

COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER: NI025861
CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 102156

Northern Ireland Child Minding Association
Company Limited by Guarantee
Financial Statements
31 March 2024

Finegan Gibson Ltd
Chartered accountants & statutory auditor
Causeway Tower
9 James Street South
Belfast
BT2 8DN

Northern Ireland Child Minding Association

Company Limited by Guarantee

Financial Statements

Year ended 31 March 2024

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Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report)

Year ended 31 March 2024

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Reference and administrative details

Registered charity name	Northern Ireland Child Minding Association
Charity registration number	102156
Company registration number	NI025861
Principal office and registered office	NICMA Elizabeth House 116-118 Holywood Road Belfast BT4 1NY

The trustees

N Shearer (Treasurer)	
S Gray	(Resigned 9 November 2023)
M Kinghan (Chairperson)	
L Craig	
A Dalzell	
S Gallagher	
B McConnell	
A Sizer	
R Bradley	
R Hamilton	
S Grey	(Appointed 22 November 2023)

Auditor	Finegan Gibson Ltd Chartered accountants & statutory auditor Causeway Tower 9 James Street South Belfast BT2 8DN
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Bankers	Danske Bank 35 High Street Newtownards BT23 7HS
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Solicitors	Worthingtons 2 Court Street Newtownards BT23 7NX
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Year ended 31 March 2024

Structure, governance and management

Governing Document

Northern Ireland Childminding Association is a company limited by guarantee governed by its updated Memorandum and Articles of Association dated 21 May 2009. Northern Ireland Childminding Association is a registered charity with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland. Northern Ireland Childminding Association is a membership organisation with currently 1,427 members each of whom agrees to contribute £1 in the event of the charity winding up.

Appointment of trustees

The Chairperson and the Trustees recruit and select new Trustees as needed. New Trustees are recruited on the relevance of their professional skills, and their potential to be able to make a helpful contribution to the governance of the charity. As part of the recruitment process, they are made aware of a Trustees' legal obligations under charity and company law, the content of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the committee and decision-making processes, the business plan and recent financial performance of the charity.

Once the potential new Trustee has agreed to be considered for appointment to the role, the Trustees meet to review and to vote on the candidate's suitability for appointment. If there is unanimous agreement, their names are then proposed for appointment.

Trustee induction and training

New Trustees undergo Induction to brief them on their legal obligations under charity and company law, the content of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the committee and decision-making process, the business plan and recent financial performance of the charity. An Induction Manual is provided for Trustees.

Arrangements for setting pay and remuneration of key management personnel

The charity's directors who are the Board of Trustees (BOT) and the Senior Management Team (SMT) comprise the key management personnel of the charity. The SMT are responsible for directing, controlling, running and operating the charity on a day to day basis. All directors (BOT) give of their time freely and no director received remuneration in the year. Details of directors' expenses and related party transactions are disclosed in note 26 to the accounts.

The pay of the senior staff is reviewed annually and normally increased in accordance with average earnings. In view of the nature of the charity, the directors benchmark against pay levels in other similar size charities run on a voluntary basis. The remuneration bench-mark is the mid-point of the range paid for similar roles adjusted for a weighting of up to 30% for any additional responsibilities. If recruitment has proven difficult in the recent past a market addition is also paid with the pay maximum no greater than the highest benchmarked salary for a comparable role.

Organisation structure and how charity makes decisions

The board of trustees, which can have up to 12 members, administers the charity and meets quarterly. A Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is appointed by the trustees to manage the day-to-day operations of the charity. To facilitate effective operations, the CEO has delegated authority, within terms of delegation approved by the trustees, for operational matters including finance, employment and direct charitable activities.

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Year ended 31 March 2024

Risk management

The trustees have a risk management strategy which comprises:

- An annual review of the principal risks and uncertainties that the charity faces;
- The establishment of policies, systems and procedures to mitigate those risks identified in the annual review; and
- The implementation of procedures designed to minimise or manage any potential impact on the charity should those risks materialise.

Potential Risk Steps to mitigate risk

The charity lacks direction, strategy and forward planning

- Create a strategic plan which sets out the key aims, objectives and policies
- Create financial plans and budgets
- Use job plans and targets
- Monitor finances and operational performance
- Get feedback from beneficiaries and funders

Trustee body lacks relevant skills or commitment

- Review and agrees skills required
- Draw up competence framework and job descriptions
- Implement trustee training and induction
- Review and agree recruitment processes

Trustee body dominated by one or two individual, or by connected individuals

- Consider the structure of the trustee body and its independence
- Agree mechanisms to manage potential conflicts of interest
- Review and agree recruitment and appointment process in line with governing document
- Agree procedural framework for meetings and recording decisions

Conflicts of interest

- Agree protocol for disclosure of potential conflicts of interest
- Put in place procedures for standing down on certain decisions
- Review recruitment and selection processes

Ineffective organisational structure

- Use organisation chart to create a clear understanding of roles and duties
- Delegation and monitoring should be consistent with good practice and constitutional or legal requirements
- Review structure and the need for constitutional change
- Create financial systems to identify restricted funds and their application

Loss of key staff

- Succession planning
- Document systems, plans and projects
- Implement training programmes
- Agree notice period and handovers
- Review and agree recruitment processes

Reporting to trustees (accuracy, timeliness and relevance)

- Put in place proper strategic planning, objective setting and budgeting processes
- Timely and accurate project reporting

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- Timely and accurate financial reporting
- Access and review projects and authorisation procedures
- Have regular contact between trustees and senior staff and managers

Objectives and activities

The purposes of the charity are:

(A) To promote in Northern Ireland (the area of benefit), the provision of facilities for the daily care, recreation and education of children under school age and the care and recreation of children of school age outside school hours.

(B) To advance within the area of benefit the education and training of childminders and other persons and organisations providing day care facilities for children both of school age and under school age and to conduct research into all aspects of the care, recreation and education of such children, and publish the useful results of such research.

In shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, the trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. The pandemic was also taken into consideration on how we delivered our services, many of which went online and staff working from home.

The strategies employed to achieve the charity's aims and objectives are to:

STRATEGIC AIMS

1. CHILDREN & CHILDCARE

I. To promote the provision of high-quality childcare and education within registered, home-based settings for children aged 0 - 14 years.

II. To encourage legal Childminding.

III. To work in effective partnerships with relevant external bodies in order to influence and develop policy.

IV. To ensure that home-based childcare is recognised and valued as beneficial to children, families, communities and government.

2. TRAINING & QUALITY

I. To provide a programme of training and quality initiatives to support and enhance the quality of home-based childcare.

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II. To deliver a high-quality training service appropriate to the lifelong learning needs and aspirations of registered Childminders in Northern Ireland.

III. To maintain a highly trained, motivated workforce appropriate to the needs of the Childminding sector.

IV. To provide a high-quality learning environment to meet the needs of all Childminders.

V. To provide support and guidance to ensure all Childminders meet minimum standard requirements.

3. SUPPORT SERVICES

I. To provide a support network to registered Childminders and approved Home Childcarers.

II. To provide a Childminding Information & Advice service to Childminders, Approved Home Childcarers, parents and those involved in early years.

III. To represent the views of the Childminding sector in order to inform the development of future childcare policy.

4. GENERAL

I. To have in place a financial strategy which will provide sufficient resources to allow NICMA to achieve its aims.

II. To recruit, support and develop staff and volunteers to ensure a motivated, efficient team, running to its full potential, which will achieve the organisations aims and objectives.

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Year ended 31 March 2024

Achievements and performance

CHILDREN & CHILDCARE

AIMS ACTIVITIES/OUTCOMES

The provision of Childminding Networks attached to 2 SureStart initiatives

- 2 Childminding Networks managed by SureStart operating according to local need.

Support the recruitment of new childminding provision in areas of identified need

- Development work in communities to promote registered Childminding as a profession; events held to provide information on Childminding as a career and promote childminding to parents especially in areas of TSN.

- Delivery of Pre-registration Briefing Sessions across Trusts; 39 sessions held with 352 prospective childminders invited and 258 attending. To create an improved public image and profile of childminding.

- To continue to update promotional information and develop new website.

Respond to current funding initiatives

- Funding applications developed and submitted.

Child minding academies delivered in Mid and East Antrim and Mid Ulster council areas delivering 24 newly registered childminders.

TRAINING & QUALITY

AIMS ACTIVITIES/OUTCOMES

Provide training to NICMA's 34 Childminding Support groups, 49 WhatsApp groups

- Training delivered to groups and SureStart Networks as required with 51 groups with 1,062 members 8 pre-registration group with 122 members.

Pre-registration Briefing for prospective Childminders.

- Delivered Pre-registration Briefing sessions across 5 Trust areas.
- PRBs 39 sessions.
- Number of people attended - 258.

Deliver Core Mandatory training to prospective childminders

- Deliver Core Mandatory training for prospective childminders in all 5 Trust areas.
- Health & Safety 15 courses.
- 184 learners invited and 155 attended.
- Safeguarding 15 courses.
- 159 learners invited and 148 attended.
- Intro Paediatric First Aid 15 courses.
- 164 learners invited and 141 attended.

Deliver Refresher Core Mandatory training to existing Childminders

Courses delivered

- Health & Safety 27 courses - 279 learners.
- Safeguarding 27 courses delivered - 291 learners.

SUPPORT SERVICES

AIMS ACTIVITIES/OUTCOMES

Maintain an up to date Information & Advice Service to all members, both in Support Groups,

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Childminding Networks, individuals, Approved Home Childcarer's and parents•Membership Services offered to 1,427 members throughout the year.

- 141 new members.

Support childminders and Approved Home Childcarers with the registration and Inspection process

- Telephone, email and group support with regard to the Minimum Standards to 2,000+ childminders.

Unregistered Childminding

- Address the issue of unregistered childminding.

Increase the % of registered childminders who are NICMA members

- To continue to update promotional information to all relevant groups / individuals.

Number surveys carried out

- 8 Completed.

Promote Website

- Ongoing updating.

Use of Social Media/communication

- Communication with members, non-members and general public. Regular updating Ezine produced bi-monthly.
- Started delivering training and Buddy groups via Zoom. A number of Whatsapp groups set up.
- Deliver AGM/Conference.

NICMA Childminding Week

- Facilitating range of events to promote and raise awareness of Childminding including press coverage.

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Financial review

The financial performance for the year ended 31 March 2024 demonstrates the ongoing dedication of NICMA to advancing its charitable objectives, supported by robust financial stewardship.

Financial Performance

Total income for the year was £469,215, a decrease from £509,679 in 2023. This included £248,902 in restricted income, which primarily supported specific grant-funded programs such as those from the Department of Health and the Health and Social Care Board. Unrestricted income amounted to £220,313, predominantly driven by membership subscriptions (£181,866) and training income (£11,720). Total expenditure stood at £537,288, down slightly from £557,173 in the prior year. Of this, £255,647 was allocated to restricted programs, reflecting effective use of grant funding for targeted activities. The charity experienced a net deficit of £68,073, reducing total funds carried forward to £48,058 (2023: £116,131).

Principal Funding Sources

NICMA's operations rely significantly on grants from public bodies such as the Health and Social Care Board, as well as membership subscriptions. These sources underpin the delivery of essential services, including training, member support, and childminding programs.

Investment powers and policy

The trustees, having regard to the liquidity requirements of the charity, have kept available funds in an interest-bearing deposit account and seek to achieve a rate on deposit which matches or exceeds inflation measured by the retail prices index.

Reserves policy

The trustees aim to maintain unrestricted reserves sufficient to cover six months of operating costs to ensure continuity of services. At year-end, unrestricted reserves stood at £48,058, which is below the target level due to the deficit incurred. Trustees are actively reviewing strategies to strengthen reserves through enhanced fundraising and cost management.

Financial Risks and Going Concern

The trustees have reviewed the charity's financial position and confirm its ability to continue as a going concern for the foreseeable future. However, they recognize the risks associated with reduced grant funding and are committed to diversifying income streams. The charity has no material contingent liabilities and remains in compliance with funding agreements. The trustees are confident that NICMA will continue to meet its obligations and sustain its critical role in supporting childminding services across Northern Ireland.

Norma Shearer - Treasurer

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Plans for future periods

NICMA's future plans will focus on the following areas:

- Recruitment of new childminders
- Develop recruitment strategy, incorporating the use of social media
- Retention of members
- Evaluate and enhance membership services
- Provide personal support to all members
- Consider the development of new Childminding Networks
- Quality Improvement within the sector
- Using the State of the Childminding Sector 2017 report, use evidence to develop funding applications to offer a range of training and quality assurance

Underpinning all of the above will be a need to continue to source funding for current initiatives as well as new projects.

Trustees' responsibilities statement

The trustees, who are also directors for the purposes of company law, are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the charity trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the applicable Charities SORP;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

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Auditor

Each of the persons who is a trustee at the date of approval of this report confirms that:


- so far as they are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charity's auditor is unaware; and
- they have taken all steps that they ought to have taken as a trustee to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditor is aware of that information.

The auditor is deemed to have been re-appointed in accordance with section 487 of the Companies Act 2006.

Small company provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies exemption.

The trustees' annual report was approved on 18 December 2024 and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:


N Shearer (Treasurer)
Trustee


M Kinghan (Chairperson)
Trustee