



# Governing Council Resource Book

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**Government of South Australia**

Department for Education

# GOVERNING COUNCIL

## RESOURCE BOOK:

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## **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

### **McLaren Flat Primary School Governing Council will:**

Give leadership in issues affecting McLaren Flat Primary School in consultation with the whole school community.

Foster and encourage the activities and participation of parents, students and teachers and positively promote the role of Governing Council through our wider community.

Further the interest and welfare of students and their educational outcomes, from Reception to Year 6.

# Governance Overview

Governance in schools and preschools is the responsibility of the governing council whose role is directed by the constitution and code of practice. In this model of governance:

- The cooperative role of governing council and school staff is emphasised.
- Management and governance are clearly separated.
- The focus is on improving student learning outcomes.
- The broad directions are set and monitored by the governing council.
- The site leader and staff are responsible for reporting.
- Joint areas of accountability are minimised.

## Governing Councils:

- **Set Broad Direction** (In conjunction with the site leader)

The governing council identifies and incorporates, where possible, student, parent and community input and values into the broad direction of the school. The principal brings the staff perspective to these undertakings. The broad direction may include a future vision, a statement of purpose and a set of values that clearly focus on improving student learning.

- **Develop Broad Directional Policy**

The governing council develops broad policy statements that facilitate the achievement of the school vision and broad direction.

- **Initiate and Approve Recommendations and Strategies**

All recommendations must conform to government policy, industrial agreements, DECD policy and direction and site decision making structures.

**Principals work with parents, staff and students to develop recommendations and strategies to achieve the *broad site directions* jointly set with the governing council. These strategies will include but are not restricted to:**

- A **Site Improvement Plan** that is developed in consultation with the staff and community through the subcommittee structures. This plan must incorporate state and federal requirements as well as local priorities that will achieve the broad direction set by the governing council.
- The **allocation of resources** to best achieve the objectives of the Site Improvement Plan. Resource allocation must take into account risk management, sustainability and industrial and accountability requirements. The budget recommendation will be developed with the Finance Advisory Committee (FAC) and staff and must be directed towards the Site Learning Plan. Draft budgets and the final recommendation will be presented to the governing council by the Treasurer. The governing council has final responsibility for budget approval.

Through decision making structures and groups within the school, principals and directors will engage the staff and parents in the development of the Site Improvement Plan. Similarly groups such as the Personnel Advisory Committee (PAC) and the Finance Advisory Committee (FAC) are involved in the recommended allocation of resources that make up the annual budget and resource planning strategies. These plans are presented to the governing council for comment and approval.

- **Monitor Progress**

The governing council monitors the site budget and progress towards the broad directions set and the targets of the Site Improvement Plan. This is done at each governing council meeting where the principal and treasurer provide information and data as a part of their reports against the plans, priorities and budget. A summary of these forms the basis of the Annual Report.

- **Report Progress**

This occurs with the principal and treasurer who provide data and timely reports that enable the governing council to confidently report to the Minister and community on how well the school is performing.

## ***Management and Leadership***

**Site management and educational leadership is the responsibility of the principal and staff. It is not a part of the governance role involving the governing council and wider community.**

- If individual community members have an issue with a staff member they should attempt to resolve the matter directly, according to the protocols described in the school grievance procedure with the staff member at an early stage. If this is not successful then the matter should be referred to the principal.
- If individual community members are concerned with management decisions or have an issue with the principal they must discuss these with the principal and if not satisfied with the result then refer the matter to the Partnership Education Director.

# Governance in Operation

The Governing Council provides **broad direction** and **policy support** to assist the principal to make the school a better place for learning

Its primary role is the enhancement of student learning through the cooperative efforts of the whole school community

Governance	Major Direction	Policy & Planning	Resource management	Monitoring & Review
<p><b><u>Governing Council</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strategic directions</li> <li>▪ Policy &amp; planning</li> <li>▪ Resource management</li> <li>▪ Monitoring &amp; Reporting</li> </ul>	<p>Initiates broad direction and vision</p> <p>Develop and approve <b>Site Improvement Plan</b></p> <p>Develop and Support special programs / projects</p> <p>Partnerships</p> <p>Fund raising</p> <p>Programs (e.g. AG)</p>	<p>Develops and approves policies that supports the <b>Site Improvement Plan</b></p> <p>Code of conduct</p> <p>Grievance procedures</p> <p>Financial policy</p> <p>Curriculum policies</p> <p>Facilities</p> <p>Dress code</p> <p>Discipline policy</p> <p>SBM</p>	<p>Develops and approves <b>Budget</b></p> <p>Approves variations</p> <p>Approves Materials and Services charges</p> <p>Supports Fundraising</p> <p>Approves Grounds / Facilities management</p>	<p>Progress of the <b>Site Improvement Plan</b></p> <p><b>Regular updates</b></p> <p><b>Annual Report</b></p> <p>Approves <b>Committee Reports</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Finance</li> <li>▪ Grounds / Facilities</li> <li>▪ Parents and Friends.</li> </ul>
<b>Day to day Management</b>	<b>Advises on directions</b>	<b>Manages operations</b>	<b>Manages spending</b>	<b>Provides feedback</b>
<p><b>Principal and STAFF TEAM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Educational leadership</li> <li>▪ Daily management</li> <li>▪ Discipline</li> <li>▪ Staff Professional Learning and development</li> <li>▪ Teaching and Learning</li> </ul>	<p>Provides information and advice</p> <p>Recommends areas to develop</p> <p>Recommend future priorities</p> <p>Develops strategies and targets</p>	<p>Implements strategies to achieve goals</p> <p>Responsible for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Day to day management</li> <li>▪ Daily Financial management</li> <li>▪ Staff appointments</li> <li>▪ WHS</li> <li>▪ Educational Leadership</li> </ul>	<p>Manages Budget spending</p> <p>Plans current and future finances</p> <p>Materials and Services charges</p> <p>Fundraising</p> <p>Oversees Grounds / Facilities</p>	<p>Reports to Council</p> <p>Action Plan progress</p> <p>Finance and budget</p> <p>Site achievements</p> <p>Recommends future priorities</p> <p>Drafts <b>Annual Report</b></p> <p>Monitors staff performance</p>

Further information can be obtained South Australian Association of State School Organisations.

Ph: 8223 2266 Email: [info@saasso.asn.au](mailto:info@saasso.asn.au) Web: [www.saasso.asn.au](http://www.saasso.asn.au) OR [www.decd.sa.gov.au](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au)

# Office Bearers / Executive

Within 1 month of the AGM, Governing Council must meet to appoint its Office Bearers and may appoint an Executive. Appointments are for 1 year.

The Executive is usually comprised of:

<b>Chairperson</b>	<b>Principal</b>	<b>Deputy Chair</b>	<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Secretary</b>
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<p><b>CHAIRPERSON</b></p> <p>The Chairperson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calls and presides over all meetings</li> <li>• Prepares the agenda in consultation with the secretary and the Principal</li> <li>• Decides on the manner in which meetings are conducted</li> <li>• Ensures full and balanced participation in meetings</li> <li>• Facilitates voting on motions</li> <li>• Reports on the operations of the council at the AGM</li> <li>• Acts as spokesperson for the council unless the council appoints another spokesperson.</li> </ul>	<p><b>SECRETARY</b></p> <p>The Secretary must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct the correspondence of the council</li> <li>• Ensure that an agenda is forwarded to each member of the council</li> <li>• Ensure that minutes are kept and forwarded to each member of the council prior to the next meeting.</li> <li>• Ensure that notices of meetings are given in accordance with the constitution.</li> </ul> <p>The Secretary is responsible for ensuring the maintenance and safekeeping of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The constitution and code of practice</li> <li>• Official records of the council and minutes of meetings</li> <li>• Copies of correspondence</li> <li>• Register of councilors</li> <li>• Contracts and agreements entered into by the council</li> <li>• Copies of policies of the council</li> <li>• The common seal and keep a record of every use of the seal</li> </ul>
<p><b>TREASURER</b></p> <p>The Treasurer assists the Governing Council in its discussion and approval of the budget.</p> <p>The Treasurer must be chairperson of the finance committee and preside over these meetings.</p> <p>The Treasurer cannot be a member of staff at the school.</p> <p>The Treasurer must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the budget and financial statements are prepared</li> <li>• Submit a report of these at each council meeting</li> <li>• Present the council's audited financial reports to the AGM</li> </ul>	<p><b>DEPUTY CHAIR</b></p> <p>In the absence of the chairperson, the deputy chair assumes their duties.</p> <p>If a Chairperson resigns, a new election should be held for a replacement Chair.</p>

# Governing Council Chairperson:

## Role description –

### Works closely with

- Principal / preschool director (site leader), secretary, treasurer, other members of council, and the wider school/preschool community
- Deputy chairperson, who is an ordinary member of the council that takes on these additional duties when the chairperson is not available.

### Minimum time commitments

- Governing Council meetings twice per term – week 3 and 8 – Mondays at 7pm at the school
- Executive meetings twice per term to set agenda for meeting.
- 1-2 hours per term reading reports / correspondence etc.

### Key duties

#### Chairperson

- Prepares the agenda, working with the site leader and secretary.
- Chairs the meeting and makes sure it runs smoothly.
- Makes sure meetings are properly organised and quorum is met.
- Makes sure there is full and balanced participation of members in meetings.
- Facilitates voting on motions at the meetings.
- Makes sure resolutions of council are acted on.
- Reports to the community at the annual general meeting (AGM).

#### General duties

- Attends all council meetings and lets people know if they can't make it.
- Represents the views of the wider school/preschool community.
- Offers advice on a range of topics about the site.
- Comes to other functions and meetings, like the AGM or end of year assemblies (as needed/appropriate).
- Actively takes part in discussions about the governance of the school/preschool.

### General responsibilities and requirements

The chairperson has the same responsibilities as a general member of the governing council. This means you agree to:

- comply with the council's constitution
- comply with the council's code of practice
- meet the department's requirements for screening, training and induction (your site leader will guide you through what's required)
- keep up-to-date and informed about your work on the council by looking at:  
[www.decd.sa.gov.au/governingcouncils](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/governingcouncils)

### Desirable experience, skills and personal characteristics

- Experience leading a diverse group of people.
- Positive attitude.
- Interested in seeing children and young people do well at preschool and school.
- Willing to work together with parents, the community and school/preschool staff.
- Able to understand and respect different points of view and different cultures.
- Can lead conversations in a balanced and fair way.
- Have a connection with and understanding of the local McLaren Flat Community and School contexts.

### Benefits to you

When you volunteer to be the chairperson for a governing council at your child's school/preschool you will:

- experience a close working relationship with staff and leaders
- be involved in a shared strategy and vision
- have an opportunity to meet parents and other community members



# Governing Council Secretary:

## Role description –

### Works closely with

- Principal / preschool director (site leader), chairperson, treasurer, other members of council, and the wider school/preschool community.

### Minimum time commitments

- Governing Council meetings twice per term – week 3 and 8 – Mondays at 7pm at the school
- Executive meetings twice per term to set agenda for meeting.
- 1-2 hours per term reading reports / correspondence etc.

### Key duties

#### Secretary

- Makes sure people are told about the meeting ahead of time.
- Assists the chair to prepare the agenda.
- Distributes the meeting minutes, agenda and any supporting correspondence.
- Makes sure that minutes are taken at the meetings and distributed to members.
- Keeps all records of council, with help from the site leader - this includes the Constitution, vacancies, standing orders, reports, minutes, contracts, code of practice and any other formal correspondence.
- Makes sure the common seal is kept in a safe place (for example, the school safe).

#### General duties

- Attends all council meetings and lets people know if they can't make it.
- Represents the views of the wider school/preschool community.
- Offers advice on a range of topics about the site.
- Comes to other functions and meetings, like the AGM or end of year assemblies (as needed/appropriate).
- Actively takes part in discussions about the governance of the school/preschool.

### General responsibilities and requirements

The secretary has the same responsibilities as a general member of the governing council. This means you agree to:

- comply with the council's constitution
- comply with the council's code of practice
- meet the department's requirements for screening, training and induction (your site leader will guide you through what's required)
- keep up-to-date and informed about your work on the council by looking at:  
[www.decd.sa.gov.au/governingcouncils](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/governingcouncils)

### Desirable experience, skills and personal characteristics

- Experience leading a diverse group of people.
- Positive attitude.
- Interested in seeing children and young people do well at preschool and school.
- Willing to work together with parents, the community and school/preschool staff.
- Able to understand and respect different points of view and different cultures.
- Can lead conversations in a balanced and fair way
- Have a connection with and understanding of the local McLaren Flat Community and School contexts.
- Access to email and online communications platforms.

### Benefits to you

When you volunteer to be the secretary for a governing council at your child's school/preschool you will:

- experience a close working relationship with staff and leaders
- be involved in a shared strategy and vision
- have an opportunity to meet parents and other community members

# Governing Council Treasurer:

## Role description-

### Works closely with

- Principal / preschool director (site leader), secretary, other members of council, and the wider school/preschool community.
- Members of the finance advisory committee, including the site finance officer.
- School or preschool business manager.

### Minimum time commitments

- Governing Council meetings twice per term – week 3 and 8 – Mondays at 7pm at the school.
- Finance Committee meetings twice per term, prior to the GC Meeting at an agreed time.
- 1-2 hours per term reading reports / correspondence etc.

### Key duties

#### Treasurer

- Chairs the finance advisory committee.
- Sets the agenda for the finance advisory committee, with the site leader
- Works with the site leader and other members of the finance advisory committee to:
  - keep up-to-date records of all finance-related matters
  - organise the budget planning processes and timelines
  - help analyse and review the budget
  - provide budget problem solving recommendations.
- Presents finance information and potential budget adjustments to the council.
- Attends all meetings of the council and the finance advisory committee, and lets people know if they can't make it.

#### General duties

- Represents the views of the wider school/preschool community.
- Offers advice on a range of topics about the site.
- Comes to other functions and meetings, like the AGM or end of year assemblies (as needed/appropriate).
- Actively takes part in discussions about the governance of the school/preschool.

### General responsibilities and requirements

The treasurer has the same responsibilities as a general member of the governing council. This means you agree to:

- comply with the council's constitution
- comply with the council's code of practice
- meet the department's requirements for screening, training and induction (your site leader will guide you through what's required)
- keep up-to-date and informed by looking at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/governingcouncils](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/governingcouncils)

### Desirable experience, skills and personal characteristics

- Background or an interest in finance or dealing with and understanding budgets.
- Experience leading a diverse group of people.
- Positive attitude.
- Access to email and online communications platforms.
- Interested in seeing children and young people do well at preschool and school.
- Willing to work together with parents, the community and school/preschool staff.
- Able to understand and respect different points of view and different cultures.
- Can lead conversations in a balanced and fair way.
- Have a connection with and understanding of the local McLaren Flat Community and School contexts.

### Benefits to you

When you volunteer to be the treasurer for a governing council at your child's school/preschool you will:

- experience a close working relationship with staff and leaders
- be involved in a shared strategy and vision
- have an opportunity to meet parents and other community members.

# Governing Council Parent Member:

## Role description –

### Works closely with

- Chairperson, principal / preschool director (site leader), other members of council, and the wider school community.

### Minimum time commitments

- Governing Council meetings twice per term – week 3 and 8 – Mondays at 7pm at the school
- 1-2 hours per term reading reports / correspondence etc.

### Key duties

- Attends all council meetings and lets people know if they can't make it.
- Represents the views of the wider school/preschool community.
- Offers advice on a range of topics about the site.
- Supporting policy review and development
- Comes to other functions and meetings, like the AGM or end of year assemblies (as needed/appropriate).
- Actively takes part in discussions about the governance of the school/preschool.

### General responsibilities and requirements

As a member of a governing council, you agree to:

- comply with the council's constitution
- comply with the council's code of practice
- meet the department's requirements for screening, training and induction (your site leader will guide you through what's required)
- keep up-to-date and informed about your work on the council by looking at:  
[www.decd.sa.gov.au/governingcouncils](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/governingcouncils)

### Desirable experience, skills and personal characteristics

- A positive attitude.
- Access to email and online communications platforms.
- Interested in seeing children and young people do well at preschool and school.
- Willing to work together with other parents, the community and school/preschool staff.
- Able to understand and respect different points of view and different cultures.
- Can take part in conversations in a balanced and fair way.
- Have a connection with and understanding of the local McLaren Flat Community and School contexts.

### Benefits to you

When you volunteer to be on a governing council at your child's school/preschool you will:

- experience a close working relationship with staff and leaders
- be involved in a shared strategy and vision
- have an opportunity to meet parents and other community members

# Governing Council

## Community Representative:

## Role description –

### Works closely with

- Chairperson, principal / preschool director (site leader), other members of council, and the wider school community.

### Minimum time commitments

- Governing Council meetings twice per term – week 3 and 8 – Mondays at 7pm at the school
- 1-2 hours per term reading reports / correspondence etc.

### Key duties

- Attends all council meetings and lets people know if they can't make it.
- Represents the views of the wider McLaren Flat Community in an objective and balanced way.
- Acts as a conduit between the wider community and the school.
- Offers advice on a range of topics about the site and its community partnerships.
- Supporting policy review and development
- Comes to other functions and meetings, like the AGM or end of year assemblies (as needed/appropriate).
- Actively takes part in discussions about the governance of the school/preschool.

### General responsibilities and requirements

As a member of a governing council, you agree to:

- comply with the council's constitution
- comply with the council's code of practice
- meet the department's requirements for screening, training and induction (your site leader will guide you through what's required)
- keep up-to-date and informed about your work on the council by looking at:  
[www.decd.sa.gov.au/governingcouncils](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/governingcouncils)

### Desirable experience, skills and personal characteristics

- A positive attitude.
- Access to email and online communications platforms.
- Interested in seeing children and young people do well at preschool and school.
- Willing to work together with other parents, the community and school/preschool staff.
- Able to understand and respect different points of view and different cultures.
- Can take part in conversations in a balanced and fair way.
- Have a connection with and understanding of the local McLaren Flat Community and School contexts.

### Benefits to you

When you volunteer to be on a governing council at your child's school/preschool you will:

- experience a close working relationship with staff and leaders
- be involved in a shared strategy and vision
- have an opportunity to meet parents and other community members

# GOVERNING COUNCIL SUB COMMITTEES



The McLaren Vale Primary School Governing Council utilises a sub-committee structure.

The Governing Council is the decision-making\*\* group, but delegates specific responsibilities to its sub-committees.

Sub-committees research and develop recommendations for decision by Council and may, where authorised, administer or implement Council decisions.

Sub-committees enable Council to deal effectively with the volume of matters for which it is responsible. They also provide increased opportunity for parents who are not members of Council to participate in school affairs in which they have a particular interest.

Sub-Committees appointed by Council must consist of at least 3 people and at least 1 must be a member of Council.

Convenors of sub-committees are responsible for the calling of sub-committee meetings, setting the agenda, recording Minutes and reporting to Council.

Each sub-committee meets between meetings of Council and is responsible for operating within its Terms of Reference.

At Council meetings, recommendations from sub-committees should either be:

- (a) approved;
- (b) amended slightly; or
- (c) referred back for reconsideration.

**In other words, Council meetings are not the place for detailed examination of issues.**

**Council members trust and respect one another's ability to develop sound recommendations and utilise appropriate delegation.**

\*\*NB there will be times when the Governing Council are consulted on issues pertaining to the school whereby the Principal has delegated authority to make the final decision.

# FINANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **ROLES / RESPONSIBILITIES**

To advise and recommend to Governing Council information regarding issues on budgetary and financial matters, such as;

- Management of consolidated funds (income, investment, cash flow).
- Make recommendations regarding the voluntary levy and the extent of fundraising in liaison with Fundraising Committee.
- Approve budget accounts for payment.
- Formulate an annual budget with periodic revision and amendment for presentation to Council.
- Ensure that an accurate register of assets is maintained.
- Support planning for longer term and major development project.
- Provide advice to council re financial matters within the school, including debtors.

### **MEMBERS**

Principal

School Finance Officer

Treasurer (committee convenor)

1 or 2 Staff Members

Any interested Governing Council Members

### **MEETING SCHEDULES**

As required throughout each term as negotiated by the Committee.

### **REPORTING**

To provide written reports to Governing Council and minutes of any meetings held.

# GROUNDS COMMITTEE

## ***TERMS OF REFERENCE***

### **ROLE/RESPONSIBILITIES**

To advise and recommend to Governing Council information regarding issues relating to facilities and grounds and the maintenance and development of such.

- Ensure that the buildings and grounds are kept in a safe and well maintained condition.
- Make recommendations regarding future development and required maintenance of the grounds and facilities and contribute the development, implementation and review of the School Grounds Master Plan.
- Encourage and plan for the improvement of the School environment.
- Consider submissions by parents/staff/Principal regarding additional equipment or facilities for use by the School.
- Monitor and prioritise ongoing maintenance plans.

### **MEMBERS**

Principal or Delegate

1 Governing Council Member to act as convenor

1 or 2 Staff Members

Any interested Governing Council Members

Interested community members or parents

### **MEETING SCHEDULES**

As required throughout each term as negotiated by the Committee.

### **REPORTING**

To provide written reports to Governing Council and minutes of any meetings held.

# PARENTS AND FRIENDS COMMITTEE

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **ROLE/RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Parents & Friends committee responsibilities include:

- recommending ideas for fundraising to contribute to the funding of special projects to develop school facilities to Governing Council
- welcome new parents into the school community
- Provide opportunities for parents to come into the school and be a part of the school community.
- This could include:
- volunteering at the school for the benefit of the students or to develop and maintain school resources
- Running and developing events at school that foster positive school and community connections.
- assisting in fundraising activities
- supporting parent education courses

### **MEMBERS**

1 Governing Council Member to act as convenor

Any interested Governing Council Members

Any interested community members or parents

Principal or Delegate

### **MEETING SCHEDULES**

As negotiated by the Committee.

### **REPORTING**

Parents and Friends reports to the Governing Council