

# Committee roles and responsibilities

## Committee Structure

The key elements of the structure of the association are the:

- constitution (governing document)
- members
- committee
- trustees

## Constitution

All associations need a constitution. This is a document which establishes the fundamental rules by which the association is governed and describes:

- the aims of the association and its powers
- its membership
- the size of the committee and how members are elected
- the need for an annual audit and general meeting.

It is essential that you adopt a constitution as the first step of setting up your PTA. PTA UK has produced a model constitution for its members in England and Wales which has been accepted by the Charity Commission; we have also produced a version for our members in Northern Ireland, which is recognised by [Charity Commission for Northern Ireland](#).

[Fast track charity registration](#) is available to PTA UK members who have adopted the PTA UK Model Constitution.

## Members

The type of association your school has or wishes to establish will depend on its membership:

- in a Parents' Association (PA) members are limited to parents, carers and guardians of pupils currently at the school
- in a Parent Teacher Association (PTA) or Home School Association (HSA) members are limited to the above plus the teaching and non-teaching staff currently employed by the school
- in any other association, such as a Friends or Community Association (CA), the members may be those described above plus any persons wishing to offer appropriate support or help to the school/association who is deemed suitable as a member by the Committee e.g. grandparents, members of the local community.

It is important that the definition of membership is clear in your constitution. Members are not legally responsible for the actions of the association. It is the elected committee members who are legally responsible for the management of the association.

## Committee

A committee is a team of volunteers who are elected at the association's [Annual General Meeting](#) (AGM) to manage the association on behalf of the members. There are two types of committee member, Officer and Ordinary (or Other) member. Officers have specific

roles such as [Chair](#), [Treasurer](#) or [Secretary](#). Ordinary Committee Members play a vital role working alongside and supporting the Officers. All committee members have equal voting rights, with the exception of the Chair, who has an additional casting vote, should this be needed.

It is normal for the size of the committee to vary, depending on the size of the school. The minimum number with which it is possible to operate is two; usually a Chair and a Treasurer. There is no restriction on the maximum number of committee members. However, it is in the association's interest not to make a committee too large, as this may prove to be unmanageable.

## **Additional support**

In addition to the elected committee, it is valuable to have a list of [volunteers/helpers](#), who are willing to support the work of the committee. It would be acceptable for such volunteers to attend committee meetings but they would not have a vote; only elected committee members (Ordinary and Officers) can vote. Being a nominated PTA volunteer can be a gentle introduction to the committee and such volunteers may well go on to being a fully elected committee member with full voting rights.

## **Trustees**

If your association is a registered charity all the elected committee members (Officers and Ordinary) automatically become Trustees of the association (charity) and have a legal duty to ensure that the association (charity) acts lawfully and is managed properly.

Whilst Trustees have a legal duty it is important to remember that all decisions should be made collectively by the committee. No one individual should take sole responsibility for a committee decision or activity.

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