



National Association of COMPASS
Co-operation of Minority Religions & Protestant
Parent Associations (Post Primary)

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Dear Chair,

Co-operation of Minority Religions & Protestant Parents Associations (Post Primary)
(COMPASS) -2018 / 2019

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce you and your association to the new National Executive COMPASS. I also want to take this opportunity to briefly let you know of a couple of developments that have either taken place or are likely to take place in the coming year.

At our AGM held at Wilson's Hospital School in May the new National Executive committee was elected. Due to his significant commitments with the National Parents Council post primary, Mr. Paul Rolston stepped down as President but remains very active as an Executive Committee member and will continue as Vice-President. Two new representatives were appointed to the Executive namely, Mr. Nigel Bannister (Wilson's Hospital) and Dr. Nita Mishra (Wesley College). Further details can be found on our website – see below.

Website and Communication

One of the matters the Executive has been conscious of is the need to improve communications with our respective Parents and Parents Teacher Associations. In this regard Ms. Mary Lillis has been contacting all school Parents/ Parent Teacher Association in order to up-date our data base and identify a reliable line of communication with you. I also want to confirm that we have launched a new and revamped website. While the address remains the same www.compassparents.org it has been populated with more information. This includes details of the new Executive; minutes of the last AGM and our audited accounts showing how we used funds we received (the establishment of the website, financing of activities for parents and students, Interactives meetings etc).

I encourage you to look at site and to make parents at your school aware of it. It is our hope that this will prove to be another important step in improving our communications with you. While the website will be regularly up-dated, should you have any information or items you think may be of interest to other parents please submit them via our email address: parentline365@gmail.com. I would also be pleased if this link could be included in any in the 'other links' section that your own website may contain.

National Parents Council post primary.

You will be aware, I hope, of the important role that COMPASS plays in providing a link between our PA/ PTA's and the National Parents Council post primary (NPCpp). The NPCpp works as an umbrella group for Parent / Parent Teacher associations of the the Irish secondary education system. It is managed by a Board consisting of representatives from its four different constituent members (COMPASS, the National Parents

Associations of ETB Schools; the Fed/CSSPA - the representative body for Parents with children in Catholic Secondary schools; and the PACCS – representing parents of the Community and Comprehensive Schools).

The NPCpp has, over the last number of years, faced a number of challenges in addressing all of its objectives but has remained active stakeholders in various discussions with the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and other national bodies. Over the last year the Board of NPCpp has undertaken considerable work revising its governance and operations in order to better fulfil its mandate and establish a more professional structure. Its sources of income are support from the -DES together with contributions of affiliation fees from Schools/BofM's/ PA's/PTA's. The arrangements for this new structure are in the final stages and we anticipate approval in the next month or two.

We are very pleased with these developments and believe that this new structure will give NPCpp its best opportunity to coordinate with us as parents and to further interact with and influence dialogue with the DES and Government. We will be in contact with you further on this matter.

Parent : Student Charter

One of the matters the NPCpp has done considerable work on over the last two years is advocating for a Parent : Student Charter including meeting the Oireachtas. Following consultations with various stakeholders such as the National Parents Council (Primary), National Parents Council (Post Primary) and the Irish Second-level Students Union, the DES is working on the finalisation of national guidelines on a Parent and Student Charter. This will further define the principles regarding how schools will engage with students and parents. Please see our website for further information on this important development for parents and schools.

As matters currently stand we believe that the Department is hoping to have the legislation in place so that Charters can be established for the academic year 2018 / 19. Through our participation in NPCpp we will be kept informed on the development of this legislation and will be in a position to brief you further later in this calendar year.

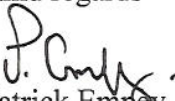
Affiliation Fees.

Finally, I would like to address the issue of annual Affiliation Fees. The system for funding parent representation nationally requires that these be paid by schools directly to NPCpp. Funding is then distributed to each of the constituency bodies including COMPASS.

In recent years and until the COMPASS Executive received the assurance that financial affairs within the NPCpp were in order, PA/PTAs had been instructed to continue to pay their annual affiliation fees to COMPASS. However, having recently held the NPCpp Presidency and now with a full complement of four directors on its board, COMPASS are satisfied that there is now appropriate levels of transparency and proper governance arrangements in place. As a consequence, and, in accordance with the Department of Education's programme and the mandatory requirement under the Whole School Evaluation Programme, we can now advise all our member bodies to remit the annual affiliation fees to NPCpp. Based on the current recommended rate of €1 per student, NPCpp will issue invoices to our member organisations in the coming weeks.

I look forward to mutual and more regular contact with you during this coming year. In the meantime, I or any of the Executive members are available to speak with you on these and any other matters you might wish to raise or seek information about.

Kind regards


Patrick Empey
COMPASS President