

**GEMS**

مدرسة جيمس كامبريدج إنترناشيونال الخاصة بالشارقة
Cambridge International Private School
SHARJAH

GEMS Cambridge International Private School, Sharjah Parent Committee Policy

Last Amendment: September 2021

Policy Review Date: September 2022

“When you become a Parent Committee (PC) member you take on an important role as a representative of all the parents/carers in your school, but that’s not all – the success of a committee is dependent on the full participation of its members. ”

How do I become a committee member?

At GCS parents are either asked to send in their nomination or we open the registration process at the beginning of the Academic year before the Agreed General Meeting (AGM) or by a show of hands at the meeting. Parents can also liaise with PRE to register their interest and fill out the registration form for showing their interest in joining the committee.

If you are keen to be involved with the work of the PC but would find it difficult to attend meetings due to family commitments, childcare issues or work then why not ask if you can become a *virtual member* – you could agree to respond (by email/phone) to issues on the agenda and any correspondence sent out by the Chair without actually being present at the meeting.

What are the main responsibilities of a committee member?

- The PC constitution will have details of the aims of the group and you should always keep these in mind when acting on behalf of the group.
- Make yourself aware of committee rules and how meetings are run. Ask about the procedures for adding items to the agenda, speaking at meetings, voting, and how to call an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM).
- Get to know fellow committee members and the office bearers and how the group operates.
- A committee member represents more than just themselves on the PC. Most parents join because they want to help their own child’s education and school, however, committee members are there to try to contribute to ideas and projects of **all** the parents in the school.
- A committee member should be aware of parental contributions and support; if several parents are keen to initiate a project or want something raised at a meeting then you may ask the Chair to put it on the agenda.
- PC members should let other parents know about the work of the committee and how they can get in touch.
- Committee members should not bring the PC into disrepute in any way. If a committee member is unhappy with committee business and/or decisions made, they should raise this with the Chair or at a meeting.
- Committee members should make themselves familiar with the diversity and make-up of the school community and make sure that all parents know about the Parent Committee, e.g. parents whose first language is not English.

Committee meetings

- Attend meetings regularly and arrive on time.
- If you cannot attend a meeting send your apologies to either the Chair or PRE prior to the meeting.

- Read any information or correspondence sent out before a meeting and if you are unsure about an item on the agenda, ask someone to clarify this.

Keep to the agenda during the meeting and do not interrupt. Do not start a separate conversation while the committee is discussing an item.

- Take an active part in discussions but if you are unsure about the subject, ask for clarification.
- Don't be afraid to ask what something means – you are probably not the only one who needs clarification!
- Be respectful when others are speaking by treating others as you want to be treated. Indicate to the Chair if you wish to speak.
- Make sure your opinion is heard – if you don't participate then you don't have the right to criticise decisions.
- If a vote takes place you must go with the majority decision – even if you don't agree.
- If you have voted against a decision made by the majority of the committee then you may ask for this to be reflected in the minutes.
- If Any Other Committee Business (AOCB) is an item on the agenda this is not the point to bring up anything for immediate discussion. If you would like to raise an issue then ask for it to be put on the agenda for the next meeting.

After a meeting

- Read the minutes from a meeting as soon as possible and make sure the PRE-is aware of any errors or if your views have not been properly reflected.
- Follow up on any tasks you may have been given as soon as you can.
- It is not appropriate to publicly disagree or complain about the committee with other parents. Any concerns should be taken to the Chair/other committee members and/or discussed at a future meeting.
- This may all seem rather daunting but it shouldn't be. Your involvement on our PC should be a great opportunity for you to get involved with the school and learn more about your child's education.
- All communication on any social media platforms, personal use or otherwise shall be responsible, respectful and professional as well as in line with the values and policies of GCS.
- **Remember the committee will be what you and the other parents make it: If you are positive and focus on what can be achieved rather than the problems, your child and all the others at the school will benefit.**

Aims/Objectives

1. The aims/objectives of the Parent Committee are:
 - to work in partnership with the school to create a welcoming school that is inclusive and supportive of all parents
 - to promote partnership between the school, its students, other agencies, and its community
 - to develop and engage in activities that support the education and welfare of the students
 - to identify and represent the views of parents on the education provided by the school and other matters affecting the education and welfare of the students



Membership

The membership of the Parent Committee consists of parents/carers of children attending GEMS Cambridge International Private School Sharjah. The membership of the Parent Council will be a minimum of three and a maximum 40 parents of different children attending the school, if possible they should be representative of all age groups within the school. Parents shall always form the majority of the Parent Committee.

General Meetings

The Monthly General Meeting (MGM) will be held in the last week of each month. A notice of the meeting, including date, time and place will be sent to all members of the Parent Committee at least 2 weeks in advance.

The meeting will include:

- a report on the work of the Parent Committee(s)
- discussion of issues that members of the PC may wish to raise
- discussion on projects and initiatives by PC members
- selection of the new Parent Committee members, if any

At all General Meetings voting shall be on the basis of one vote per parent/full Parent Committee members present at the meeting.

PARENT COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Members of the Parent Committee shall be appointed at the MGM. They shall be elected for a period of one academic year. After this time, they would be eligible for re-election if they wish as long as they still have a child attending the school. Parent Committee members may leave Parent Committee at any time by submitting their resignation in writing.

Any parent of a child in GCS can volunteer to be a member of the Parent Committee. Anyone not selected to be a member of the PC may be offered the opportunity to be part of any sub-groups set up by the PC.

The Events group and volunteer group shall be responsible for keeping accurate minutes of all meetings and will make these available upon request to any member of the Parent Committee. If any Parent Committee member misses 2 consecutive meetings without explanation, the Parent Committee will contact the individual to confirm whether they wish to remain a member.

Parent Committee Sub-Groups

If the PC chooses to set up sub-groups, they should each involve at least one member of the PC. Other members of the PC and school community may be co-opted to subgroups. Sub-groups will last as long as required to carry out their tasks. Membership should be reviewed annually. The PC members on the subgroup will be responsible for liaison with the PC.

Meetings

The PC will meet at least once in every month.

Any two members of the PC can request that an additional meeting be held and all members of the Parent Committee will be given at least one week's notice of date, time and place of the meeting.

Finance

The volunteers and events PC members will ensure that monies collected during any fundraising events are counted and verified by at least two PC members.

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The Parent Committee shall be responsible for ensuring that all monies are used in accordance with the objectives of the PC.

Ground rules

Kindly speak "through the Chair" by putting their hands up when they would like to speak. They should then wait until the Chair says it's their turn.

- Don't interrupt other people.
- Stick to the items on the agenda.
- Don't talk amongst yourselves.
- Respect other people's views.
- Keep contributions short and to the point.

Social Media

Parent committee members must raise the profile of GCS by posting positive comments on all social media platforms

Social media platforms must be used to communicate accurately and verified information to other members of the community

All forms of communication must remain transparent with the committee members.

Parent committee members must take admin rights/ ownership of WhatsApp groups or any other groups for each grade to continue communicating accurate and verified information.

Disclaimer: At any point members are found engaged in spreading rumours, incorrect information, or creating a conflict of interest for GCS, they will unfortunately not be allowed to be part to be of the parent committee.

By signing below, I hereby acknowledge that I have completely read and fully understand the terms of the GCS Parental Committee policy.

Name of the Parent: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____