



**Childcare
Committee**
County Kildare

Coiste Cúram Páistí Chontae Chill Dara



2025

Annual Report



An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,
Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige
Department of Children, Equality,
Disability, Integration and Youth



pobal

government supporting communities

Table of Contents

Company Information	2
Foreword from our Chairperson	3
A Message from our CEO	4
About Kildare County Childcare	5
Our Structure	6
Salary Scales	6
Our Governance	7
Our Funding	7
2025 End of Year Progress Report	8
Progress/Achievements	8
Changes/Obstacles	8
Highlights/Successes	8
Patterns/Trends	9
National/Regional Agencies and Stakeholders	9
Local Agencies and Stakeholders	9
Additional Actions	10
Governance	10
Staffing	11
Financial Management	12
Conclusion	12

Company Information

Address	Unit 21 Thompson Enterprise Centre Clane Business Park Clane Co. Kildare W91 E6NY
Contact	Web: www.kccc.ie Email: info@kccc.ie Tel: 045 861307
Company Registration Number	355991
Charitable Status Number	15585
Registered Charity Number	20054175
Revenue Employers Number	6375991Q
Company Secretary	Edel Smyth
Directors (*Date resigned)	Ed Drew Edel Smyth Yvonne Darragh Nicola McDonnell Raymond Fullam Edelle McMonagle
Company Auditor	Patrick Lane & Co Chartered Accountants Registered Auditors 69 Main Street Blackrock Co. Dublin A94N6D0 Tel: +353 (0)86 8153157 Email: Patrick.lane@patricklane.com
Bankers	Allied Irish Bank 41 South Main Street Naas Co. Kildare Tel: 045 879136

A Foreword from our Chairperson



My name is Ed Drew and I was appointed Chairperson of The Kildare County Childcare Committee (KCCC) in December 2022. It is a pleasure for me to welcome you to the 2025 annual report.

During 2025, KCCC continued to demonstrate that we are a resilient, adaptable and flexible organisation that has met all its objectives contained within the Statement of Work.

Our mission and our Core values demonstrate the type of organisation we aim to be:

“KCCC strives to ensure that early childhood is understood as a significant and distinct time in life that must be valued, nurtured and respected, and that every child in Kildare has equal access to the highest quality education and childcare experiences within their local communities”.

Child Centred: Everything we do is driven by the welfare of children.

Inclusive: We value the diversity within our local communities in County Kildare and promote opportunities for participation and equal access for all.

Respectful: We listen and treat everyone fairly keeping an open mind.

Collaborative: Together we are better and create greater impact.

Accountable: We are responsible for our decisions and contributions.

Supportive: We are encouraging, helpful and seek to bring value to all we engage with.

I'd like to extend my thanks and gratitude to all the staff in KCCC who work tirelessly to promote the highest standard of childcare in this county. As Chair and as a father of three young children, I cannot thank you all enough.

I look forward to working with all in 2026 and continuing to provide a wonderful, child centred, inclusive, respectful, collaborative, accountable and supportive service.

Sincerely,

Ed Drew

Chairperson, KCCC

Message from our CEO



It is with great pride we publish our 23rd Kildare County Childcare Committee Annual Report for 2025. Consistently, for the past 23 years, the KCCC team have completed all actions as set out by the DCDE in our Statement of Work to a high standard and 2025 was no exception. As you will see in this report, we completed a number of additional actions meeting the emergent needs of service providers, families and children locally, including providing dedicated supports to children and families living in emergency accommodation centres through interagency collaboration with Kildare Children and Young People's Services Committee.

We continued to navigate the fast-changing ECCE sector with a flexible approach, aiming to meet the individual and group needs of children and families in Kildare.

Our team worked closely with a range of support agencies to fulfil our Statement of Work

and meet our Strategic Goals. In 2025, we engaged in an Arts & Ecology Project research in collaboration with Kildare County Council. Our Annual Conference included inputs from NCCA, LINC, Better Start, SETU, and Barnardos, whilst our Communities of Professional Practice were supported by Kildare Sports Partnership and Sligo Woodland School.

We collaborated with the Department of Social Protection and Jobs Ireland to promote childcare as a career path.

KCCC continue to collaborate with the LAIT team to bring support Ukrainian families in the county.

A special thanks to our whole KCCC team on a fantastic year. Your commitment and dedication was a key driver in providing a high level of support, guidance and training. Additionally, thank you to our Board members for your commitment to KCCC in a voluntary capacity. We are grateful for your service and your commitment to good governance that supported me and our team to continue to meet and exceed our actions in 2025 and beyond. We send well wishes to staff who moved on in 2025 and thank them for their contribution during their time with Kildare County Childcare Committee.

Our team would like to thank everyone involved in the childcare sector in Kildare who, every year, go above and beyond in supporting all children and families to access childcare. Your passion, endless commitment and positivity always shine through when we engage with you all. We do not take it for granted that we have such a dedicated group of professionals, who support KCCC's mission, in striving to ensure that early childhood is understood as a significant and distinct time in life that must be valued, nurtured and respected so that every child and their families in Kildare have equal access to the highest quality childcare within their local communities.

Julie McNamara

CEO

About Kildare County Childcare Committee

Our Vision

Through the leadership of Kildare County Childcare Committee, early childhood is understood as a significant and distinct time in life that must be valued, nurtured and respected, where every child in Kildare has equal access to the highest quality education and childcare experiences within their local communities.

Our Mission

KCCC strives to ensure that early childhood is understood as a significant and distinct time in life that must be valued, nurtured and respected, and that every child in Kildare has equal access to the highest quality education and childcare experiences within their local communities.

Our Values

Kildare County Childcare Committee (KCCC) have agreed the following Organisational Values

As a member of KCCC, directors promise to abide by the fundamental values that underpin all the activities of this organisation.

Child Centred: Everything we do is driven by the welfare of children.

Inclusive: We value the diversity within our local communities in County Kildare and promote opportunities for participation and equal access for all.

Respectful: We listen and treat everyone fairly keeping an open mind.

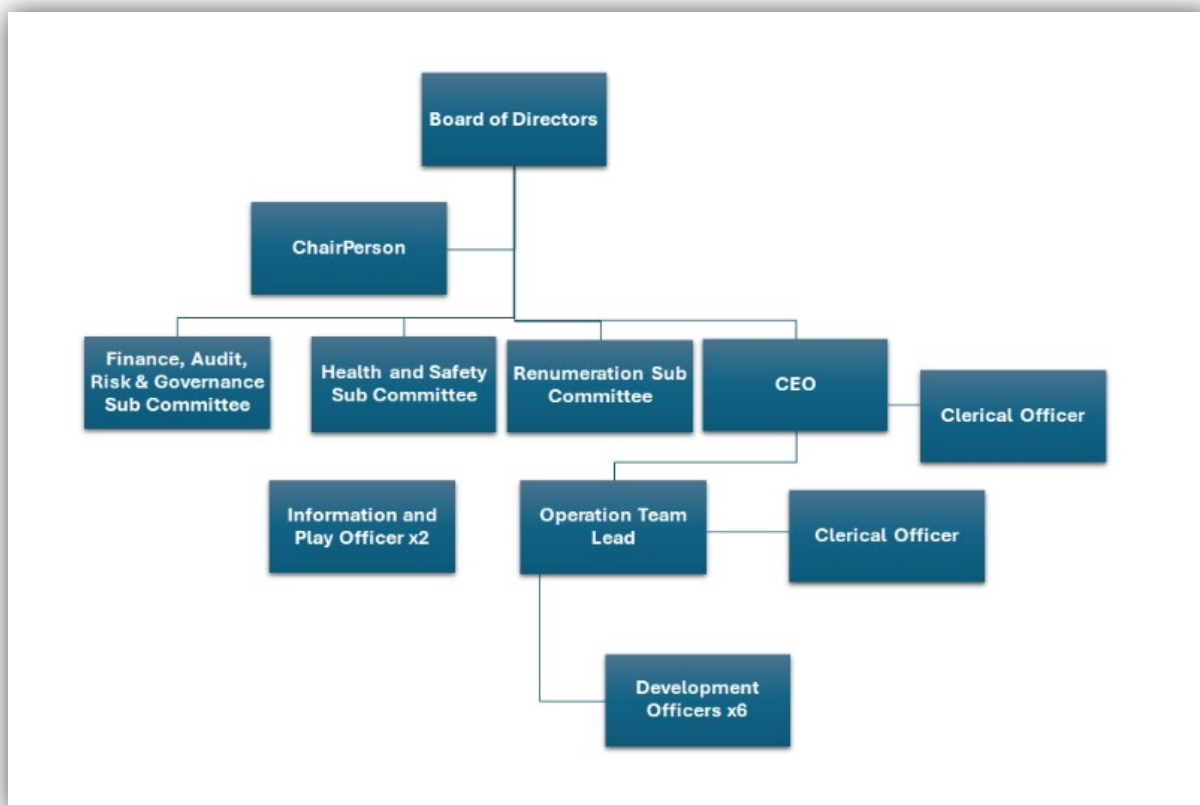
Collaborative: Together we are better and create a greater impact.

Accountable: We are responsible for our decisions and contributions.

Supportive: We are encouraging, helpful and seek to bring value to all we engage with

Our Structure

We are operated as a not-for-profit organisation, governed by a Board of Directors.



KCCC Salary Scales

Childcare Committee Salary Scales are aligned to local authority salary scales, which were as follows as at 1st August 2025; source Forsa.ie.

Senior executive officer/county & city librarian/head of information systems/financial accountant/management accountant/financial & management accountant
€80,967 – €81,689 – €84,866 – €88,063 – €91,266 – €94,435 – €97,624 – €101,240 (LSI1) – €107,004 (LSI2)
Grade 7 – Administrative officer/senior executive librarian
€60,011 – €61,480 – €63,194 – €64,914 – €66,634 – €68,170 – €69,745 – €71,269 – €72,790 – €75,395 (LSI1) – €78,015 (LSI2)
Grade 6 – Senior staff officer/executive librarian/senior legal assistant/clerk of works/building inspector
€57,322 – €58,689 – €60,356 – €63,491 – €65,363 – €67,690 (LSI1) – €70,030 (LSI2)
Grade 5 – Staff officer/librarian/legal assistant
€51,722 – €53,266 – €54,844 – €56,454 – €58,076 – €59,967 (LSI1) – €61,865 (LSI2)
Grade 4 – Assistant staff officer/senior library assistant
€35,613 – €37,740 – €40,759 – €42,741 – €44,475 – €46,153 – €48,417 – €50,056 – €51,722 – €53,296 (LSI1) – €54,911 (LSI2)
Grade 3 – Clerical officer/library assistant/branch librarian*
€31,119 – €32,868 – €33,302 – €34,174 – €35,452 – €36,731 – €38,010 – €38,939 – €39,992 – €41,211 – €42,078 – €43,289 – €44,506 – €46,797 – €48,424 (LSI1)

Our Governance

Kildare County Childcare Committee has adopted the Charities Governance Code.

See <https://www.charitiesregulator.ie/en>

We seek to offer transparency on all aspects of our organisation. Full information on all of the following areas is available on our website (click to follow links):

Our Board & Staff: <https://www.kccc.ie/Our-Members>

Our Financial Records and Annual Reports: <https://www.kccc.ie/Governance/>

Our Complaints Procedure: <https://www.kccc.ie/Governance/Complaints>

Our Privacy Policy: <https://www.kccc.ie/Privacy-Policy>

Our Funding

We are funded directly by Pobal, a government agency (<https://www.pobal.ie/>), with close operational links with the Department of Children, Disability, and Equality, (DCDE).

<https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-children-disability-and-equality/>

Kildare County Childcare Committee

2025 End of Year Progress Report

1. CCC reflection on overall progress/achievement to date in delivery of 2025

LIP/Statement of Work

KCCC has made strong progress in delivering its 2025 Strategic Objectives. Significant achievements include comprehensive supports to ELC and SAC services across compliance, pre-registration, pre-inspection, and post-inspection processes, all of which were completed with high engagement. Capacity-building workshops—including Irish language supports, safeguarding training, and Communities of Professional Practice—were well attended and positively received. KCCC also delivered targeted support to childminders through the Childminding Development Grant (CMDG), pre-registration guidance, and compliance assistance.

Collaborations with national agencies, local stakeholders, and community groups contributed to successful initiatives such as the Arts & Ecology Project and inclusion-focused conferences, strengthening sector capacity and quality.

2. Details of any changes/obstacles that impacted on the work of the CCC

While the majority of actions progressed as planned, some activities—particularly governance, finance, and case-management training—were delayed pending direction from DCDE.

Additional challenges included variable engagement from some childminders and service capacity pressures across the county. These were managed through flexible responses and targeted supports; however, they highlight areas where sustained attention will be required to maintain sectoral development.

3. Details of key highlights/successes identified in the six-month period

Key successes for this period include:

- Strong participation and positive feedback from programme readiness supports and workshops; additional sessions were requested.
- Fee table approvals, QIPP supports, Tusla re-registrations, CAPA supports, and increased Critical Incidents session attendance.
- Six Learner Fund Bursary's completed.
- Delivery of four fully booked Updated Aistear workshops.
- Pre-registration training and a childminder well-being event in October with strong engagement.
- A recruitment and advertising workshop for services facing staffing and capacity challenges.
- Fully booked DLP training in September.
- Capacity-building support through an online database of available childcare places.

- Communities of Professional Practice bringing 11 services together to enhance quality in outdoor learning, physical literacy, and movement.
- Launch of the Arts & Ecology Project report, with plans to replicate the model for childminders and children nationally in 2026.
- Staff trained in Solihull
- Weekly bulletin distribution
- A Services Needs Survey undertaken in October to guide forward planning.
- Support provided to seven services for Bia Blasta applications
- Eleven childminders supported in securing CMDG funding.

4. Details of emerging patterns/trends identified in the six-month period

Several emerging trends were identified:

- Strong demand for updated Aistear workshops, particularly further support in documentation.
- Continued need for workshops introducing Irish to educators in English-medium settings with limited Irish language skills.
- CMDO survey findings indicating that concerns about commercial rates remain a barrier to childminders progressing to Tusla registration.
- Increased queries regarding 2026 school places, with some parents seeking an additional preschool year due to unavailability of primary school places.
- Requests for Core Funding workshops, policy and procedure training, and ECCE supports, alongside concerns about reduced service capacity linked to lower registrations.

5. List the other national and regional agencies and stakeholders collaborated with in July to December 2025

Better Start, NCCA, Barnardo's, Pobal, DCDE, LINC, NUIM, SETU, CCI, Tusla.

6. List the other local CCCs, agencies and stakeholders collaborated with in July to December 2025

NCCA, CFSN, CYPSC, Tusla, Kildare Leader Partnership, Kildare Sports Partnership, Kildare County Council, Creative Places Athy, Sligo Woodland School, Barnardos, Department of Social Protection, Galway CCC, NUI Maynooth, Cross and Passion College Kilcullen, Local Interagency Team, Public Health Nursing (PHN), Kildare Education Support Centre.

7. Provide examples of those collaborations that worked well or were deemed a success in terms of meeting the CCC priorities

- Arts & Ecology Project research launch in collaboration with Kildare County Council.

- KCCC Annual Conference in partnership with NCCA, LINC, Better Start, SETU, and Barnardos.
 - Communities of Professional Practice delivered with Kildare Sports Partnership and Sligo Woodland School.
 - Recruitment event and sector-wide vacancy promotion through collaboration with the Department of Social Protection and Jobs Ireland.
 - Collaborative supports with Better Start to assist services in meeting the needs of children.
 - A highly successful full-day Inclusion Conference on October 4th with contributions from Barnardos, Better Start, NU NUIM, NCCA.
 - KCCC continue to collaborate with the LAIT team to bring support Ukrainian families in the county.
-

8. Additional Actions / Local Needs Delivered Outside the LIP / Statement of Work

- During the reporting period, KCCC responded proactively to emerging local needs through a range of targeted initiatives delivered outside the LIP and Statement of Work.
- KCCC participated in the ESD Forum and provided tailored support to an early year setting in County Kildare in preparation for hosting a stand at the event. In December, KCCC collaborated with Public Health Nursing services to support Roma families in accessing appropriate childcare provision.
- In the second half of the year, all early year's services across the county were contacted via phone and email and supported in completing the Annual Early Years Sector Profile. In parallel, KCCC commenced engagement with service managers to establish a Managers Consultation Support Forum, aimed at strengthening leadership capacity and facilitating peer collaboration across the sector.
- The Early Years Initiative team, established in May 2025, delivered a programme of impactful, evidence-informed supports. These included onsite, trauma-informed, play-based stay-and-play sessions for parents and children, with a particular focus on Ukrainian families and those residing in IPAS and emergency accommodation settings. The team also distributed "My Play to Play" and toddler resource packs, supported existing parent and toddler groups, and promoted early literacy through a sustainable library initiative involving the distribution of donated books to children.
- In addition, the team collaborated with schools and early years services to support the inclusion of Ukrainian families and delivered information clinics in libraries and accommodation centres. These clinics provided guidance on accessing childcare, funding supports, and available places. The initiative was represented at a range of sectoral events, with ongoing monitoring and evaluation of programme data.

- Furthermore, a summer activities programme was coordinated and delivered across accommodation centres, comprising arts, music, storytelling, and cultural workshops in partnership with local organisations.
-

Governance

Board and Sub-Committee Meetings

A total of 12 Board and Sub-Committee meetings were held during 2025.

Board Membership and Structure

One director resigned in March 2025. Following this, KCCC undertook a targeted recruitment campaign through Activelink and social media platforms and engaged Boardmatch to support the process. As a result, three new directors were selected and will be co-opted to the Board in 2026, bringing expertise in finance and human resources. Recruitment is ongoing to secure additional Board members with legal expertise.

External business support consultants continue to provide financial management support to the Board. From 2026, quarterly financial reports will be presented to the Finance, Audit, Risk and Governance Sub-Committee (FARGSC), which will make recommendations to the full Board.

3. Board Challenges and Successes

A key challenge for the Board during 2025 was the recruitment of new directors, with associated costs. Despite this, KCCC continues to benefit from a committed and experienced Board of Directors who provide strategic oversight and guidance across finance, governance, human resources, and organisational development.

The recent recruitment of additional directors will strengthen Board capacity and enable a more effective distribution of responsibilities across sub-committees.

4. Staffing

KCCC experienced two staff resignations during 2025. In response, four new staff members were recruited, including three newly created positions (two Clerical Officers and one Project Manager), enhancing the organisation's operational capacity.

Staff engaged in a broad range of training and professional development initiatives, including Solihull Approach, Aistear, leading remote teams, trauma-informed practice, HIK Vision systems, manual handling, and First Aid.

In 2026, further training is planned, including refresher sessions in GDPR, Aistear, Restorative Practice, and a workshop addressing Misinformation, Disinformation, and Malinformation.

5. Financial Management

There was no variance between the budget projection and actual expenditure as of 31 December 2025. KCCC submitted three budget change requests during the year, primarily reflecting additional income received through addendums, as well as adjustments related to staff resignations and subsequent recruitment.

Financial management services are outsourced to external business consultants. Following a review, it has been recommended that KCCC transition to a dedicated financial management software system in 2026. In addition, a dedicated Chartered Accountant will be assigned to support financial oversight.

Monthly management accounts will be produced and formally reviewed and approved by the organisation.

6. Concluding Remarks – Key Learning from 2025

Key learning from 2025 highlighted the importance of adaptability and flexibility in delivering the Statement of Work. Effective forward planning and strong internal coordination were identified as critical to ensuring high-quality delivery of all actions.

Despite challenges, including unplanned additional actions and delays in communication, the team maintained a strong focus on achieving organisational goals. As a relatively new team, with six staff recruited since October 2023, there has been a significant emphasis on structured induction and knowledge development within a hybrid working environment.

The complexity of supporting services in areas such as Core Funding and Quality requires substantial time and expertise, alongside the demands of organisational governance. Balancing these responsibilities with increasing service demands has been challenging.

KCCC also observed a return to pre-COVID levels of engagement in training and conferences. The use of an annual service needs survey has proven effective in ensuring responsiveness to sector needs.

A review of the hybrid working policy, undertaken in consultation with staff and the Board, resulted in the introduction of a weekly anchor day to support collaboration, relationship-building, and effective onboarding. Hybrid working continues to support recruitment and retention.

7. Concluding Remarks – Influence on Future Planning

Learning from 2025 will directly inform future planning processes. Quarterly planning days will be introduced to support adaptability and responsiveness, while weekly Development Officer meetings will continue to facilitate effective delegation, problem-solving, and work plan adjustments.

The 2026 Statement of Work will be allocated based on team strengths, supported by a buddy system across roles. Sectoral events will be scheduled in line with service availability, avoiding peak operational periods.

Early collaboration with partner agencies will be prioritised, and the recruitment of a Clerical Officer will enhance administrative efficiency, allowing Development Officers to focus on core actions.

8. Concluding Remarks – Actions to be Implemented Differently

KCCC will place a stronger emphasis on strategic planning and proactive workload management. The organisation will continue to advocate for additional resources to address identified gaps, particularly in relation to the development of childcare infrastructure across County Kildare.

Recent mapping and research indicate a shortage of childcare provision, especially for children under three years of age and within community childcare services. While KCCC is recognised as a key agency in supporting service development, current resource limitations present ongoing challenges.

9. Concluding Remarks – Sectoral Impacts and Future Policy Considerations

Wider sectoral changes and policy developments have had a notable impact on childcare providers. The implementation of Employment Regulation Orders (ERO), while welcomed, has increased operational costs for services, alongside the introduction of auto-enrolment pension schemes and statutory sick pay.

Services remain constrained in their ability to increase fees, and the absence of a Fee Increase Approval (FIA) process in 2025 has limited their capacity to offset rising costs. Feedback from providers indicates that Core Funding does not fully meet these additional financial pressures.

Recruitment and retention continue to present significant challenges, impacting service capacity and quality. Difficulties in releasing staff for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) persist, despite CPD being included within Core Funding, due to the lack of a system to support staff cover.

Additional challenges include delays in childminder registration linked to commercial rates assessments, concerns regarding the publication of personal information, and the need for tailored eLearning supports for the National Childcare Scheme (NCS), as current training does not fully meet the needs of childminders.

10. Concluding Remarks – Additional Commentary

2025 was a dynamic and productive year for KCCC. Despite staffing changes, the organisation successfully expanded its team and secured funding to deliver outreach supports to emergency accommodation centres.

Board capacity was strengthened through the recruitment of three new directors with expertise in finance and human resources. KCCC continued to support the sector through a wide range of initiatives, including conferences, training programmes, and collaborative partnerships with key stakeholders such as NCCA, LINC, Barnardos, Better Start, and SETU.

Key achievements included the successful launch of the Art and Ecology initiative, delivery of the ESD Forum in Maynooth, and Communities of Practice in areas such as outdoor learning and physical literacy in partnership with Kildare Sports Partnership.

Childminding supports were significantly enhanced, resulting in a 50% increase in registered childminders, delivery of four pre-registration training programmes, and the recruitment of a Childminding Development Officer. Additional supports included First Aid and Fire Safety training for prospective childminders.

Organisational improvements included office upgrades to enhance staff wellbeing, the implementation of improved hybrid working systems, and the introduction of new policies, including an AI policy. Financial systems were also strengthened through outsourcing to specialist providers.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2025 - ATTENDANCE RECORD							
NAME	Jan	March	April	July	AGM/Sept	October	Dec
Edel Smyth	0	1	0	1	1	1	1
Yvonne Darragh	1	1	1	0	0	0	1
Ed Drew	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Nicola McDonnell	1	1	0	1	1	1	1
Edelle McMonagle	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
Raymond Fullam	0	1	1	0	1	0	1
Ciaran Scanlon	1	0	R				

1 = Attended

0= Apology non-attendance

Blank space = no apology rcd

Resigned(R) - Date notified

Tel: 045 861307 **Email:** @kccc.ie **Web:** www.kccc.ie

RCN: 20054175 CRO: 35591 CHY: 15585

Chairperson: Ed Drew

Directors: Ed Drew, Edel Smyth, Yvonne Darragh, Nicola McDonnell, Raymond Fullam, Edelle McMonagle.

Company Secretary Edel Smyth



An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,
Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige
Department of Children, Equality,
Disability, Integration and Youth



pobal

government supporting communities