

Operating Charter of the Canberra Montessori School Parents and Friends' Association Committee

Version 3 of this Charter became effective on 3 April 2023

Preamble

This document sets out the operating practices of the Canberra Montessori School Parents and Friends' Association Committee. It is made as a by-law of the Canberra Montessori School Parents and Friends' Association in accordance with section 12 of the Constitution of the Canberra Montessori School Parents and Friends' Association. If there is any inconsistency between this Charter and the Constitution, the Charter will be subordinate to the Constitution.

Contents

1. [Terms](#)
2. [Values of the P&F Committee](#)
3. [Objectives](#)
4. [Management of the P&F Association](#)
5. [The duties of the President](#)
6. [The duties of the Vice-President/s](#)
7. [The duties of the Secretary](#)
8. [The duties of the Vice-Secretary](#)
9. [The duties of the Treasurer](#)
10. [The duties of all P&F Committee members](#)
11. [Communication protocol](#)
12. [Consultation](#)
13. [Decision making](#)
14. [Committee meetings](#)
15. [Out-of-session business](#)
16. [Fundraising activities/Related Party Transactions](#)
17. [Annual Review of the Charter](#)

1) Terms

The following terms are used in this document:

‘P&F Association’ refers to the Canberra Montessori School Parents and Friends’ Association.

‘The Constitution’ refers to the Constitution of the Canberra Montessori School Parents and Friends’ Association.

‘P&F Committee’ refers to the Canberra Montessori School Parents and Friends’ Association Committee, as set out in section 12 of the Constitution.

‘The Charter’ refers to this document — the Operating Charter of the Canberra Montessori School Parents and Friends’ Association Committee.

‘CMS’ refers to the Canberra Montessori School.

2) Values of the P&F Committee

- a) Valuing all families and fostering a culture in which all families feel that they belong to our school.
- b) Working as a team, respecting our fellow P&F members and valuing the diversity of opinions, experiences and ideas.
- c) Respect for our children, their education and their educational environment and support.
- d) Respect for our school leaders, teachers and staff and the teaching and learning programs that are offered.
- e) Respect for the principles of Montessori education.

3) Objectives

- a) The P&F Association provides CMS with opportunities for formal and informal interaction with parents, carers and friends of CMS and the wider community. The P&F Committee plans and organises activities and social events for fundraising and friendship. These functions occur with the approval and support of the CMS Principal, as the representative of the school management and teaching staff.
- b) All events and activities will have predetermined objectives and anticipated outcomes and will be communicated to all members accordingly. Each event and activity will be guided by the Values of the P&F Committee, set out at section 2 of the Charter.

4) Management of the P&F Association

- a) The business and affairs of the P&F Association shall be under the management of the P&F Committee, which will exercise all such powers in accordance with the Constitution and this Charter.
- b) P&F Committee membership is set out in the Constitution at sections 12 and 13. Any person who is a member of the P&F Association may be elected to the P&F Committee.
- c) Each member of the P&F Committee will hold office, subject to the rules of the Constitution, until the conclusion of the Annual General Meeting (AGM) following the date of the member's election but is eligible for re-election.

- d) Office bearers comprise:
- the President
 - not more than two Vice Presidents
 - the Secretary
 - the Vice-Secretary
 - the Treasurer
- e) Election of Office bearers and Committee members shall be made according to the rules of the Constitution set out at section 13.
- f) If a Committee member is unable to fulfil a term of office they must indicate this in writing to the President and Secretary of the P&F Committee. In the case where it is the President and/or Secretary resigning, written notification must also be given to the Vice President(s). Any resulting vacancy must then be filled according to the process set out at section 13 of the Constitution, and the new position will be occupied for the remainder of the original term of office.
- g) If after three meetings the three Committee positions of President, Secretary and Treasurer remain unfilled, future meetings of the P&F Association may be suspended until those positions are filled and advice taken from the Principal.

5) The duties of the President

The duties of the President and, in the President's absence or inability, the Vice President, include:

- a) Chair and convene all meetings of the P&F Association and the P&F Committee.
- b) Approve the minutes of each meeting, as prepared by the Secretary, prior to their issuing.
- c) Liaise with the Principal on any matters that involve the P&F Association.
- d) Represent the P&F Association at meetings of CMS staff or the CMS Board, as necessary.
- e) Have a deliberative as well as casting vote when required at all meetings.
- f) Liaise with P&F Association members, CMS Principal and CMS staff in the planning of events, activities and monies spent.
- g) Promote the P&F Association, its aims and activities to new parents at CMS and identify ways to increase community engagement.

- h) Provide written reports and articles for school publications, communications and newsletters, as required.
- i) Provide an annual written report to members of the P&F Association at the P&F Association AGM.
- j) Act as the point of contact between the P&F Committee and the CMS Principal, CMS staff and members of the P&F Association.
- k) Be the conduit for communications between the P&F Committee and CMS, and the P&F Committee and P&F Association members, as defined at section 11.

6) The duties of the Vice-President/s

The duties of the Vice President/s include:

- a) Assist the President in the management of the P&F Committee.
- b) Convene and chair meetings of the P&F Association or the P&F Committee in the absence of the President.
- c) Work closely with the President in the day-to-day affairs of the P&F Committee.

7) The duties of the Secretary

The duties of the Secretary include:

- a) Perform duties set out at section 14 of the Constitution.
- b) Attend to correspondence and issue notices of the P&F Association.
- c) Maintain a register of current Office bearers and other members of the P&F Committee.
- d) Keep copies of the President's Report and of the Financial Statement and Balance Sheet adopted at the P&F Association AGM and the names of Office bearers and of other members of the P&F Committee elected at the AGM.
- e) Issue meeting agendas to Committee members two business days prior to scheduled meetings.
- f) Keep minutes of all meetings of the P&F Association and the P&F Committee, as set out in the Constitution at section 14(2).
- g) Maintain a register of friends of the P&F Association, noting that CMS management staff maintain the register of parent and carer members.

- h) Keep all the records of the P&F Association including legal documents, insurance certificates, certificates of incorporation and registration with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) and other documents as necessary.
- i) Submit an Annual Information Statement by 30 June of each year and notify the ACNC of changes to the Address For Service of the P&F Association or changes to Committee members.
- j) Perform the duties of the President should the President and the Vice President/s be unable to attend a meeting or event.

8) The duties of the Vice-Secretary

The duties of the Vice-Secretary include:

- a) Perform the duties of the Secretary in the Secretary's absence or inability.
- b) Work with the Secretary in the day-to-day affairs of the P&F Committee.

9) The duties of the Treasurer

The duties of the Treasurer include:

- a) Perform the duties set out at section 15 of the Constitution.
- b) Safe custody and stewardship of the funds of the P&F Association.
- c) Receive subscriptions and donations on behalf of the P&F Association.
- d) Keep proper accounts of financial transactions of the P&F Association set out at section 15(1) of the Constitution.
- e) Prepare the Financial Statement and Balance Sheet made up to the 31st day of December in each year.
- f) Presentation to the P&F Committee of such Financial Statements as are from time to time required.

10) The duties of all P&F Committee members

The duties of P&F Committee members are:

- a) To provide verbal status reports on active projects/activities at P&F Committee meetings and update their relevant paperwork as required.

- b) To manage their agreed projects and deliver outcomes accordingly.
- c) To work within the parameters of both the Constitution and Charter as well as any policies or protocols that have been determined by the P&F Committee.

11) Communication protocol

- a) It is acknowledged that CMS owns the CMS brand. Approval for use of the P&F Association logo will be at the discretion of the President, CMS Principal, or his/her delegate.
- b) Standard stationery items will be provided by CMS to the P&F Committee.
- c) The P&F Association has its own Facebook group 'The Canberra Montessori School Parents and Friends' Association' of which there are designated administrators. P&F Committee members are encouraged to join and post accordingly.
- d) The P&F Facebook page will only accept members who are either active Members or Friends of the P&F. Administrators of this page will also comply with Facebook regulations, including age requirements, as well as any other current legislation requiring the protection of children.
- e) Written communication with parents and the wider community resides with the President or her/his assigned delegate and the CMS Principal.

12) Consultation

- a) The P&F Committee will consult with its members via a range of mechanisms and will be guided, but not limited, by the results of consultation in its decision making.
- b) The P&F Committee will regularly invite parent feedback through school newsletters and communications and will respond to correspondence received in a timely way. P&F Committee members will also engage in informal consultation at organised events or in day-to-day interactions with members and may share insights at P&F Committee meetings during a standing agenda item — 'Member feedback'.

13) Decision making

- a) All activities initiated by the P&F Committee, requiring expenditure of P&F Association funds shall be approved by the CMS Principal, or his/her delegate, before proceeding to implementation.

- b) The P&F Committee may conduct business at P&F Committee meetings, as set out at section 14, or out of session, set out at section 15.
- c) CMS staff hold responsibility for students' educational needs and requirements. The P&F Committee shall not be involved in these decisions.
- d) All decisions agreed by the majority of Committee members at a Committee meeting shall be binding. Decisions may only be revisited at a future Committee meeting and must be itemised on the relevant Agenda in accordance with the Committee's protocols.
- e) All work and projects managed and conducted by the P&F Association is for the benefit of members and CMS. Individual members must not financially benefit from any work or project undertaken by the P&F Association. An exclusion to this ruling may apply in the event of severe hardship of one or more members. In this instance, Committee meeting protocols must be enacted.

14) Committee meetings

- a) In accordance with the Constitution (at section 18(1)) the P&F Committee will meet at least 4 times in each calendar year. The P&F Committee will aim to hold at least two meetings per school term.
- b) P&F Committee meeting dates will be advertised via school newsletters, 'what's on this week' emails and the CMS calendar for parents.
- c) P&F Committee meetings will be conducted as open meetings. Any P&F Association member may attend as an observer but shall not be entitled to vote.
- d) The P&F Committee will conduct business at P&F Committee meetings according to the rules set out in the Constitution at section 18.

15) Out-of-session business

- a) The P&F Committee will endeavour to undertake business during meetings but may conduct business out of session as necessary.
- b) The President or his/her delegate will send an email to members of the P&F Committee clearly outlining matters for decision. The closing date and time for responses shall be specified in the email and will be at least 2 whole business days after circulation of the email. P&F Committee members will vote by sending an email reply to the P&F Committee, including 'Agreed' or 'Not agreed' in their reply. P&F Committee members may include comments for consideration if they wish.

- c) Consistent with the voting rules of the Constitution at section 18, a decision is agreed by a majority of votes. If the votes are equal the President may exercise a second or casting vote. At least four individual responses (including the President) are required, or the decision shall be deferred to the next P&F Committee meeting.
- d) The outcome of the vote will be minuted by the Secretary and circulated to the P&F Committee by email.

16) Fundraising activities and other activities

- a) Events and activities organised by the P&F Committee will have predetermined financial objectives. In principle and practice, events and activities of the P&F Association will be self-financing. Fundraising and/or social events and activities may include but are not limited to:
 - Parent Social Network
 - Colour Run/Disco/BBQ/Movie events
 - Two new Parent welcome events each year
 - Welcome back picnic term 1
 - School Fair
- b) Any activity organised by the P&F Association will not involve students of CMS during school hours without the express endorsement of the Principal of CMS.

17) Nuts and allergens

- a) The P&F and any of its third parties or agents will not serve food containing nuts at any event or social gathering it manages.

18) Conflict of Interest / Related Party Activities

- a) Regulatory officers and members of the CMS P&F Association Committee will not misuse their position, and will take all reasonable steps to disclose any perceived or actual conflict of interest via the CMS P&F protocols by completing the Conflict of Interest declaration form on an annual basis.

- b) Where a perceived or real Conflict of Interest has been foreseen by a Committee member, a new declaration form must be completed and submitted to the President and Secretary as a priority. The President and Secretary will then notify the Committee either at an out-of-business session or at the next meeting, pending the risk associated with Conflict of Interest matter. This perceived or real Conflict of Interest will then be registered on the 'CMS P&F Related Party Transactions Register' which is kept by the Secretary.
- c) It is noted that this Policy underpins new transparency rules for Charitable Institutions of all sizes requiring annual reporting on related party transactions during their reporting cycle.
- d) It is important to note that the Party involved in the Conflict of Interest matter, will not hold voting rights nor be a part of any discussions pertaining to the associated matter. It is also important to note that the Committee should apply these protocols to members of the CMS P&F, if deemed prudent.

19) Annual Review of the Charter

- a) Amendments to this Charter may be proposed by P&F Association Committee members at the P&F Committee meeting preceding the P&F Association AGM and be adopted by formal vote at the AGM.
- b) This Charter may also be amended or overturned by passing of an appropriate motion at a special general meeting of the P&F Association, as set out at part 4 of the Constitution.

Signatures

Version 3 of this Charter was adopted by the Association at its 3rd AGM meeting on 3 April 2023

Petrea Simeon

President's name

President's signature

Date

Eleanor Bettini

Secretary's name

Secretary's signature

Date

Document Control

Version	Date	Notes
Version 1	28 August 2020	<p>This Charter was adopted by the Parents and Friends' Association Committee at its meeting on 23 July 2020.</p> <p>The Charter became effective on 28 August 2020, 28 clear days after 31 July 2020, the day on which P&F Association members were issued a notice advising of these by-laws.</p>
Version 2	7 April 2022	<p>Version 2 of the Charter was adopted by the Parents and Friends' Association Committee at its AGM on 7 April 2022.</p> <p>Members were notified of changes by email.</p>
Version 3	3 April 2023	<p>Version 3 of the Charter was adopted by the Parents and Friends' Association Committee at its AGM on 3 April 2023.</p> <p>Members were notified of changes by email.</p>