



# National Association of COMPASS

## Co-operation of Minority Religions & Protestant Parent Associations (Post Primary)

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### Minutes of 2019 Compass A.G.M. held Wesley College on 9<sup>th</sup> November, 2019

**Present:** Executive Committee Members –Patrick Empey (President), Paul Rolston (Deputy-President), Julie Carr (Secretary), Nigel Bannister (Treasurer) Shane Bennett (P.R.O.), Richard Brickenden, Alan Mulligan, Nita Mishra and Mary Lillis.

**Parent Representatives from:** Wesley College, Rathdown School, St. Columba's College, The King's Hospital, Wilson's Hospital School, Villiers School, East Glendalough School, Kilkenny College, Dundalk Grammar School, Bandon Grammar School, St. Andrew's College, Stratford College, Temple Carrig School, Middleton College and Sandford Park.

**Apologies:** Claire Cox and Geraldine Neill

**Dr Siobhan O'Higgins – Active & SMART Consent Programme N.U.I.G.:** Dr O'Higgins gave a great talk on the whole area of sexuality and consent. This is not an easy topic and one that is rarely spoken about but the response from parents to this talk shows what an important issue it is. She said it is so important to talk to our children from a very early age to inform and equip them to deal with situations in the future. Advertising has played a huge area in sexualising things by showing inappropriate images that can only be indirectly related to the product being advertised. The more informed children are will reduce the risks of misinterpretation in situations. It should always be assumed that consent is not given in any situation unless there has been a discussion and clarification on what is agreed. This applies to all sexual orientations/genders. Obviously certain situations can affect discussions like alcohol and peer pressure. The whole area of social media e.g. posting sexually explicit things needs to be addressed. Another area that needs improvement is the area of sex education in schools which at the moment is inappropriate. This is a huge role parents need to play in keeping their children educated. Dr O'Higgins backed up her talk with some very interesting statistics.

**A.G.M. Business:** The minutes of the 2018 A.G.M. and Secretary's Report had been circulated prior to the meeting and are also available on the new website. They were proposed by: Richard Brickenden and Seconded by: Alan Mulligan.

The President spoke of how most of the Compass Executive's work was concerned with changes in Npcpp. The Department of Education & Skills (DES) required Npcpp's corporate structure to be addressed so a new constitution was adopted and Npcpp subsequently restructured. There were originally twenty Directors and this was reduced to twelve i.e. three directors from each constituent body. The Compass Directors appointed to Npcpp are Paul Rolston, Nita Mishra and Nigel Bannister. The President thanked the outgoing Directors – Alan Mulligan, Julie Carr and Shane Bennett. Obviously the changes in the Npcpp Constitution has had a knock on affect the Compass Constitution which has also had to be amended accordingly. With regards to funding – Npcpp receive some from the DES and also through the €1 per student Affiliation fee requested from the schools.

Compass have had a lot of discussion regarding outreaching to parents and are trying to hold Interactives around the country to interact with as many parents as possible. Our AGM usually scheduled in May was replaced by an EGM because of changes in Npcpp and to engage with parent contacts to update them. Obviously with the regular changes in parents' representatives this can affect communication channels.

The Treasurer provided the accounts to the meeting. One of our main costs was the revamp of the website. There was a question as to why our Affiliations were at zero. It was mentioned that this is because Schools have been asked to pay Npcpp directly now. Schools are encouraged to affiliate as funding then comes back to Compass which will enable them to do more for parents. It also shows commitment of Compass within Npcpp. Affiliation to NPCPP is also a requirement to fully complete a Whole School Evaluation that schools are affiliated to a National Parent Organisation. The accounts have been approved and the auditor will sign them prior to posting on the Compass Website. Accounts were proposed by: Julie Carr and Seconded by: Paul Rolston

The new Constitution of Compass was discussed. It was mentioned that Directors are nominated by Compass and then elected by Npcpp. Item 16 in the Constitution was amended from Directors to Members. Changes to the Constitution were agreed and approved. Proposed by: Richard Heywood Jones and Seconded by Shane Bennett.

There were four places now available on the Executive due to the retirement of Alan Mulligan, Richard Brickenden, Shane Bennett and Geraldine Neill. All the remaining Executive Members are available to remain on the Committee and with no objection from the meeting they were elected.

The following were also elected onto the committee:

Clive Jones – Wesley College  
Eoin Murphy – Midleton College  
Hilary Rabbette – St. Andrew's College  
Alyson Findlay – East Glendalough School

Proposed by: Julie Carr and Seconded by Nigel Bannister

**A.O.B:** It was proposed to hold Interactives regionally – Proposed by: Patrick Empey and Seconded by: Nigel Bannister

A further discussion took place in relation to Npcpp and engagement of parents. It was mentioned that Npcpp is the point of contact for parents looking for advice. They represent parents on various national bodies, committees and organisations. Npcpp were also the parents' voice behind having the Parent Student Charter made a reality and this will have a huge effect on Parents having their voices heard. This has now reached publication stage in the Oireachtas. Affiliation notices will issue shortly from Npcpp and again schools are encouraged to pay these fees to support NPCPP as it advocates for and represents post primary parents in the national education system.

The President then closed the meeting and thanked everyone for attending and to Wesley College for hosting the event.