

# **The British School of Amsterdam**

## **Parents Organisation Operating Guidelines including Parents Organisation Executive Committee Code of Conduct**

### **What is the Parents Organisation (PO)?**

According to BSA's Articles of Association, the Parents Organisation is a body of all parents and guardians of children attending BSA. It represents the parents and guardians and provides a forum for putting forward their views to the Management Board and the Supervisory Board. Every parent or guardian of a child at BSA is automatically a member of the PO unless the parent or guardian indicates in writing to the Parents Organisation Executive Committee that he/she does not want to become a member. There are no membership dues.

The Parents Organisation provides a forum for the parents and guardians to nominate – through its executive committee – parent members to the Supervisory Board of BSA, and make their views known and have an influence on matters concerning the school.

The Parents Organisation provides a forum for the Supervisory Board and the Management Board of BSA to report to and consult with parents and guardians.

The Parents Organisation provides a forum for activities in support of the Foundation, such as class representatives, liaising with teaching staff, volunteering efforts, fund raising, and other activities.

### **What is the Parents Organisation Executive Committee (POEC)?**

The Executive Committee is a group of seven to eleven volunteer parents who are elected as representatives by the members of the Parents Organisation. Its objective is to build a strong school community where all families feel welcome, included, informed and represented.

The responsibilities of the POEC shall include:

- 1) The conduct of an Annual Meeting of the Parents Organisation
- 2) The procedure to be adopted for elections to the POEC and for nomination of the PO representatives to the Supervisory Board.
- 3) The operating procedures for the POEC including term of office; rotation schedule for members; structure and activities
- 4) Code of Conduct for members of the POEC

#### **1) Annual Meeting**

Each year in the last term, the POEC shall hold a meeting to allow the Supervisory Board (SB), Management Board (MB) and POEC to report on the past year and to share plans for the future including academic, budget, enrollment, personnel, and other important issues that affect the school. Parents and guardians will have an opportunity to raise questions to members of the SB, MB and POEC in this meeting. Sufficient notice will be given to allow planning for and attendance at this meeting.

#### **2) Election and Nomination Procedures**

##### **A) Election Procedures for POEC**

Each year the PO shall meet to hold elections for the POEC within the first three weeks of the beginning of the new school year.

All members of the Parents Organisation shall have one vote. All voting decisions, including elections, by the PO shall be made by a majority of member votes.

#### **B) Parent Members of the Supervisory Board**

Members of the Parents Organisation make up a minimum of one-third of the Supervisory Board members.

The POEC nominates parent members to the Supervisory Board.

The POEC shall publicly solicit candidates to fill openings on the SB and shall nominate the appropriate candidate based on skills. If more candidates are interested than spaces available, then the POEC shall hold an election and the Parents Organisation will select the nominee to the SB.

Members of the POEC may also be Supervisory Board Members.

### **3) The operating procedures for the POEC including term of office, rotation schedule for members; structure and activities**

#### **A) Term of office and rotation schedule for POEC members**

POEC members must be parents at BSA. Members are elected for a two-year term. (*EXCEPTION: In 2011/2012, three members of the 2010/2011 POEC will run for a one-year term. If elected, this will create an alternating rotation schedule where approximately half of the POEC turns over each year.*)

#### **B) Structure**

The POEC will be structured to meet the needs of BSA's parent body.

The POEC shall consist of seven to eleven members who represent all age groups of the school. Additional members can be co-opted by the POEC to fill a particular skill set or to represent a particular age group.

POEC members will be selected to act as Chair, Deputy Chair and Secretary. Additional positions may be added to fill specific roles if deemed appropriate by the POEC.

#### **C) Activities**

The POEC shall develop the annual budget in consultation with the Management Board. The PO budget will need to be approved as part of the annual budget process run by the Foundation.

The POEC will arrange meetings with the Parents Organisation at least once per term and all meetings minutes should be made available to all parents via BSA's web site.

The POEC shall create committees to meet the needs of the parent community.

Example committees may include the following:

**Class Representatives Committee:**

- One meeting per term to solicit input and share with class reps
- Year Group Productions
- Library responsibilities
- Class trips
- Support teacher needs

**Event Committee:**

- One major fundraising event per term – Winter Market, Pub Quiz and Summer Fair

**Hospitality Committee:**

- Newcomers
- Coffee mornings
- Leavers

**4) Code of Conduct**

Once voted on to the POEC members shall agree to abide by the Articles of Association as laid down to the Foundation as well as the POEC Code of Conduct

**Conduct Expected of the Executive Committee of the Parents Organisation**

The POEC will encourage open expression of views at its meetings, but accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the POEC or its delegated agents.

In discharging their duties the POEC should always be mindful of their responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of the school and will not in any way behave in a manner that will bring the school or the POEC into disrepute.

All members of the POEC agree to operate under this Code of Conduct without exception. Any member of the Parents Organisation who believes this to not be the case has the right to file a complaint with the BSA Integrity Committee. All complaints will be dealt with by this independent committee with no recourse.

**Collective Responsibility**

The strength of the POEC lies in the talents and commitment of its members and in their ability to work together as a team for the good of the school.

Every member of the POEC has an equal right to participate and to state his or her views. No member of the POEC has the right to expect preferential treatment because of his or her status on this or any other body or group.

**Confidentiality**

If the majority of the POEC decides an item for discussion is confidential, all members of the POEC are expected to abide by that decision. Individual members of the POEC are expected to respect that confidentiality and not disclose information deemed as confidential in any other forum

If any member of the POEC disagrees with the decision to keep information

confidential, that member has the right to appeal through the Integrity Committee.

All reports are public documents after the meeting has considered them so and must be available at the school or via the school website to any member wishing to view them unless the POEC decides that they are confidential.

### **Clarification and Sources**

The Code of Conduct is for clarifying the objectives of the POEC and the roles, objectives and conduct of the members of the POEC. This documents seeks to articulate these matters in a framework that all can understand.

There is no statutory framework for enforcing these guidelines and Code of Conduct. In adopting this Code of Conduct the POEC are setting out their own standards and guidelines.

This Code is based on guidance drawn from the Articles of Association; a range of UK and international sources; and in consultation with the IB, Working Group and the Management Board.

### **Notes**

Code of Conduct created and signed by first POEC in March 2010.

Code of Conduct revised to include operating guidelines and proposed amendments to the Articles of Association in June 2011.