

Full name: Westfield Playgroup

Other names by which the charity is known: Westfield Playgroup

Registered charity number: 1143763

Principal address: Parish Hall, Vicarage Lane, Westfield, TN35 4SD

Trustees:

Abby Lee – Chair

Lucy Dethridge – Secretary

Kaitlynn Philpot – Treasurer

Bankers

Natwest, Hastings branch

Independent examiner

Laura Dawson, employee of Hastings Voluntary Action, Jackson Hall, Portland Place, Hastings, TN34 1QN.

Governance and management

Westfield Playgroup has an active committee of 3 Trustees and are governed by a constitution adopted on 24th June 2011, and most recently amended on 17th October 2017. Election of Trustees is laid down in the constitution. Trustees are appointed from parents attending the playgroup and local people who support the aims of the group. Trustees are elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) according to the requirements of the constitution. All trustees give their time freely and no trustee remuneration or out of pocket expenses were paid during the year.

Day to day management of the playgroup is undertaken by the manager, Julie Guest, who is responsible to the trustee board. Membership of the group is open to parents both past and present and other adults with a vested interest in the playgroup. The trustees meet regularly as a board and hold formal and informal meetings with the manager, and the manager and staff meet regularly to reflect on what is working well and areas for development. Issues arising within the setting are raised through the manager with the trustees having the final say. Staff and trustees have a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities, with clear written policies and procedures being shared with parents.

Aims and objectives

The aim of the association shall be to advance the education of children below compulsory school age by: a) providing safe and satisfying group play, in which parents have the right to take part; b) encouraging other charitable activities through which parents may help the children, including running a parent and toddler group; c) to operate as a non-profit making organisation for the benefit of the children of the local community and surrounding areas.

Background

Westfield Playgroup opened in 1968 and operates from a church hall in Westfield. The setting opens Monday to Thursday during school term times. Sessions are from 9am to 3pm on Monday to Thursday. The setting is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The setting employs 7 staff, 5 of whom, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and above.

The provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care – known as the Early Years Foundation Stage. The Playgroup is registered with OFSTED (URN EY109538).

Summary of the main activities and achievements during the period, giving due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit

In setting our objectives and planning our activities the trustees have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit and in particular to its supplementary public benefit guidance on advancing education and on fee-charging.

The charity's principal activity during the year continued to be provision of day care for pre-school children.

The playgroup staff provide a broad range of activities designed to promote children's learning across the seven areas of learning. They effectively assess children's level of development and identify clear next steps in learning for each child. Staff inform parents of children's learning needs and encourage them to support this with activities at home. Parents provide information back to staff about children's home achievements and comment positively on the support and advice they receive to help their children progress.

Staff provide activities that reflect the children's interest and abilities. Staff interaction with the children is excellent, asking questions that encourage them to describe what they are doing and to share experiences. Children in the setting are given the freedom to explore and investigate independently. The playgroup is organised to ensure that each child receives an enjoyable and challenging experience.