



**The
Childminding
Association**

Annual Report 2022-2023



Foreword

Welcome to our 2022-23 Annual Report.

With no Executive or Assembly in place, this has been a challenging yet busy year for NICMA. Both funding and policy development have been affected, and these difficulties have been further exacerbated by the cost of living crisis.

NICMA's main priority remains to ensure that the voices of Registered Childminders are heard, and we continue to lobby and advocate for our Childminders across Northern Ireland. We have met with all political parties, relevant Government Departments, MP's and MLAs, to guarantee that the needs of the sector and the role of Registered Childminders are kept firmly on the agenda.

Throughout the year, we listened to the collective voice of our 1538 members through surveys and feedback, which guided NICMA in delivering training and advocacy work. This included delivering further training in Makaton and establishing a new partnership with Mencap to create specific training on additional needs for Registered Childminders.

NICMA has continued to build new friendships and alliances with partnership organisations such as Mencap, as well as strengthening long established ones with PlayBoard, Early Years and the Childcare Partnerships.

NICMA is a dynamic organisation that will continue to adapt to change while challenging the ever-growing amendments to policy and legislation. We are building up our suite of training programmes and further developing areas of support for our amazing Registered Childminders, who provide such loving care and support to thousands of parents and children across the province.

I will finish by sincerely thanking all of the staff, old and new, who are vital to the organisation. Their hard work, commitment and support are the backbone of all that we have and will accomplish.

On behalf of the staff and myself, I would also like to extend our sincere thanks to the Board of NICMA, to all the Registered Childminders who support us, our wonderful funders and last, but by no means least, the Childminding Advisory Council for their dedicated service throughout the past year.

Patricia Lewsley-Mooney CBE
Chief Executive Officer



At the end of March 2023 NICMA had 1522 members

Development and Engagement Team

NICMA's team of six Development and Engagement Officers work across the five Trust areas, to support and represent Registered Childminders within the sector. They work to promote Registered Childminding in their communities, improve the quality of existing provision and ultimately raise the profile of the sector as a viable childcare option for families.

Our Development and Engagement Officers work in partnership with relevant statutory agencies, community and voluntary groups to promote the benefits of registered home-based childcare, and identify both areas of need and opportunities for training and development.

The team supports Registered Childminders and NICMA members, responding to queries over the phone, or by text, WhatsApp, or email, as well as in person at a range of peer support groups across the region. In addition, our Development and Engagement Officers also provide mentoring to Prospective Childminders through the registration process.

Facilitated
49 WhatsApp chats with a
total of 1047 members

Held 119 support
group meetings,
with 34 groups and
533 members

2578 support and
advice calls

21 workshops delivered/
facilitated

78 information
stands

SureStart Co-ordinators

Gold SureStart
(Cookstown, Maghera Magherafelt)
Network co-ordinator: Tina McKeown

The Childminding Network Co-ordinator in GOLD works to promote Registered Childminding within the Sure Start catchment area and establish a childminding network to offer “Quality Assured” provision through monitoring and training.

The Co-ordinator also supports and recruits Registered Childminders, mentors Prospective Childminders through Registration in partnership with the Development Team, determines availability for the Registered Childminding Respite Team, provides access to GOLD Sure Start’s toy library and provides parents with information on Registered Childminding vacancies.

Shantallow Surestart
(Shantallow - Derry/Londonderry)
Network co-ordinator: Joanna Legg

The Childminding Network Co-ordinator in Shantallow assists SureStart families to meet their childcare needs, mentors Prospective Childminders through registration in partnership with the Development Team and recruits new and Registered Childminders into the Childminding Network.

They also support Network Childminders to meet the Minimum Standards (DHSSPS, 2012), provide guidance on childminding matters to childminders, parents & staff, facilitate a weekly drop-In playgroup for childminders and their minded children, facilitate a support group where childminders can access free training and peer support, and produce a monthly newsletter for childminders.

Events

In the first quarter of this year, a group of NICMA staff, with the support of several Childminding Peer Support Groups, undertook to walk 1761 miles (the distance from Kyiv, Ukraine to the NICMA office in Belfast) to fundraise for the humanitarian crisis that the people fleeing the conflict in Ukraine were facing. This journey represented the physical, emotional and economic distance between our lives and those of the people of Ukraine, in the hope that our efforts could in some way reduce the miles between us. These walks were the focus of our Childminding Month events in May 2022.



A Registered Childminder Academy was launched with Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership to help increase the provision of affordable childcare in the Mid Ulster area. Our aim was to mentor 25 participants through the registration process, and support them in setting up a quality childminding provision.

The NICMA Annual Conference was held on Saturday 8th October 2022
at the Silverbirch Hotel, Omagh



Theme: #ECOMinding Keynote Speaker: Prof. John Barry (QUB)
69 Registered Childminders booked to attend
Workshops: Outdoor Play, Curiosity Kids, Kindergarden Cook, Recycle Play

Social Media



6606 Facebook followers



550 Twitter followers



155 Instagram followers



Training and Quality

Core Training and Pre-Registration Briefings April 2022 – March 2023

- Pre-Registration Briefing Sessions: 40 sessions 256 attended
- Prospective Core Health & Safety: 20 sessions 168 attended
- Prospective Core Safeguarding: 21 sessions 179 attended
- Prospective Core Paediatric First Aid: 19 sessions 149 attended
- Refresher Health & Safety: 30 sessions 308 attended
- Refresher Safeguarding: 35 sessions 442 attended

Funded courses facilitated:

Business workshops

(Mid Ulster Academy) - 12 participants

Breaking Barriers

(Supporting Children with a Learning Disability)

6 courses, 70 attendees

141 Registered Childminders accessed training via **Pathways** funding. Courses included:

ADHD Training

Fundamentals of Autism

Makaton L1

Makaton L2

Infant Mental Health - Signs of Hope

Workshops...

External workshops:

Diabetes Awareness

Good Relations

Employers for Childcare

National Energy Action

Henry Approach

Solihull Approach

Eat Well Together

Internal workshops facilitated by Development and Engagement Team:

Inspections

Profitability

Self-assessment

Christmas Crafts



**21 workshops delivered
334 attendees**

*I really enjoyed this course.
The tutor was very friendly and informative. I've noted some small things that I want to change in my setting to improve health and safety.*

*Had never used zoom,
wasn't sure if I would have been able to access it as easily as I did.
The tutor put me at ease and explained everything well.*

NICMA Staff Teams



Management Team

Patricia Lewsley-Mooney, CBE - Chief Executive
Andrea Knocker - Regional Development Manager

Development and Engagement Team

Fiona Clendinning - Development and Engagement Officer, SECCP
Karla Moore - Development and Engagement Officer, SCCP (Resigned March 2023)
Katie Turkington - Development and Engagement Officer, SCCP (Resigned Aug 2022)
Jane McKibbin - Development and Engagement Officer, BHSCT
Grainne Scullion - Development and Engagement Officer, Lower WCCP
Clare McGillion - Development and Engagement Officer, Upper WCCP
Paula McLaughlin - Development and Engagement Officer, NCCP

SureStart Coordinators

Tina McKeown - Gold SureStart, Cookstown
Joanna Legg - Shantallow SureStart

Finance and Administrative Team

Eimear O'Caoilte - Finance Manager
Rhonda Hunter - Membership and Engagement Administrator (Resigned September 22)
Karan McCullough - Membership and Engagement Administrator
Kerry Stranaghan - Membership and Engagement Administrator
Lyn Bradley - Membership and Engagement Administrator (Retired March 22)
Kurtis Dawson - Administration Support

Board of Trustees

Suzi Gray - Chairperson
Marlene Kinghan - Vice Chair
Norma Shearer - Treasurer
Dr Margaret Baumann - Secretary (Deceased)
April Dalzel- Secretary
Catherine Cook (Resigned)
Karen Hanna (Resigned)
Sharon Gallagher
Adam Sizer
Bernie McConnell
Ruth Hamilton
Lisa Craig

Acknowledgements

Our work would not be possible without the generous support of a large number of organisations who have funded staff posts and supported Registered Childminding initiatives over the last year. We would like to extend our thanks to those organisations and to our members for your continuous support - it is very much appreciated. In 2022/23 our stakeholders included:

Early Years - the Organisation for Young Children
Pathways

NICMA Members
NICMA Childminding Advisory Council
NICMA Peer Support Groups

Department of Health
Department of Education

Health and Social Care Board
Northern Health and Social Care Trust
South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust
Western Health and Social Care Trust
Southern Health & Social Care Trust
Belfast Health & Social Care Trust

Shantallow Surestart
Gold Surestart

The Childcare Partnerships

Emergency Care NI
Paul Berry Group
Help Kids Talk