

Setting up the committee

Source: <https://www.parentkind.org.uk/For-PTAs/Start-a-PTA/Setting-up-the-committee>

The committee is one of the four key elements of an Association's structure, along with the constitution, the members and the trustees.

The 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.

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.

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. [Read more about the responsibilities of being a Trustee.](#)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-cc3>