

Our Committee

The Committee are the Management Team of the playgroup; acting as employer for the staff, promoting and supporting the playgroup through PR, fundraising and events, managing the financial accounts, reviewing policies and above all, ensuring that we meet the playgroup's legal and regulatory requirements. We are a voluntary group of parents/carers or family members of children currently attending playgroup. Everyone brings their own set of skills and ideas. Committee members can also be people from the local community who have an interest in the playgroup. The Committee is supported by the Administrator.

Facts about a Preschool Committee

- * **In order for the playgroup to open and run effectively we must have a committee.**
- * **To form a committee there must be at least five members, with the majority being parents or carers of children currently attending the setting? The more members we have the more we expand our skills base and we value each committee member's views and ideas.**
- * **Did you know that the committee are the Management Team of the playgroup; acting as employer for the staff, promoting and supporting the playgroup through PR, fundraising and events, managing the financial accounts, managing admissions, and ensuring, above all, that we meet the legal and regulatory requirements for the setting?**
- * **Research shows clear benefits for children when parents/carers become actively involved in their child's learning and development from an early age? Parental involvement has been recognised by the Government as being key to a child's successful development too.**

Some Questions Answered...

What are the roles on the committee?

There are a number of roles that make up an effective committee; Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer are required roles. Other responsibilities include Health & Safety, Staff Liaison, Ofsted Contact, Policies officer and Fundraising. Not every member of a committee must have an assigned role, general committee members also provide great support to the team. Details of roles at the end show what each role entails.

I'm interested but I haven't got much free time!

We appreciate that some parents/carers may work, or have other children, which means that they don't have a lot of spare time. However, you can still add valuable contributions to the committee by joining as a general committee member without a specific role. This means that you will still be part of the team by attending committee meetings to make contributions and voice ideas and then help out when you have the time at fundraising and playgroup events. General members are really important as their help at busy times can really lighten the load for everyone.

But I don't know anyone!

Don't worry – many of us joined when we didn't know anyone else on the committee. Joining the committee is a great way to get to know other parents/carers, be involved in your child's playgroup, and contribute to our local community. We're a friendly and welcoming group of people, who have one common interest – getting the best for our children from our local Early Years provider.

When do you meet?

We meet in the evening once every half term online via Teams. We run to an agenda, updating the whole committee and making decisions about the playgroup. We also plan events and fundraising diary.

How do I join?

Committee members normally join at the Annual General Meeting (AGM), which is held during the first half term of the year. At the AGM, all current members resign and a new committee is then voted in. Positions will be allocated at a roles meeting after this so you may want to think how you want to be involved, a particular role that may interest you or you have experience in. The AGM is perhaps the only formal meeting of the year and everyone is encouraged to come even if you do not want to join the committee. You can also join throughout the year by being enrolled at our next committee meeting.

As a new committee member, you will be required to have a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Scheme) check and be deemed 'suitable' by the National Governing Body. This is because the committee work with children and the confidential records of children. It is a requirement from Ofsted that all committee and staff be checked. The process is simple and at minimal cost, and can be taken with you/used for other groups (if they accept this type of certificate). We will explain the process once you join the committee.

I don't know anything about running a playgroup – it seems like a big responsibility!

Being on the committee does mean taking on some responsibility but it is one that we, the committee, take on collectively; all working together as a team. Our Administrator has been involved with the playgroup as a parent, committee member and now staff for a number of years and brings lots of experience and support to the committee, and is on hand to answer any questions. There is also a full handover of roles, and committee training available through Cambridgeshire's Childcare and Business Team (CBES) at Cambridgeshire County Council. The CBES team are also available for support and advice.

This is what previous members have said about being on the committee:

"Joining the committee gave me an insight into how the playgroup was run. I had no idea before joining. It has allowed me to meet new people and make some great friends. Also, being on the committee has allowed me to get to know the staff better."

"I joined the committee initially to be involved in my child's early years education. I also wanted a new challenge after giving up work to become a full time mum. I've met new friends and gained an understanding of what is involved in running an early years setting. My role has been challenging at times but, with the support of the rest of the committee and the staff, it has also been very rewarding and a lot of fun! I know that I have made a difference."

"I joined the committee as I thought it important to get involved and wanted to give something back to the playgroup. Having a committee is essential to the survival of Chestnuts and it is great being able to easily share my thoughts and feelings on the day to day running of the group, and also the more specific events that are held. The committee meetings are a great way to get to know other parents, and you can get involved as much, or as little as you like."

Committee Roles

Chair - *The role of the Chair is to lead the Management Committee and develop and maintain an effective working relationship with staff.*

- Arranges and runs committee meetings, working with the Secretary to create the agenda.
 - Ensures that all decisions made are in line with policy and the committee constitution.
 - Runs effective committee meetings by enabling democratic decision-making and full participation of the committee.
- Follows up on decisions made during the meetings, which require action and delegates tasks to committee members.
- Usually acts as line manager to the Preschool Leader and conducts the Annual Appraisal on the progress of the setting and the Preschool Leader's performance (duty shared with Staff Liaison Officer).

Secretary - *The role of Secretary is to support the Chair ensuring effective administration of the committee. This role is supported by the Administrator.*

- Communicate to parents/carers through email, notices, Class Dojo and newsletters.
- Takes minutes during committee meetings if the Administrator is unavailable.
- Writes letters on behalf of the committee following instruction from the Chair or other committee members.
- Ensures arrangements are made for meetings including booking venues, arranging equipment and refreshments.

Treasurer - *The role of Treasurer is to maintain an overview of the financial affairs of the setting and keep appropriate financial records. This role is supported by the Administrator.*

- Keeps a financial record of all transactions and keeps the committee informed of the financial status of the group
- Prepares the annual report for the AGM and completes other financial reports when required, such as the annual return to the Charities Commission.
- Make payments and manages petty cash
- Manages payroll
- Manages the insurance for the playgroup; annual renewal and maintaining communication with the insurance provider.

Policies Officer - *This role ensures our playgroup's policies and procedures are regularly updated, and are in line with the statutory guidelines. This role also ensures the staff policy and procedures are up to date. by the Administrator.*

Ofsted Contact - *This role ensures Ofsted are updated of any staff and committee changes, as well as ensures all DBS checks are undertaken and completed successfully. This role is supported by the Administrator.*

- Ofsted communications – Designated Person
- DBS Disclosures – ensures all committee and staff are processed through the Disclosure & Barring Service.

Health & Safety Officer - *The role of the Health & Safety Officer is to ensure that the playgroup health and safety policies and procedures are followed.*

- Liaise with the staff Health & Safety Officer to ensure that the setting is safe and fit for use.
- Completes regular risk assessments and facilities checks and keeps records of these. Actions any issues that are identified and reports these back to the committee.
- Ensures that the management committee is maintaining a safe and healthy working environment for staff.
- Regularly checks accident and incident reports to identify possible risks and hazards.
- Produces risk assessments for playgroup events (template used).

Staff Liaison Officer - *The role of the Staff Liaison Officer is to liaise with staff on behalf of the committee.*

- Be a point of contact for staff requests and concerns and report these back to the committee.
- Update staff on committee decisions where required.

Head of Fundraising - *The role coordinates all committee lead fundraising events, to include:-*

- Communicating effectively with staff and committee about proposed events, and delegating duties accordingly.
- Ensuring an adequate venue for each event is booked, and ensuring risk assessments are undertaken ahead of events.
- Advertising each event appropriately.

General Members - *General members support the committee by attending meetings and offering their views and opinions. They also help at playgroup events and community events.*