

What is a committee ?

This Pre-school, like many others is a parent managed committee run pre-school.



Why Join the Pre-School Management Committee?

The Management Committee is essential for running the pre-school. It must consist of at least five members, with **60% being parents of attending children**. Without a functioning committee, the pre-school **cannot operate**. Since children come and go, the committee must also change regularly to meet legal requirements.

Many pre-schools struggle to maintain a committee, often because its importance is overlooked. However, joining the committee offers **many personal benefits** beyond supporting the pre-school.

Benefits of Joining the Committee:

- **Develop Valuable Skills**
 - Enhance social and professional skills
 - Gain experience in leadership and teamwork
- **Boost Career Prospects**
 - Access to nationally recognized groups, including:
 - Pre-School Learning Alliance
 - The Children's Trust
 - Ofsted
 - Early Years and Childcare Department
 - Ideal for those interested in education and childcare careers
- **Maintain Employment Readiness**
 - Stay engaged with a working environment
 - Build skills that support job applications
 - Gain a valuable employment reference
- **Learn and Apply Key Skills in Various Areas**
 - Personnel and Resource Management
 - Law
 - Finance
- **Make a Positive Impact**
 - Support children's early learning journey
 - Strengthen the local community

Joining the committee is a rewarding opportunity to develop new skills, improve career prospects, and make a lasting difference in children's education. Consider getting involved today!

Section 1-The Role of the Management Committee

What a committee is?

A committee of a pre-school is a group of parents/individuals that hold joint responsibility for the management of the pre-school/charity. They hold meetings on a regular basis, usually once a month or each half term, in order to make fair decisions about how the pre-school will operate, this is carried out by voting system. A committee is the management/employer for the pre-school so many important decisions need to be made. Without the committee the pre-school cannot operate.

Who is in a committee?

The members of a committee are made up from a Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer known as the officers, they perform specific duties; see the roles and responsibility section. The other committee members, known as members, volunteer to carry out and share the other duties between them.

How they operate

A committee needs to function through established rules, and these rules are written into a "constitution". The committee may already have an existing constitution, the Pre-school Learning Alliance have a model pre-school constitution (2011) that can be used, see appendix 1. The constitution will also play a vital role in operating within the guidelines of charity law, which requires all charities to have a constitution that defines legal structure and how they operate.

Section 2 - Specific Responsibilities

Each committee must have a Chairperson, a Treasurer and a Secretary. They must then have at least 2 other committee member. Each committee member will be allocated a specific role.

Chairperson

The chair's job falls into four main parts:

- The chair is the public face of the elected committee, representing the setting where necessary at public events and sometimes at meetings of other organisations.¹ In rare cases an emergency may occur between committee meetings which require an immediate response. In this case the responsibility rests on the chair, who should consult as many committee members as possible, before² making an interim decision. This will be reported to the committee at the next meeting.
- The chair takes charge at open meetings and at committee meetings. This does not mean that the committee is there to do what the chair wants. It means the chair has the difficult and important task of seeing to it that the meetings are effective: that decisions are taken and implemented in a way that reflects the needs and the wishes of the group members and makes the best use of the skills and talents available.
- The chair is usually the line manager of the person in charge, e.g., leader or manager.
- The chair must support and authorise the work of the treasurer, checking at regular intervals (at least monthly) that the amounts of money banked correspond with the amounts signed for on original documents such as receipts.

Secretary

The secretary deals with all the groups' official paperwork except for keeping accounts. The work includes:

- Writing and receiving letters for the group and the keeping of all correspondence.
- In consultation with the chair, drawing up and circulating an agenda before meetings.
- Ensuring that everyone knows in good time about the date, time, and venue of committee meetings and general meetings.
- Keeping proper records (minutes) of meetings.
- Arranging the venue for meetings.

Treasurer

The treasurer's job is important; she/he will work closely with and be supported by officers and delegated staff regarding income and expenditure.

All committee members are responsible for making financial decisions, but the treasurer is the one who keeps the records of the group's financial transactions. The treasurer can also delegate some of the work to a paid bookkeeper. However, if the committee decides to employ a paid bookkeeper, they must ensure there is also a voluntary treasurer, as stated in the Pre-school Learning Alliance Model Pre-school Constitution.

The Treasurer's job covers:

- Guiding and advising the committee on approval of budgets and accounts.
- Keeping the committee informed of their financial responsibilities.
- Advising the committee and senior staff of the financial implications of the business plan and budget.
- Confirming the financial resources of the group meets the present and future needs and comply with the reserves policy
 - Ensuring that funds are invested in accordance with any investment policy.
 - Understanding the importance of financial procedures and controls
 - Ensuring that the accounts are audited or examined as appropriate
 - Presenting the accounts at Annual General Meetings.
 - Maintaining accurate financial records, including payments, receipts, cash analysis, banking, cash withdrawals and raising cheques for authorised invoices in order to support the administration, maintenance and development of the budgets
 - Raising invoices as appropriate and maintaining credit control
 - Providing financial information to be used by the group in funding applications and in reports to funders
- Processing and preparing salary and expense claims for payment. To operate all HM Revenue & Customs procedures or to inform the payroll agency of payments and adjustments.
 - Preparing cash flow forecasts and budget monitoring reports
 - Ensuring that the Chairperson receives a copy of the group's bank statement

Other committee members

The rest of the work is shared among the other committee members. In addition to being jointly responsible for all decision making, members of the committee will arrange for the following work to be carried out, although they might not do it all in person:

- Keeping the whole group in touch with the committee's decisions and activities by means of a notice board and/or newsletters/letters to parents and carers
- Administrating a waiting list in accordance with the groups admissions policy.
- Fundraising
- In consultation with staff, buying equipment for the group.
- In consultation with staff, ensuring that registration and inspection requirements are met
- Arranging the groups insurance and maintaining an inventory
- Making sure the group is a safe place to be, for both children and adults.
- With staff, making regular checks on the accident record and conducting risk assessments.
- Ensuring the alliance membership is updated as necessary.
- Policies and Procedures in place are reviewed regularly and updated as necessary.
- Recruitment of staff
- Representing the pre-school as and when required

Section 3 - Committee Responsibilities

Safe Recruitment

Recruitment can be a major part of the committee's role and being responsible for staff can often be a frightening prospect. Safety checks and ensuring staff are suitable, have the relevant skills and knowledge to offer high quality education and care for children is paramount. Advertising, interviewing and ensuring the correct checks are made before staff start working with the children is of vital importance.

Confidentiality and DSB (formally CRB)

All committee members need to sign a confidentiality agreement in order to protect the committee and the pre-school, it is to ensure that any matters discussed will remain confidential, see appendix 2. It is essential that each committee member will be required to

have an enhanced criminal records check (DBS) this will safeguard the children and ensure suitability.

From 28 May 2012, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), formerly known as the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB), introduced new identity (ID) checking guidelines. These new guidelines will apply to all applications for a DBS check.

This enhancement has been introduced so that the DBS's identity checking process is strengthened to improve public protection. In particular, the changes will make it more difficult for individuals to conceal previous criminal records by changing their name. These changes are part of an on-going improvement process that will enable easier detection of undeclared changes of name in the future. Visit the website for more information - www.homeoffice.gov.uk/dbs The DBS searches police records and, in relevant cases, barred list information, and then issues a DBS certificate to the applicant and employer to help them make an informed recruitment decision.

Ofsted are required to check the suitability of the manager and the registered person (which is the committee of a voluntary-run setting or the directors or owners of a private day care setting) to be providing care for children.

The manager and every committee member, director or owner of early years settings must fill out a declaration and consent form (EY2) which can be obtained from the local authority or downloaded from Ofsted's website to apply for an Enhanced Disclosure. Once completed, the forms should be sent to Ofsted who will carry out the checks.

Any changes to the registered person(s) must also be notified to Ofsted, the committee, directors or owners will need to complete a Notification to Ofsted form (EY3) which informs Ofsted of the change.