

**TRUSTEE INDUCTION PACK**

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This pack is intended to be a helping guide to people who are new to being a member of a board of trustees.

Playgrounds can use it as it is or take parts out and adapt them for their own use.

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## What is a Charity Trustee?

*Being a trustee is the same as being a committee member, people just use different terminology. Some people will say they have a Board of Trustees while others will say they have a Management Committee. The roles and responsibilities of both are exactly the same.*

Trustees are responsible for controlling a charity's management and administration, They are responsible for ensuring that a charity's income and property are used for the purposes set out in the charity's governing document (constitution) and for no other purpose. Trustees have a responsibility to act reasonably and prudently in all matters relating to the charity, and have a responsibility to act in the best interests of the charity.

Above all, trustees need to work together as a team to ensure their charity is run effectively and efficiently. As a body, the trustees should contain people who collectively have the skills and confidence that will enable the charity to confront and challenge any issues affecting it. This means that the board of trustees should work to avoid situations where knowledge or an excessive degree of influence is held in the hands of a select few (who may not be trustees themselves). An effective induction programme can equip a board to fulfil its role. The board of trustees that does not have an appropriate induction programme will be less able to hold their own when faced with a challenge to their authority.

*[Adapted from the Charity Commission trustee recruitment, selection and induction]*

## People who are disqualified from acting as trustees

When a new charity is formed and registers with the Charity Commission all the trustees are asked to sign a declaration that they are not disqualified from acting as trustees. Once registered the charities trustees are expected to collectively ensure that the board does not appoint or contain any individuals disqualified from acting as a charity trustee. Charities must ensure that they or staff make the necessary checks on prospective trustees, as it is a criminal offence for a disqualified person to act as a trustee.

A person is disqualified from acting as a trustee if they fall under any of the following provisions, detailed in section 72 of the Charities Act 1993:

- **People under the age of 18, unless the charity is a registered company;**
- **Anyone convicted of an offence involving deception or dishonesty unless the conviction is spent;** (This depends on the sentence given not on the offence committed).
- **Anyone who is an undischarged bankrupt;**
- **Anyone who has previously been removed from trusteeship of a charity by the Court or the Commissioners; and**
- **Anyone who is under a disqualification order under the Company Directors.**

## Disqualification Act 1996

In certain cases the Charity Commission has the power to grant a waiver and allow a person disqualified from trusteeship, under section 72 of the Charities Act 1993 to accept a trustee post. They will only agree in those cases where the charity can clearly demonstrate that the waiver is in the best interest of the charity.

## Conflict of Interest

All trustees must act, and be seen to act, in the best interest of the charity and not for their own private interest or gain. There may be situations where trustees own interests and the interest of the charity arise simultaneously or appear to clash.

The issue is not the integrity of the trustee concerned, but the charity's management of any potential overlap or conflict of interests. Not all conflicts of interest stand as a bar to service as a trustee, that will depend on the circumstances, including the size and nature of the benefit at issue. It will often be enough for a trustee to withdraw from discussions and decisions, which closely involve their interests, or simply to declare interests which are more general or indirect so that everyone is clearly aware of them.

It is vital that all charities have arrangements in place for spotting and dealing with potential conflicts of interest and ensure that their prospective and new trustees are aware of these arrangements. An open approach to potential conflicts of interest, which includes recognising, acknowledging and managing the issue in a transparent and efficient manner, can help to meet good practice guidelines and protect the reputation of the charity.

It is good practice to ensure that potential new trustees consider the question of possible conflicts of interest before there is commitment on either side. This is particularly important where personal interests may be significant enough to make it difficult for the individual concerned to make a full and rounded contribution to the committees discussions and decisions.

*[Taken from Charity Commission Trustee recruitment, selection and induction. RS1]*

## Ensuring good management

*Trustees are responsible for controlling a charities management and administration, they are responsible for ensuring that that a charities income and property are used for the purpose set out in the charities governing document (constitution) and for no other purpose. Trustees have a responsibility to act reasonably and prudently in all matters relating to the charity, and have a responsibility to act in the best interest of the charity.*

In order to avoid the most common difficulties that can arise in a charity, trustees should:

- Appreciate their responsibilities for the charity and it's resources, and not treat their position as purely honorary
- Make themselves familiar with the charity's constitution, so that they are clear what it does and does not have the powers to do
- Spot any circumstances in which they need to get specialist advice, for example on legal or financial issues
- Not leave an individual trustee or staff member, or a small group, to run matters without sufficient accountability or control
- Never allow personal affairs and resources to become entangled with those of the charity, or otherwise fail to spot and manage potential conflicts of interest
- Manage the charity in the interest of the charity as a whole, not in their own, or those of a narrow interest group.

*[Adapted from the Charity Commission trustee recruitment, selection and induction]*

## Code of practice for a board of trustees

In this section it is intended that the board of trustees debate then adapt this section to their charities own particular needs. It is then recommended that a code of practice should be adopted as a policy statement.

## Code of practice for a Board of Trustees

*As a voluntary organisation, which seeks to be effective and accountable, we will be clear and open about our work and conscious of our social responsibilities. In particular:*

### Effectiveness

1. We will state our purpose clearly and keep it relevant to current conditions.
2. We will be explicit about the needs that we intend to meet and how this will be achieved.
3. We will manage and target resources effectively and do what we say we will do.

### Accountability

4. We will evaluate the effectiveness of our work, tackle poor performance and respond to complaints fairly and promptly.
5. We will agree and set out for all those to whom we are accountable how we will fulfil these responsibilities.

### Standards

6. We will be clear about the standards to which we will work.

### User involvement

7. We will be open about our arrangements for involving users.

### Governance

8. We will have a systematic and open process for making appointments to our management committee.
9. We will set out the role and responsibilities of members of our management committee.

### Voluntary action

10. We will have clear arrangements for involving, training, supporting and managing volunteers.

### Equality and fairness

11. We will ensure that our policies and practices do not discriminate unfairly or lead to other forms of unfair treatment.

### Staff management

12. We will recruit staff openly, remunerate them fairly and be a good employer.

*[Taken from Rowntree foundation codes of practice for voluntary organisations]*

## Sample Job Description for a Member of the Board of Trustees

**Job description** - *the roles, responsibilities and tasks which trustees are expected to carry out.*

A member of the board of trustees will be expected to perform a number of tasks. These fall into two main groups: Tasks to fulfil legal duties and managerial tasks

### Tasks to fulfil legal duties

1. To ensure that the organisation pursues its objects as set out in the governing document.
2. To have read and understood the constitution.
3. To act at all times in the interests of the beneficiaries.
4. To understand the legal responsibilities of the board of trustees.
5. To make sure that the organisation acts within the law: as an employer, in respect of equal opportunities, meeting health and safety requirements, as a charity and so on.
6. To ensure that all money and assets are prudently managed and used in pursuit of the objects of the organisation.
7. To make sure that money is spent for the purposes for which it was given.
8. To ensure that the organisation accounts for its activities to its funders, the Charity Commissioners, its members, the local community and others as required.
9. To work jointly with the other trustees.
10. To ensure that the organisation manages its affairs reasonably and properly.
11. To work in the interests of the organisation, and not for personal gain.
12. To ensure that the board of trustees takes proper professional advice on matters in which it does not have competence.

## Managerial tasks

### Vision and direction

1. To understand and be committed to the mission of the organisation. To ensure that the organisation pursues its mission.

### Financial duties

2. To read and understand the financial information about the organisation and to ensure the finances are sound and properly managed.
3. To ensure that resources are used efficiently and economically.

### As an employer

4. To ensure that the organisation is a good employer of its paid and voluntary staff.
5. Where paid staff are employed, to appoint the senior worker, and usually to be involved with the appointment of other staff.
6. To supervise and support the senior worker and ensure other staff and volunteers are properly supervised.

### Evaluation

7. To monitor and evaluate the work of the organisation on a regular basis. This includes receiving reports from staff, staff supervision, receiving feedback from clients, users and consumers and so on.

### Insurance

8. To make sure that the organisation is properly insured against all reasonable liabilities.

### Assets

9. To make sure that any premises and equipment are properly looked after.
10. To ensure that investments and cash balances are managed properly.

### To be effective

11. To work with the other members of the board to form an effective governing body for the organisation.
12. To attend meetings and to read papers in advance of meetings.
13. To attend sub-committee meetings as appropriate.
14. To participate in other tasks as arise from time to time, such as: interviewing new staff, helping with appeals and fundraising.
15. To keep informed about the activities of the organisation and wider issues, which affect its work.
16. To ensure that the organisation is effectively managed and gets its work done.

*[ Adapted from NCVO Trustee information briefing]*

## Sample person specification for a member of a board of trustees

**Person specification** - *the skills, experience and qualities that are expected from trustees. These will vary depending on what specifically you are looking for - they could include technical skills, experience of the community you work with or of a particular culture. These may have come from a review of the board of trustees or a skills audit. However, all trustees should be able to demonstrate basic qualities of commitment and integrity which are needed to be a trustee.*

### Person specification

1. A commitment to the organisation
2. A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort
3. Strategic vision
4. Good, independent judgement
5. An ability to think creatively
6. A willingness to speak your mind
7. An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship
8. An ability to work effectively as a member of a team
9. Selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.
10. A willingness to be available to all staff for advice and enquiries on an ad hoc basis.

*[Adapted from NCVO Trustee information briefing]*

## **Additional job description duties for a chair of trustees**

**In addition to the general responsibilities for all trustees as set out on page 7 the chair also has some specific responsibilities:**

1. Planning the annual cycle of trustee meetings.
2. Preparing agendas for trustee meetings, usually with the advice of the senior worker.
3. Chairing and facilitating trustee meetings.
4. Giving direction to the trustee's policy making.
5. Monitoring that decisions taken at meetings are implemented.
6. Representing the organisation at functions, meetings and acting as a spokesperson as appropriate.
7. To ensure that another trustee, usually the vice-chair is able to act for the chair when s/he is not available.
8. Liaise with the senior worker to keep an overview of the organisations affairs and to provide support as appropriate.
9. Leading the process of appraising the performance of the senior worker.
10. Sitting on appointment and disciplinary panels.
11. Liaising with the senior worker to develop the board of trustees.
12. Bringing impartiality and objectivity to decision making.
13. Facilitating change and addressing conflict within the board of trustees and within the organisation, liaising with the senior worker to achieve this.

### **Vice-chair**

The vice-chair stands in for the chair and helps with decisions between meetings. Sometimes the chair deals with the organisational and policy side of chairing, and the vice-chair with the meetings side.

The chair should ensure the vice-chair knows enough about current issues within the organisation to be able to stand in at short notice. On some playgrounds the vice-chair has responsibility for specific issues, for example recruiting volunteers.

*[Adapted from NCVO Trustee information briefing]*

## Additional duties for a chair of trustees

### Person specification

***The skills, experience and qualities expected from a chair.***

*All trustees should be able to demonstrate basic qualities of commitment and integrity; the chair would benefit from having additional skills including leadership and communication skills and previous committee experience*

1. Leadership skills.
2. Experience of committee work.
3. Tact and diplomacy.
4. Good communication and interpersonal skills.
5. Impartiality, fairness and the ability to respect confidences.
6. A willingness to be available to all staff for advice and enquiries on an ad hoc basis.

In most circumstances it would also be desirable for the chair/vice-chair to have knowledge of the type of work undertaken by the organisation and a wider involvement with the voluntary sector and other networks.

*[Adapted from NCVO trustee information briefing]*

## Additional job description duties for a secretary

**In addition to the general responsibilities for all trustees as set out on page 7 The secretary also has some specific responsibilities:**

The role of the secretary is to support the chair by ensuring the smooth functioning of the board of trustees. Tasks will include the following (either by carrying them out directly or by delegating to a member of staff and ensuring that they have been carried out):

1. Preparing agendas in consultation with the chair and senior worker and circulating them and any supporting papers in good time.
2. Making all the arrangements for meetings (booking the room, arranging for equipment and refreshments, organising facilities for those with special needs, etc).
3. Receiving agenda items from other trustees/staff.
4. Checking that a quorum is present.
5. Minuting the meetings and circulating the draft minutes to all trustees.
6. Ensuring that the chair has signed the minutes once they have been approved.
7. Checking that trustees and staff have carried out action agreed at a previous meeting.
8. Circulating agenda and minutes of the annual general meeting and any special or extraordinary general meetings.
9. Sitting on appraisal, recruitment and disciplinary panels as required.
10. Receiving correspondence from local authorities, funders and the charity commission and ensuring that relevant information is passed on to the relevant person.
11. Ensuring that relevant correspondence is replied to, by you or a designated board or staff member.

*[Adapted from NCVO Trustee information briefing]*

## Additional duties for a secretary

### Person specification

***The skills, experience and qualities which are expected from the secretary.***  
*All trustees should be able to demonstrate basic qualities of commitment and integrity and the secretary should demonstrate additional skills relevant to your charity.*

### Role of secretary

1. Organisational ability
2. Knowledge or experience of business or committee procedure.
3. Minute taking experience, if this is not being delegated to staff.
4. A willingness to be available to all staff for advice and enquiries on an ad hoc basis.

*[Adapted from NCVO Trustee information briefing]*

## Additional job description duties for a treasurer

**In addition to the general responsibilities for all trustees as set out on page 7 the treasurer also has some specific responsibilities:**

The overall role of a treasurer is to maintain an overview of the organisations affairs, ensuring its financial viability and that proper financial record and procedures are maintained. In small charities without paid staff the treasurer may take a greater role in the day to day finances of the organisation.

1. Overseeing, approving and presenting budgets, accounts and financial statements.
2. Being assured that the financial resources of the organisation meet its present and future needs.
3. Ensuring that the charity has an appropriate reserves policy.
4. The preparation and presentation of financial reports to the board of trustees.
5. Ensuring that appropriate accounting procedures and controls are in place.
6. Liaising with staff and volunteers about financial matters.
7. Advising on the financial implications of the organisations strategic plans.
8. Ensuring that there is no conflict between any investment held and the aims and objects of the charity.
9. Ensuring the organisations compliance with current relevant legislation.
10. Ensuring that equipment and assets are adequately maintained and insured.
11. Ensuring that the accounts are prepared and disclosed in the form required by funders and the relevant statutory bodies, e.g. the Charity Commission.
12. If external scrutiny of accounts is required, ensuring that the accounts are scrutinised in the manner required (independent examination or audit) and any recommendations are implemented.
13. Contributing to the fundraising strategy of the organisation.
14. Making a formal presentation of the accounts at the annual general meeting and drawing attention to important points in a coherent and easily understandable way.
15. Sitting on appraisal, recruitment and disciplinary panels.

*[Adapted from NCVO Trustee information briefing]*

## Additional duties for a treasurer

### Person specification

***The skills, experience and qualities expected from the treasurer.***

*All trustees should be able to demonstrate basic qualities of commitment and integrity; the treasurer should demonstrate additional skills including experience of financial management appropriate to the size and complexity of the finances of your charity.*

### Role of treasurer

1. Financial qualifications and experience
2. Some experience of charity finance, fundraising and pension schemes
3. The skills to analyse proposals and examine their financial consequences
4. A preparedness to make unpopular recommendations to the board of trustees
5. A willingness to be available to all staff for advice and enquiries on an ad hoc basis

*[Adapted from NCVO Trustee information briefing]*

## Trustee skills and self-assessment monitoring form

*In order for a board of trustees to make the best use of new members it needs to know about your skills and experience.*

*The form which follows is intended to help you and the other board members decide what role you would best be able to carry out.*

### Personal details

Name .....

**Please indicate your main area of interest in this board of trustees.** (If more than one please number in order, 1 being main area of interest):

1. Parent / Carer
2. Work in play
  - a) Play management
  - b) Face to face play work
  - c) Trips, outings, holidays
  - d) Special occasions, ie, parties
3. Specialist area
  - a) Chair
  - b) Treasurer
  - c) Secretary
  - d) Other
4. Work / voluntary management in other field (please state)
  
5. Other (please state)

## **Skills and experience** (Please tick as appropriate)

### **1. Play**

- a) Playwork education
- b) Experience of face to face playwork:
  - 1) adventure play
  - 2) after school provision
  - 3) holiday playschemes
  - 4) play with disabled children, play with specifically disadvantaged children, or children with particular needs (eg refugee families, children in care, children with emotional and behavioural difficulties / challenging behaviour)
- c) Play policy
- d) Safety and risk in play
- e) Play theory (academic work in play)
- f) Play information

### **2. Finance**

### **3. Law**

### **4. Children's Policy**

### **5. Training**

### **6. Voluntary Sector management**

### **7. Other** (please state)

*[London Play]*

# TRUSTEE INDUCTION PACK

## Trustee joining and equal opportunity monitoring form

Your name, address, date of birth, ethnic origin, ability and gender is information requested by the Charity Commission.

Please complete using BLOCK letters

Name:	Date of joining: Date of leaving: Date of birth:
Organisation: (where appropriate)	email
Address: (work)	Address (home)
Telephone numbers:	Work no:
	Home no:
	Mobile no:
Ethnicity:	<input type="checkbox"/> African <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese <input type="checkbox"/> Irish <input type="checkbox"/> Latin American <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Middle Eastern <input type="checkbox"/> Black <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed <input type="checkbox"/> Any other (please specify)
Are you a disabled person?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Gender:	<input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male

We would like to circulate your main contact details i.e. name address and telephone numbers, to other trustees. Would you please sign below to signify your agreement to this, or tick the relevant box if **you do not** want this information circulated.

Signed.....

Date.....

[London Play]

## Trustees meeting availability and preference survey 200...

Name:

The board of trustees usually meet once a month.

In order to arrange the dates for the coming year we would like to check on availability to ensure the meetings go ahead with the maximum number of members being present.

**Please complete this form by ticking the appropriate boxes.**

### **Weeks of the month**

- Week 1
- Week 2
- Week 3
- Week 4

### **Days of the week**

- Monday
- Tuesday
- Wednesday
- Thursday
- Friday

### **Time of day**

- Morning
- Afternoon
- Evening

*[London Play]*

## Checklist for a trustee induction pack

*An induction pack should include:*

### **Documents**

- Governing document (constitution)
- Set of recent trustee papers, minutes and dates of next meetings
- Terms of reference for board of trustees, any sub or working groups
- Annual reports and accounts for the previous three years
- Policy documents including equal opportunities and financial controls

### **Information about the Adventure playground**

- A brief history of the playground
- Mission statement
- Structure of the organisation - board of trustees, working groups, user groups, staff and volunteers
- The playground staff structure and the senior workers job description
- Information about the premises/land/lease
- Any newsletters or publicity materials
- Business plans/strategic plans/work programmes

### **Information about the trustees role**

- Job descriptions and person specifications of trustees and honorary officers
- Profiles of trustees and contact details
- A manual such as Responsibilities of Charity Trustees (Charity Commission CC3) giving guidance on roles and responsibilities of trustees
- A code of conduct and agreement for the trustee to agree to
- A self assessment form to indicate skills, experience, interest and support needs

## Checklist for a new trustee

- Have you received an induction pack?
- Have you filled in a self-assessment form?
- Do you have a code of conduct and agreement?
- Do you know how and why the organisation was set up and its history?
- Do you know the aims of the organisation?
- Do you know about the activities of the organisation?
- Do you know how the organisation is funded?
- Do you know about the key issues facing the organisation?
- Do you know about the future projects or activities planned?
- Do you know about other organisations the charity has networks or special relationships with?
- Are aware of the structure of the organisation and your role in it?
- Are you aware of the staff and volunteer structure and your relationship with staff/volunteers?
- Are you aware of your roles and responsibilities as a trustee?
- Have you met with the chair and senior worker and had a site visit?
- Have you met and got to know the other trustees?
- Do you have support or training needs and are they being addressed?

*[Taken from NCVO Trustee information briefing]*

## Review meeting guidelines

A review meeting with the chairperson after a couple of meetings can allow the new trustee to feedback with their first impressions and address some of the following points:

1. Any further explanation of the organisation's structure or activities.
2. Identify skills / interests the trustee could contribute to the organisation.
3. Ensuring the new trustee is fully aware of the time, commitment and responsibilities involved. For example, are they aware of their role as trustee and how they work with staff in the organisation? Are they aware of any conflicts of interest they may have and have these been declared?
4. A review of support or training provided and any further support or training that may be necessary - for example, the new trustee may want training on a particular area of work they are taking on, such as public speaking.
5. How the new trustee has experienced working with the management committee (or visa versa).

**Ensuring the new trustee have an effective induction should not only ensure that the new trustees are retained and do not become disillusioned and leave, but also that they quickly become an effective and useful member of the board of trustees.**

*[Taken from NCVO Trustee information briefing]*

## Volunteer expense policy

The board of trustees of ..... believes that all volunteers are entitled to reimbursement of expenses, this includes volunteering by members of the board of trustees. You should not be out of pocket for volunteering. Volunteers are entitled to claim reimbursement of all out of pocket expenses on production of receipts, and will be encouraged to do so. Arrangements for reimbursement are outlined below:

### Travel expenses

You are entitled to claim your transport costs to and from the playground and for other travel costs incurred in the course of your voluntary work for the playground.

Fares on public transport will be reimbursed on production of tickets.

If you have a travel pass, reimbursement will be of the fares that you would have paid if you did not have a pass, and a photocopy will be taken in place of receipts.

If a car is used, a mileage rate of .....p per mile will be paid.

### Subsistence expenses

If you work more than four hours in any one-day, you are entitled to claim a meal allowance, up to a maximum of £..... This will be reimbursed on production of receipts.

All volunteers will be provided with free tea, coffee, soft drinks and biscuits.

### Other expenses

All other expenses not detailed above must be authorised by the chair of the board of trustees in advance.

All expenses may be claimed on the day they were incurred, or can be claimed on a weekly basis if preferred.

*[Mostly taken from Islington Play Association's Management Committee information folder]*

## Policies

*As a trustee it is important that you familiarise yourself with the playground policy and practice book, particularly with the following policies*

### **Constitution or governing document**

The constitution might look exceedingly boring but it is important that you read it, it will tell you what the playground believes: It states the social or economic situations or events. It will also tell you what the playground does, its priorities, what it wants to achieve and what sorts of things it will and will not do.

### **Equal opportunities**

The playgrounds board of trustees, staff, children and parents must all implement this policy at all times to ensure that everyone feels welcome.

### **Health and safety**

The board of trustees is ultimately responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to at all times. Implementing the policy minimises any risks to the children, staff, trustees or visitors. It is the trustees duty to keep the whole site as safe as possible.

### **Child protection**

Some of the children using the playground will be vulnerable; some may be suffering from some form of abuse. Parents, carers and the children should all know and feel they are safe while on the playground. Familiarise yourself with the policy in case you have to deal with a child protection issue.

### **Complaints**

In your role as a playground trustee you may have to deal with a complaint from a playground user, their parent or carer. If you are aware of the correct procedures it will de-personalise any complaint and make it much easier to deal with.

### **Recruitment**

You are responsible for the employment of the playground staff. Funders will insist that you recruit openly and fairly. The recruitment policy will show you how to do this.