of the PTA, with rights to vote at general meetings and to hold office.

Volunteers may become PTA Committee members. PTA Committee members have voting rights at PTA Committee meetings, and may become an Officer of the PTA.

5. Selection of the PTA Committee at the AGM, and Election of Officers

The PTA Committee shall be selected each year at the AGM. Volunteers, who shall be Parents, shall nominate themselves for selection to the PTA Committee. Volunteers who cannot attend the AGM may notify the PTA Committee that they wish to volunteer in advance. All members of the PTA Committee shall retire annually but be eligible for re-selection immediately at the AGM.

The PTA Committee shall also include the two Parent Representative members of the Board, the Principal, and one Teacher representative. At the AGM, the Principal shall nominate a Teacher representative, and the two Parent Representatives to the Board to be members of the PTA Committee, and the PTA shall accept those nominations at the AGM. The Principal is always a member of the PTA Committee.

The PTA Committee shall comprise of Officers including the Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Parent Representative Coordinator, and Social Media Coordinator. If PTA Committee numbers and volunteers allow, Vice Chairperson, Vice Secretary and Vice Treasurer should also be member of the PTA Committee. The Parent Representative members of the Board should not be Officers of the PTA.

PTA Committee members shall nominate themselves for election to an Officer role and must be seconded by another member of the PTA. If more than two PTA Committee members wish to hold the same role, the office holder shall be determined through simple vote of the PTA members present at the AGM.

The PTA Committee will have the power to fill by selection from PTA Committee members, with that PTA Committee member’s consent, any necessary Officer places vacant following the Annual General Meeting that arise throughout the year, until the next Annual General Meeting.

PTA members can become Committee Members outside of the PTA AGM on decision of the PTA.

Officers may hold the same position for a maximum of one year if elected. However, in the event of the PTA Committee being unable to fill any of the above-mentioned Officer roles, then any previous holder of same will be eligible for appointment to that role for a maximum of one further year.

If an Officer member of the PTA Committee does not attend three consecutive meetings without leave of absence that member may, at the discretion and on decision of the PTA Committee, be removed from that Officer Role.

6. PTA Committee Meetings and General Meetings

The PTA Committee will meet at least monthly. Meetings may be held in person or by any other means of communicating as decided on by the PTA Committee from time to time. All members of the PTA Committee, including Officers, will be given at least seven days' notice of the meeting by the Secretary, verbally or in writing, although where possible the date of the next meeting should be agreed at the previous PTA Committee meeting.

At all times the PTA Committee shall strive to achieve consensus in any decision and seek to maintain a warm welcoming setting for all.

The PTA Committee meetings require a quorum of at least 50% of the Officers, and 50% of the PTA Committee plus one.

Voting, should it be necessary, is by simple majority. In the event of a tied vote, the Chairperson (or the person nominated to be chair at the meeting) has the casting vote.

PTA Members may attend PTA Committee meetings and make representations, but may not vote.

The Secretary will ensure that a minute book is maintained which is available to any PTA member and which, for each meeting of the PTA Committee, records:

- the names of those present;
- all decisions which are required by the constitution or by law to be made by the organisation; and
- any other matters discussed or actions agreed at the meeting.

Agreed minutes shall be published insofar as the PTA Committee has the facility to do so.

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be held before 15th October each year. All Parents of children attending the school, and Teachers are invited to attend the AGM. The PTA Committee will at all times be bound by the decisions of the members at General Meetings.

7. Finances

The PTA will take reasonable endeavours to ensure its activities are self-financing through fund-raising activities throughout the year. The PTA Committee shall discuss with the Principal in the first PTA Committee meeting after the AGM any specific school projects that may need particular fund-raising efforts over the coming school year.

Any direct expenses incurred by Parents, Teachers, Principal or GETNS in relation to pre-agreed PTA activities shall be fully vouched and reimbursed without undue delay.

The PTA shall have its own bank account. There shall be at least two, and preferably three individuals who can authorise payments from PTA funds, at least one of which must be Treasurer. At least two individuals must authorise any payment from PTA funds.

An anticipated budget should be agreed at PTA Committee meetings before expenses are incurred by an individual, and that individual when becoming aware that expenses will be greater than budgeted, shall

inform the Treasurer (or Vice Treasurer) before incurring such expense. Under such circumstances, the Treasurer shall utilise their judgement in determining whether such expense should be incurred, or whether the opinion of the PTA Committee should be first sought.

The Treasurer shall bring any proposed expense to the PTA Committee's attention if it is likely to put the PTA at risk of a budget over-run in any given year.

The Treasurer shall prepare an annual statement of account, and present a summary of the financial position of the PTA at the AGM, and these shall be approved at the AGM. The approved accounts shall be made available to any PTA member on request, and the approved accounts shall be published insofar as the PTA Committee has the facility to do so.

8. Roles of PTA Committee Officers

Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson

- a) Responsible for ensuring that the rules of the PTA Committee are followed.
- b) Prepares the agenda for the meetings with the Secretary.
- c) Chairs all meetings and moderates on all discussions to ensure all attendees are afforded an equal opportunity to contribute to the business of the meeting.
- d) Presents the Chairperson's report at the AGM
- e) Ensures that the work is shared and that teamwork is reviewed, including proper coordination with the wider PTA activities not organised by the PTA Committee.
- f) Helps the PTA Committee to have clear vision and goals.
- g) Represents the PTA at any formal occasion or nominates someone in their place if needed
- h) Signs the minutes of the previous meeting when approved by the PTA Committee as a record of the business and decisions of that meeting.

Secretary and Vice-Secretary

- a) Records the minutes of meetings including matters arising.
- b) Helps the Chairperson prepare the annual report for the AGM.
- c) Notifies PTA Committee members of forthcoming meetings and forwards minutes of the last meeting and the agenda for the next meeting.
- d) Coordinates help for PTA activities
- e) Prepares the agenda for meetings in consultation with the Chairperson
- f) Ensures an attendance record of all attendees is completed for all PTA Committee meetings.

Treasurer and Vice-Treasurer

- a) Keeps an accurate record of money received and disbursed by the PTA
- b) Liaises with the school board and the PTA Committee regarding all financial aspects of the PTA
- c) Prepares a year-end reconciliation for presentation at the AGM.

Class Representative Coordinator(s)

- a) Publicise events and activities organised by the PTA.
- b) Be the official first point of contact for class representatives and Parents for PTA activities.

- c) Make representations at each Junior Infant Parent introductory meeting and provide information regarding the PTA and support participation as Parent Class Representatives
- d) Provide information to Parents about how to contact their child's Teacher, the Principal and the PTA
- e) Liaise with the Social Media Coordinator to most effectively fulfil the above role.

Social Media Coordinator

- a) Maintain an up-to-date social media presence for PTA activities, supporting the other Officers of the PTA, and in particular, the Class Representative Coordinator, as required.
- b) Maintain a list of all accounts, including appropriate passwords.
- c) Coordinate with other PTA members to provide for administrative support in the Social Media Coordinator Role.
- d) Establish, maintain, and monitor policies for usage of social media by the Committee and PTA members.

9. Constitution

This constitution (or any changes to the previously agreed constitution) shall be circulated to all Parents of children in the school and a copy of this constitution shall be given to members of the board of management. The constitution may be adopted in one of the following two manners:

- This constitution (or any changes to the previously agreed constitution) shall be discussed as an agenda item at the AGM. A vote shall be taken on its adoption. A majority vote will adopt this constitution; or
- An Extraordinary General Meeting will be called to discuss this constitution (or any changes to the previously agreed constitution) and a vote shall be taken on its adoption. A majority vote will adopt this constitution.

This constitution comes into force at the 2016 AGM on [].

Appendix A

Extract from Education Act, (1998)

26.—(1) The Parents of students of a recognised school may establish, and maintain from among their number, a Parents' association for that school and membership of that association shall be open to all Parents of students of that school.

(2) A Parents' association shall promote the interests of the students in a school in co-operation with the board, Principal, Teachers and students of a school and for that purpose may—

(a) advise the Principal or the board on any matter relating to the school and the principal or board, as the case may be, shall have regard to any such advice, and

(b) adopt a programme of activities which will promote the involvement of Parents, in consultation with the Principal, in the operation of the school.

(3) The board shall promote contact between the school, Parents of students in that school and the community and shall facilitate and give all reasonable assistance to Parents who wish to establish a Parents' association and to a Parents' association when it is established.

(4) (a) A Parents' association shall, following consultation with its members, make rules governing its meetings and the business and conduct of its affairs.

(b) Where a Parents' association is affiliated to a national association of Parents, the rules referred to in paragraph (a) shall be in accordance with guidelines issued by that national association of Parents with the concurrence of the Minister.