

Class Parent Representatives at MPS 2017



Purpose:

The Parent Representatives role builds class community through increasing connections between and with families and school.

Why Be a Parent Representative

Volunteers make a big difference to our students, both in the additional adult time that children have access to, along with the broader range of activities that can be offered. However volunteering also brings personal benefits*. (*see end of document*)

The Role

Parent classroom representatives (one or two parents from each class) encourage awareness, participation and build a sense of community among their child's class and year level team.

The role includes:

- Welcoming new families into the class at the start of the year and through the year via a welcome note or email.
- Organising social class get togethers so that parents and children can meet in an informal setting. Eg plays at Hazelwood or Tusmore Park, drinks or dinners at a local Hotel, Marrayville, Kensi, Robin Hood, bottle and plate night, parent morning / coffee and cake (remembering that some events may be more or less inclusive depending on cultural background).
- Producing a class and year level team email contact list
- Recruiting support and assistance for other community activities within the school, eg Sports day, fundraising events.
- Organising class parents to run **one** Sausage Sizzle per year.
- Encouraging parents to read the school and class newsletters and visit the website to read the parent handbook for current information.



What the parent rep role is not:

- To know everything (*refer parents to class teacher or front office as necessary*)
- To remind other parents of everything (*refer parents to newsletter, website, App notification, class newsletter, notice board as appropriate*).
- Complaints Management- (*refer parents to the school parent complaint policy available on the website*)

Role of Parent Rep Coordinator:

- Communicate with parent reps when support is needed for whole school events
- Manage communication between the school and parent reps, via the school liaison person

Role of class teacher

- Seek nominations from parents to be a parent class rep.
- Talk with parent class reps about communication processes to be used (email, noticeboard, sandwich board...)
- Talk with parent class reps about possibilities for unit or year level get togethers.

Role of School Liaison

- Respond to parent class rep coordinator questions
- Assist with promotion of events via App and newsletter

Resources

- The parent rep role distributed to all parents to ensure common understanding of the role.
- Communication Policy (available on the school website)
- New family welcome packs

- A brief description of common school events (Swimming Carnival, Sports Day, Obstacle Course, School Discos, Cake Walk...) to support parent reps with questions from class parents.

Process

- Parents invited through teacher letter to be a class rep.
- Principal facilitates a meeting early on in term one (and once reps are known) to provide opportunity for reps to meet and determine a Parent Rep Coordinator.
- Goal is to have parent reps in place by the time of Acquaintance Night in term 1 (usually week 3 of term 1) so they can be introduced to the class parent group
- New parent buddy reps will be allocated a buddy (a rep who has already completed a year in the role)
- Parent reps will be invited to a 'get together' once per term.
- When letter goes home at the end of the year informing about class placement for the following year, include a note asking parents to think about class rep role.
- Promote the role at Reception parent open night in term 4 each year.
- For EALD families, offer language support through connecting to families in other classes.

Fundraising Committee determines the school's major fundraising activities. This calendar of events is shared with the community via website and newsletter in term 1 each year.

These and student generated fundraising events can be promoted by parent reps.

Parent reps gain support for the class sponsored sausage sizzle once per year

Police clearances. Current DECD requirements are detailed in the school Volunteer Policy available on the website – or see Vicky Zappia or Denise Martin in the front office.

After **School Sports Committee** – oversee the promotion of teams, recruiting of sports coaches. Parent reps could also promote these teams to families of year 2 children in mid-term 1, 2.

"One of the healthiest things we can do is to volunteer. Volunteering leads to healthier, happier, and longer lives" Nielsen, T. W. (2013). Meaningful Living

<http://www.thomaswnielsen.net/giving-makes-us-happy/>

"Sustainable wellbeing comes not from money or consumerism, but from having meaningful happiness in our lives. Studies show intimate links between generosity and our immune systems. We now know that volunteering is not just good for our physical health, but for our psychological and emotional health too". Thomas W. Nielsen, The Canberra Times, June 14, 2010

<http://www.thomaswnielsen.net/resources/meaningful-living/>

No recipe for happiness is complete without meaning and purpose. In fact, when we engage in activities that serve a higher calling and help others spread positivity, we not only get a warm, fuzzy feeling, but also increase our overall satisfaction with our lives.

Martin Seligman, "the father of positive psychology" at the University of Pennsylvania, said "if you want to feel better in the next few hours, go and help someone else". He added that happiness was not just about pleasure. It encompassed living an engaged and meaningful life in which a person used their strengths and virtues to serve "something bigger" than themselves. This means that as a parent rep you are providing a visible demonstration of serving something bigger and are a great role model to children.

