



annual report  
2016









## Our Vision

Every young child is thriving and learning in quality early childhood settings.

## Our Mission

Our mission is to inspire and enable members to provide quality experiences for young children and their families in their settings.

## Our Values

As a membership based organisation we value:

- Children as competent learners and as citizens with rights
- Parents as champions and as the most important people in the lives of children
- Early childhood professionals, their commitment, dedication and professionalism in working with young children and their families
- Play as a right and as a key learning pathway in the lives of children
- Collaborative working to achieve our aims and bring about change
- Knowledge building and sharing to inform, enrich and empower
- Integrity, respect and ethical behaviour at the heart of how we work





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# Message from Chairperson

Our #VoteforChildcare campaign ahead of the February 2016 general election received significant buy-in across the political divide. However, the budget investment did not match our expectations by a long shot. Yet again.

On the positive side, the roll-out of the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) and the Affordable Childcare Scheme (ACS) were cornerstone developments in 2016, and although both are still in their early stages, both are important initiatives that require ongoing consultation with our sector. As always, the people with the knowhow and energy to make bring such programmes into practice must be consulted and heeded from start to finish.

The agreement by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) to accept the principle of the 52-week model in the ACS was a significant policy win for us on behalf of our members and shows that Minister Zappone and her Department are listening.

However, while affordability, quality and sustainability are the three essential ingredients for success in this sector, the 'sustainability' element to the investment equation is sadly lacking. This is something we must address with every stakeholder and opinion leader impacting on the Irish childcare model in the current year.

Early Childhood Ireland continued to be the "go to" organisation for media in relation to questions about the cost, quality and delivery of early childhood care and education in Ireland. We will always talk about the importance of quality for children, affordability for parents and sustainability for services through our numerous interviews and media statements.

The general public continue to grapple with the high cost of childcare in contrast with the low wages to childcare workers, but

we did make headway in explaining the labour intensity required in caring for and educating young children, and the ratios of educator to child which must be adhered to. The importance and positive impact of good, quality early childhood education in shaping minds and futures was also a key message for us.

On the governance side, the withholding of funds raised through National Pyjama Day 2016 hit the headlines. From the moment a query was raised, the Board was steadfast, along with the CEO, to ensure we received the appropriate assurances from our partner charity that monies raised would be used for its intended purpose. I am glad to report that while this was a most uncomfortable position to be in for a little while, our reputation did not suffer. We used this experience to shape a new approach to choosing our charity partners for National Pyjama Day in future years, and we are currently being assisted by the Community Foundation for Ireland in this regard, with the three recipient charities to be announced shortly.

For me it is an honour and a privilege to serve as your chairperson, and I am never disappointed at the quality stories and experiences I see through our child centred, play based early years curriculum which allows children to shine. I have the privilege to lead a Board of exceptional volunteers. I want to use this opportunity to thank the staff and Teresa, our CEO of Early Childhood Ireland for a job well done in 2016.



**Jillian van Turnhout**  
Early Childhood Ireland  
Chairperson



# Message from CEO

I'd like to take up on Jillian's point on the essential ingredient of sustainability. It must be recognised that without it, we simply won't have a viable sector on which to hang any of the Government promises, policies and programmes.

Not perturbed by this, last year, we continued to build on our 'Doing the Sums' report in order to ensure that the cost of providing high quality early years remains high on the policy agenda. All this was done in the context of our work on professionalising the sector. Workforce planning is a priority for 2017 if we want to recruit and retain the best people in this sector, as is capacity planning of early years and school age childcare to prevent displacement and to ensure viability.

There were some positive developments with the publication of the revised Childcare Regulations in Summer 2016 and the improvement of the inspection process thanks to recruitment of new personnel in the inspection team with experience and qualifications relating to early years' education. However, we still have a long way to go to make the inspection system as robust, consistent and frequent as it needs to be.

Our learning story and innovation awards continued to provide a showcase demonstrating what good child centred, play based, early childhood care and education looks like for parents. However, many of our members continue to be too shy about doing their own PR at local level. We plan to take that light out from under the bushel this year in a sector where you not only have to be doing a good job, but you have to be seen to be doing a good job.

In 2016 we continued to provide the highest quality services for our members, with fast turnarounds in our Garda Vetting service and plenty of networking and knowledge sharing via our conference and workshop programme.

We look forward to supporting you again in 2017 and please do keep in touch by joining our Policy & Implementation Panel, via our Facebook Page, by contributing to our Early Times magazine, or by phoning or calling into the office.

Together we must all push for quality, affordability AND sustainability of the Irish early years sector. Only then will we be supporting the needs and rights of young children properly.

I want to thank you for your continued membership and support throughout the year.



***Teresa Heeney***  
*Early Childhood Ireland*  
CEO



**3529**  
**members**

## ONLINE RENEWAL

0 → **50%**  
in 3 years

## SUPPLIER SOURCE



Member Purchasing  
Programme  
**380**  
members accessed quotes

## KIDS ACTIVE



Pilot Programme  
**30**  
Pre-Schools



## LITTLE VISTA LITE

**Little Vista LITE**

Management System  
for Member Services  
**360**  
expressions of interest



# SUPPORT POINT FOR MEMBERS



## Breakdown of Calls

**24%**  
REGULATION

**19%**  
POLICY &  
PROCEDURES

**16%**  
HR

**9%**  
PRACTICE

**7%**  
QUALIFICATIONS

**6%**  
INSPECTIONS

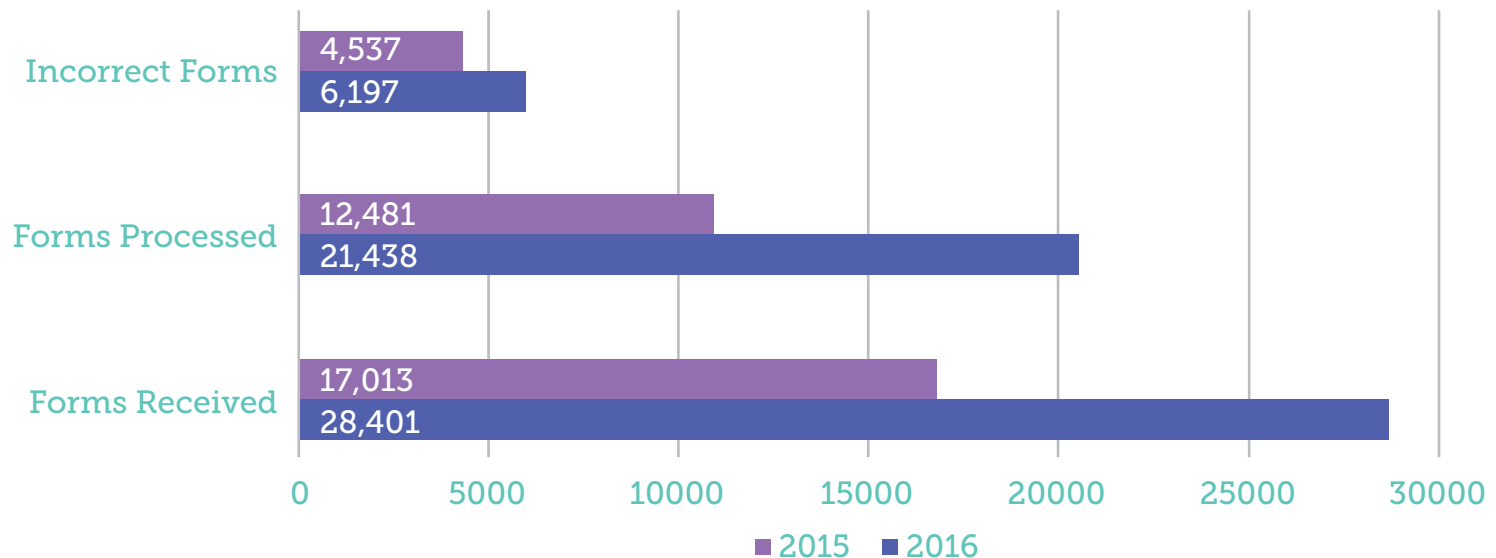
**20%**  
OTHER

Support Point  
Web Articles **31**

The number of applications received by the organisation **increased by 67%** with the increase starting from May onwards as services looked to ensure they were compliant with the new laws regarding vetting of individuals working with children.

Early Childhood Ireland achieved a **10-day working turnaround** in **80% of all cases**.

**2016**  
**-v-**  
**2015**



## Collaboration with Parents

Dissemination of **'Going to Big School'** information leaflets to parents in collaboration with the National Parents council



**over 60,000** leaflets distributed to parents **via ECI members**



# SUPPORTING MEMBERS TO DELIVER QUALITY EXPERIENCES AND OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

## Siolta Quality Assurance Programme



on-site visits



## Aistear and Siolta in Action



**4** workshops  
divided into  
**2 Phases**

**PHASE 1**  
the play based  
emergent curriculum

**PHASE 2**  
exploring assessing &  
sharing children's learning

## Outdoor Play and Movement



Outdoor  
Play Facebook

**4758**  
MEMBERS



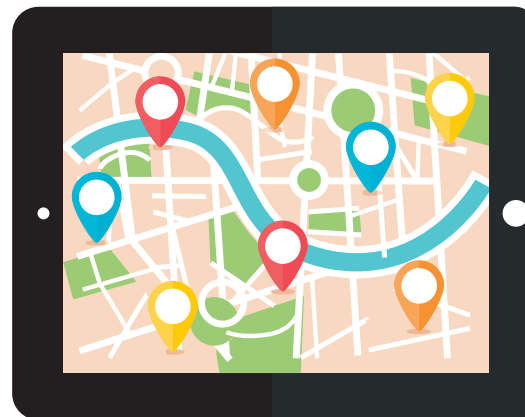


## Improving Quality for Under 3s



UNDER 3s  
**WEEK**

**500** people attended  
events in



Cork, Maynooth and Dublin



## Supporting Members Through Media



Inspiring practice series  
of Facebook pieces



**WEEKLY  
BLOGS**

**Quarterly  
magazine**





# EARLY CHILDHOOD IRELAND IS COLLABORATIVE AND INNOVATIVE IN CREATING AND SHARING LEARNING WITH OTHERS

## ECI/NUIM Degree Programme



**112**

students



## ECI Accredited Training



In total **Over 700**  
Learner Fund Level 5 & 6  
**learners**




In 2016  
**314 learners received**  
**MAJOR AWARDS**  
at Level 5 and 6

## Continuous Professional Learning

## PRACTICE FRAMEWORKS AND QUALITY SUPPORTS

101  
Events



1375  
PARTICIPANTS



## Diversity Quality and Inclusion

## EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY PROGRAMME

DCYA Commissioned Training of Trainers Programme


56 TRAINERS AS  
PARTICIPANTS  
in 2016



23 more scheduled  
for  
January  
2017



38,236 CHILDREN  
will benefit from  
the rollout of  
programme  
in 2017



## Marte Meo Training

**5 Early Childhood Ireland Staff** were trained as Marte Meo Colleague Trainers, to **further support** our members with their **interactions and relationships** in early childhood settings.

## Research Circles



4 Research  
Circles:

**Reggio Inspired Practice**  
**Outdoors**  
**Emergent Curriculum**  
**Reflective Practice**

## International Learning Collaboration


Erasmus KA1 International Study visits to  
Italy and Germany



**30**  
Early Childhood  
Trainers



**5** **ECI staff**  
**TRAINED**

 **52 people**  
**engaged in**  
INTRODUCTORY TRAINING

## Early Childhood Ireland Practice Awards

Profiling great EC Educators



**30 AWARD**  
**WINNERS**

**105**  
SUBMISSIONS

Learning Stories  
Innovation  
Siolta

Erasmus KA2

**2 successful** Erasmus consortium Bids

ChildInMind & Sequences



## Collaborations

### **Kildare County Childcare Committee (KCCC) - 3 projects**

1. Provided support to a member setting with their service for refugee children.
2. Develop a local community of practice network.
3. In collaboration with KCCC presented research on community of practice at ECI research day and OMEP Cork.

### **ECI is on the following Advisory Groups**

The DES Early Years Education Policy Unit Advisory Forum;  
The DCYA Early Years Forum;  
The BOBF Advisory Council;  
The Children's Rights Alliance Early Years Advisory Group;  
The National Children First Steering Group;  
The AIM Cross Sectoral Implementation Group

### **Arts in Education - 5 Partnerships with:**

The Arts Council,  
4 LA Arts Officer Collaborative Commission, Barbaro Arts Festival and Space Invaders Arts festival and Recreate

### **AIM collaboration**

As part of the supports delivered under AIM, ECI were part of a consortium with Froebel and NUI Maynooth, led by Mary Immaculate College which was responsible for the design, delivery and quality assurance of the Level 3 LINC programme. 900 new learners will shortly be recruited for year 2.

**Working collaboratively together with all other stakeholders/ initiatives/projects, nationally and (subject to availability of resources) locally**

Area Based Poverty Initiative,  
Tusla the Child and Family Agency,  
The Children and Young Peoples Services Committees,  
The Early Years Specialist Service,  
The Health Service Executive,  
The Inspectorate at the Department of Education and Skills,  
The National Early Years Inspectorate,  
The City and County Childcare Committees and Pobal

## ECI IS A STRONG AND EFFECTIVE ADVOCATE FOR MEMBERS, CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

**In 2016, we made the following submissions:**

Department of Finance Consultation on the Sugar-Sweetened Drinks (SSD) Tax;

The Development of a new Affordable Childcare Scheme

The National Women's Council of Ireland's Shadow Report to the CEDAW Committee

Budget 2017 Submission Time for Giant Leaps Toward Quality, Sustainability and Affordability in Irish Childcare

Department of Education and Skills Statement of Strategy 2016-2018

### Doing the Sums

*Doing the Sums: The Real Cost of Providing Childcare*, based on a survey of 596 childcare services, of whom 413 provided financial information. The report concluded that the average childcare service in Ireland, whether private or community, urban or rural, operates on a breakeven basis, with staff on low pay and many working part-time/38-week contracts. The report makes 10 recommendations to Government and policy makers ranging from to publish the National Early Years Strategy developing a capacity plan for the sector. The report was launch by the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Katherine Zappone TD, on 29th September and was attended by a wide range of stakeholders, ECI members and Oireachtas Members.




## Media Statistics

**532**  
MEDIA  
appearances  
and articles



**24,575**  
shares



on social media

**website  
visits  
430,347**



**JOBS**  
**171,663**  
views of our  
jobs board



## Most Visited Web Pages - Page Views

**171,663**  
JOBS BOARD

**31,425**  
BOOKINGS

**26,710**  
OUR WORK

**21,614**  
CHOOSING  
CHILDCARE

**18,675**  
BUDGET 2016  
BRIEFING

**17,909**  
QUALIFICATION  
REQUIREMENTS

**11,959**  
REGULATIONS 2016

**10,070**  
GARDA VETTING

**8,598**  
EDUCATION &  
TRAINING

**7,741**  
PLAY

## Emails Sent

**469,000**



**134**  
group  
emails



**6**  
ezines



**25**  
early  
times  
weekly

## #VoteForChildcare Election Campaign

The campaign used the hashtag **#VoteForChildcare** and it was trending on the night of the final Leader's Debate.

The **#VoteForChildcare** door hanger was distributed by Early Childhood Ireland's members to **100,000 parents** nationwide.

The **#VoteForChildcare** campaign video calling for action on childcare was watched **99,909 times**

Countless settings around the country supported the campaign by making a poster with **#VoteForChildcare** on it.

The campaign reached out to **412 politicians** running for election, and many of those politicians lent their support to the campaign.





# Governance Statement

In light of the negative media coverage of the charity sector in 2016 we want to assure our members that we take Governance very seriously in Early Childhood Ireland.

Our Board is made up of professionals within our own sector and the wider sector to ensure that we have the skills necessary to guide and direct the organisation in line with our constitution. Susan Selfridge, Head of Membership and Operations, is the Company Secretary.

The Audit committee, is a sub-committee of the board and also has an independent Solicitor in situ. Their terms of reference include finance, risk assessment and governance. They review the finances of the organisation on a regular basis and report back to the full board.

The accounts are audited annually by Gerard O'Rourke & Company, Castle Street, Kells, Co. Meath. Our 2015 and 2016 accounts have been prepared in line with FRS102. Accounts are filed annually with the Companies Registration Office. Audited accounts from 2012 are available to view on our website. In addition, we are audited annually by Pobal.

Our annual report gives an update on key infographics for the year along with a summary of the finances.

We have adopted the Governance code and are on the journey to completion. Expected completion date is December 2017.

We are registered and up to date on our reporting requirements with the Charities Regulatory Authority, the Companies Registration Office and the Lobbying Act.

For any governance queries please contact our Chairperson at [chair@earlychildhoodireland.ie](mailto:chair@earlychildhoodireland.ie) or Susan Selfridge, Head of Membership and Operations at [sselfridge@earlychildhoodireland.ie](mailto:sselfridge@earlychildhoodireland.ie) or phone **087 771 9827**

<b>Companies Office Number</b>	506235
<b>Charity Number</b>	CHY 1998
<b>Registered Charity Number</b>	20078904

# Board Members



*Jillian van Turnhout*  
Early Childhood Ireland  
Chairperson



*Catherine Byrne*  
Early Childhood Ireland



*Georga Dowling*  
Early Childhood Ireland



*Liam Fahy*  
Early Childhood Ireland



*Martina Murphy*  
Early Childhood Ireland



*Catherine O'Brien*  
Early Childhood Ireland



*Sally O'Donnell*  
Early Childhood Ireland



*Naoimh O'Dwyer*  
Early Childhood Ireland



*Thomas Walsh*  
Early Childhood Ireland

# Financial Review

## Auditors

Our Auditors, Gerard O'Rorke & Company have prepared the Statutory Accounts for the period ended 31st December 2016 in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2014.

These were approved by the Board of Directors on 2nd March 2017.

The full set of Audited Accounts are available from the offices of Early Childhood Ireland at Hainault House, Belgard Square, Tallaght, Dublin 24. Copies will be available at the AGM on the 1st April 2017 in UCD.

## Financial Data

A summary version of the Income, Expenditure and Balance Sheet for Early Childhood Ireland for 2016 versus 2015 is set out below.

INCOME SUMMARY	2016			2015		
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
Government Funding	231,307	1,190,000	1,421,307	272,318	1,190,000	1,462,318
European Funding	24,708	36,343	61,051		31,640	31,640
Membership	497,924		497,924	493,408		493,408
Training	145,981		145,981	190,282	421,859	612,141
Resources & Publications	195,320		195,320	170,365		170,365
Affinities/Sponsorship/Partnerships	81,673		81,673	173,208		173,208
Pyjama Day	58,211		58,211	58,062		58,062
Conferences/Research Day/Seminars	440,234		440,234	28,336		28,336
Consultancy/Mentoring/Other	13,738		13,738	5,509		5,509
LINC Programme	48,477		48,477	-	-	-
Interest Income	720		720	13,550		13,550
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>1,738,292</b>	<b>1,226,343</b>	<b>2,964,635</b>	<b>1,405,037</b>	<b>1,643,499</b>	<b>3,048,536</b>

### Notes on Variances against 2015 figures:

- Government Funding: - €41,011
  - » Tulsa funding decreased by 11% (-15k)
  - » Staff member on secondment to NCCA in 2015 (-35k)
  - » Additional funding secured for Garda Vetting in 2016 (+9k)
- European Funding: + €29,411
  - » We are partners on two Erasmus projects with a 2year duration (14k)
  - » Mobility weeks (14k)
- Training: - €466,160
  - » The decrease represents the end of the Training fund for accredited L5 and L6 training.
- Resources & Publication: + €24,955
  - » Expansion of products available on the online shop
- Affinities/Sponsorship/Partnerships: - €91,535
  - » Decrease in general sponsorship income
- Conferences/Seminars: + €411,898
- EECERA conference corresponding expenditure line to run the event, generating a surplus of 40k
- Consultancy/Mentoring/Other: + €8,229
  - » Financial management services for Recreate €5k
- LINC Programme: + €48,477
  - » Corresponding expenditure line for ICT development of the application module for AIM LINC training
- Interest Income: - €12,830
  - » Poor interest rates available for deposit accounts.



EXPENDITURE SUMMARY	2016			2015		
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
Permanent Staff & Associated Costs	721,171	972,272	1,693,443	417,513	1,393,163	1,810,676
Temporary Staff	74,814		74,814	287,450		287,450
Mobility Training		36,343	36,343	29,698		29,698
Communications	76,528	37,541	114,069	52,138	41,639	93,777
ICT	53,835	34,523	88,358	54,323	41,068	95,391
Print & Design	122,149	20,290	142,439	123,435	8,100	131,535
Training & Events	475,171	18,222	493,393	112,589	80,971	193,560
LINC Programme	32,066		32,066	-	-	-
Professional Fees	40,024	28,998	69,022	71,839	2,920	74,759
Finance/Depreciation/Sundry	113,047	432	113,479	99,912	281	100,193
Facilities	116,217	77,722	193,939	117,163	75,357	192,520
Pyjama Day	58,211		58,211	58,354		58,354
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>1,883,232</b>	<b>1,226,343</b>	<b>3,109,575</b>	<b>1,424,414</b>	<b>1,643,499</b>	<b>3,067,913</b>
<b>Surplus/Deficit for the Year</b>			<b>-144,940</b>			<b>-19,376</b>

### Notes on Variances against 2015 figures:

- Permanent Staff & Costs: - €117,233
  - » Decrease in staff members in 2016 due to leaving/retiring, no replacements
- Temporary Staff: - €212,636
  - » Reduction in number of fixed term contracts for accredited training
- Mobility Training: + €6,645
  - » Costs corresponds to increased funding for study weeks
- Communications: + €20,292
  - » Increased postage costs
- ICT: - €7,033
  - » Reduction in software renewals purchases
- Print & Design: + €10,907
  - » Printing of resources for members, magazine, childcare regulations, guide to DES inspections, General Election
- Training & Events: + €299,833
  - » Expenditure for EECERA 359k, offset by reduction in venues for accredited training
- LINC: Increase of €32,066
  - » Corresponding income line for reimbursement of this expenditure
- Professional Fees: - €5,737
  - » Reduction in use of outside expertise
- Finance/Depreciation/Sundry: + €13,286
  - » Full year cost for members purchasing platform (6.5k)
  - » Bad debt provision (5k)

BALANCE SHEET	2016	2015
<b>Assets Employed</b>		
Fixed Assets	176,586	220,209
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Stock	47,709	34,381
Debtors and Prepayments	209,480	139,592
Cash at Bank and on Hand	2,205,465	2,066,952
Creditors (Amounts falling due within 1 year)	736,240	415,974
Net Current Assets	1,726,414	1,824,951
	<b>1,903,000</b>	<b>2,045,160</b>
<b>Financed by:</b>		
Revenue Reserves	61,676	206,616
Capital Reserves	1,841,324	1,838,544
	<b>1,903,000</b>	<b>2,045,160</b>


### Notes on Variances against 2015 figures:

- Fixed assets: - €43,623
  - » Limited expenditure on additions, full depreciation of existing assets
- Stock: + €13,328
  - » Increase of product lines and bulk purchasing
- Debtors & prepayments: + €69,888
  - » Aged debtor + €90k - 74.5k not due for payment at year end
  - » Increase in bad debt provision -€5k
  - » Prepayment -15k
- Cash at hand/Bank + €138,513
  - » Cashflow change, timing of membership renewal
- Creditors falling due within one year + €320,266
  - » Aged Creditors -59k
  - » Deferred membership income + 331k
  - » Pyjama Day fund 2016 + 250k
  - » Revenue P30 -8k
  - » Deferred grant income of +68k
  - » Accruals of -40k
- Revenue Reserves -€144,940
  - » Reduced by the deficit for 2016
- Capital Reserves + €2,780
  - » Increased with the voluntary wind up of IPPA









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An Roinn Leanaí  
agus Gnóthai Óige  
Department of  
Children and Youth Affairs



**pobal**  
government supporting communities

early   
**childhood**  
ireland