



Treasurer

Information Pack





Contents

Welcome from the Chair	3
Who we are	4
What we do	5
Our strategy	8
Meet the Board	9
How we are organised	11
Time commitment	12
Finances	13
Treasurer Role Profile	14
The application process	16



Welcome from the Chair

Dear Candidate

Thank you for your interest in becoming Treasurer of the Board of Early Years – the organisation for young children.

We are looking for an exceptional individual who is willing to dedicate time and energy to the organisation and who shares our passion to transform early learning and childcare across Northern Ireland. In return you will have the opportunity to be part of a team who bring with them a wide range of skills, experience and networks.

Established in 1965 and employing 250 people, with eight branches serving 430 settings across NI, Early Years is the biggest organisation in Northern Ireland working with, and for, young children. Our mission is to 'lead and innovate to ensure high-quality shared early education and care services that support resilience for children, families and communities'.

We have a team of highly trained Quality Mentors working closely with

pre-school settings on curriculum and continuous improvement provision.

We were the first organisation to recognise the unique role of children in peacebuilding. This led to the 'Respecting Diversity Programme' and our involvement in the UN-led Early Childhood Peace Consortium. We are proud of our record of supporting generations of children and families and strengthening communities in Northern Ireland while building global partnerships.

Our recruitment partners at Engage will be happy to answer any questions relating to the role of Treasurer, or to the application process, in the first instance.

We very much look forward to hearing from you.

Nemonie Fulton
Chair



Who we are

Today, Early Years is a registered charity, company limited by guarantee and membership organisation, representing hundreds of childcare settings and employing approximately 250 staff across Northern Ireland.

Established in 1965, the organisation for young children began life as the Northern Ireland Pre-School Playgroup Association (NIPPA), created in response to the growing need for high-quality early childhood education and care. What started as a small membership-based movement developed steadily over the decades into Northern Ireland's largest organisation working with and for young children. The organisation's original focus on supporting pre-school playgroups expanded to encompass a much broader range of services for children, families, childcare providers, employers and policymakers.

As its role evolved, the organisation rebranded, adopting the name Early Years in 2007 to better reflect the breadth of its work and influence across the early childhood sector. Today, it is a registered charity, company limited by guarantee and membership organisation, representing hundreds of childcare settings and employing approximately 250 staff across Northern Ireland.

For more than six decades, Early Years has championed children's rights, evidence-informed practice and quality childcare. It has helped shape policy, supported generations of families and practitioners, pioneered initiatives promoting inclusion and peacebuilding, and developed international partnerships. Its continued growth reflects a longstanding commitment to improving outcomes for children, strengthening communities and ensuring that every child has the best possible start in life.

What we do



We provide a specialist support service to early years settings within the **Preschool Education Programme (PSEP)**.

Membership of Early Years offers access to forums to discuss issues such as best practice, quality improvement and governance as well as resources, webinars and training.

Members can avail of the expertise of our Quality Mentors, with programmes such as HighScope, Reggio and Eager and Able to Learn, as well as receiving regular e-updates and newsletters.

We advocate for our members through our communications and engagement programme and provide secretariat support to the All Party Group on Early Education and Childcare at Stormont.



We operate the **Fermanagh Early Years Children and Family Centre** in Enniskillen as a centre of excellence in the provision of high-quality early learning and care. The Centre offers 80 full-time equivalent places for children aged 6 weeks to 12 years.

We have been closely involved with Sure Start for over two decades and are currently the lead and/or accountable body for seven Sure Starts:



- Rainbow
- Splash
- Star
- South Armagh
- Clogher Valley
- Newry
- Dungannon & Coalisland

We are an employing body and key stakeholder within a further two Sure Starts. Sure Start is a targeted programme supporting children under the age of four, and their families, living in the most disadvantaged areas in Northern Ireland. With funding from the Department of Education, the programme provides support to parents from pregnancy until their child's fourth birthday.



Supported by PEACEPLUS, a programme managed by the Special EU Programmes Body, PEACEPLUS ASPIRE is a multi-year, shared education initiative bringing children, along with families and communities from different backgrounds, together to learn and foster peace. Early Years leads the pre-school element in Northern Ireland.



The **Northern Ireland Childcare Subsidy Scheme** is a Department of Education initiative designed to reduce the childcare costs of eligible working parents. The scheme was established in 2024 and Early Years was appointed to administer the funding to providers in order to pass on savings to working parents. The scheme was subsequently extended to school age children (4-11 years).



The Pathway Fund is open to registered providers or facilitators of early years education and learning (ages 0-4) such as registered sessional providers, registered childminders and approved home childcarers. The Fund is administered by Early Years under contract with the Department of Education. In support of the Department's vision that 'every child and young person is happy, learning and succeeding' the outcomes are aimed at improving the development of those who are at risk of not reaching their full educational potential and achieving an enhanced, more sustained early years sector. The Pathway Fund supports young children in Northern Ireland facing social disadvantage, with additional needs, children at risk of harm, from ethnic minority backgrounds and those living in a rural locality.



The Toybox project is funded by the Department of Education and is aimed at improving the long-term outcomes for Traveller and Roma children and their families. The programme uses a home visiting approach with a focus on play to support children to transition into education. The project has been extended to meet the needs of Northern Ireland's changing society and is reaching more children and families from ethnic minority backgrounds.



We are a founding member of the International Network for Peacebuilding with Young Children (INPB). The Network is a programme body and founder member of the Early Childhood Peace Consortium (ECPC).



The ECPC studies how early childhood programmes build peace and it shares findings with policymakers worldwide. The ECPC translates complex research into clear messages for governments to invest in young children. Along with its partners, the ECPC implements and tests peace-building early childhood programmes in communities around the world.





Our strategy

We're working on a new strategic plan to segue from our 2022–2026 Strategic Plan which set out an ambitious vision for creating a society in which every child can thrive, supported by resilient families, strong communities and responsive services.

Strategic Vision

The strategy is founded on the Child Rights Ecology Model, recognising that children's development is shaped by a network of relationships, including families, communities, service providers and wider society. The plan emphasises that positive child outcomes depend on strong connections between these systems and that investment in children delivers long-term benefits for society as a whole.

Mission

To lead and innovate in delivering high-quality, shared early education and care services that build resilience among children, families and communities.

Desired Outcomes

The strategy seeks to achieve six overarching outcomes:

- Children are confident, capable and visible within their communities.
- Families experience nurturing relationships and strong support networks.
- Children and families enjoy positive physical and emotional wellbeing.
- Children are eager to learn and achieve their full potential.
- Parents, carers, families and service providers are empowered and resilient.
- Children grow up respecting diversity within a peaceful and shared society.

Strategic Priorities

The plan focuses on strengthening resilience at every level by:

- Supporting high-quality childcare and early learning.
- Promoting children's rights and wellbeing.
- Strengthening families and communities.
- Influencing policy and practice through evidence and innovation.
- Building partnerships that improve outcomes for children and families.
- Ensuring the long-term sustainability and effectiveness of Early Years as an organisation.

Our Key Message

The strategy recognises that creating the best outcomes for children is a collective responsibility. Through leadership, innovation, partnership and advocacy, Early Years aims to build stronger families, stronger communities and better futures for children across Northern Ireland.

Meet the Board



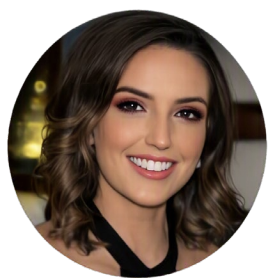
Nemonie Fulton Chair

Nemonie is an experienced solicitor with a strong academic background, and over 30 years of experience in both the private and public sector, specialising primarily in commercial and property law. She is a graduate in law from the University of Exeter, the University of Aix-Marseille III, and Queen's University Belfast. She brings valuable legal insight and objectivity to her work, and is passionate about creating the best start in life for all children. Nemonie was first appointed as a Trustee to the Early Years Board in 2018 and, in 2026, was appointed as Board Chair, where she provides strategic leadership, governance oversight, and legal expertise.



Teresa Canavan

Teresa is the CEO of Rural Action, with over 30 years' experience in rural development. She founded the organisation in 2019 to create a solutions-focused body dedicated to supporting the community and voluntary sector in delivering impactful rural initiatives. Under her leadership, the organisation now delivers programmes on behalf of central and local government, acts as a Managing Agent for the International Fund for Ireland, and has contributed to the design of PEACEPLUS-supported initiatives to strengthen rural communities. Teresa was first appointed as a Trustee to the Early Years Board in 2026, where she contributes expertise in community engagement, funding and strategic leadership.



Bernie O'Neill

Bernie serves as Deputy CEO of Magherafelt Women's Group and brings over 20 years' experience within the community and voluntary sector in Northern Ireland. She has extensive leadership experience across early years provision, community development, and the management of multidisciplinary teams. Bernie is actively engaged in community networks across Mid Ulster and represents the Northern Branch on the Early Years Council. In 2026, she was

appointed as a Trustee to the Early Years Board, where she contributes her expertise in governance, strategic leadership, and sector development.



Sarah McCambley

Sarah is an experienced leader at Jolly Rodgers Day Nursery and holds a BA (Hons) in Early Childhood Studies and an M.Ed. She plays a key leadership role within the sector as Chair of the PSEP Forum and represents Lisburn & Down on the Early Years Council. Sarah was appointed as a Trustee to the Early Years Board in 2022, where she brings her expertise in early years practice and sector leadership.



Francis Loye

Francis is co-owner and director of Giggles Early Years Hub in Newry, which recently celebrated its 20th anniversary. With a background in teaching, he has also worked as an associate assessor with the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) and holds a Master's Degree in Education Leadership and Management. Francis brings significant sectoral expertise through his leadership roles, including serving as Chair of the Early Years Daycare Forum and representing the Forum on the Early Years Council. He is also actively involved in the Sector Partnership with regional colleges, supporting the development of early years education and training. Francis was first appointed as a Trustee to the Early Years Board in 2023, where he contributes his experience in early years provision, leadership, and sector development.

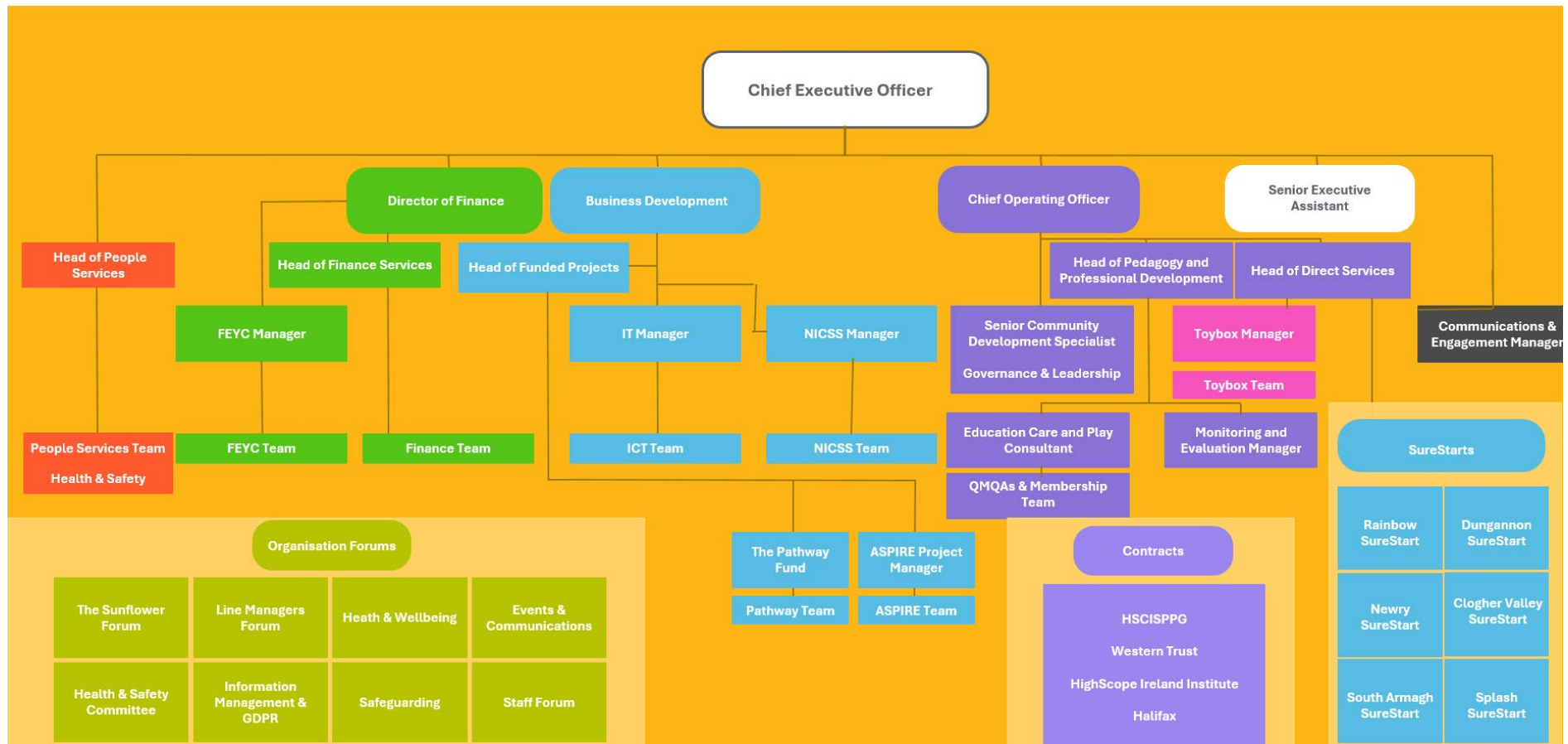


Dr. Will Burton

Will is a Lecturer in Journalism at Ulster University and a former BBC broadcast journalist. He brings extensive industry experience, with work published in The Sunday Times and The Irish Times, and specialises in online journalism, video storytelling, and public affairs. Will was first appointed as a Trustee to the Early Years Board in 2026, where he contributes his expertise in communications, media, and public engagement.



How we are organised



Time commitment

Full Board Meetings and Committees

- Board meetings take place four times per year (quarterly), with one meeting typically also incorporating a development/training session.
- The Finance and General Purposes Sub-Committee also meets four times per year, usually around two weeks before each Board meeting. This is currently the only Board Sub-Committee.
- In addition, the Treasurer would also be expected to attend any extraordinary meetings convened as required.

These meetings are generally held on **Wednesday evenings at 6pm** and last approx. **two hours**, although the duration can vary depending on the agenda. Dates are currently being finalized and subject to Board approval.

Treasurer Induction and Support

The Treasurer will be offered a full induction programme and supporting reference materials.

Finances

You can view a snapshot of our latest published Income and Expenditure statement here. If you're reading online, further details of our finances can be accessed by clicking on the links below to our last three annual reports.

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	3	-	168,523	168,523	-	201,436	201,436
Charitable activities	4	2,074,945	9,349,019	11,423,964	1,001,024	9,218,428	10,219,452
Other trading activities	5	1,140,667	-	1,140,667	1,132,706	-	1,132,706
Investments	6	1,276	-	1,276	685	-	685
Total income		3,216,888	9,517,542	12,734,430	2,134,415	9,419,864	11,554,279
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	7	314	411	725	2,490	4,992	7,482
Charitable activities	8	2,998,370	9,505,249	12,503,619	2,104,898	8,861,627	10,966,525
Other expenditure	13	708	-	708	-	-	-
Total expenditure		2,999,392	9,505,660	12,505,052	2,107,388	8,866,619	10,974,007
Net income		217,496	11,882	229,378	27,027	553,245	580,272
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	302,242	(302,242)	-
Net movement in funds	10	217,496	11,882	229,378	329,269	251,003	580,272
Reconciliation of funds:							
Fund balances at 1 April 2024		979,342	290,406	1,269,748	650,073	39,403	689,476
Fund balances at 31 March 2025		1,196,838	302,288	1,499,126	979,342	290,406	1,269,748

Annual Report March 2025

Annual Report March 2024

Annual Report March 2023



Treasurer Role Profile

Main Purpose

The Treasurer is a member of the Early Years Board. As with all Board members, the Treasurer helps to ensure the effective governance of the organisation and shares responsibility for its overall governance and strategic direction. This includes helping to develop the organisation's vision, values and strategic objectives in accordance with the Articles of Association and all relevant legal and regulatory requirements.

In addition, as Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee (F&GP), the Treasurer plays a key role in advising the Board on financial matters and overseeing the financial probity and regularity of the organisation.

Specific Responsibilities

- Chair the Finance and General Purposes Committee (F&GP).
- Play a leading role in the Board's review of, and actions relating to, its financial responsibilities.
- Advise the Board on how to discharge its financial responsibilities effectively.
- Support the development of long-term financial policy and planning, ensuring that Early Years uses its resources solely in pursuit of its charitable objectives and does not commit resources to activities outside those objectives.
- Work with the Chief Executive Officer and Director of Finance to ensure that appropriate financial reports are provided to the Board in a timely manner.
- Ensure that audited financial statements are presented to the Board annually.
- Act as a signing authority on behalf of the Board for financial matters.
- Comply with the standards and requirements expected of Board members as set out in the Governance Manual, company law and the Articles of Association.

Skills, Experience and Qualities Required

- Strong chairing, communication and interpersonal skills.
- Good knowledge of the sector.
- An understanding of finance and broader resource management issues.
- The ability to build effective working relationships with the Chair, Chief Executive Officer and other staff.
- Commitment to the vision and values of Early Years and an understanding of the organisation's culture.
- Understanding of relevant legislation and other rules governing Early Years.

What we're looking for

- Openness, objectivity and high standards of integrity.
- Broad understanding of the charity sector, particularly governance arrangements.
- Flexibility and time commitment – four meetings of the Finance and General Purposes Committee per calendar year and four meetings of the full Board per year.

Eligibility

Candidates must disclose any information about their personal or professional life which in the Trustee Board's perception could bring Early Years into disrepute, including removals from previous governance roles, current or previous membership of organisations which may conflict with the aims, principles and values of the organisation, or behaviour which might be seen to undermine public confidence and trust.

Candidates must also disclose if they have been convicted of a crime, which debars them from acting as a company director, or they are an undischarged bankrupt or disqualified to act as a company director.

Candidates must disclose any information, which could give rise to a perception of conflict of interest with their role as an Early Years Board Member. This will not necessarily result in an inability to serve on the Board.

Candidates may not have been disqualified by a court from being a director, nor be an undischarged bankrupt. If either of these conditions apply, court permission is needed. Candidates must be over the age of 16.

The application process

For a confidential discussion about the position in the first instance, please contact Engage Director Patrick Minne, patrick@co3.org.uk 07792 509003.

1. Candidates are asked to provide a full CV by email to Engage by **noon on Thursday 22 October 2026** to **apply@engageexec.co.uk**.
2. Engage will submit your application to the Early Years Board panel who will shortlist candidates.
3. Shortlisted candidates will be invited to meet the panel for a two-way discussion about their candidacy – a 'Conversation with a Purpose'. These meetings are likely to be scheduled fortnight beginning 26 October 2026.
4. The preferred candidate will be recommended to the Board by the panel for ratification by vote at the September Board Meeting in late September.
5. The appointment will be fully ratified at the AGM in October.





Please address any enquiries relating to the advertised position to Early Years' recruitment partners:

Patrick Minne Tel: 07792 509003 or
Lesley Dugan-Clarke Tel: 07734 378618



Email: apply@engageexec.co.uk

www.engageexec.co.uk

Enquiries unrelated to this recruitment can be addressed to:

Early Years
6c Wildflower Way
Apollo Road
Boucher Road
Belfast, BT12 6TA

T: +44 (0)28 9066 2825
E: info@early-years.org

Company Registration Number: NI023257; Charity Registration Number: 105832

Aug-26