



Swan Christian  
EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

# SCEA Parent Partnership Policy

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## Preamble

SCEA recognises that the family of a child is their first teacher and the most influential educator during their formative years. We recognise that the relationship between a parent and child is sacred and in the Christian tradition, it is acknowledged that it is not the place of a school to become the primary educator, but a partner in the educational and formational process. Therefore, in the interests of each child's healthy development, parents are encouraged to enter into an effective partnership with their SCEA school.

In addition to working closely with the school in the interests of their child's education, families are encouraged to engage with, and contribute to, the school community.

In fulfilling our responsibilities towards the children and young people in our care, our desire is to create an environment where all within the community – children, parents and staff - can truly belong, learn and thrive.

## Purpose

Our desire is that each SCEA school partners with parents in fulfilling their shared responsibility to equip children and young people to flourish. The purpose of this policy is to outline how each school might foster and enable this partnership through open communication, integrity and providing opportunities for parents to meaningfully engage with staff and school leaders.

## Scope

This policy applies to all Swan Christian Education Association schools and educational sites.

The policy aligns with the Swan Christian Education Association Incorporated Constitution, amended (insert month once Constitution is finalised) 2021, and the SCEA Strategic Plan (2021-2015).

## Definitions

### Parent

'Parent' means the parent, legal guardian or adult responsible for the care of a Child residing with them.

### School Member

Each parent who signs an enrolment contract of a child enrolled at a school is deemed to be a 'School Member' of that School while their children are enrolled and while they remain a signatory of the enrolment contract.

### Association Member

A person (including School Members and Staff Members) who wish to become an 'Association Member', must declare their agreement with the Objects of the Association, agree with and accept the Statement of Faith, agree to abide by the Constitution, indicate clearly their acceptance of Christ personally as Saviour and Lord, and give evidence to the satisfaction of the Board, or its delegated representatives, that they are leading lives compatible with the Christian Lifestyle Policy.

## Policy Statement

1. Each SCEA school will partner with parents in fulfilling their shared responsibility to equip children and young people to flourish.
2. Each SCEA school will establish annually a 'Parents in Partnership Committee' comprising willing parent volunteers.
3. Each SCEA school will establish frameworks specific to the context and priorities of the school to develop and foster that partnership, including through scheduling meetings and other mechanisms for providing integrity of school operations and priorities to School Members, securing parents' feedback, and otherwise strengthening the environment so that all within the community can belong, learn and thrive.

## Procedures

### 1. Composition of the Parents in Partnership Committee

The school's Parent in Partnership Committee will be comprised of:

- Chairperson – Association Member recommended by the school Principal to the SCEA Board for approval
- Office bearers – Chairperson, ~~Vice Chairperson~~, Treasurer, Secretary and Head of the Christian Life Committee (see below)
- Other members as deemed appropriate by the Principal and Chairperson of the Committee.

Appointment of Committee Members

- At the commencement of each school year the principal of the school will recommend a committee chairperson (Chair) to the SCEA Board for approval. Subsequently, the Chair and Principal of the school will be responsible for the appointment of the Office-bearers and other committee members.

Tenure of appointments

- Each person appointed to the Committee will retain their appointment for the duration of the school year.

### 2. Role of the Parents in Partnership Committee

The Parents in Partnership Committee will meet at least once per Term with the School Principal (or delegate) to plan and discuss initiatives and events that will be coordinated by the Committee. Where deemed appropriate by the Committee, some of these meetings can be 'opened' and invite interested parents to participate in the planning process.

The goals of the Parents in Partnership Committee include:

- To build partnership between the school and with parents
- To plan events bring parents together and serve to grow a spirit of partnership between parents and the school, with the aim of supporting student growth and development.
- To serve the parent group and the school, playing a significant role in building community and school culture
- To promote a positive and inclusive school community
- To form sub-committees to undertake specific tasks, for example:
  - Provide advice to the committee on certain matters
  - Fundraising with a specific purpose
  - Surveying parents on areas that will help to promote and strengthen the partnership between parents and the school.
  - Organise and implement community engagement activities
- **Agree to** expenditure of any funds raised by the Committee, aligned with school priorities and areas targeted in agreement with the Principal.

The partnership aims to ensure that children and young people enrolled in the school flourish, and that all within the community belong, learn and thrive.

The activities of the committee will aim to provide opportunity for every school member to use their gifts and capabilities to support the school, contributing their time and talents to maximise the thriving of the school community.

The Parents in Partnership committee is encouraged to engage with the Principal and offer ideas and suggestions that might enrich school life or the quality of the education program, however, any collective decisions made by the Committee will not be binding upon the School, its Principal or the Association.

### **3. Meetings of the Parents in Partnership Committee**

Meetings will occur regularly throughout the year as determined by the Principal, but will not be less than one per Term. These might vary from once per fortnight to once per term, as required. The meetings will be Chaired by the Chair **(or Principal in his or her absence)** ~~(Vice Chairmen in his/her absence)~~ and minutes taken by the Secretary. A record of meeting minutes will be retained by the school and made available to Committee members and parents (upon request).

School Members not on the Parents in Partnership committee, wishing to make recommendations or suggestions, should submit these in writing to the Secretary of the Parent in Partnership Committee, for consideration. At times, the Chairperson and Principal may invite a school member who has a suggestion to attend a Committee meeting, where their ideas can be discussed.

The Treasurer will coordinate the financial activities of the Committee under the oversight of the school's Business Manager.

In Term 3, the Chairs from each SCEA Parents in Partnership Committee and their Principals will convene at the SCEA Office to share achievements and ideas as a learning and celebrating opportunity.

#### **4. Christian Life Committee**

The Christian Life Committee is a group of Members of the school community desirous of being a part of, and contributing to, the spiritual life and growth of the school community.

This Committee is open to all who want to join, including grandparents and relatives of students, spouses of staff, friends of the school, staff members, school leaders and church partners.

The Head of the Christian Life Committee will be both a member of the Parents in Partnership Committee and a SCEA Association member. He/she will be nominated (or self-nominate) and be jointly appointed to the position by the school Principal and Chair of the Parent in Partnership Committee. It is possible for the Chair of the Parents in Partnership Committee to take on this role if no other suitable person can be identified.

The function of the Committee is to support the principal, staff, school members and Parents in Partnership Committee members in spiritual ways. These might include:

- Convening prayer meetings to pray for the principal and school leaders, for parents and students with particular needs, for school events and their witness to the wider community
- Providing spiritual support for the Principal
- Promoting the growth and well-being of the school and SCEA
- Leading devotions for staff by invitation
- Holding discussion nights on topics designed to assist parents in the understanding of the Christian faith.
- Taking an active interest in how the Christian faith is expressed in the life of the school community
- Facilitating guest speakers to support spiritual growth of the community
- Promoting membership of the Association and engagement in its activities.

The Christian Life Committee is encouraged to engage with the Principal and offer ideas and suggestions that might enrich school life or the quality of the educational programs. However, any collective decisions made by the committee will not be binding upon the School, its Principal or the Association.

#### **5. Finances**

The Treasurer, under the oversight of the school's Business Manager, will manage and be accountable for any funds raised by the Parents in Partnership Committee. The Treasurer will work closely with the School Business Manager to ensure all funds are accounted for and decision-making around their use is in accordance with school priorities and/or areas targeted, in agreement with the Principal.

#### **6. Communications**

Communications between the Parent in Partnership Committee and School Members will include:

- Regular scheduling of meetings on a public platform to ensure all parents are invited and feel welcomed and included
- Minutes of meetings made available to all parents upon request
- Advertising of activities

- Annual invitation for parents to join and to volunteer their time in supporting school activities.

~~In Term One (1)~~ Each year the Chair of the Parents in Partnership Committee will convene and host a meeting for School Members. This will be referred to as the Annual School Members' Meeting (ASMM)<sup>1</sup> where the Principal will present a report outlining key school operations and priorities. The report will include the School Improvement Plan and school achievements during the previous 12 months. It might also include discussion on items included in the school's Annual Report.

The meeting will also provide an opportunity for School Members to offer suggestions and seek clarification on any matters of concern to the Committee.

## Implementation

SCEA Principals will implement this policy annually.

## Contact Person

Chief Executive Officer

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<sup>1</sup> At least one (1) week of notice will be given to all members, through email, for this meeting.