





Foreword

My goodness time has flown! It's hard to believe a year has passed since NICMA's last AGM and conference.

As the Chairperson of NICMA it has been my honour to work alongside my Trustee colleagues and the unique and dedicated staff of NICMA.

It was with sadness that the Trustees accepted the resignation of Bridget Nodder who had been at the helm of NICMA for 26+ years and we all wish her well in her retirement.

Also, as this year draws to a close, we welcome Patricia Lewsley-Mooney CBE on board as the new Director. I know Patricia brings with her a wealth of knowledge, dedication and commitment to children of all ages to enrich their lives and publicise the value of childminding as the perfect vehicle for children who require childminding services.

The childminding sector, more than any other form of day care, has experienced massive changes with the implementation of the Minimum Standards to the present pilots on online inspections which, we believe, has had a detrimental effect on childminders over recent years and has contributed to a 20% reduction in providers.

Childminders are a unique, dedicated and diverse group of selfemployed individuals with differing needs, abilities and ways of managing their businesses and it remains NICMA's primary role to respond positively to those varying needs.

Childminding can be lonely and childminders often operate in isolation but again NICMA strives to support them in their role of delivering a service of the highest quality to families throughout the province.

We know, as Trustees and staff, that we must be vigilant and responsive to the changing needs and requirements of our members.

This has been further evidenced by NICMA's recently published State of the Sector report, which highlights the challenges that not only NICMA and childminders face, but also for the whole early years' sector.

The report is an accomplishment that the staff should be proud of. It is detailed, accurate and hopefully will inform and help policy makers in the coming months to make the right decisions and choices for our children and their care.

NICMA can't do this in isolation and we hope, over the coming months, that collectively and with the long-awaited childcare strategy, all those who have a responsibility for early years and childcare can meet the challenges head on.

Finally, I must thank the staff of NICMA, my colleagues on the Board of Trustees and all of the amazing childminders throughout Northern Ireland who not only support NICMA but provide a warm, loving and nurturing environment for children in a home setting, many of whom don't realise the very positive impact their dedication leaves with the children throughout their lives.

I know that in the coming year NICMA will meet many challenges and face change but I know we will meet them with the same determination and professionalism that we are known for. In closing for 2016, I am reminded of the words of John F Kennedy:

"Children are the world's most valuable resource and its best hope for the future."



Supporting Families Through SureStart Childminding Networks



Blossom SureStart

We currently have twenty-four registered childminders who regularly attend our groups. From April 2016 – March 2017, Blossom SureStart has held monthly support groups for members on dental health; Healthy Diet in the Early Years; Employers for Childcare, HMRC; Christmas Crafts; Love for Life, AWARE – Good Mental Health and Epilepsy Action.

We have also provided training through NICMA on safeguarding children to keep the childminders up-to-date in line with the Minimum Standards. We have facilitated twenty-six drop-ins, four outings to local parks, a Christmas party and a trip to Clementsmount Open Farm for the childminders and their own families.

Shantallow SureStart

Eighteen registered childminders are currently attached to the Shantallow SureStart Childminding Network. Training offered via the Childminding Support Group in 2016 / 2017 has consisted of two sessions of Cognitive Behaviour Therapy; Speech & Language Awareness; Wellbeing & Mindfulness. Workshops on Self-Assessment; Policies & Procedures; the Impact of Bereavement & Loss on Children & Families and Parenting Puzzle have also taken place.

The Childminding Mentoring Service is also offered to new recruits and we hold information on childminding vacancies which are shared with local parents on request. Parents are also signposted to the NICMA website to allow them to conduct a wider search.

SureStart Network members are able to attend a monthly Childminding Support Group and a weekly Drop-In Playgroup as well as receiving a quarterly newsletter.

Gold SureStart

The Gold Childminding Network consists of nineteen members in Cookstown and six members in Maghera. Weekly drop-in centres are held for members working on a rotation basis in both Cookstown and Maghera along with a monthly Childminding Support Group. The Support Group in Maghera works in partnership with NICMA's Childminding Development Officer in the Northern Health & Social Care Trust. Support visits are also provided to Network members where necessary.

During the period April 2016 – March 2017, five outings were held for Network members and their children - two for Cookstown members, two for members in Maghera and one joint trip. A wide range of training workshops also took place. These included Bowel and Cervical Cancer Awareness; Breast Screening Awareness; Calm Relaxed Kids; Minding Me Stress Management; PEEP; Promoting Resilience in the Childminding Setting and Self Reflection.

NICMA Childminding Advisory Council

The Childminding Advisory Council (CMAC) met four times during the past year in various locations throughout the province.

CMAC consists of NICMA members coming together to reflect on 'the grass roots' issues of childminders, either as individuals or through the Childminding Support Groups, to debate those issues and make recommendations to the Board of Trustees.

We are grateful to the following childminders for their attendance during the year:

Allison Clarke, Enniskillen; Andrea O'Loan, Belfast; Barbara Stewart, Lisburn; Candic McDonnell, Antrim; Claire Darby, Antrim; Clare McClean, Antrim; Clare McKnight, Antrim, Fiona Scallon-Farrell, Enniskillen; Grainne Scullion, Coalisland; Irene Leonard, Lisburn; Janice Jones, Armagh; Joan Huey, Enniskillen; Karen Hanna, Lisburn; Linda Wilton, Banbridge; Lisa Williamson, Antrim; Nicola Finlay, Antrim; Olive Magill, Banbridge; Olive Reid, Dungannon; Sharon Gallagher, Dungannon; Shirley McKee, Dungannon and Tania Smith, Banbridge.





I have been a registered childminder for seven years. Changing careers was a big decision for me to make as I was previously employed in retail management, but it has proved to be a most enjoyable and fulfilling

It was through NICMA that I received guidance and support in the training I needed to get started. I started small and then increased my intake and inevitably needed an assistant and, although I started by using another registered childminder, I found this was not as flexible as I needed. Then I realised that my husband's work commitments would allow him to assist me as and when necessary and that is how his registration programme began.

As a parent, I learnt a lot during my daughter's time in a nursery and when she was cared for by childminders. This enabled me to use these experiences to fine-tune my overall business plan as a registered childminder. I strive at all times to care and support children with their learning and development process. Also, building good partnerships with parents and remaining flexible and supportive in their demanding modern lives.

A childminding assistant needs to be fully aware of the policies and procedures within the setting and how they are implemented. As NICMA members, over the years my husband and I have completed a number of courses from health and safety, safeguarding children, paediatric first aid to promoting positive behaviour, creative learning, food allergies and mindset. I have also completed a Level 3 Diploma for Children's Care, Learning and Development.

There are two categories of assistants. Category 1 is to carry out short-term limited tasks i.e. school runs and category two is to work alongside a registered childminder on a consistent or substantial basis to enable them to care for children. With the increase in changes in legislation I would highly recommend Category 2 as this allows your assistant to have more responsibility without any restrictions which could arise with Category 1. Regardless of Category, it is important that current training and insurance is in place. Originally insurance for childminding assistants was an additional cost, however this has recently been changed by NICMA and assistants are included in the childminders own insurance as part of their business.



Having an assistant has benefited my business in so many ways:

- ✓ I am able to increase the number of children in my care
- ✓ Allows us to cover a bigger area for school pickups
- Extending the care when a child moves from nursery to a different primary school
- ✓ The ability to take on new siblings
- Allowing the different age groups to remain in routine of sleeping and feeding
- Enabling flexibility for parents
- Having a childcare provider the children are familiar with in case of emergencies
- Smoother handovers to give a little more time to parents knowing other children are in safe hands
- Giving more leeway for taking children to after-school activities swimming, parties
- Going on outings with mixed age groups that may not be possible on my own
- Continual support, discussing the wellbeing of children, resolving any issues that may occur or just discussing ways to improve the service we provide.

Being an employer can be a very daunting experience especially with the ever-changing regulations but taking on a childcare assistant is an ideal way to expand your business without having to spend a lot of money in the process.

Childminding can be a very isolated job and I would highly recommend the importance of networking with others. Joining a local support group has been a great benefit to me. It's a time to chat and listen to others, discuss issues, create ideas and most importantly make new friends.

Overall, the benefits of having an assistant have worked for me but I understand that it may not be something that works for everyone. Having my husband registered as my assistant has been a great support across the board and together we will continue to grow and develop my childminding service giving a professional service to children and parents; providing a home from home environment.













Initially, I decided to become a childminder when I became a second-time mother, which gave me the opportunity to take some time off work and see the world again through a child's eyes. I enjoyed this so much that I wanted to stay working with children rather than return to the graphic design world and knew I could bring my skills and passion for graphic design into children's art activities as well as using these skills to help promote my childminding business.

However, as I had just moved to Northern Ireland there were a lot of challenges that came with starting out as a registered childminder. First and foremost, while you are more than comfortable with your own children, there is an initial fear of looking after someone else's children; it's a huge responsibility. I thought it would take some time to build up the confidence to overcome this fear, however, from the time the first child started with me it felt completely natural and extremely enjoyable and I think that anybody who decides to become a childminder shouldn't overthink it but should just go for it.

Another challenge was that the process of becoming a registered childminder is not as straightforward as I initially thought it would be — it takes many weeks before you are fully registered! NICMA is very supportive in helping with this process, but there is a challenge in making sure that everything is ready for the interview and inspection process, as well as making sure that you have all of the required courses booked and completed in time.

Finally, getting things prepared and finding my first customers was also a challenge, as it takes time to build up a good reputation. While the registration process was underway, I spent a lot of time planning what I would do with the children, planning meals, activities, my days in general, as well as putting time into finding customers. I designed flyers and had them printed professionally and my husband and I spent some days, morning to night, hand delivering them to each household in my area, which really helped.

I also created a website (www.dorashouse.co.uk). It's not easy trying to find customers; things get much easier once you have a reputation built up and I now have a waiting list of people who want their children to be minded by me. I now work with an assistant, Hannah. This has proved to be very beneficial to my business.

The best piece of advice I have been given is that I should aim towards making each child as happy as they can be in my setting - if the children are happy overall, everyone is happy and everything will run smoothly in general. How to achieve this is another story, but it should always be the aim. If they are happy and having fun, children are more open to learning new things and will work with you in helping them to understand their own feelings, and to be more empathetic with others. I've found that play is the best way to help them to develop life skills and to learn to be able to cope with their emotions. What they eat is also important in their development so I have invested a lot of time in understanding what food is best for a child's health in the different stages of their lives. I have a strong interest in healthy eating, and I try and involve the children as much as possible in preparing meals from scratch (a messy but fun process!). When they are involved in preparing their own healthy food, they have fun and will mostly eat everything from the plate and will be happier! If you strive for their happiness from the start, then everything you try to do with them will be easier and more rewarding.

This year, I won the 2017 Families First Northern Ireland Childminder of the Year award and was a previous winner of the 2014 Netmums Childcare Award for Northern Ireland.

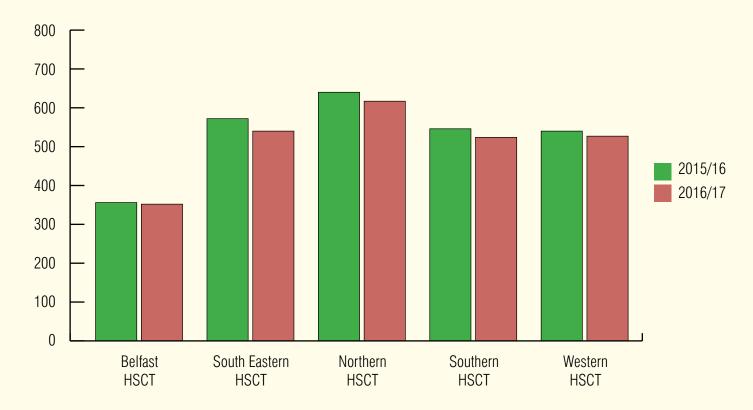
Beyond work, I am a loving mother to my two children and am passionate about taekwondo, having won gold medals separately in championships in Scotland, England, Northern Ireland and Ireland in the past two years.



Childminding Membership Services

NICMA provided membership services to a total of **2564 childminding members** throughout 2016/17, which is 90 less than the previous year. This figure represents a drop of just over 2% in our membership. 135 of these members were marked as 'leavers' during the year. Some had retired from childminding, chose another profession, or chose to access services elsewhere. The table and chart below show the spread across Northern Ireland and the areas that were affected by the shift in our membership figures.

Health Trust Area	Members 15/16	Members 16/17	Variance
Belfast HSCT	356	352	-4
South Eastern HSCT	572	540	-32
Northern HSCT	640	617	-23
Southern HSCT	546	524	-22
Western HSCT	540	527	-13



On a positive note, NICMA welcomed **237 new members** to the association during the year, although this indicates a drop on the previous year (309 in 15/16). Last year we attributed the reduction to the new requirements for registration reducing the number of successful applications going through. We know that this figure is still falling.

NICMA services are tailored to provide our members with a comprehensive package, allowing us to offer all the support services and essential documentation required to help run a successful and efficient childminding business. Public and Legal Liability insurances, which are a mandatory requirement for registered childminders, are included in our membership package and we also offer a range of information services for both our clients and their service users. Core Training, which is also mandatory, is offered to childminders across the sector and NICMA members can access this at a subsidised rate.



Quality Initiatives

Minimum Standards in Childminding and Day Care Core Training

NICMA has had yet another successful year in delivering the three core elements – Safeguarding Children, Health and Safety in the Childminding Setting and Introductory Paediatric First Aid to prospective childminders. We were delighted to obtain further funding from the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) which enabled us to deliver 45 courses (16 of each course) to 251 prospective childminders.

We are also still meeting the needs of the childminding sector by delivering refresher core training across Northern Ireland. Over the last year, we have delivered **31** Health and Safety in the Childminding Setting courses to **549** childminders as well as **33** Safeguarding Children course to **610** childminders. This training was delivered to both NICMA members and non-members.

Some comments from childminders who attended the training include:

"Really enjoyable and informative."

"Lots of useful information and tips on what needs to be in place or changed in the house to get ready for childminding."

"Gail (trainer) was a fantastic teacher, informative and kept us engaged."

"Very interesting, trainer friendly and professional."

"I really enjoyed the course and learned a lot on
the day."

Business Management for Childminders

NICMA also delivered Business Management for Childminders training. This 3-hour training course was self-funded by all those attended and covered information on all aspects of being self-employed and running a childminding business including:

- · how to meet Minimum Standard requirements for your childminding business;
- the legal requirements for Tax, National Insurance Contributions, Self-Assessment and Tax Returns;
- the importance of keeping up-to-date records of income and expenses;
- the importance of working in partnership with parents;
- how to negotiate with parents when completing contracts; and
- Data Protection obligations and protecting your childminding business; ways to market your childminding business.

4 courses were rolled out across the Northern, South Eastern and Belfast Trust areas with 37 childminders attending.

Some of the comments from learners include:

"Very informative and presented in an easy-to-understand way."

"As I start off, I will be armed with everything I need from what I have learnt through the NICMA training."

"I feel I now have the knowledge needed to begin registered childminding. I am more confident with regards to the business side."

"Gail (trainer) was very informative with a relaxed training approach whilst ensuring that all information and queries were covered."

"Great training - lots of information packed into 3 hours.

Many thanks!"

Caring for Children with Additional Needs

NICMA received funding through the Childcare Partnership Early Years Development Fund to work in partnership with SENSE on a pilot project to develop childminding services for parents with children who have additional needs. Sense is a national charity



that supports people who are deafblind, have sensory impairments or complex needs, to enjoy more independent lives. Their expertise in supporting individuals with communication needs benefits people of all ages, as well as their families and carers.

The aim of the project was to identify gaps in demand and/or supply of childminding provision for children with additional needs and both short and long-term skills gaps of childminders. The project was to identify service models for addressing these gaps in a structured and proactive manner to meet the identified need and increase both provision and choice around childcare options for children with a disability and their families.

SENSE's role was to scope the demand for childminding services within a defined geographical area (Newtownabbey, East Antrim, and Carrickfergus); to ascertain the needs of the children and families requiring support and identifying and matching that with the availability of existing registered childminders.

NICMA's role was to scope capacity of childminding services within the sector for caring for children with additional needs and to identify childminders' training requirements and support needs.

11 childminders took part in the project. As part of the first stage they attended training on:

- Child development 0 5 years (6 hours)
- Developing an Awareness of Caring for Children with Additional Needs (3 hours)

NICMA is currently in discussion with the Northern Childcare Partnership and SENSE regarding matching childminders on the project with parents of a child with a disability. Further specialised training will be provided by SENSE to ensure that childminders can meet the needs of the child placed in their care.

Examples of the type of training would be sensory disabilities 0 - 12 years, behaviour support, seizure management plans, and epilepsy training.

Some comments from childminders who were involved in the project include:

"Accessing this training has given me the confidence to be able to offer my services to parents of children with complex needs. It also has given me a better understanding of what a child with additional needs may be going through."

"I will be able to offer care for children with disabilities and help families as much as I can now that I have done these courses."

"I am better prepared to give support to parents with children who have additional needs. I now hopefully have a stronger understanding of the types of needs and how to adapt my setting."

Caring for a Child with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Asperger's



NICMA received funding from the Belfast Childcare Partnership to deliver stage one of a pilot project which would enable children with additional needs to access an inclusive childminding environment specifically for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Asperger's.

The identified need for this project was highlighted in figures obtained from The Prevalence of Autism in School Age Children in Northern Ireland 2016 which outlines that the prevalence rate of ASD in Belfast Trust rose steadily between 2008/2009 and 2013/2014 by 0.8%.

NICMA conducted a scoping exercise within the Belfast Trust in relation to capacity within the childminding sector and identifying training requirements and childminders' support needs. This scoping exercise included:

- · identifying any unmet parental childcare needs for children with additional needs:
- promotion of an information event to engage with registered childminders who have indicated a willingness to offer a childminding service to parents of children with additional needs;
- identifying childminders willing to participate in a two-tier training package which includes NICMA - Child Development (0-5) years (6 hours) and Developing an Awareness of Caring for Children with Additional Needs (3 hours); and
- identifying and highlight any barriers to the development of this childminding service in terms of capacity, skills, knowledge and resources.

Through the scoping exercise, NICMA identified that, although no formal data has been recorded, anecdotal evidence clearly confirms there is a high parental demand for childminding services for children with ASD and Asperger's in the Belfast Trust area.

NICMA was delighted that 10 registered childminders took part in stage one of the pilot. As part of the first stage they attended training on:

- Child development 0 5 years (6 hours)
- · Developing an Awareness of Caring for Children with Additional Needs (3 hours)

Some of the comment from learners include:

"I feel motivated to become a better childminder." "Very informative, reflective and useful." "I now feel that I would be able to work better with additional needs children. "Great delivery and group interaction."

"Useful tips on how to deal with Autism and speak to parents better."

NICMA is currently putting together a proposal for stage two of the project which will aim to develop a childminding network. This network will be provided with specialised training in caring for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Asperger's and will aim to meet the parental demand for childminding services in the Belfast Trust.

Outdoor Play in the Childminding Setting

NICMA received funding through the Childcare Partnership Early Years Development Fund to deliver outdoor play training to registered childminders in each of the Health and Social Care Trust areas.

NICMA continually encourage childminders to improve the quality of their outdoor provision as research clearly states that the outdoor environment provides young children with one of the best possible environments in which to learn.

The three hour outdoor play training aimed to:

- · upskill the childminding workforce by delivering training in outdoor play;
- enhance the outcomes of children's health and well-being;
- increase childminders confidence and self-esteem in providing age and stage appropriate outdoor play opportunities for all children in their care:
- increase the educational levels, skills, confidence and self-esteem of all childminders who attend the training;
- increase childminders knowledge on how to provide a safe, nurturing outdoor environment for children where their individual needs are being met; and
- enhance the quality of outdoor play provided by childminders within the community.

All courses delivered were extremely successful, 66 childminders attended, all of whom enjoyed the session and took away new outdoor play ideas to try with the children.

Some of the comments from childminders include:

"I have learned not to worry about the children going home dirty and to relax more and have more outdoor fun."

"It's not all about the end product. It's about using open-ended resources and simple ideas - low cost/no cost. It was a great enjoyable evening. I learned so much but had fun."

"loved the course. I have learned the importance of

outdoor play for children's health and well-being. I will be putting my new ideas into practice with kids."

"I have learned that the benefits of outdoor play are equal to indoors. I will also start using the local park and taking children on nature walks."

"I understand that outdoor play is very important to include in my setting, no matter what the weather!"



ROUND UP OF TRAINING 2016 – 2017

Funder	Course Title	No of courses
Health and Social Care Board (HSCB)	Core Training [3 elements] Prospective childminders:	
	Health & Safety in home-based settings Safeguarding Children Introduction to Paediatric First Aid [facilitation only]	15 15 15
Self-funded	<u>Current</u> childminders:	
	Refresher Health & Safety in the Childminding Setting	31
	Refresher Safeguarding Children	33
Self-funded	Blossom Sure Start Childminding Network	
	Refresher Safeguarding Children	1
Self-funded	Business Management training for Childminders	4
Childcare Partnerships	NICMA/SENSE Caring for children with additional needs	
	Information sessionsChild DevelopmentDeveloping an awareness of caring for children with additional needs	1 1 1
Childcare Partnerships	NICMA/Belfast Childcare Partnership – Caring for children with additional needs	
	Information sessionsChild developmentDeveloping an awareness of caring for children with additional needs	1 1 1
Limavady Community Development Initiative	Promoting Positive Behaviour in the Early Years	1
Northern Childcare Partnership	Outdoor Play in the Childminding Setting	5
Total		126



Implementation Guidance (Version 3)

The Implementation Guidance (Version 3) was released in January 2016 and now replaces all previous versions. It has been developed with the aim of providing childminders and registering social workers with a shared interpretation and additional information of the Minimum Standards for Childminding and Day Care for Children Under Age 12. You can download a copy from the NICMA website.



Lifestart – Limavady Community Development Initiative - Promoting Positive Behaviour in the Early Years

NICMA delivered its 3-hour "Promoting Positive Behaviour in the Early Years" course at Lifestart in Limavady. Lifestart is a free home-based educational programme for parents of children aged from birth to five years. Family visitors deliver the 'Growing Child' programme, which is designed to support and educate parents on how their children will learn and develop in the early years. The course was a great success and enjoyed by all who attended.

Some of the comments from participants include:

"Good information and helpful tips."

"Delivered in a practical, informative and inclusive manner."

"Trainer did a very good job; made things easy to understand."

"Resources were brilliant and tutor was lovely."

"My favourite training session so far. Well explained, fantastic handouts and clear, practical guidance given."





Bridget Nodder Director

Bridget Nodder is the Director of NICMA - the Northern Ireland Childminding Association which is a regional charity and voluntary sector organisation working to support and promote childminding. NICMA has been in existence since 1984 and

has grown from a childminding membership of 90 and a staff of 1 part-time worker to a membership of 2,500 childminders and a staff of 23.

After College, Bridget started her career in Health Services Management which eventually took her to the Middle East for a period of 5 years. Following a career break, she returned to employment with NICMA in 1990 and has been in her post as Director since 1995. Bridget completed a part-time degree in Management & Business Studies at QUB in 1998. Her role in the organisation is varied but involves both strategic leadership and development of the childminding sector as well as the operational running of the organisation.



Karena McErlean **Assistant Director**

Karena is a graduate of Stranmillis University where she received a BA Hons in Early Childhood Studies.

Since graduation, Karena was employed in Royal Belfast Hospital for

Sick Children for 4 years as a Hospital Play Specialist, and during this time completed the professional Diploma in Specialised Play.

For the past seven years, Karena has been employed in the community sector in West Belfast in Blackie River Community Groups based in Beechmount in West Belfast, as Childcare Coordinator and most recently in the position of Greater Falls Family Support Hub Coordinator. Karena is currently studying for a MSc in Children's Rights at Queen's University Belfast.



PA to the Director

I joined NICMA in 2002. In my current role as Personal Assistant to the Director, I work closely with Patricia, to provide administrative support usually on a one-to-one basis.

My duties include acting as the point of contact for the Director, screening and directing phone calls and handling requests appropriately; managing diary appointments and scheduling meetings; and design and presentation of NICMA's internal publications. I attend Childminding Advisory Council meetings, Board of Trustee meetings and any internal meetings as required for minute taking. Within my role, I am responsible for organising seminars and NICMA's annual conference.

TRAINING TEAM



Susan Anderson **Training Manager**

Susan joined NICMA in 2004 as an NVQ Assessor as part of NICMA's JEWEL Project. Through funding available on the project she completed an Internal Verifiers Award and the Training the Trainers qualification.

When the project ended in 2006 she remained with NICMA as a sessional tutor but gained experience in other organisations delivering a diverse range of training both within and outside of the early years' sector. In June 2007, she completed the NVQ Level 4 in Co-ordination of Learning and Development Provision and in May

2009, achieved a First Class Honours in a B.A. Education (Hons) Degree at Worcester University. Susan has also completed the ILM Level 5 Award and Certificate in

In November 2007, Susan was appointed to the post of Training Officer in NICMA which enabled her to return to the early years sector and, from March 2014, was appointed Training Manager. Susan is involved in the design and delivery of a wide range of training to childminders and other early years' practitioners across the province. As part of the training team she reviews and updates courses to reflect current knowledge and best

Susan is involved in the development of new training courses for childminders and other early years practitioners. She reviews and updates courses, policies and relevant documentation for Childminders to reflect current best practice. Her role also involves writing and submitting funding proposals and carrying out research within the childminding sector.



Gail Trainor Trainer/Assessor

I initially joined the NICMA training team on a peripatetic basis in early 2014. By November 2014, I took up the post of Trainer/Assessor with NICMA where my role has expanded to being involved in delivering a wide range of training to childminders

throughout Northern Ireland. I work closely with NICMA's Training Manager and over the last year have delivered over 100 training courses on topics such as Health and Safety in the Childminding Setting, Safeguarding Children (both original and refresher courses), Promoting Positive Behaviour in the Early Years, An Introduction to Caring for Children with Additional Needs, Business Management for Childminders and Outdoor Play in the Childminding Setting.



Claire Vitti Training Co-ordinator

I joined NICMA in October 2008 as Administration Assistant. I am now the organisation's Training Co-ordinator and work closely with NICMA's Training Manager regarding the organisation of all training courses

delivered throughout the year. This includes all mandatory core training courses for prospective and current childminders which help them meet Minimum Standards' requirements.

As part of NICMA's Information and Advice Team, my day is also kept busy dealing with incoming telephone enquiries from our members and from parents, counter enquiries and helping the rest of the administration team with the day-to-day running of the office such as the making up of policy and membership packs and providing our members with any help and guidance they may need in their role as self-employed registered childminders.

FINANCE & IT



Finance and Administration Manager

Joan's career with NICMA began in January 1996 with general administration, accounts and payroll duties. Since then NICMA has faced a great many changes along with substantial growth and she now manages the Finance and

Administration department and Childminding Support

services. As a voluntary organisation, finance and longterm sustainability obviously presents NICMA with huge challenges.

Overall, we have been successful with our growth since NICMA began in 1984 and will continue to work towards creating a more financially secure environment for our members and the organisation.



Catherine Rogers Finance and IT Officer

Catherine joined NICMA in 2003 after finishing a BA Hons Business Studies with Accountancy 2:1 and completing an additional computer course.

Since joining NICMA, her role has changed a lot through the years. As well as the day-to- day functions of the finance department she helps deal with our members' queries and concerns. Catherine has been involved with the development of the NICMA website and is responsible for its maintenance and updates.

Catherine develops and creates databases of member's information and training courses so that information and statistics can be obtained in the easiest manner and the administrative process can be simplified.



Briony Simpson Finance & IT Officer

Briony became a part of the NICMA team in February 2014 as maternity cover for the Finance Officer. Initially a part-time post, the main responsibilities were to support the Finance Manager and offer IT support

to NICMA staff and members.

In June 2014, Briony accepted a full-time post within the office so that she could also offer support to the administration team. She helped to develop the NICMA website to include online membership application and training and integrated payments to NICMA's online services. She has since continued her development in website design and is currently responsible for the maintenance of the NICMA website and the services it provides.



Emma Bayliss Finance Assistant

(temporary)

My Name is Emma Bayliss and I work in the NICMA offices as part of the Finance team.

Previously I worked in various roles within the Civil Service including

telecoms and finance for 18 years before joining NICMA on a temporary basis in April 2016.

Working as part of the Finance Team, I deal with the daily finances of the organisation.

I take and receipt payments for membership, training and publications. I also provide support to the Membership and Administration team assisting as and when required. I also offer support and advice to our members over the telephone, via email and face to face. I really enjoy my role within NICMA.



MEMBERSHIP



Sonia Tomblin Membership Administrator

I am Sonia Tomblin and I was delighted to have been offered the position with NICMA as Membership Administrator in July 2016. My background is in banking and the airline industry.

My role in NICMA is a varied one and is different on a daily basis. I am part of the administration team and my main responsibilities include offering support and advice on the telephone and also face to face to members. All membership applications come directly to me via post and online and I am responsible for updating the database and ensuring membership packs are processed. I also work closely with the finance team processing payments. The post is one of my main responsibilities - to ensure on a daily basis that all incoming and outgoing post is processed correctly.

DEVELOPMENT TEAM



Fiona Clendinning South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust

My name is Fiona Clendinning, and I am the Childminding Development Officer covering the South Eastern Trust (Ards and North Down, Downpatrick and Lisburn areas).

Promotion of registered childminding and NICMA membership is an integral part of my role and underpins all of my work. This might take the form of a preregistration briefing session for prospective childminders, liaising with other professionals, distributing promotional materials, manning information stands, advising parents, addressing unregistered childminding, facilitating cluster events and workshops for childminders, or attending support and buddy group meetings. I also provide a support and advice service for existing and new childminders, via email, phone, text or whatsapp.



Michelle Grant
Southern Health & Social Care Trust
My name is Michelle Grant and I am
NICMA's Childminding Development
Officer working across the Southern
Health & Social Care Trust. I cover
the Armagh & Dungannon, Newry

& Mourne & Craigavon & Banbridge

areas. I also work seven hours a week with ArKe SureStart covering Keady Town and specific wards within Armagh city. I am the local person engaging with childminders in each community and addressing local issues.

My work in the SHSCT has included promoting childminding as a career via information sessions at Baby Cafe/Massage programmes in SureStarts. I have worked with Community Groups to promote the benefits of registered childminding and organised "Becoming a Registered Childminder" information sessions working in partnership with SLNA – Maghery Community Centre. I have co-ordinated 'Be Positive Training' sessions with Action Mental Health for registered childminders.

As an important part of my role is to support prospective childminders. I promote NICMA membership services to all registered childminders and members within the Trust and make contact with new members to offer them support. I also provide support to parents via Parent & Toddler Groups, SureStart and individual telephone calls.



Belfast Health & Social Care Trust
As Childminding Development Officer
working in the Belfast Health &
Social Care Trust and Northern Trust
(Southern Sector). I focus on raising
the profile of registered childminding
and have held this post for the past

14 years. I engage with a wide range of groups and organisations to publicise the benefits of registered childminding for children, families and communities.

I have facilitated information stands / sessions across a diverse range of venues including libraries, parent & toddler groups, shopping centres and supermarkets, at Sure Start events and Locality Planning Groups, to a regional group of school-aged mums' co-ordinators and to childcare students in training organisations including Swann, Impact and People 1st.

Promoting childminding as a career is ongoing with pre-registration briefing sessions held during the year aimed at ensuring that anyone considering a career in the sector has all the information they need to help them make an informed decision.

A key part of my role is providing support and advice to NICMA members, prospective childminders and to parents.



Clare Mckay Northern Health & Social Care Trust (Northern Sector)

My name is Clare McKay and as NICMA's Childminding Development Officer in the Northern Sector of the Northern Health & Social Care Trust, I cover Antrim, Crumlin and Ballymena,

Cookstown & Magherafelt and the Causeway Coast and Glens areas. I support childminders and promote registered childminding at Parent and Toddler groups, Health Fairs, Rhythm and Rhyme events in libraries, new mums' groups, festivals, colleges and shopping centres.

Within the period April 2016 – March 2017, recruitment of new childminders has been ongoing and I have continued to work closely with the Northern Trust. I organise and deliver pre-registration Briefing sessions for prospective childminders, supporting them through the registration process. Support is also given to existing childminders providing information and advice on all aspects of childminding. I also provide information and an advice service for parents, highlighting the benefits of using a registered childminder.



Maria Magee Western Health & Social Care Trust

My name is Maria Magee and I am the Childminding Development Officer in the Western Health & Social Care Trust. I cover the Londonderry, Fermanagh and Omagh areas, working closely with the Trust Early Years'

Teams to promote registered childminding and support those already registered.

A total of seven pre-registration briefing sessions have been held across the Trust for prospective childminders from April 2016 – March 2017. Ongoing support is given to all who then proceed with registration.

Registered childminding as a career and as a childcare option for parents is promoted widely in Londonderry, Fermanagh and Tyrone. Information is provided via stands in shopping centres, leisure centres and libraries I also regularly attend Parent & Toddler Groups, Rhythm

& Rhyme sessions, events in SureStart centres and Job Fairs in local areas.

Buddy Groups, offering support and advice to NICMA members are well established in Londonderry, Strabane and Limavady. Buddy Group meetings are also held in Enniskillen and Omagh; a 'Drop-in' centre for NICMA members operates weekly in Omagh.



Lyn Bradley Secretary

Lyn has been a NICMA staff member for many years, providing administrative support to the Assistant Director and five Childminding Development Officers. Assisting the Training Department with training

bookings and preparation for a variety of NICMA training courses also forms part of her duties.

On a daily basis Lyn is part of the general office team, which involves answering the telephone, providing information and advice to registered childminders and parents as well as dealing with counter enquiries. She also assists with the administration for NICMA events held during the year e.g. AGM/Conference and membership mailings.

CHILDMINDING NETWORKS



Joanna Legg Childminding Network Co-ordinator for SureStart Shantallow in Londonderry

Joanna recruits/mentors/supports and advises childminders, giving them access to free training, a weekly dropin and a monthly support group. She

also advises/supports parents. As an former childminder Joanna believes that she is reducing the solitude experienced by childminders.



Katie Turkington
Childminding Network/Daycare
Co-ordinator for Blossom SureStart
Katie's role is to develop a
childminding network within the
Blossom SureStart area in Portadown.
Her aim is to set up a weekly drop-in
morning and a monthly support night

as well as offering a mentoring and support service to new childminders. Katie also aims to improve access to quality childminders for parents wishing to return to work or access training.



Tina McKeown
Childminding Network Co-ordinator
for GOLD SureStart, Cookstown

Tina provides advice, support and mentoring to childminders as well as trying to recruit them, especially unregistered ones! As an ex-Childminder who loved the

profession Tina hopes that she is bringing a little support to a profession often overlooked by many as "just" a childminder!!!!





Summary of Annual Accounts and Report 31 March 2017

NICMA's financial position for the year ending 31 March 2017 is reported in the statement of financial activities indicated as follows:

During 2016/17, NICMA's key grant income awards were sourced from:

- The Department of Health offering support towards our core services
- The Health and Social Care Board, who continued with their support towards childminding development and supported the development of new childminders into the sector by providing funds which enabled NICMA to deliver and facilitate core training in the 3 key areas.
 This enabled prospective childminders to meet the requirements of the Minimum Standards for registration.
- The Department of Education, who, through the Childcare Partnerships, continued to support childminding networks in selected SureStart areas.

The charities reserves policy, which is based on the equivalent of six months running costs to support the organisation, has reached the required level which provides NICMA with a sound base for short-term stability.

Ultimately, I must report that the total income in the year dropped by just over £89,000, which we partly attribute to the loss of funding from HSCB DE Sustainability, which supported 30 hours of development work within the Northern Health & Social Care Trust Area. NICMA has been covering this cost since the end of the first quarter of 2016 but we are sourcing potential funding.

Our expenditure also increased by a nominal amount; less than £1,000. NICMA lost 1 childminding network during this time. We took the opportunity to make substantial savings last year when the post of Assistant Director was vacant and we welcomed someone into the post alongside a new Membership Administrator which returns staffing levels to normal in 2016/17.

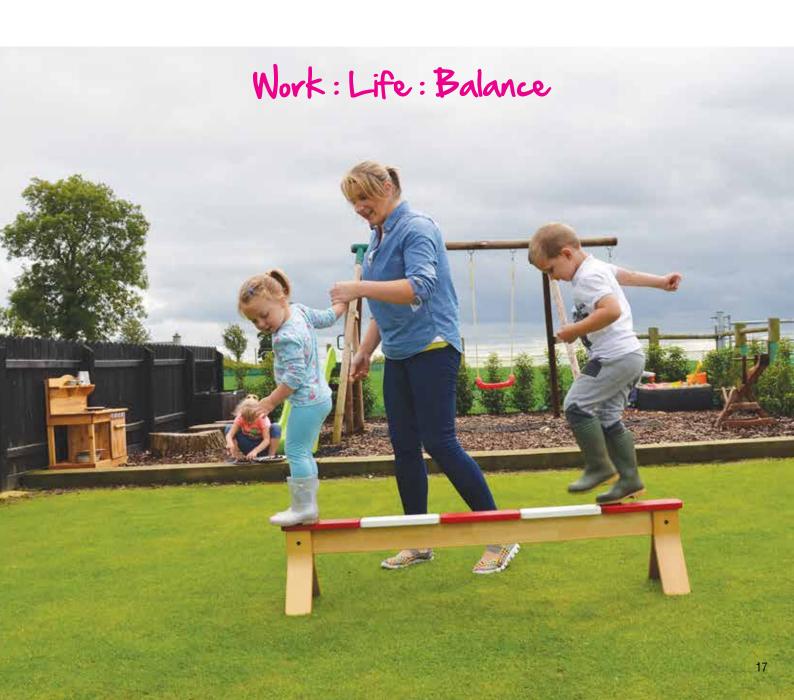
Thus, in conclusion, I am pleased to be able to report positively, and that in terms of NICMA's financial position at 31 March 2017 we would look forward to a number of new and exciting challenges in our future.

Norma Shearer

Honorary Treasurer/NICMA Chair



Statement of Financial Activities	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2017	Total 2016
Incoming Resources				
Donations	3,749	-	3,749	4,282
Income from Charitable Activities	231,817	341,979	573,796	662,524
Investment income	57	-	57	105
TOTAL INCOME	235,623	341,979	577,602	666,911
Outgoing Resources				
Charitable Activities	300,068	341.979	642,047	640,449
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	300,068	341,979	642,047	640,449
Net Incoming/Outgoing Resources for Year	(64,445)	-	(64,445)	26,462
Fund Balances Brought Forward	386,173	22,957	409,130	382,668
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	321,728	22,957	344,685	409,130



Acknowledgements

Our work would not be possible without the generous support of a large number of organisations who have funded staff posts and supported childminding initiatives over the last year. We would like to extend our thanks to those organisations and to childminding members whose commitment and support is very much appreciated. In 2016/17, our stakeholders included:



NICMA Staff Team

Bridget Nodder Director – resigned March 2017 Karena McErlean Assistant Director - appointed July 2016

Valerie Earney PA to the Director

CHILDMINDING DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Childminding Development Officer, ECCP & NCCP Liz Brown

Childminding Development Officer, SECCP Fiona Clendinning

Childminding Development Officer, SCCP & Arke SureStart Michelle Grant

Maria Magee Childminding Development Officer, WCCP Childminding Development Officer, NCCP Clare McKay

Secretary, Development Team Lyn Bradley

TRAINING & QUALITY TEAM

Training Manager Susan Anderson Trainer/Assessor Gail Trainor Claire Vitti Training Co-ordinator

CHILDMINDING NETWORKS

Una Leonard Childminding & Play Advisor, Clogher Valley SureStart Childminding Network Co-ordinator, Shantallow SureStart Joanna Legg Childminding Network Co-ordinator, G-old SureStart Tina McKeown

Childminding Network Co-ordinator, Splash SureStart - resigned January 17 Roisin Rogers

Katie Turkington Childminding Network Co-ordinator, Blossom SureStart

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

Finance & Administration Manager Joan Hewitt

Catherine Rogers Finance & IT Officer Briony Simpson Finance & IT Officer

Emma Bayliss Finance Assistant – temporary maternity cover from April 2016

Niky McGrattan Membership Administrator - resigned June 2016 Membership Administrator - appointed July 2016 Sonia Tomblin

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Chair Norma Shearer

Dr Margaret Baumann

Alison Blayney

Resigned May 16

Suzi Gray Karen Hanna Catherine Cooke







16 – 18 Mill Street Newtownards BT23 4LU

Tel: 028 9181 1015 Fax: 028 9182 0921

www.nicma.org
e-mail:info@nicma.org
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