

# BOARD of REFORMED CHRISTIAN EDUCATION SCOTLAND CONSTITUTION

## 1. Name

1.1 The organisation shall be known as the Board of Reformed Christian Education Scotland. Hereafter for the purpose of this document 'BRCES'.

## 2. Purpose

2.1 The organisation's purpose is to advance education through promoting and assisting the establishment and maintenance of non-denominational, Reformed, Confessional Christian schools, early years, Primary and Secondary, throughout the nation of Scotland. The pursuit of this purpose may require the organisation to justify and defend such education. In seeking to attain its purpose the organisation will seek to assist parents in carrying out their Biblical privilege and responsibility to educate and train their children, by the grace of God, and in accordance with His inerrant and infallible Word. The goal will be to provide the highest possible standard of education, suitable for the widest range of intellectual ability, in an environment which cares for each child as an individual.

## 3. Statement of Faith and Principles of Doctrine

3.1 We believe and accept the revelation of the triune God given in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, variously expressed in the Reformed Confessions, namely the Westminster Confession of Faith and Larger and Shorter Catechisms (1646), Three Forms of Unity (Belgic Confession 1561, Heidelberg Catechism 1563, Canons of Dort 1619) and the London Baptist Confession (1689).

Members must indicate their unqualified acceptance of one of these confessions.

For the sake of unity and making allowance for the few areas in the Confessions that are not in agreement, there should be no teaching at variance with the doctrines of these named confessions.

We therefore believe in:

3.2 The divine inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture, its supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.

3.3 The sovereignty and grace of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit in creation, providence, revelation, redemption, and final judgement.

3.4 The world was created in 6 literal days, and that God rested on the seventh.

3.5 The sinfulness and guilt of man, making him subject to God's wrath and condemnation.

3.6 The substitutionary sacrifice of the incarnate Son of God as the sole and all-sufficient ground of redemption from the guilt and power of sin and from God's wrath and condemnation.

3.7 The justification of the sinner solely by the grace of God through faith in Christ crucified and risen from the dead.

3.8 The regenerating, illuminating, indwelling, and sanctifying work of God the Holy Spirit.

3.9 The abiding authority of the moral laws of God as summarised in the Ten Commandments.

3.10 The personal, visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ in power and in glory to judge the world.

3.11 The bodily resurrection of all mankind, the believer to life everlasting and the unbeliever to eternal damnation.

3.12 For the sake of unity, sung items of praise being offered explicitly as worship to God should be from the Book of Psalms and should not be accompanied with instrumental music.

#### **4. Education Principle**

4.1 BRCES will seek to ensure that its associated schools teach the children in an environment governed by the Word of God, and one in which the Mediatorial Kingship of Christ is recognised in the whole ethos, curriculum, and discipline of the School. Thereby, in the grace of God, enabling the children to develop and own the biblical Christian world-view and their God-given gifts for a life of glorifying service to God.

#### **5. Governance**

5.1 The Board of Directors shall:

- a. govern the BRCES, striving to ensure that it glorifies God in all its aims and activities,
- b. bear the collective and individual responsibility for the purposes of the title to heritable property,
- c. administer all funds.

#### **6. The Board of Directors**

6.1 The BRCES shall have no more than twelve Members. The BRCES members shall be legally recognised Directors or Trustees and Members of the Company and Charity.

6.2 The Members must be communicant members of a Reformed, Confessional Church and give clear evidence of saving faith in the life choices which they have made. They must sign the BRCES Statement of Faith and the Principles of Doctrine (Section 3), including one of the Confessions of Faith, before being accepted as members of the BRCES.

6.3 The Members shall serve on the board for an initial, minimum term of three years. Members wishing to resign must tender their resignation in writing to the SBRCE Secretary. There shall be no restriction on Members being re-nominated.

6.4 The BRCES shall, at its discretion, ask Scottish Churches with an unqualified commitment to one of the recognised confessions of faith detailed in Section 3.1, to consider nominee/s from the BRCES with a view to their being appointed to serve as Members on the BRCES. These individuals will have demonstrated a clear and competent interest in Christian education. A maximum of two persons will be nominated from any one denomination. Whilst the majority of the BRCES members must be Church (denomination) appointed, not all Board members are required to be Church (denomination) appointed.

6.5 The BRCES can, by a unanimous vote only, excluding the affected nominee(s), decide to cease asking a denomination to nominate a Member(s). In the event of that happening the SBRCE will write to the denomination citing its reasons for not extending an invitation to nominate a Member(s) to sit on the SBRCE.

6.6 The BRCES shall invite two representatives of the supporting Dutch Charity as non-voting members of the board. Their membership of the BRCES is subject to their being a member of a Dutch reformed church and signing the BRCES Statement of Faith and the Principles of Doctrine.

6.7 Should other Reformed Confessional Charities be formed out with Scotland to support the work of the BRCEs, they too will be afforded the opportunity to nominate two representatives of their supporting Charity as non-voting members of the BRCEs Their membership of the SBRCE is subject to their being a member of a reformed church and signing the BRCEs Statement of Faith and the Principles of Doctrine.

6.8 The BRCEs may invite a maximum of three individuals at any one time to join the Board for the reason of their particular gifts to perform a specific role. They shall serve for a period of one year but may be reappointed at the discretion of the BRCEs. Membership of the BRCEs is subject to meeting the requirements of 6.2.

6.9 For a meeting of the BRCEs to take place, a quorum of 55% of the membership must be present.

6.10 The BRCEs shall elect from among its Members a Chairman, Treasurer, and Secretary. It may appoint from out with its number a non-voting 'writing secretary'.

6.11 The BRCEs shall meet at least three times a year to transact its business.

6.12 BRCEs Board members will be in receipt of an agenda and financial statement seven days prior to a SBRCE meeting taking place. Each agenda shall include the following statutory items:

- opening and closing prayer.
- a report, including a financial statement, from each associated school principal teacher,
- a financial report from the SBRCE Treasurer,
- a report on new school opportunity developments,

BRCEs Board members may request items to be included on the agenda by writing to the Board Secretary fourteen days prior to the SBRCE meeting.

6.13 In the case of a voting deadlock, the Chairman shall exercise a casting vote.

6.14 A minute record of all BRCEs meetings shall be taken by the Secretary or other nominated person and sent to BRCEs members within 14 days of a BRCEs meeting taking place. At the next BRCEs meeting these minutes will be taken as read and, following consideration, be agreed with any required amendments.

## **7. SBRCE Annual General Meetings**

7.1 The organisation shall hold an Annual General Meeting and such other meetings as may be called. The time, place, and agenda of such meetings shall be determined by the BRCEs and communicated to the members of the company/charity and other interested parties not less than six weeks before the date of the meeting. The meeting is to be chaired by the BRCEs Chairman or other BRCEs member nominated by the BRCEs.

7.2 BRCEs members shall be entitled to table items for the agenda. Items for inclusion in the agenda must be tabled one month before the meetings, and the agenda distributed not less than two weeks before the meetings. Items may, in addition, be raised under A.O.B. but will not be discussed or voted on at that meeting, except at the discretion of the chairman. All proposals regarding the operation of the BRCEs must be explicitly consistent with the Word of God.

7.3 As well as fulfilling the legal requirements pertaining to the charitable company status the BRCEs

AGM will publicly state the finances, report on the past year, and share plans for the future with those present.

7.4 Special meetings may be called at any time at the discretion of the BRCES. Such a meeting must state the reason for calling the meeting, and notice of a special meeting must also include a statement of these reasons.

7.5 In case of voting deadlock, the Chairman shall exercise a casting vote.

7.6 A minute record of all Annual General Meetings shall be taken by the Secretary or other nominated person and sent to BRCES members within 14 days of the meeting taking place.

## **8. Finance**

8.1 The BRCES shall seek to obtain from donations the funds necessary for it to realise its purpose and goals. The BRCES shall have power to borrow funds as required.

8.2 No BRCES Member (apart from contracted staff) will receive any payment for work undertaken. Expenses will be reimbursed as per normal practice.

8.3 The BRCES accounts will be professionally audited annually and published prior to the Annual General Meeting.

## **9. Property**

9.1 The organisation shall have power:

*BRCES*

- to purchase, lease, hire, or otherwise acquire any heritable or movable property for occupation or use by a member school in accordance with its stated purpose.
- to sell, let on lease or tenancy, or otherwise dispose of or deal with buildings or land or any interest therein.
- to erect, alter, maintain, or repair, and generally promote the preservation of any buildings or land vested in the BRCES.

9.2 Any purchase, selling or erection of property must be agreed by the BRCES.

## **10. BRCES Member Schools**

10.1 In the pursuit of its purpose the BRCES shall offer existing Christian schools the opportunity to enter into a contractual agreement with the BRCES which will see them adopt the 'Model Constitution' approved by the BRCES and adopt the name *Melville-Knox Location*, (for example 'Melville - Knox Primary School, Glasgow'). These schools will then be known as 'Member Schools' in their relationship with the BRCES.

10.2 The BRCES will seek to support these Member Schools by whatever legitimate means it can, in the pursuit of their respective and shared purpose and goals.

10.3 Parents seeking to establish a Reformed, Confessional, Christian School in their area can apply to the BRCES for support in forming a Melville-Knox School. This will involve;

- the establishing of a Melville-Knox Schools Board defined by location, (for example, Melville-Knox Schools Board Glasgow),
- the entering into a contractual agreement with the BRCES,
- and the adoption of the 'Model Constitution' approved by the BRCES School Board.

10.4 All Member Schools operating with BRCES support shall be known by the name, 'Melville-Knox', and adopt the complete branding approach for 'Melville-Knox' schools. This is to facilitate both efficiency in operating and effective promotion of the shared purpose and aims. (Complete branding means all; internet presence, school uniforms, school sign-age, letterhead materials etc.)

## **11. BRCES Associate Schools**

11.1 The BRCES will offer associate status to schools which are seeking to transition to a Reformed, Confessional position and adoption of the model Constitution approved by the BRCES for member schools.

11.2 The BRCES will seek to support associate schools by whatever legitimate means it can, for as long as it deems necessary, as such schools work to become a Member School.

## **12. Amendments**

12.1 No amendments shall be made regarding the purpose (section 2), Statement of Faith (section 3), educational principles (section 4), and amendments (section 11).

12.2 No amendments shall be made which would have the effect of causing the BRCES to cease.

12.3 Any change to this Constitution shall only be made at a properly convened General Meeting with a 75% majority vote.

## **13. Dissolution**

13.1 In the case of dissolution, the property and monies of the BRCES shall, after realisation and settlement of debt, be donated to an organisation involved in the promotion of Christian education which is itself a charity for tax purposes. The choice of organisation shall be at the discretion of the BRCES.

13.2 Dissolution shall only take place where a 75% majority of the BRCES re in favour of it.

13.3 Each BRCES member undertakes that if the company is wound up while he/she is a member (or within one year after he/she ceases to be a member), he/she will contribute up to a maximum of £1 to the assets of the company to be applied towards:

- a) Payment of the company's debts and liabilities contracted before he/she ceases to be a member;
- b) Payment of the costs, charges, and expenses of winding up;
- c) Adjustment of the rights of the contributories among themselves.