

Guidance to Effective Committee Meetings

Information included in this guidance:

- Information on Committee Meetings
- Committee Members Contact Sheet
- Example Agenda for Committee Meetings
- Taking Minutes
- Supporting Literature

For Information on Committee Roles and Responsibilities please refer to the Voluntary Management Committee Tools section on the Birth to Five website www.birthtofive.org

Points to Consider

When looking at where to hold a meeting think about access for everyone, is the meeting place suitable for everyone to attend? Is there anyone attending the meeting that requires additional support: sign language, a translator, Braille records or anything similar?

Committee Meetings

Committee meetings are important because they are the way in which the work gets organised. If the meetings are effectively run, committee members will feel confident that the necessary decisions have been made, that tasks have been allocated and shared accordingly, and that actions will be met before the next meeting.

Meetings should be held at least once a month for the effective delivery of the EYFS or as often as the Constitution states; there will be a minimum number of meetings throughout the year as stated in the Constitution.

For a committee meeting to take place a minimum number of committee members need to be present. This is a Quorum and it will be stated in your Constitution how many this consists of. In addition to these regular meetings, there will be an Annual General Meeting (AGM) which is held once a year to review the year's progress, look at annual reports and elect or reelect new members. There may be a need to call an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) during the year to specifically address any issues.

Reports

The Manager, Treasurer and Chair will be asked to give a written report on different aspects of their work. It should contain a review of all relevant information, identifying how the provision has met its aims over the past year.

There are four main aspects to a report:

1. The purpose of the report.
2. Who it is for.
3. Factual content of the report.
4. Conclusions and Recommendations.

A written report should have your name, job title, date and setting name on it. Any supporting information should be attached as numbered appendices.

The Agenda

1. This is the list of "things to be discussed". The Chairperson and Secretary usually draw up the agenda together and it should be circulated in advance of the meeting so that everybody involved knows where and when they are to meet and what is to be discussed.
2. The agenda should give the date, time and place of the meeting and should include discussion of:
 - The minutes of the previous meeting
 - Any matters which arise from the business of the previous meeting
 - A report from the Chairperson
 - The statement of account from the Treasurer
 - The Secretary's report on any correspondence handled since the last meeting
 - Manager's /Supervisor's report
 - Any major items of business, each of which should be listed separately
 - Any other business (AOB)
 - The date, place and time of the next meeting

An agenda for an EGM would be developed to identify and address specific issues and would not include all of the items above (e.g. reports, previous meeting minutes etc).

People who read the agenda should get a clear picture from it of what will happen at the meeting. It is helpful if the Chair and the Secretary can go through the minutes of the previous meeting together when drawing up the next agenda. List the subjects to be dealt with under "matters arising". This saves time at the meeting and can act as a useful last-minute reminder if anyone has not carried out the tasks allocated to them.

If the Committee is dealing with a long-running task - for example, they are organising an event - it is better to list this as a separate item rather than including it among the business which arises from the minutes of the previous meeting.

Any other business is intended just for small items. If something important comes up after the agenda has been circulated, the chairperson should explain this at the beginning of the meeting and add it to the agenda rather than bringing it up under Any Other Business.

New Committee Members

All Committee members should be given the information required to carry out their responsibilities:

1. A copy of the Constitution.
2. A copy of roles and responsibilities of the Committee.
3. EYFS guidance pack.
4. Charity Commission Trustees guide, CC3.
5. This information sheet.
6. The Annual Report, (if applicable).

7. Equal Opportunities and Confidentiality Policies, each member should then sign that they have read them.

Ofsted EY 3 and EY 2 forms – All new members given EY2 forms to complete (these are downloadable from Ofsted website) and timescales for completion discussed. EY3 form to be completed at the meeting to inform Ofsted immediately of changes. It is a statutory duty that Ofsted must be informed of changes within 14days.

Committee Members Contact Sheet.

Name	Address	Telephone Number	Email Address
(Chairperson)			
(Vice Chair) if applicable			
(Secretary)			
(Treasurer)			
Committee Member			
Committee Member			
Committee Member			
Committee Member			
Interested Parties			

Agenda for Committee Meeting

For

On (Date and Time)

At (Venue)

Apologies for absence, attendance sheet completed

- Minutes of the last meeting held on (insert date)
- Matters arising from the minutes
- Chair's Report
- Secretary's report on any correspondence
- Treasurer's report
- Manager/Supervisors report
- Ofsted and EYFS requirements
- Quality Assurance (if applicable)
- Policies
- Fundraising
- Forthcoming events
- Any Other Business. (A.O.B.)
- Date, time and place of next meeting

You may want to include a slot on working with the local school if appropriate or other key people you work with.

Taking Minutes Points to Remember

Minutes are a written account of a meeting. They are important because they are the legal records of decisions made. It is difficult for the Secretary to note down who said what and this should be avoided; only those making major contributions are usually named.

The Secretary or Minute's Secretary may take the Minutes but they are still the responsibility of the Chairperson who should sign each page of the Minutes to prove they are a true account of the meeting.

Minutes should include:

- The place, time and date of the meeting.
- Those present, who was chairing the meeting and any apologies.
- A note saying that the minutes of the previous meeting were agreed or any amendments.
- The same items as on the agenda, in the same order.
- The main points leading to decisions and any decisions made.
- Those responsible for implementing the decision and those responsible for any actions.
- The time the meeting ended (it may be significant later to know whether discussion lasted 15 minutes or 6 hours!)
- The date, time and venue of the next meeting.

Remember:

- Mark items for action or attention so that people remember what they agreed to do.
- Write up the minutes as soon as possible after the meeting.
- Get the minutes checked by the chair of the meeting.
- Number each page.
- Circulate to members as soon as possible.

Supporting Literature

- Getting it Right Legally, Status and Structure for Play and Childcare Organisations (*available from University of Gloucestershire, 01242 543 555 Or email team@playwork.co.uk*)
- Voluntary but not Amateur, A Guide to the law for Voluntary Organisations and Community Groups – ISBN 1-872582-11-7
- The Good Employment Guide for the Voluntary Sector - NCVO