EASTERN CHINESE LANGUAGE SCHOOL INC. 新金山东区中文学校

Governance, Committee and Delegations Policy

Document no.	ECLS-POL-01	**Version**	1.2
Policy owner	Chairperson and Principal	**Approved by**	School Committee
Date approved	25/01/2026 (v1.0)	**Next review**	January 2028
Applies to	School Committee members, Principal, Operations Manager and all staff with delegated authority	**Status**	v1.0 current; v1.2 revision for endorsement

1. Purpose

This policy explains how Eastern Chinese Language School Inc. (ECLS) is governed and how the arrangements in the School Charter 2026 work in practice. It sets out who makes decisions, how the School Committee oversees the Principal and the use of Department of Education (DE) funding, and how child safety is kept on the Committee's agenda.

2. Scope

This policy applies to the School Committee (the governing body of the incorporated association), the Principal, the Operations Manager, the Child Safety Officer and any staff member who holds a delegated authority under this policy.

3. Legal and funding context

ECLS is an incorporated association (Registration No. A0044328U, ABN 60 157 431 716) and a registered charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC). It operates on a not-for-profit basis under its Rules (Constitution) and is accredited and funded by DE under the Community Language Schools Funding Program.

The Committee is ultimately accountable for:

- compliance with the Rules, the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Vic) and ACNC Governance Standards;
- compliance with the Victorian Common Funding Agreement 2025–2027 (Schedule GIN13960) and the CLS Accreditation and Funding Guide;
- compliance with the Child Safe Standards (Ministerial Order 1359) and the Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic);
- the proper use of all money received, including DE per capita funding.

4. Governance structure

Body / role	Main responsibilities	Reports to
School Committee (Chairperson, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and ordinary members)	Sets direction, approves policies, budget and annual financial statements; oversees the Principal; approves use of DE funding; receives child safety reports; ensures accreditation and funding obligations are met	Members at the Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Body / role	Main responsibilities	Reports to
Principal	Day-to-day management of the school under the Charter; implements policies; prepares the budget with the Operations Manager; leads child safety culture; approves expenditure within delegation	School Committee
Operations Manager	Enrolments, fees, records, rosters, timesheets and expense processing; maintains registers (WWCC/VIT, first aid, visitors)	Principal
Child Safety Officer (one per campus)	First point of contact for child safety concerns; maintains child safety training records; reports to the Committee each term	Principal (operationally) and Committee (reporting)
First Aid Officer	First aid kit, injury register and first aid training register	Principal
School Coordinator / teachers	Classroom teaching, supervision, attendance and progress reporting	Principal

Committee members and office holders for the current year are listed in the School Charter and recorded in the minutes of the AGM. Every Committee member must hold a current Working with Children Check (WWCC) or VIT registration and sign the Child Safety Code of Conduct each year.

5. Committee meetings

5.1 Frequency and quorum

- The Committee meets **at least once each term** (four ordinary meetings a year) plus the AGM, as required by the School Charter.
- Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson or the Principal, or at the written request of two Committee members.
- The quorum is set by the Rules. If the Rules are silent, a quorum is a majority of Committee members.

5.2 Agenda and papers

The Secretary, with the Principal, circulates the agenda and papers **at least five days** before each meeting. The following **standing items** appear on every ordinary meeting agenda:

1. Apologies, declarations of conflicts of interest, and confirmation of previous minutes.
2. Principal's report (enrolments, attendance, staffing, curriculum and operations).
3. **Child safety report** from the Child Safety Officer: concerns, incidents or complaints (de-identified), WWCC/VIT status and upcoming expiries, training completed, and any changes needed to policies or practice.
4. **Financial report** from the Operations Manager: bank balances for all accounts, income and expenditure against the approved budget, and a **separate statement for the Department of Education funding account**, listing payments made from it since the last meeting.
5. Compliance and risk: accreditation, funding acquittal and audit matters, risk register, emergency drills, first aid and OH&S.
6. Policies due for review or approval.
7. Complaints received and their outcomes (de-identified).
8. General business and next meeting date.

5.3 Minutes and records

- The Secretary takes minutes recording attendance, conflicts declared, the papers tabled, each decision and the person responsible for any action.
- Minutes are confirmed at the next meeting, signed by the Chairperson and kept for at least **seven years** (DE record-keeping requirement), together with the financial and child safety reports tabled.
- Decisions of the Committee are made available to members of the Association as required by the Charter.

6. Decision-making and delegations

The Committee may delegate authority to the Principal and other office holders. Delegations are exercised in good faith, within budget and in line with ECLS policies. The current delegations are:

Decision	Authority	Conditions
Approve annual budget, including the planned use of Department of Education funding	School Committee	Prepared by the Principal and Operations Manager; the funding budget is approved after the Department of Education funding is received
Approve policies and the School Charter	School Committee	Recorded in minutes; review dates set in the Policy Register
Appoint and remove the Principal	School Committee	—
Appoint staff, the Child Safety Officer and the First Aid Officer	Principal	Subject to WWCC/VIT verification and reference checks; reported to the Committee
Approve budgeted operating expenditure up to $2,000 per item	Principal	Payment jointly authorised by the Operations Manager and one Committee member (ECLS-POL-02)
Approve expenditure over $2,000 per item, or any unbudgeted expenditure	Principal and School Committee	Recorded in minutes; payment jointly authorised by the Operations Manager and one Committee member
Approve expenditure of Department of Education funding	Principal and School Committee	Payment jointly authorised by the Operations Manager and one Committee member; must meet ECLS-POL-03
Approve staff wages and teacher payments	Principal and School Committee	From approved timesheets; payment jointly authorised by the Operations Manager and one Committee member
Approve expense claims by the Principal	Operations Manager and Chairperson (and Committee if over $2,000 or unbudgeted)	The claimant never approves their own claim
Sign the funding application, Common Funding Agreement and annual acquittal	Principal and Chairperson (or another authorised office bearer)	Information verified against school records
Settle complaints about the Principal	Chairperson	Under the Complaints Management Policy (ECLS-POL-05)

No person may approve a payment to themselves or to a close family member, or approve their own expense claim.

7. Conflicts of interest

- Committee members and staff must declare any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest, including family relationships with staff or suppliers, and any personal benefit from a decision.
- Declarations are recorded in the minutes and in a Conflicts of Interest Register kept by the Secretary.
- A person with a conflict does not take part in discussion or voting on that matter.

8. Reporting to the Department and CLV

The Principal ensures that, within the timeframes in the Common Funding Agreement:

- DE is told in writing within **10 business days** of any change to the Rules, structure, management or operations that could affect eligibility for funding;
- DE is told immediately of any event that affects ECLS's ability to meet its funding obligations;
- the annual report and financial acquittal is submitted through SmartyGrants by the DE due date (1 May for the previous year);
- Community Languages Victoria (CLV) receives any information it requests to support compliance;
- reportable allegations are notified as required by the Child Safety Policy.

9. Policy framework and review

- All ECLS policies are listed in the **Policy Register**, which records each policy's owner, approval date and next review date.
- Policies are reviewed at least **every two years**, or sooner if the law, DE or CLV requirements, or an incident, require it. Child safety policies are reviewed after any significant child safety incident.
- New or revised policies are approved by the Committee and recorded in the minutes. Staff are told about changes at the next staff meeting or professional development day, and key policies are published on the school website.

10. Responsibilities

- **Chairperson:** chairs meetings, ensures the Committee meets its obligations and leads oversight of the Principal.
- **Secretary:** agendas, minutes, registers (members, conflicts of interest) and correspondence.
- **Treasurer:** reviews bank reconciliations (with the Principal) and the annual financial statements.
- **Operations Manager:** prepares the budget with the Principal; account signatory; reports income, expenditure and the Department of Education funding statement to each meeting; prepares the funding acquittal.
- **Principal:** implements Committee decisions and prepares the reports listed in section 5.2.
- **All Committee members:** act honestly and in the best interests of ECLS and its students, and keep WWCC/VIT and Code of Conduct requirements current.

11. Related documents

- ECLS School Charter 2026; ECLS Rules (Constitution)
- ECLS-POL-02 Financial Management Policy; ECLS-POL-03 DE Funding Use Policy; ECLS-POL-05 Complaints Management Policy
- ECLS Child Safety Policy and Child Safety Code of Conduct (Aug 2026)
- School Committee Meeting Agenda and Minutes Template (ECLS-FORM-01)

12. Basis and references

- DE, *Community Language Schools Accreditation and Funding Guide 2024*: accreditation requirements (s.2.1), Common Funding Agreement (s.3.6) and record keeping (s.3.9).
- Victorian Common Funding Agreement 2025–2027, Schedule GIN13960: Governance, Record keeping and Audits.
- CLV, *Operational and Administrative Procedures Manual for Community Language Schools* (V4, 2023): s.1.13 Association of Incorporation, s.2.7 Charter, s.2.9 Constitution, s.2.12 Finance.
- CLV, *Student Safety and Staff Welfare Manual* (V5, 2023): Responsibilities of School Councils (child safety governance).
- ACNC Governance Standards; Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Vic).
- ECLS School Charter 2026, *School Governance* section.

13. Version history

Version	Date	Change	Approved / endorsed by
1.0	25/01/2026	Policy approved	School Committee, meeting of 25 January 2026 (minute ref. _____)
1.1	October 2026	Revised and reformatted: aligned with the DE CLS Accreditation and Funding Guide, 2026 funding conditions, CLV manuals and current ECLS practice	For endorsement at the next School Committee meeting (date _____)
1.2	October 2026	Delegations and reporting aligned with ECLS-POL-02 v1.2 (Operations Manager reports to the Committee; payments jointly authorised by the Operations Manager and one Committee member)	For endorsement at the next School Committee meeting (date _____)