**CONSTITUTION OF THE PARENTS’ ASSOCIATION OF RATOATH JUNIOR NATIONAL SCHOOL AND RATOATH SENIOR NATIONAL SCHOOL**

**Article 1 The Name of the Parents’ Association**

The name of the Parents’ Association of Ratoath Junior National School and Ratoath Senior National School shall be Ratoath National Schools Parents’ Association, (R.N.S.P.A.).

**Article 2 The Purpose of the Parents’ Association**

The purpose of the Parents’ Association is to provide a structure through which the parents/guardians of children attending Ratoath Junior National School and Ratoath Senior National School can work together for the best possible education for their children. The Parents’ Association will work with the Principals, staff and Boards of Management to build effective partnership between home and school. Under the Education Act, 1998 Section 26. – (1) The parents of students of a recognised school may establish, and maintain from among their number, a parents’ association for that school and membership of that association shall be open to all parents of students of that school. (2) A parents’ association shall promote the interests of the students in a school in co-operation with the board, Principal, teachers and students of the school and for that purpose may (a) advise the Principal or the board on any matter relating to the school and the Principal or board, as the case may be, shall have regard to any such advice, and (b) adopt a programme of activities which will promote the involvement of parents, in consultation with the Principal, in the operation of the school. (4) (a) A parents’ association shall, following consultation with its members, make rules governing its meetings and the business and conduct of its affairs. (b) Where a parents’ association is affiliated to a national association of parents, the rules referred to in paragraph (a) shall be in accordance with guidelines issued by that national association of parents with the concurrence of the Minister.

**Article 3 The Aim of the Parents’ Association**

The aim of the Parents’ Association is to enable parents/guardians (herein after referred to as parents) to play their part in ensuring provision of the best possible education for their children and that this is achieved through the Association’s programme of activities. The Parents’ Association will promote the interests of the students in co-operation with the Boards of Management, Principals, teachers and students, in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act, 1998.

**Article 4 The Work of the Parents’ Association**

The Parents’ Association will undertake a programme of activities which will promote the involvement of parents and which will support students, parents and school staff. In planning its activities, the Parents’ Association will consult with the school Principals.

**Article 5 The Membership of the Parents’ Association**

All parents of children attending Ratoath Junior National School and Ratoath Senior National School will be deemed to be members of the Parents’ Association.

**Article 6 The Election of the Parents’ Association committee**

The Parents’ Association shall hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) at the start of each academic year, at which the members of the committee will be elected. Each member will be elected for one year. At the AGM all committee members step down. Outgoing committee members who wish to remain on the committee and are eligible to do so, (that is as long as they continue to be a parent of a child in the school), are deemed to be re-elected to the committee for the forthcoming academic year. The names of those members who are remaining on the committee will be read out at the AGM. A list of retiring committee members’ names will also be read out. The election of new committee members then takes place. The committee will ensure that a minimum of 2 places is available for new committee members each year. Where the number of new volunteers to join the committee exceeds the number of vacancies, a lottery shall take place during the AGM to determine the new committee members. Should committee places become vacant during the year, the vacancy shall be filled by lottery from the remaining unsuccessful volunteers at the AGM who still wish to join the committee. Parents’ Nominee, elected to the Boards of Management, are automatically members of the committee, but will not hold an officer position on the Parents’ Association committee. Notice of the AGM shall be given in writing to all members of the Parents’ Association not less than 10 working days prior to the meeting.

**Article 7 The committee of the Parents’ Association**

The committee of the Parents’ Association should have a maximum of 16 and a minimum of 12 members. This committee will have responsibility for representing the parents of children attending Ratoath Junior National School and Ratoath Senior National School and managing the activities of the Parents’ Association. The officers of the committee are the Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Vice Chairperson, Vice-Secretary and Vice Treasurer. No member of the committee will hold the same officer position for more than three consecutive years. Ideally no member of the committee shall be eligible to serve as an officer until they have served at least one year on the committee. Should a committee member be absent for 3 consecutive ordinary committee meetings without the approval of the committee they shall be deemed no longer a member of the committee and their position becomes vacant. Members of the committee who are Parent Nominee on the Boards of Management are exempt from the above ruling. A Parent Nominee from each of the Boards of Management should attend each committee meeting. If a Parent Nominee on the Boards of Management resigns their board position mid-year, they may remain a member of the committee of the Parents’ Association until the next AGM even if this means that the maximum committee size of 16 is exceeded for a time. At the committee meeting prior to the AGM the committee must agree which members are retiring from the committee to ensure that a minimum of 2 vacancies are created for new nominations to the committee at the AGM.

**Article 8 The Work of the committee of the Parents’ Association**

The Parents’ Association committee will be responsible for ensuring that all parents are informed of issues which are pertinent to the entire parent body. The Parents’ Association committee may advise the Principals and Boards of Management on any matters relating to the schools in accordance with the Education Act, 1998, 26.(2)(a). The committee is the team that will manage the tasks of the association on behalf of the parent body (the members). Subcommittees can be set up for particular tasks. The subcommittees may also co-opt people to assist in their work. The subcommittees may not make decisions; they remain at all times accountable to the main committee.

The committee will seek suggestions for activities from the parents at the AGM and discuss these suggestions to plan activities for the forthcoming academic year.

The committee will be responsible for seeing that activities are run in an efficient and effective way. The committee will consult with the school Principals and Boards of Management when planning the programme of activities for the forthcoming academic year. The committee will arrange with the Principals and Boards of Management a system for ongoing communication. At the annual general meeting (AGM) the committee will report to the parent body (the members) about its work. The committee communicates openly with the parents in the schools. Occasionally, matters may arise that must be kept confidential, in such cases this shall be respected.

**Article 9 Finance**

The committee will manage and account for any funds collected or expended by the Parents’ Association.

The Parents’ Association committee will finance the activities of the Parents’ Association through fundraising. A Treasurer will be appointed from among the committee members and will be responsible for keeping account of the income and expenditure of the Parents’ Association finances. The Treasurer will give a statement of income and expenditure at each committee meeting. A written statement of income and expenditure will be given at the AGM and a copy will be forwarded to the Boards of Management for their information. The accounts should be audited and verified by a certified accountant. The Parents’ Association will keep a bank account in its name. Each cheque issued requires two authorised signatures. The Parents’ Association will maintain membership of the National Parents Council Primary by annual subscription. In the event of the dissolution of the Parents’ Association all of its assets shall pass to the Boards of Management of the schools.

**Article 10 Fundraising for the School**

Fundraising for the schools by the Parents’ Association will be done with the prior agreement of the Boards of Management. The Parents’ Association committee will agree with the Boards of Management as to the specific purposes for which funds are to be raised by the Parents’ Association.

**Article 11 Changing the Constitution**

Changes to the constitution can be made at the AGM or, if for an urgent reason, an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) can be called for that specific purpose. Notice of an EGM shall be given in writing to all members of the Parents’ Association not less than 10 working days prior to the meeting. Proposals to change the constitution must be submitted in writing to the Parents’ Association committee. The Parents’ Association committee will then circulate these proposals to all parents before the AGM/EGM. All parents of children in the schools at the meeting are eligible to vote on the proposals.