

1

The Childcare Management Committee

- 1.1 Getting started 1
- 1.2 Becoming a member of the committee and working effectively 3
- 1.3 The constitution or governing document – what is it? 5
- 1.4 Committee roles and responsibilities 7
- 1.5 Becoming and operating as a charity 15
- 1.6 The Childcare Management Committee health check 16

1 The Childcare Management Committee

1

1.1 Getting started

If you have just become chair or are new to the committee – here is a ‘snap shot’ of what you need to know and where you can find the relevant information if it has not been passed on to you. *It is important to realise that the committee is the employer and is also financially responsible for the group.* Please share this information around the committee, as it is important for everyone to have an overview, all committee members should also be given an outline of their specific roles and responsibilities (see **Table 1** in **Section 1.4**).

- You will need to **inform Ofsted (tel: 08456 404040) immediately of any changes** to the group, for example new members of the committee, staff or changes to the day-to-day running or any part of the venue. As a new chair or committee member you will also need to complete a copy of an **Ofsted EY2** (available as a download from the Ofsted website www.ofsted.gov.uk). Ofsted will require a designated ‘contact person’, and this is frequently the Chair – though it can be another committee member or even the manager or supervisor of the setting. The nominated person will have to undergo a ‘suitable person’ interview with Ofsted. Ask Ofsted about all of the above when you telephone them, as the rules – and the forms – often change. When communicating in writing or sending information to Ofsted always keep a copy, use registered post and keep the receipts.
- Make sure you **read and work through** a copy of *The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (setting the standards for learning, development and care of children from birth to five)*. Look on the Department for Children, Schools and Families website www.dcsf.gov.uk to download or order this document if a copy has not been passed on from the previous committee. **The EYFS Statutory Framework clearly states the specific requirements of the law** with regard to children attending settings between the ages of 0–5 years. As a member of a childcare management committee it is vital to know how the law affects the running of your preschool, (see **Section 3.1** of this publication). Another document that is important, though more for your Lead Practitioner (Manager or Supervisor), is the Practice Guidance for the EYFS. Before September 2008 children aged 3–5 years attending settings were covered in law by the 14 National Standards. Also see **Section 6: Assuring Quality** in this publication for general advice and further information about the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- It is very important to understand that the ‘Registered Person’, in a voluntary run childcare organisation (i.e. an unincorporated association), is the **committee/trustees and it is the committee who are ultimately and collectively responsible for the group**. That responsibility is delegated to the manager or supervisor of the setting, as set out in their job description, on a day-to-day basis as an employee of the group. It is the responsibility of the committee and in their best interests to make sure that employee job descriptions are fully comprehensive. It is vital to have another employee with the appropriate qualifications, who can deputise as the Lead Practitioner in case of sickness or training. The provider’s Ofsted registration certificate should always be obviously displayed at the setting.
- Make sure you read a copy of the setting’s **last Ofsted inspection report**. If it cannot be found with the paperwork handed over to you, go to www.ofsted.gov.uk and look in inspections. You can also enter your unique Ofsted number into the website to gain access. The report will give you a good overview of the areas that the setting does well, and those that need improvement. It is important to note any Ofsted ‘Key Issues’ – these can be found at the end of the report – to make sure that these have been or are being addressed. Ofsted will require evidence of how each issue has been dealt with (e.g. an action plan and photographic evidence). It is important to understand both the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory requirements and your last Ofsted report, as they are the key to understanding improvements the committee need to make to support the setting and their staff.

- Locate and read a **copy of the group's constitution**. The constitution is a document setting out the rules by which the group or association is governed (see **Section 1.3** for a full description). If you cannot find a copy of your constitution and the group is a registered charity then contact the Charity Commission for a copy. If you find you are not a constituted group you are advised to become one. For an example of a childcare constitution look on the Pre-school Learning Alliance website, www.pre-school.org.uk. Also see several types of model constitutions in *Getting it Right Legally* published by SureStart (www.surestart.gov.uk).
NB You do not have to be a registered charity to have a constitution but you have to have a constitution when registering as a charity.
- You will need a copy of the group's **summary of accounts for the last financial year** and ones from previous years. Ask yourself:
 - Has the group covered its costs?
 - How much income has been made from fees and from the government free entitlement for 3- and 4-year olds?
 - What percentage of income is lost in unpaid fees?
 - How much extra income has been made from grants and fundraising?
 - Have the staff received an annual pay rise, in line with inflation? Are you paying the equivalent or above the National Minimum Wage?
 - Has there been an annual profit or a loss and are there any notable profit or loss patterns over the last few years?
 - Are the present financial procedures (methods and records of payments and income) robust?
 - Are there contingency funds set aside – e.g. for closure and redundancy?
- Does the committee have an understanding of **employment law**, e.g. the National Minimum Wage, holiday pay, maternity pay, sick pay, redundancy, pension entitlement? For further information see **Section 5** for an overview of the Committee as Employers. For further information, contact Acas, www.acas.org.uk.
- Has the group fulfilled its **Inland Revenue obligations**? See **Section 5.7** and www.hmrc.gov.uk for more information.
- Does the committee have roles with descriptions and have they understood and agreed them? (see **Section 1.4: Committee roles and responsibilities**).
- With regard to the **committee as employers**, do you, or another committee member, have copies of staff job descriptions, staff contracts (is there a confidentiality clause or code of conduct?). Does the setting have a staff handbook? Staff induction procedures? Have all staff been given a copy of the setting's policies and procedures? Is staff appraisal carried out? Do you have copies of staff qualifications and letters of reference? Do you have a grievance procedure? Are the staff's personal detail records kept at the setting?
(For more information see **Section 5: Employing staff**).
- At the setting, are the **Ofsted registration certificate, insurance certificate and Ofsted complaints telephone details obviously displayed** for parents and carers to see? Keeping a register and an accident and emergency duplicate book are requirements of the law.
- How does the setting link with parents and the local and wider community?
 - Does the setting have a Welcome pack or Prospectus?
 - Is it clear when your child starts at the setting that **the group is voluntarily run by parents of those attending**, and that without those volunteers forming a committee the group cannot legally run?
 - Does the group distribute a newsletter and does it contribute regularly to the local parish magazine?
 - Is your setting easy to find and easy to contact to register a child?
 - Do you have a marketing plan – particularly one that addresses the common September shortfall, when session bookings dip as children start school?

- **Have you read the group's policies and procedures?**
 - When was the last time that these were updated? You will need to check that the group has all the appropriate policies and procedures to demonstrate its compliance with, and observance of the Childcare Act 2006 (see *the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage*).
 - Which policies and procedures are specifically required by law? A rolling programme of review is recommended (look at one or two at each staff and committee meeting, either separately or together) as this way the policies and procedures remain fresh in everyone's minds and are regularly updated. Copies of these should be made available to parents and carers; perhaps highlighting them occasionally in newsletters (e.g. the social development policy – helping parents understand what is expected of their children and how any issues will be addressed by the staff). See **Section 6.4**.

- Check whether you have the **following types of insurance**:

- Public liability
- Buildings insurance
- Contents insurance
- Personal accident
- Vehicles
- Money
- Personal effects
- Loss of revenue
- Legal expenses
- Professional indemnity
- Trustee indemnity insurance
- Hire agreements and outings

(see **Section 4.5** in this support pack).

Also check exactly what each of your insurance policies covers you for the value of that cover, you need to feel confident that the group has cover for all eventualities.

- Ensure that you and/or a delegated committee member understand issues around Safeguarding Children (Child Protection) – see **Section 3.2** – and also Health and Safety issues that may affect the group. You should also be aware of the **risk assessments** – see **Section 6.4** – carried out by staff.

This list may feel intimidating at first, but this pack is designed to help with your questions and supply further information.

You will have volunteered to help your childcare group because you want to help your child/children and those of other parents in the community, so give it some time and after a while the pieces will start to fit together. You will gain huge satisfaction, all sorts of life skills and a very useful addition to your CV.

You will, after all, be involved in collectively running a small business, which delivers care and learning through play for young children.

1.2 Becoming a member of the committee and working effectively

A committee is a group of people who come together to run an organisation (e.g. public bodies, charities and voluntary organisations) by considering collectively what decisions and actions are required for that organisation to run appropriately. **The set of rules governing the actions of a committee are known as the constitution or governing document.** (These are the equivalent of the memorandum and articles of an incorporated company.)

Committee members/trustees are universally unpaid but can claim incurred expenses from the organisation. Here we are looking specifically at running a voluntary playgroup/pre-school/nursery. The parents/carers of children attending the setting automatically become members of the association/group. Sometimes a membership fee is charged when a child is registered at a setting. Staff cannot become members unless they also have a child attending.

Once a year parent members volunteer to form a management committee and at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) these members are voted in by the other members. The AGM is the time when previous members of the committee collectively stand down and then leave or are re-elected and new members are voted in. Most voluntary run childcare groups are registered as charities and the Charity Commission (please see **Section 3.3**) and others commonly **use the term 'trustee' to describe a committee member.** It is a legal requirement to register with the Charity Commission if you are running a charitable organisation with a turnover of more than £5,000 pa.

The voting process requires one member of the group to nominate ('First') the prospective new committee member or committee member who wishes to be re-elected and then another ('Second') supports that nomination. Each committee member is voted for in turn in this way. The same people shouldn't keep voting each time – mix it up so other members have a chance to first or second. A written record must be taken of the names of those who first and second each member, which is then signed/witnessed by those present and kept along with everyone's contact details (always include the postcode). It is possible for committee members to join during the year and the process is the same with the names of nominees and supporters being noted in the minutes of the meeting. In the case of the officer roles (chair, treasurer and secretary) the person would be the 'acting' member until re-election at the next scheduled AGM.

The constitution (the set of rules governing the actions of the committee, please see **Section 1.3** for a detailed look at what is in a constitution) states the minimum and maximum number of committee members allowed at any one time and the maximum number of terms a committee member should serve. The three main officer roles, the chair, treasurer and secretary, are legally required. Commonly the constitution of a childcare group states the three officer roles and two others as a minimum. The committee may work in a formal way, through the use of resolutions (the chair having the casting vote, if stated in the constitution), or in a more informal way with each item on an agenda discussed, decisions reached, actions delegated and noted. The latter way of working is more common and better for communication purposes but the former may be useful if an important decision needs to be made and the committee find not enough committee members (a quorum) can attend. An effective committee should bring together different ideas and points of view, with the chair ensuring that everyone is heard and feels confident to communicate their views in a constructive way. Similarly actions must be agreed and designated to specific individuals or sub-committees.

Minutes (a written record of the discussions and actions agreed). Minutes should always be taken, typed up and distributed to all in a timely fashion after the meeting. At the beginning of the next meeting the minutes are reviewed, then agreed as an accurate record

and subsequent actions reported. It is essential to keep good minutes, as these can be used to provide a record of what decisions and actions have been taken. These could then be used as evidence in a dispute or grievance procedure, apart from being kept as a general record of what the association has been doing. There should be a minimum of one meeting per term, one every half-term should be sufficient. Too few committee meetings may leave members feeling unengaged and too many will put people off and lead to poor attendance.

Childcare management committee members should be committed to the aims and objectives of the group. Commitment requires time, and whilst committee members may have specific skills or talents appropriate to the group they may also wish to develop and learn new skills. As the employer, committee members need to understand their responsibilities to their staff. The chair is the line manager to the supervisor/manager (lead practitioner or Early Years professional) and the supervisor/manager is the line manager to the other staff. This does not mean that as a committee you have to understand everything your manager/supervisor does, as they are trained for the job, but you do need to be aware of their input with regard to **the statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.**

Difficult situations may arise, requiring diplomacy and tact, but if time is taken to reflect, seek guidance, try to remove the 'personal' from the situation and bear in mind that everyone is working to support the children, then such difficulties can and should be resolved.

New committee members should:

- receive a copy of the group's constitution (and read it)
- receive a copy of the policies and procedures adopted by the group (and read them two or three at a time)
- be fully informed of the current work of the committee (previous minutes will help)
- understand the background of the group and its responsibilities
- have a clear defined role or tasks within the committee that have been agreed
- listen to and encourage the children, parents and staff to comment on the way the group is run and work with the committee.

Being an effective committee member requires commitment and consideration of others, particularly if the group is run in a small or rural community and where some people know one another well and others might be isolated for a variety of reasons. An effective member is:

- is regular in attendance at meetings – arriving punctually
- is able to contribute to conversation in a relevant and constructive way
- is well briefed and well informed about items on the agenda to be discussed
- is assertive without being aggressive
- keeps in mind the aims and agenda of the meeting
- listens to all discussions during the meeting
- listens to the views of others
- supports other members of the committee
- carries out the actions delegated and agreed within a reasonable time scale

It may be helpful to collate the above into a committee welcome or membership pack, so that people can feel confident to contribute positively from the beginning.

The childcare management committee is (legally) collectively responsible for the group. The work, the fun and the satisfaction should be shared by all (please refer to **Sections 2.3** and **3.4** and the **Health check** at the end of this section, for further information regarding trustee liability). Difficult situations can be lessened by having the most appropriate and up-to-date policies and procedures; these can then be followed should a problem occur. This allows people to feel confident and secure in their actions should difficulties arise. Similarly, keeping and maintaining a 'paper trail' for use in any sort of dispute is sensible, e.g. good minutes, copies of letters and robust financial systems.

Always ask for help either from West Sussex Early Childhood Service, Action in rural Sussex, the Pre-school Learning Alliance, *4Children* or from other groups that support voluntary childcare organisations. These bodies want to help and all share the aim of better outcomes for children.

1.3 The constitution or governing document – what is it?

The constitution is a document setting out the rules by which the group or association is governed, in this case the voluntary run childcare group. If you have just joined a childcare committee make sure you have a copy of the constitution and read it. Not all constitutions are the same, but many childcare groups have adopted a model constitution from the Pre-school Learning Alliance (The Alliance), www.pre-school.org.uk. There are also several model constitutions in *Getting it Right Legally*, published by SureStart, www.surestart.gov.uk.

Generally a group's constitution contains the following:

- **Name** – the name the association (unincorporated) shall be known as.
- **Aims** – the purpose for which the group exists – this can be as simple as "The aim of the association shall be to advance the education of children below compulsory school age in ... location" or can be very detailed. This is, however, a very important part of the document as in some cases the aims cannot be changed.
- **Powers** – this lists the things you are allowed to do to achieve the aim of the group. For example, to fix and collect the fees payable in respect of children attending the group and to employ such paid or unpaid staff, agents and advisors as maybe required from time to time.
- **Membership** – this tells you who can become members of the group for example family and affiliate (other members of the community who are interested in supporting the setting) membership. A majority of the members must be family members. It should also set out reasons for termination of membership.
- **The committee** – this confirms that the overall management of the group lies with the individual members of the pre-school/playgroup management committee and that if the group is also a charity they are trustees of that group. It states the number of people who can be on the committee (often chair, treasurer, secretary no less than two other members and no more than nine with a further three for possible co-option). This section also states that no paid member of staff can also be a trustee. They can attend meetings, but they have no voting rights,

unless they have become a family member (i.e. their child attends the group). If so they cannot attend discussions about staff contracts or pay. In some group's constitutions and in the Alliance's Model Pre-school Constitution 2008, there is provision for some committee members to become employed as staff. No more than a quarter of the committee or 'a minority' can be employed and they must not receive greater remuneration for their services than other staff. As previously mentioned they cannot vote or sit in a committee meeting dealing directly with matters relating to their services.

The committee can ask a member to leave. To do this they need a resolution agreed by a *majority* of committee members. In the Alliance's model constitution, members of the association vote for the committee members (maximum of twelve) at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and then at the next committee meeting the officer roles are agreed by individuals applying for the roles. In practice very often the out-going committee or other members standing again have already asked around to ascertain who will take on the officer roles.

If a committee member were to die then the vacancy would be filled by the *appointment* (agreed and minuted at a committee meeting) of another committee member until the next AGM. Similarly if an officer resigned during their term of office then the appointed member would be the 'acting' member until being re-elected at the next AGM. This section of the constitution also states how many years a member may serve on the management committee: too few years and expertise built up can be under-utilised and too long on a committee can lead to members dominating or contributing to a 'stagnant' committee. As a rule of thumb, having a vested interest in a group is a good incentive to becoming a useful committee member.

- **General meetings or the rules of procedure at meetings** – in this section the numbers required for a quorum are mentioned, e.g. No less than 10% of members or five for an AGM. For an ordinary meeting no less than a third of the committee members plus one officer. It is important to realise these are only examples: you need to look at your constitution to find out the numbers for your group. Members of the committee have one vote each, apart from the chairperson who has, if stated, the casting vote. This may need to be used in the case of an equal number of votes for or against a resolution.
- **Property** – this details what the group would need to do if they acquired any interest in a building, the most important task being the appointment of custodial trustees.
- **Finance and accounts** – this states that it is necessary to keep annual accounts, as required by the Charities Acts. The accounts must be audited and include all assets and money in respect of the group. It should also state how to protect the setting from fraud, by having two signatories for cheques and never signing a blank cheque! Committee members may be reimbursed expenses but may not draw a salary or wages for doing committee work. The Charities Act 2006 made some changes to this and, provided it offers value for money, and is agreed by the committee, some paid elements for specific work may be possible. *What trustees need to know* is a good summary document of the Charities Act 2006 and can be found at www.charity-commission.gov.uk.
- **Minutes** – precise wording of any resolutions, include the summary of discussions of each item of business and details of decisions and actions to be taken by named individuals. Minutes must be taken at each meeting and circulated to committee members. They should also be made available to staff and other parents/carers once they have been agreed at the following meeting.
- **Dissolution** – this describes how the group/ association can wind up and dissolve its assets. An Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) would be convened and those present are required to vote to wind up the childcare group. The exact majority needed, for example two-thirds, will depend on what is specified in your constitution. Any assets left after paying any liabilities would be distributed to a group with the same aims agreed in writing by the Charity Commission. In the Pre-school Learning Alliance model constitution the remaining assets are transferred to the Pre-school Learning Alliance (The charitable national body supporting voluntary childcare). *At no time can any of the assets be transferred to trustees/committee members.*
- **Indemnity** – this clause is not commonly found in many non Alliance constitutions (but a useful addition) and relates to possible court proceedings against a group. In defending any proceedings (whether civil or criminal) or being found liable for costs then the assets of the group may be used to pay for these costs.

- **Changes to the constitution** – parts of the constitution can be altered if the minimum number of members are present and vote for the change and the Charity Commission agreed to the changes in writing.

Please make sure you read your constitution when joining a childcare management committee. It may well be different from the examples used above. It is good practice to annually sign and date a copy and keep it in the committee portfolio/operational folder. When you leave the committee please make sure that the constitution is passed on and highlighted to the next committee.

Running an Annual General Meeting (AGM)

An AGM is the time when committee members are re-elected or new members are elected by the group's membership for the following year. At an AGM an annual report from the outgoing committee and a full financial statement must be presented to the membership (family and affiliate) and staff. The AGM is also an opportunity to inform those parents/carers not directly involved with the committee about what the pre-school does and how it functions legally (an unincorporated association run by a management committee formed from the membership). The AGM can attract a larger attendance by expanding it to cover how the children spend their time (e.g. with informal chats with staff about individual children) and include any proposed developments or new legislation around childcare. In this way new committee members may be found and parents are made aware of the necessity of them volunteering at some point in their child's time of attending.

A notice should be sent out to all the membership and staff that an AGM is imminent. A month's notice (a minimum of two weeks) should be given of the time, date and venue details (please remember accessibility issues when deciding upon a venue). The notice should update parents as to the reason for the AGM and invite nominations for election. Any proposed resolutions to be addressed at the AGM should be written in plain language (including appropriate languages for multiracial groups) and made widely available before the meeting.

Try to run the AGM in a professional but sociable way. Try to put people at their ease, offer refreshments and leave time on the agenda for questions. It may be appropriate to invite professional supporters along to the meeting who can give further information and offer advice to new committee members by running through roles and responsibilities and giving reassurance on how to "manage the business" and "the employment of staff". Use the AGM also to thank contributors to the group, be they volunteers or paid staff.

An **Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM)** is any general meeting that is called over and above the Annual General Meeting. For example if a full committee (minimum of the three officer roles and two others) is not elected at the AGM then an EGM needs to be called. If a full committee is still not elected then closure is probable. It is not legal for a voluntary run group to operate without the three officer roles being filled and acted upon. Again notice must be given to all those concerned and a minimum of two weeks should be allowed. If this timescale is not possible the key factor is to make sure everyone involved is fully aware of the EGM so that they have a chance to come and contribute.

1.4 Committee roles and responsibilities

It is important for the three 'officer' roles to be fully understood not only by the people undertaking them but, to some extent, by everyone on the committee. Other committee members should also have defined roles. For example; someone should support and understand Health and Safety issues by helping the designated staff Health and Safety Officer, (usually the supervisor/manager). They could do this by keeping up to date with changes to health and safety legislation (e.g. register for email alerts from the Health and Safety Executive), helping staff carry out risk assessments and organising changes or remedial work highlighted by the risk assessments. Ofsted require the committee to be aware and involved in Health and Safety issues and having a nominated person demonstrates to them how this is being organised. Similar types of role might be Safeguarding (Child Protection), Marketing, Fundraising, Premises management etc.

It is very important that all the tasks of running the childcare group are shared and not left for one or two people to do. Taking on too much can lead to stress and communication breakdown between committee members and between committee members and staff. Some may criticise whilst not knowing what is actually involved. Every member of staff and every parent whose child attends needs to understand that the group they are joining is voluntarily run. If parents are not informed they cannot be expected to contribute. When a new committee member joins and takes on a role there is a period of adjustment whilst they read up and assess what needs to be done. In some groups people take on roles that are inappropriate for them, making tasks more onerous than is necessary. One thing is certain: when things go wrong this will result, eventually, in the needs of the children not being met.

Table 1 follows and this lists committee tasks that must be addressed and understood. By the side of each one is a *suggestion* of which committee role might be suitable. The roles are not 'set in stone' and can and should be shared or changed around to suit the individuals concerned. However, it is necessary to ensure that all the tasks are being done and it is useful if the chair is the coordinator of the team.

Table 2 lists the Early Years professional lead or lead practitioner's tasks, including those that a deputy might help with. In many settings there may be different arrangements, e.g. shared supervisory roles however the list is here to help you understand the responsibilities of your lead practitioner/s. Likewise your lead practitioner also needs to be clear about the committee's roles and responsibilities. Demarcation of responsibility, when understood and agreed by both staff and committee, reduces mutual misunderstandings that commonly lead to tensions. In large voluntary-run settings the manager may take on more of the committee's overall work or an administrator and/or a bookkeeper may be employed. None the less, rigorous job descriptions and trustee awareness are still necessary for the successful running of the group.



Table 1: Committee roles, responsibilities and tasks

It is important that both the committee and the staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities as this supports good working relationships and contributes to the best opportunities for children. The designated roles here are only suggestions. The committee as a whole is collectively responsible so should share out the tasks as well.

Responsibility/tasks	Suggested role
Chair committee meetings/ensure meetings run smoothly and productively; follow agenda; be unbiased; ensure everyone has their views heard; delegate jobs/actions to be done (make sure these are recorded in the minutes); keep order; casting vote.	Chair
Ofsted 'nominated person' is the Ofsted point of contact for inspection and information purposes. Whoever takes this role may be interviewed as a 'suitable person' by Ofsted. However, the ' Registered Person ' has overall responsibility for ensuring that the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are met. This is the whole committee, who are collectively responsible. NB Ofsted must be notified of any changes in staff, committee, day-to-day running or the physical surroundings.	Chair or it can be the manager or supervisor
Ensure any Ofsted 'Actions' arising from an inspection are fully planned, supported, implemented, monitored and evaluated in conjunction with the lead practitioner (supervisor/manager) and staff.	Chair or designated committee member & lead practitioner
Supervisor or manager's line manager	Chair
Hold all the committee records (paper and electronic); receive all the paperwork from the previous chairperson.	Chair
Recruitment of staff: advertising, job descriptions, application forms, interviews, checking references and qualifications, Ofsted EY2 forms, CRB disclosures, issuing employment contracts, probationary period, induction (with supervisor). For best practice and up-to-date information, training in this area is advised. The Manager/Supervisor should also be involved with interviewing the staff. It is a good idea for prospective staff, after interview, to try out for a morning with the children. There is a legal obligation to keep all the staff records. These must be passed on to a new chair and committee. See Section 5 .	Chair and committee (secretary may help specifically with this) For large groups the manager may take these duties
Manager/supervisor's appraisal: carry out appraisal and support supervisor with other staff appraisals	Chair
Staff training plan: work with supervisor <i>re</i> training and development with reference to the staff's completed appraisal forms.	Chair and supervisor
Grievance and disciplinary procedures: in charge of policy and dealing with any issues as they arise. Bear in mind confidentiality if discussion includes the committee/others.	Manager/supervisor and chair
Day-to-day emergencies: be available for emergencies or ensure someone else from the committee is available to do so; act as spokesperson for the group.	Chair and / or other committee member

Continues overleaf

Responsibility / tasks

Suggested role

Safeguarding/child protection: oversee any incident or issues that arise; ensure that safeguarding policies and procedures are regularly updated and fully understood by all; ensure safeguarding letter from the county (which explains the duty the setting has to report any incidents) is sent to all parents (enclose with prospectus); maintain levels of safeguarding training within the setting.	Chair or designated committee member working with manager or supervisor
Ensure that confidentiality is maintained by the committee. It is also important that the chair liaises with manager/supervisor re staff confidentiality.	Chair
Ensure good communication between the committee and staff (have a clear policy) especially from the very beginning either of a new committee or a newly-appointed member of staff.	Chair
Agendas and minutes – chair and secretary liaise: secretary ensures all committee members have a copy (copy also to staff and available to parents upon request after they have been agreed at the following committee meeting).	Chair and secretary
Parents and committee liaison: information and marketing to parents and the community (e.g. newsletter, parish magazine); ensure parents see their children's records when they want; help organise parents' evenings.	Chair, deputy chair or secretary and manager/supervisor
With reference to relevant guidance and legislation, update policies and procedures (a rolling programme to update keeps the policies fresh); ensure annual update, staff and committee to input, read and sign them (agreeing to abide by them should be in the staff's employment contract).	Chair, committee and staff
Support and authorise work of the treasurer; receive duplicate bank statements from treasurer.	Chair
Cheques must have two signatories – to avoid fraud don't sign blank cheques.	Chair, secretary, or supervisor with treasurer
Monitor staffing levels with the supervisor; plan how to maintain correct Ofsted ratios and ensure the Ofsted registration requirements are met – as a minimum a committee member needs to be aware of ratios and ensure that they are maintained.	Chair with supervisor/manager
Keep records of all correspondence for the group including policy and procedure updates.	Secretary
Update (with chair and committee), type up, print, distribute and keep copies of prospectus/Welcome Pack, staff handbook/induction including appraisal forms and guidance, staff guidelines re confidentiality, staff contracts and committee induction including copies of policies and procedures and the group's Constitution	Secretary and/or deputy chair with chair & committee
Maintain parent and child contact information: remember confidentiality NB certain paperwork must be kept on the premises and will be looked at during an Ofsted inspection (refer to the <i>Statutory Framework for EYFS</i>) or contact Ofsted directly.	Secretary with designated staff member

Responsibility/tasks	Suggested role
Inform all of term dates, dates of occasional activities (e.g. the Christmas Party or Nativity) and outings in newsletter, parish magazine and on notice board.	Secretary
Take minutes of meetings (separating fact from opinion), verify with Chair, type up and distribute to all committee. (Distribute to staff and parents only after they have been agreed).	Secretary
Book session venue if appropriate (e.g. village hall, community centre or parish/church hall/room).	Secretary
Book and notify all of meeting dates, times and venues. NB notification of AGM should be sent out a month (minimum two weeks) prior to meeting (date, time, detail of business, invitation for proposals of resolutions, requests for nominations for election) on notice boards, local shop etc.	Secretary
Maintain waiting list and feed into overall financial forecast	Secretary or deputy chair or designated staff member or committee member
New Staff Paperwork/ Ofsted EY2 forms, CRB Disclosures, Application Form, Staff Contract, Staff handbook and guidelines (grievance, confidentiality and behaviour at work issues) follow up references. See Section 5 .	Secretary and / or Deputy Chair or Chair
Recruitment of new committee members: never assume that parents understand the the voluntary nature of how the group runs. Take every opportunity to inform e.g. use a regular newsletter to inform, but remember most parents will not read them so make them attention seeking! Give an explanatory handout, when a new child joins. See Section 6.8 for a sample 'Welcome to the committee' letter you could use.	All committee
Collect fees, pay cash/cheques into bank, sign and issue cheques, pay bills when due, keep receipts and records of invoices for reference.	Treasurer
Pay staff wages and deal with PAYE regulations (groups can pay for a book-keeper but this should not be a committee member unless they are charging a substantially reduced rate). See Section 3.3 for more information about what trustees can be paid for since the Charities Act 2006.	Treasurer or paid book-keeper
Pay premises hire	Treasurer
Renew insurance annually, checking whether it gives sufficient cover for the group's activities and legal obligations.	Treasurer
Pay membership fees as appropriate	Treasurer
Organise petty cash and provide floats for any fundraising initiatives	Treasurer

Continues overleaf

Responsibility/tasks

Suggested role

Provide financial reports and copies of bank statements regularly and give to the chair and committee (annual report to all at AGM).	Treasurer
Complete end-of-year accounts and arrange for them to be independently examined/inspected.	Treasurer and/or paid accountant
Complete annual Charity Commission return – including annual report, annual statement of accounts and personal details of committee members.	Treasurer
Assess forward budget planning, (see Section 4: Running the business)	Treasurer, chair and whole committee
Organise milk rebate claims.	Treasurer
Complete and return WSCC headcount form for 3- and 4- year olds free entitlement money. Sign annual Free Entitlement registration form (the provider declaration) and read the conditions of registration.	Treasurer or staff member or admissions person
Lead fundraiser/s, and grant applications	Designated committee member/s or sub-committee
Health and Safety committee member (including records for accidents, infections and medication)/ support staff with risk assessments. Ensure the group is a safe place for both children and adults. Work closely with manager/supervisor and buildings manager.	Designated committee member
Inclusion Needs Co-ordinator (INCO), Special Educational Needs or Additional Support Committee member / understand this area and policy to support the staff INCO. Have an overview of the government and county perspectives on inclusion, particularly with regard to the social model of disability.	Designated committee member
Equipment and toys – support staff clearing out old equipment, repairs and acquiring new – link these to the Early Years Foundation Stage learning outcomes.	Designated committee member
Uphold the statutory requirements as stipulated in the <i>Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage</i> in respect of the Registered Person	All committee

We really do appreciate all your concerns



WHO DOES SHE THINK SHE IS?!



Just put it on the shelf, dear!

WHO DOES SHE THINK SHE IS?!



I wish someone understood what I do around here!



Table 2: Lead Practitioner or Early Years Professional Lead's tasks

The lead practitioner may be the supervisor or, if the setting is larger, a manager may have been employed and they line-manage the supervisors of the setting. The manager might also be designated some of the tasks of the committee, especially in larger groups but the committee/trustees still have collective responsibility.

Promote the aims and objectives of the setting, which includes providing high standards of physical, emotional and environmental care to meet the needs of the individual children.

Responsible for the provision following the Early Years Foundation Stage – attendance of Early Years Foundation Stage training required.

Organise and oversee the children's observation, planning and record keeping; responsible for the observations being included within planning (i.e. that the individual needs of the attending children are being fully met within the planning structure and that this can be clearly traced within the planning records).

Ensure parents can see their children's records easily; lead parents' evenings.

Manage, motivate and organise the suitable deployment of the staff team; in charge of day-to-day running, including ensuring adequate staffing levels/ratios.

Work with staff and committee with regard to implementing, maintaining and updating appropriate policies and procedures in line with current best practice.

Ensure equal opportunities for all children and staff.

Work/liaise with parents and outside agencies to ensure children's particular needs are met.

Record and give to the treasurer (or book-keeper) the staff rota, including number of sessions.

Health and Safety Officer: carry out regular risk assessments and liaise with H&S committee member and develop good working relationship with building/premises manager (alternatively this could be delegated to designated member of staff and or committee member).

Line manager to the other members of staff team; carry out their appraisals in line with group's appraisal system.

Fire drills: in charge of fire drills half termly and making sure the children understand what is expected of them during a drill; make sure fire extinguishers are regularly checked with committee Health & Safety person and/or building manager (these need to be logged).

Input to training plan with committee chair; it is good practice to carry out regular appraisals, that way all staff have been consulted and involved in completing the training plan. It is also good practice to have adopted a training policy, this would include what is paid for and what is not e.g. time and travel.

Keep and maintain attendance records.

Continued overleaf

Keep and maintain duplicate accident book (one copy for parents/carers and another for the setting's records) for accidents that may involve the attending children; keep and maintain a separate accident book for accidents that involve staff.

Organise and chair half termly (minimum) staff meetings (dates, times, venues and agenda, delegate minute taker).

Responsible for complaints book, and complaints procedure; first person the parents should come to if there is a problem – should then notify chair. (It is good practice to liaise with chair on all complaints/concerns, bearing in mind confidentiality.)

Keep milk invoices to give to treasurer or book keeper.

Hold and maintain the correct paperwork that Ofsted require to be held on the premises; keep illustrative/photographic record of events and activities for Ofsted inspectors to view during their inspection as evidence of setting's good practice.

Keep and update regularly an inventory of equipment – relate/link equipment/toys/resources to the Early Years Foundation Stage areas of learning; remember resources should reflect equal opportunities, race relations legislation and Disability Discrimination Acts.

Organise/oversee the administration of WSCC paperwork for eligibility for the Free Entitlement for 3- and 4- year olds with the committee especially the chair and/or treasurer. NB the committee chair or representative should sign the yearly agreement called the Provider Declaration.

Allocate staff to be key workers to children attending the group; support key workers in developing confident and secure children as they start and settle in the setting.

Develop and foster good relationships with parents of children attending the setting.

Organise children's sessions list.

Organise/oversee new children and parent mornings; introduce the setting to parents interested in their children attending (make clear that the childcare group is run by a volunteer parent committee).

Attend committee meetings to update and liaise with committee members; keep committee members informed of all aspects of the setting – good practice would be to liaise regularly with a representative from the committee. Not all committee meetings need to be attended.

If the setting is located in a community building, the supervisor should endeavour to establish a positive working relationship with the management committee of the building, in conjunction with the chair or another committee member.

Prepare for and attend annual appraisal with line manager (committee chair).

Ensure emergency contact information is kept safely and is updated regularly.

Ensure confidentiality throughout the setting and promote this to staff and parents.

Check the telephone daily for messages and ensure it is in good working order (or delegate this).

1.5 Becoming and operating as a charity

When setting up a charity you need to set out in a governing document the purposes (aims and objects) of the charity and how the administration will be organised. The Charity Commission's website has three 'model' documents: a Memorandum and articles of association, for a charitable company; a Trust Deed – for a trust; and a Constitution, for an unincorporated association. (For more information on these types of associations see **Section 2.1: Getting it right legally – Legal status and structure**). For an unincorporated group the governing document is the constitution.

The next step is to register as a charity. For guidance on the process of registering and the application forms please visit the Charity Commission website www.charity-commission.gov.uk. Much can now be done online.

Becoming a charity gives the group/association the advantage of fundraising from public bodies, local individuals, the public and charitable trusts and foundations. Charities also benefit from a public image that is mostly positive. Other advantages of charitable status are exemption from income tax, capital gains tax and corporation tax on profits or gains, although these profits can only be used to achieve the charity's aims and objectives. However, in order to enjoy these benefits a charity must fulfil the requirements of the Charity Commission.

The requirements are:

- Inform the Charity Commission annually of the names and addresses of the members of the voluntary management committee. This can now be done online
www.charity-commission.gov.uk/common/applyforit.asp
- Your charity registration number must be clearly shown on all your documents particularly documents relating to finance (invoices, receipts).
- Depending on your group's annual turnover a financial statement by an independent examiner must be sent to the Charity Commission.
- All the group's accounts and reports must be sent annually to the Charity Commission and should be kept for a minimum of six years in addition to a complete record for the current year.
- *"When your organisation has an income of £5,000 or more you are required by law to register with us"*
The Charity Commission.

(Please see **Section 3.3: Regulation and regulatory bodies** for more about the Charity Commission and the Charities Act 2006).

1.6 Health check

Yes/No Action to take

Does your group have a constitution/
governing document?

You need to refer to the Charity Commission if you do not have a copy of your constitution – they will give you a copy.

Have you read and understood
your constitution? – e.g. do you
know what to do in order to close
or wind up the pre-school?

Please refer to **Section 1.3: *The constitution or governing document – what is it?***

Also refer to the Charity Commission website
www.charity-commission.gov.uk

Do you understand that it is
illegal to run your childcare group
without the three officer roles
being filled?

Read your constitution.

Do you understand the roles
and responsibilities of the
management committee?

See Table 1 in **Section 1.4: *Committee Roles and Responsibilities.***
Also refer to 4Children document *Making it Happen – The Voluntary
Management Toolkit* www.4Children.org.uk

Also see www.surestart.gov.uk and enter “roles and responsibilities” in
the Search window.

Do you understand the role/s of
your lead practitioner/s

Please refer to your lead practitioner’s job description/ personal
specification. See Table 2 in **Section 1.4.**

Do you have trouble recruiting
committee members?

Are you communicating effectively with parents/carers and the local
community?

Are they aware of the need for new committee members and the legal
implications for the group?

Are the parents aware, from when their child joins, that the setting will
close in its present form, if a committee cannot be elected, first at an
Annual General Meeting (AGM) and subsequently at an Extraordinary
General Meeting (EGM)?

Emphasise the personal benefits of volunteering and its use on a CV.
Please also refer to **Section 6.8** for further help.

Do you know the two most
important aspects of a voluntary
committee led childcare group?

The committee is the employer of the staff with all the legal
responsibilities that this involves – See **Section 5** and refer to
www.acas.org.uk

The committee is responsible for the financial probity of the group. It
needs to understand the annual percentage occupancy required to
‘break even’ – income (e.g. fees and fundraising) equals or exceeds
outgoing (staff wages and all other costs).

As a trustee am I personally
liable for any debts the group
may incur?

*“Where a liability has been properly incurred by the trustees of an
unincorporated charity, but the charity does not have sufficient assets
to meet the liability, those trustees may have to meet the shortfall
personally. How this deficit is to be shared between the trustees can
depend on the terms of the agreement which gave rise to the liability,
but normally the creditor will be able to sue any of the trustees for the
whole liability. A trustee who has to pay more than his or her share may
claim a fair contribution from the other trustees. This means in effect
that any deficit will be shared equally between those of the trustees
who can be found, and who have the means to pay, unless they agree
otherwise among themselves.”*

Managing Financial Difficulties and Insolvency in Charities

Charity Commission Booklet www.charity-commission.gov.uk