

## The Role of Parent Representatives in Middle and Senior School

Junior School Parent Representatives have long played an important role building strong links within the parent community. The School welcomes a large number of new families to the community each year. The move to Middle and Senior School (and to a new School community) presents many challenges to both incoming students and their parents, and a friendly face can make all the difference.

The guidelines for Junior School Parent Representatives work well in the Primary environment, but are not necessarily applicable to Middle/Senior School. This is a quick rundown of what we have been doing for the last few years.

### Requirements for Middle/Senior School Parent Volunteers

We would encourage the nomination of two parent volunteers to act as Parent Representatives for the Year 6s cohort. The role of the Parent Representatives are to support the St Mark's ethos and values as well as to reinforce the sense of community at St Mark's.

Ideally, the Volunteer Parent Representatives will work towards:

- Helping to facilitate the introduction of new School families to the St Mark's community, by acting as a port of call (but not the only port of call) regarding routines and day to day life as a parent in the School.
- Contacting parents of new children in the year group, by telephone, email or in person.
- Building a list of contact details for the Year Group
- Arranging an informal social get together for parents of children in the year group as a way of introducing the new families to the School. A coffee morning at the Coffee Van in the Quadrangle is an easy way to start.
- Occasionally offering to co-ordinate parent help in the Year Group (where the School sees this as desirable).
- Assisting with promoting volunteer opportunities when requested by myself, the teachers and/or the P&F's Parents Auxiliary Coordinator, Jill Charlish.
- Liaising with Community Relations & Marketing and occasionally, on an 'as needed' basis, with the P&F.
- Promoting St Mark's in a positive manner.

### Protecting the Privacy of Information

- The information on the Form contact list is private and provided voluntarily. It may not be distributed outside of the members of the list.
- Please be mindful of families who request two separate contact details for a particular child.
- Some families may choose not to have their details included.
- Please note that participation in the contact list is entirely voluntary, and it is the individual parent's decision as to how much information will be made available for use on the contact list.
- It is essential that Parent Representatives act cautiously and respectfully when sharing information through the group, and to ensure that the parents' wishes in terms of what information may be shared is adhered to.
- When sending out emails to the group, please ensure the "BCC" facility on the email program is utilised.
- When parents request to be added to the group, please check if they only want to be added to the general circulation of notes, or whether they would like to have their contact details shared with everyone.

### Acceptable Use of the Contact List

**Accepted use** includes the establishment of car pools/walking school bus, arranging parent get-togethers, identifying lost property, and sharing of information regarding availability of Parent Commitment opportunities and promoting P&F events/activities.

**Unacceptable use** will be the distribution of spam (including "pass it along" jokes or similar), advertising local businesses or services, political messages (including, but not limited, to the vaccination debate and other personal issues and agendas), sharing of private information, and concerns regarding children's social, emotional, or academic well-being or personal concerns regarding teachers/staff.

## Other important notes

- Parents who are unsure of how to proceed with a particular concern regarding their child's social, emotional or academic well-being should always contact the PCG/Homeroom teacher as a first response.
- In the best interests of both the children and their parents, Parent Representatives should not get involved in matters that are best dealt with by the School.
- If concerns are raised at any stage regarding any of the above please encourage the parent to contact the PCG/Homeroom teacher, Head of Year, Head of School or Principal, as appropriate.
- If a Parent Representative hears of a family in need of pastoral support, they may contact the Chaplain, the Head of Year/School or the Assistant Principal (Pastoral), in confidence, as appropriate.
- Use of emails/text messages to members of the list should be carefully considered, and limited.
- When in doubt, check with Community Relations & Marketing and/or Head of School/Head of Year

## Parent Groups on Facebook

Many year groups or class groups elect to have their own Facebook page. If you choose to create one, please bear in mind that some parents may elect not to have a Facebook profile, and would therefore not be in the group. Please ensure that any information shared within your class/year Facebook group is also shared with these parents.

Before you set up a new group, please ensure you are aware of the School's Privacy Policy and Use of Student Photographs Policy, all of which are available in SEQTA Documents Portal.

There are a few types of Facebook groups: closed group, public group or 'secret' group (see explanation of group types [here](#)).

All groups should have a Code of Conduct or Terms & Conditions. Facebook has incorporated a new system for creating group rules, and we would encourage you to have a look at that if you haven't already done so. If you need further advice on this, please email [community@stmarks.wa.edu.au](mailto:community@stmarks.wa.edu.au)

There is now an option to have your year group's Facebook group connected to the School's Facebook page. Your group's privacy settings will remain exactly as they are (i.e. only group members would be able to see what is happening within the group), but it will mean your group will be easier for other Year 6 families to join.

You will need to make some minor changes to make allow your group to connect to the School's page, as follows:

1. You will need to allow [Mark Saint](#) (an alternate profile used to manage the School's social media accounts) to join your group. Please give Mark Admin rights to your group. Depending on your group's privacy setting you may have to "friend" Mark first.
2. Mark will then connect you to the School's Facebook page. We will alert you when this is done.
3. If you needed to befriend Mark, you can 'unfriend' him at this point, so that your personal profile remains private.
4. Mark will need to remain a member of the group, but will not post in the group or otherwise enter into group conversations.

We recommend naming your group by their Year 12 exit year. So for example, the Year 11 Facebook page could be named something like St Mark's Class of 2020 Parents, the Year 10s as Class of 2021. This way, you won't need to rename the group each year.