



Siena

*Catholic Primary School
58 Sippy Downs Drive
Sippy Downs*



PARENT REP
HANDBOOK

RATIONALE

As educationists we are renowned for presenting **rhetoric** about parent-school partnerships. Too often this is where it stops - it is words more than actions. With the structure of Parent Network Representatives there is a pathway to assist with the opportunities of parent school partnerships becoming **realities**.

Schools in the 21st century are complex organisations. For schools to run effectively they require high levels of support and involvement. Much of this support can be sourced from existing resources within the school community, the parents.

Parents are the first and foremost educators of their child. The values and the rituals practised within the family are those that become integral formation of a children's development. Catholic schools exist to support families in the education process, not to tell families how to educate their children. **Developing good relationships** at the class level with parents is instrumental to successful learning.

Parent bodies in schools (P&F, Pastoral School Boards, Parent Councils, etc) are formal vehicles for parents to be involved in school activities. There is a structure to these bodies on how they work and what their mandate is. The Parent Network Representative group is less formal - it focuses more on relationship and community building at a class level working in collaboration with class teachers to be supportive of class needs.



Siena

Mission Statement



In the tradition of Saint Catherine of Siena, we are committed to:
Promoting and celebrating a love of God, self and others
Recognizing and enhancing the talents and uniqueness of each person
through the Siena ethos of **Prayer, Care and Learning.**

PRAYER

We nurture and grow our relationship with God as members of a faith community.



Siena Catholic College

CARE

We foster recognition of difference, compassion for others and the strength to act on our beliefs.



Siena Catholic Primary School

LEARNING

We develop the knowledge, attitudes & skills essential to reaching our full potential as life-long learners.



CHILDREN LEARN WHAT THEY LIVE

If a child lives with criticism,
He learns to condemn.

If a child lives with hostility,
He learns to fight.

If a child lives with ridicule,
He learns to be shy.

If a child lives with shame,
He learns to feel guilty.

If a child lives with tolerance,
He learns to be patient.

If a child lives with encouragement,
He learns confidence.

If a child lives with praise,
He learns to appreciate.

If a child lives with fairness,
He learns justice.

If a child lives with security,
He learns to have faith.

If a child lives with approval,
He learns to like himself.

If a child lives with acceptance and Friendship,
He learns to find love in the world.

Dorothy Law Nolte

PURPOSE

The Siena Parent Representative Network exists to:

- Provide opportunities for **active partnerships** of parents working with class teachers to be developed to support the overall mission of the school;
- **Build strong links** with parents and teachers for the betterment of education of all children;
- Have a consultative group of parents to refer to on **major decisions** in the development of the school;
- Allow opportunities for parents to **present ideas** that support school/class needs;
- Develop **Christian actions** within the school community;
- Keep parents **informed** of the major developments within the school community;
- Foster a **sense of community** through caring and sharing; and
- Promote the **growth and development** of Siena within the community.

WHAT PARENT REPRESENTATIVES CAN DO

- Be a **liaison person** between the class teacher and class parents with information, issues and school events.
- **Welcome** new parents/families into the school. A personal phone call to a new family can be a great welcome into the school community.
- **Organise social gatherings.** The majority of parents are here for the long journey of education. Developing relationships amongst the parents assists in building community spirit and sense of belonging.
- **Assisting** with classroom needs, eg. class excursions and liturgies
 - Informing teachers about parent anxieties
 - Encouraging parent assistance
 - Supporting the teacher with organisational needs
- **Listen.** Often parents have issues that need a sympathetic ear. Major issues need taking up either with the class teacher or the principal by individual parents. This may only need encouragement from the parent representative.
- Supportive of the **school direction.** Word of mouth is a strong promotional vehicle in schools. Promotion of school activities and developments require parents to have the tools to inform/promote the school. Knowledge is a big part of supporting the school. Through this group meeting each term, the major stakeholders will have more information (knowledge) about what is happening.
- **Feedback.** Through meeting with the principal opportunities for feedback on a range of issues can be shared to keep the principal informed of community attitudes and feelings.
- **Teacher Gifts** – this is a voluntary gesture by parents. There should be no pressure on the amount given and the collection of money should not discriminate or disclose a family's social status. Money needs to be collected by a parent. There is merit in children giving their teacher small gifts as a form of acknowledgment.

WHAT PARENT REPRESENTATIVES CAN NOT DO

- Be **counter productive** to the school ethos and culture of the school
- **Canvas parents** into support groups against school protocol without consultation
- Make decisions **without consultation** with school input, eg. class teacher or school principal
- **Send communication** out without the school's knowledge, eg. class teacher.

MEETINGS

- Once a term
- Report is circulated to all representatives
- Items for each meeting need to be brought to the school's/principal's attention prior to meetings for inclusion in the meeting agenda

PARENT REP APPOINTMENTS

- Classes appoints/selects a representative at the beginning of the year.



This is a story about four people - Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody.

There was an important job to be done and Everybody was asked to do it.

Everybody was sure Somebody would do it.

Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it.

Somebody got angry about that because it was Everybody's job.

Everybody thought Anybody could do it, but Nobody realised that Everybody wouldn't do it.

It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when actually Nobody asked Anybody.



Daintree Building Education Project 2011