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Governance to me means the smooth running of the centre adhering to the laws and regulations that apply to us in the EC sector. We are a community-based service overseen by a management committee made up of parents. This committee is the centre's governing body and the assistant director and I are responsible for the day-to-day running of the centre. The management committee, including 11 parents, is responsible for the 'bigger decisions' such as employing the centre director. They sign off on the fee rate and accept the budget that the treasurer, bookkeeper and I have prepared. They approve large purchases such as a new oven, new guttering, internal painting—anything really over \$5000. I circulate the quotes via email so that people can come prepared to discuss them at the meeting.

We are licensed for 64 children and are currently at 98 per cent utilisation. My role is to adhere to the national laws and regulations, including Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) laws. I believe in honesty and transparency, and I believe this shines through in the way things are done at our centre. Committee meetings are held between 7 and 9 pm, which is after working all day, so it is a long day. Not everyone can make it to meetings every time and people do drop out for whatever reasons through the year too. We usually have about seven people there, with myself and the assistant director attending too. If the assistant director is away, the educational leader comes in her place (and if I am away, she accompanies the assistant director).

We have monthly staff meetings where things are discussed and the educational leader has team leader meetings where issues around curriculum are discussed. Any issues around governance are usually discussed at staff/committee meetings. To be honest, it depends on what the issue is as to when it is addressed. If it is really serious, it would be addressed immediately. The assistant director is heavily involved in the centre. She works full-time in the office, alongside me, managing enrolments. The educational leader is off the floor and leads the curriculum throughout the centre. She also assists in mentoring new educators and students within our centre. Both the assistant director and I manage the staff team of 28.

I have a good relationship with the committee. I can contact them via phone or email at any time. The chairperson comes in twice a week for a brief catch up about staff and any general matters. I also report on unusual big purchases, and have contact with the regulatory unit and any 'serious' matters that I feel need to be discussed in person rather than by email or phone. The treasurer and I meet once a week as she signs and signs all paid invoices and this means we can discuss any budgetary issues. It is just good for them to know what is going on. I also work closely with my assistant director and sometimes it is useful to chat with someone else who is one step removed.

Committee meetings are held once a month and I distribute the agenda and my report one week beforehand. I feel I have a lot of autonomy regarding my role. I am responsible for all the employment of staff and their subsequent performance management. I deal with complaints and staffing issues, but if it becomes serious, I get the committee involved. So, for example, we have had a staff member involved in some conflict with other staff which resulted in that staff member walking off the job (casually employed gardener). Now, I dealt with that myself and then just reported to the committee that he had left. Parent complaints are also dealt with by myself and the assistant director. If anyone was unhappy with a decision, then I would refer them to the committee. Parents do complain to me, but it might be around little issues like shoes that are lost or that a parent didn't like the way someone spoke to their child.