



PLAYBOARD NI

Trustee Information Pack



PlayBoard NI

Lead agency for children and young people's play in Northern Ireland

Voluntary Management Board Opportunity

Thank you for your interest in applying to join Playboard's Board of Directors as a Trustee. We do hope that your interest at this stage is further enhanced by this information pack, which is designed to provide you with background information on PlayBoard and the role, responsibilities, and commitment of its Trustees.

The position of Trustee offers a rewarding experience and the opportunity to make an important contribution to the play sector regionally, nationally and internationally and to make a real difference to the lives of children and young people.

If you think you have the skills we are seeking and if you are interested in working for a cause that prioritises children and their lives, please complete the application form, equal opportunities form, the disclosure of criminal convictions form and **return to jimmy.gillen@playboard.co.uk.**

We are currently seeking to fill up to two Trustee positions. If you have the skills, experience and motivation for this important role, we are confident that you will gain significant rewards through helping children and young people to develop and thrive through play, whilst also contributing to the realisation of social impact and supporting a much-loved organisation to thrive.

We particularly welcome applications from individuals with experience in one or more of the following areas

- ✓ Governance
- ✓ Finance
- ✓ HR
- ✓ Play delivery or development
- ✓ Minority ethnic issues
- ✓ Media and marketing
- ✓ Public sector service level agreements (SLAs)
- ✓ Business development.

Recommendations for new voluntary Board members will be submitted to the Board of Directors for their agreement. Newly appointed Trustees will be put forward for approval and voted onto PlayBoard's Board of Directors at its AGM in November 2024. Each new trustee will then receive an induction process in early November or December 2024.

If you are interested in this role, we would love to hear from you.

Yours sincerely,



Alan Herron
Chief Executive Officer





PlayBoard Voluntary Board Member Information and Application Pack

PlayBoard is an independent charity and the lead organisation for the development and promotion of children and young people's play in Northern Ireland.

Since its establishment in 1985, PlayBoard has been committed to supporting children and young people's play through a combination of:

- Service delivery and development
- Campaigning and lobbying
- Research, evaluation and awareness raising
- Working in partnership with others to put play on the agenda of policy makers and resource providers
- Promoting best practice in play and playwork
- Delivering play programmes.

A membership organisation, PlayBoard works closely with and provides support to over 1,700 members, all of whom are committed to helping us to achieve our goal of developing quality play opportunities that improve children and young people's lives across Northern Ireland.

As a rights-based organisation, we strongly believe that play is an intrinsic aspect of children and young people's lives. PlayBoard works from the premise that play is fundamental to a healthy and happy childhood. Play challenges and informs our understanding of children and young people because it views them as competent and confident human beings.

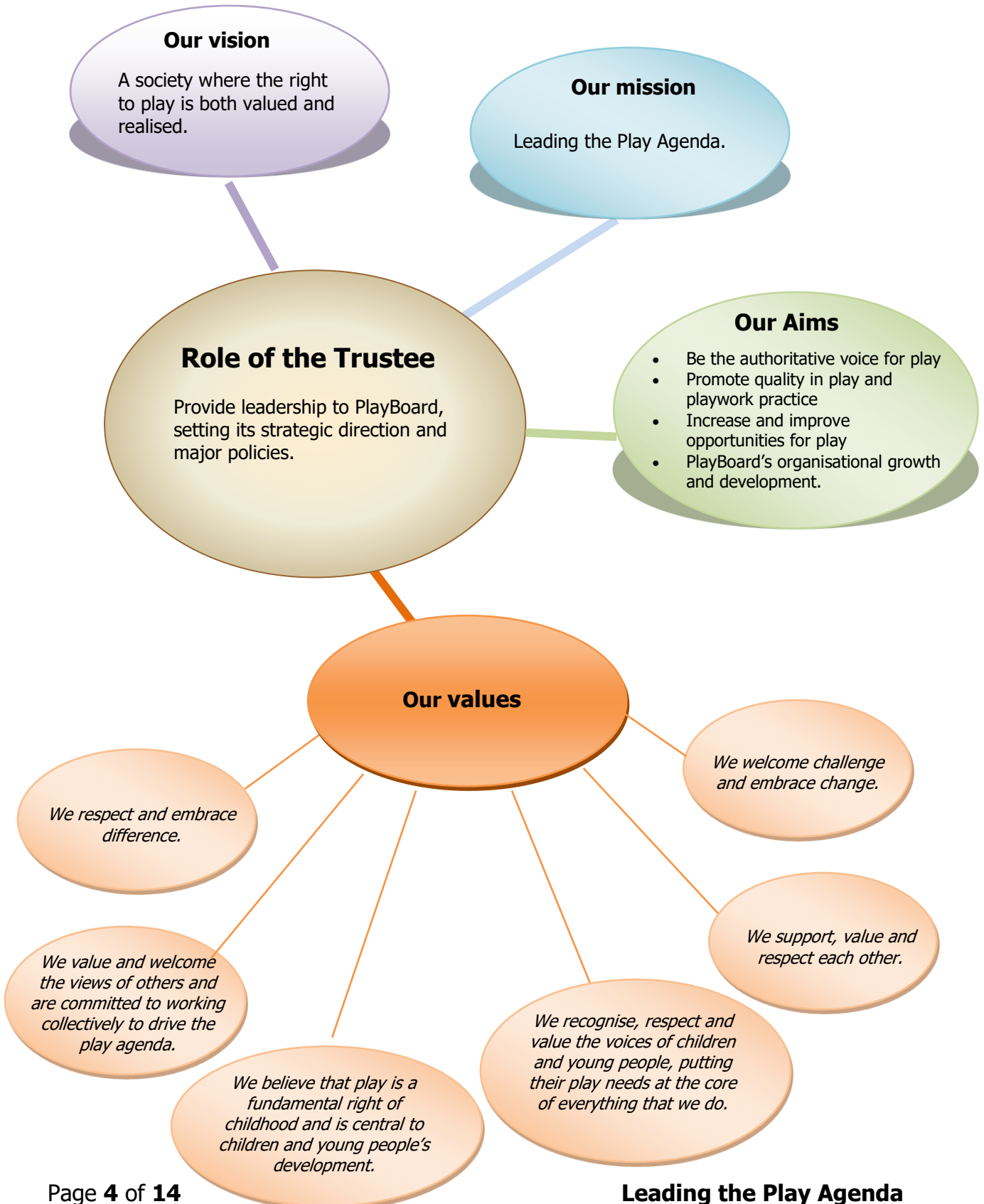
This position is further endorsed by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989). Article 31 declares:

"States Parties recognise the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate fully in cultural life and the arts. States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity".

ADVANCING ALL WE STAND FOR, BY LEADING THE PLAY AGENDA

PlayBoard NI

Lead agency for children & young people's play in Northern Ireland



PlayBoard's Outcomes:

Outcome 1

The knowledge, conditions and actions unpinning policy will be better informed about the importance of resourcing and planning for play. This will result in improved outcomes for children and young people.

Outcome 2

The knowledge base for play will be enhanced where this will inform better planning and improved service delivery. Evidence will shape and inform policy decisions and spend.

Outcome 3

The play volume will be turned up! More people will be aware of the benefits of play and this in turn will drive demand for better improved services.

Outcome 4

Improved play practice and quality play experiences for children.

Outcome 5

Professional recognition for playwork across the children's sector.

Outcome 6

Improved play practice and better opportunities for children.

Outcome 7

Better play experiences and opportunities for all children in particular children with disabilities or additional needs.

Outcome 8

PlayBoard will achieve cross sectoral apperception and investment in play.

Outcome 9

Increased profile for PlayBoard and greater opportunities for play in the Republic of Ireland.

Outcome 10

PlayBoard will be a strong, confident, fit for purpose organisation with strengthened profile and reach.

Outcome 11

PlayBoard will be outcome informed and outcome based in its decision making.

Outcome 12

PlayBoard have strong leadership, management and decision-making structures.

We will deliver on our outcomes by the following four aims:

1. Being the authoritative voice for play
2. Promoting quality in play and playwork practice
3. Increasing and improving opportunities and conditions for play
4. PlayBoard's organisational growth and development.

Each work stream has three focused objectives which include:

- ✓ Advocating for play
- ✓ Building our evidence based on practice and experience
- ✓ Strengthening our Voice
- ✓ Developing and delivering a quality framework suitable for a number of sectoral contexts
- ✓ Promoting and developing the Playwork workforce
- ✓ Delivering playwork
- ✓ Working with councils, schools and childcare settings to enhance understanding and knowledge of play and playwork
- ✓ Developing strategic alliances, collaborations and new partners to promote the health and inclusion benefits of play e.g. PHA, disability sector
- ✓ Enhancing our cross-border profile to share learning and develop new relationships and partnerships
- ✓ Advancing PlayBoard's economic growth
- ✓ Developing PlayBoard's competence, capability and capacity
- ✓ Enhancing Organisational leadership, culture and growth.

PlayBoard Board of Directors

The Executive Committee

- 1.0** The Executive Committee are both the Trustees of the Charity and Directors of the Company. In law, all the Directors are jointly and severally responsible for the conduct of the company and have a duty to care for it. All Directors are equal in the eyes of the law, regardless of their title or appointment.

The Executive Committee provides the overall leadership for the company, setting its strategic direction and major policies, appointing and supervising senior management, ensuring it complies with relevant laws and regulations and being accountable to its membership. The Executive Committee is ultimately responsible for the performance of PlayBoard.

The Executive Committee are elected from among PlayBoard's full members. The three Honorary Officers are invited to stand for election either from among PlayBoard's membership or from the wider field of association with membership organisations. Executive Committee and Board members are elected for a three-year term.

The Honorary Officers - Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Treasurer currently serve for a maximum term of three years with the option to extend to a second term totalling no more than six years.

2.0 Overall Purpose

The Board of Directors are responsible for the overall governance and strategic direction of PlayBoard, developing the organisations aims, objectives and goals in accordance with the governing document, legal and regulatory guidelines.

3.0 Main Duties and Responsibilities of the Executive Committee

The main duties and responsibilities of Board members are as follows:

- Ensuring that PlayBoard complies with legislative and regulatory requirements, and acts within the confines of its governing document.
- Acting in the best interest of PlayBoard, beneficiaries and future beneficiaries at all times avoiding any personal conflict of interest.
- Determining the overall direction and development of PlayBoard through good governance and clear strategic planning.
- Maintaining sound financial management of PlayBoard's resources, ensuring expenditure is in line with the organisations objects and

investment activities meet accepted standards and policies.

- Interviewing, appointing and monitoring the work and activities of paid staff.
- Ensuring the effective and efficient administration of PlayBoard and its resources, striving for best practice in good governance.
- Acting as a counter-signatory on PlayBoard cheques and any applications for funds, if appropriate.
- To maintain absolute confidentiality about all sensitive/confidential information received in the course of Board of Director's responsibilities to PlayBoard.

4.0 Accountable to

As the Executive Committee are responsible and liable for the governance and functioning of PlayBoard, they are accountable in varying degrees to a variety of stakeholders, including: its membership, service users, funders, government departments, Charity Commission for NI and Companies House.

5.0 Role Purpose

The role of each Board Member is;

- To promote the aims, objectives and values of PlayBoard, keeping within its charitable objectives.
- To take part in formulating and monitoring progress against the aims of PlayBoard.
- With other Board members to ensure that the policy and practices of PlayBoard are in keeping with its aims and values.
- With other Board members to ensure that the organisation functions within the legal and financial requirements of a charitable organisation and strives to achieve best practice.
- To bring an external perspective on PlayBoard.

6.0 Expectations of Board members

Board members will be expected to:

- Attend and participate in meetings on a regular basis, and special events as able.
- Participate on committees of the Board as necessary.
- Represent PlayBoard's vision, values, strategy and policies when performing your responsibilities in the organisation.
- Be alert to community concerns that can be addressed by PlayBoard's mission, objectives, and programmes.

- Carry out any tasks you agree to take on.
- Offer to lead if you have special skills.
- Be supportive of the Board and respect confidentiality.
- Act as an external ambassador for PlayBoard when required.
- Help communicate and promote PlayBoard’s mission and programmes to its membership and stakeholders.
- Understand the policies and procedures of PlayBoard.

7.0 What difference will you make?

This is an opportunity to be involved in a well-established organisation that has made an impact throughout Northern Ireland and beyond. You would be joining a well-established, welcoming and committed Board and a supportive, focused and caring organisation that holds children and young people at its core. You will play a pivotal role in shaping the strategic direction and future development of this successful charity.

8.0 Practicalities

Where the board meet: PlayBoard office: 7 Crescent Gardens, Belfast
BT7 1NS

Time of meetings: Currently on a Wednesday @ 4pm in PlayBoard office, however members may join on zoom if required.

Time commitment: Six meetings per year, which can last up to two hours.

There are also opportunities to serve on our Finance and Personnel subcommittee who meet four times per year or other as and when needed e.g. time limited/task focused sub-committees.

Expenses: This is a voluntary role. Board members will be reimbursed for travel and subsistence costs when carrying out PlayBoard business.

TRUSTEE

Role Description

Overall Purpose

Trustees are responsible for the overall governance and strategic direction of PlayBoard, developing the organisations aims, objectives and goals in accordance with the governing document, legal and regulatory guidelines.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

- Ensuring that PlayBoard complies with legislative and regulatory requirements, and acts within the confines of its governing document;
- Acting in the best interest of PlayBoard, beneficiaries and future beneficiaries at all times avoiding any personal conflict of interest;
- Determining the overall direction and development of PlayBoard through good governance and clear strategic planning;
- Maintaining sound financial management of PlayBoard's resources, ensuring expenditure is in line with the organisations' objects, and investment activities meet accepted standards and policies;
- Interviewing, appointing and monitoring the work and activities of paid staff;
- Ensuring the effective and efficient administration of PlayBoard and its resources, striving for best practice in good governance;
- Acting as a counter-signatory on PlayBoard cheques and any applications for funds, if appropriate;
- To maintain absolute confidentiality about all sensitive/confidential information received in the course of Board of Director's responsibilities to PlayBoard.

Accountable to:

As the Board is responsible and liable for the governance and functioning of PlayBoard, they are accountable in varying degrees to a variety of stakeholders, including; service users, members, funders, government departments and Companies House.

PLAYBOARD NI TRUSTEE

QUALITIES

- Be constructive and non-judgemental about other Board of Director's opinions in discussions.
- Be able to act reasonably and responsibly when undertaking Board duties.
- Be able to maintain confidentiality on sensitive and confidential information.
- Be empathetic to the values and ethics of PlayBoard.
- Be committed to preparing adequately for all meetings and to attending them regularly.
- Have the ability to advocate the needs of PlayBoard and not his/her own nominating body or agenda.
- Have a willingness to serve on at least one sub-committee.
- Have a willingness to attend occasional events, meetings on behalf of PlayBoard.
- Be committed to the principles of equity, diversity and interdependence.

PREFERRED SKILLS and KNOWLEDGE

- Previous experience of committee work.
- Awareness of the policy framework within which voluntary organisations operate.
- Good communication skills.
- Impartiality, fairness and the ability to respect confidences.
- Advocacy and negotiation skills.
- Excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to build sustain and influence relationships with external contacts and agencies with a wide range of interests.

TIME COMMITMENT

- An estimated time commitment for the role is **two hours per meeting x 6 meetings per year.**

Highlights of our work last year under each key strategic aim

Aim 1: Being the authoritative voice for play

- Strategic representation on 30+ networks, forums, partnerships including UK Play Safety Forum, UK Play Policy Forum, DoE Sectoral Partnerships, Network Youth NI, All Party Groupings, Childcare Partnerships, NICCY Participation Forum etc.
- Representing the school age childcare and play sector on the newly established Early Years and Childcare Strategy Reference Group and Stakeholder Forum.
- In partnership with the Mae Murray Foundation undertaking 'Let Me Play' an Inclusive Play Park Study and publication of subsequent report.
- Co-authoring of the UK Play Safety Forum statement 'Including Disabled Children in Play Provision', published and launched as part of UK 4 Nations Policy event, ongoing presentations to various forums and councils on inclusive play.
- Presented internationally on our work at 'Play on Early Education' conference in Athens, at the Children's Research Network conference in Dublin, online at the Australian National Sports Convention and at IPA World online events.
- Undertook consultation with children from school age childcare on behalf of DE on their vision for an Early Years and Childcare Strategy.
- Ongoing engagement with senior government officials across a range of departments aimed at enhancing the commitment to delivering quality play opportunities.
- Facilitated quarterly Play Development Forum meetings and site visits with council and DE.
- Increased social media followers across Facebook by 17% and Twitter by 5%.
- 12 E-Plays issued in year and 4 E-Play updates.
- Within the year, PlayBoard has increased its membership from 1,596 at the end of March 2023 to 1689 at the end of March 2024.

Aim 2: Promoting quality in play and playwork practice

- During the past year PlayBoard has worked hard to support the delivery and provision of CPD opportunities. In seeking to do this we have worked strategically with a range of partners including government departments, Childcare Partnerships, local authorities, training providers, colleges and employers to promote greater access to training and qualifications, greater choice of courses and greater access to variety of approaches to learning.
- Inclusion on newly formed Sectoral Partnership (Dept Economy driven) representing playwork. Five meetings attended.
- Input to the National Occupational Standards Review (4 Nations group, representing PETCs across the 4 Nations) and participation on PETCUK and PETCNI.

- The profile and professionalism of playwork has been enhanced, and training and practice has stimulated collaboration and cross-sectoral mobility within the children's workforce.
- DE Getting Ready to Learn (GRtL) – four webinars delivered in year to Early Years practitioners.
- Childcare Partnerships – face-to-face and online training specific to the school age childcare/play sector.
- Bright Start – ongoing quality, governance and monitoring support for 49 SAC projects. 25 cluster sessions were delivered reaching 250 participants.
- Early Years Development Funding allowed PlayBoard to deliver 2 x training sessions to 91 individuals representing 37 organisations. 37 Play Resource packs (small play equipment, Space to Play book and a number of play documents) distributed.
- Spaces to Be, OUR Generation project delivered 115 sessions to children & young people, practitioners and parents with 674 attending. 3 seminars were also delivered with 191 attending.

Aim 3: Increasing and improving opportunities and conditions for play

- Play delivery included 70 community play sessions for Newry, Mourne and Down District Council; 191 children in attendance at six pop up play sessions for Mid and East Antrim Borough Council; 3 Street Play sessions for Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council.
- We developed a partnership with Radius Housing and facilitated two pilot programmes for two new housing developments (indoor afterschool play / street play programmes).
- We were delighted to be approached by Maghaberry Prison to re-establish a play programme developed during DE's Play Matters programme. Sessions were held with fathers in the prison to highlight the importance of play, how play can reconnect families, and play planning for a Christmas Families Party.
- A focus this year was 'Play in times of Hardship' which became the theme for our annual AGM and seminar event. Staff presented on our new 'Play in times of Hardship' resource and low-cost play ideas. The resource has been very well utilised and received. We were pleased to receive support from DE who provided hard copy versions of the resource for distribution.
- Following this theme our internal Eco Committee linked in with local supermarkets over the Christmas period and staff provided play sacks for children and families which were distributed via local foodbanks.

Aim 4: PlayBoard's organisational growth and development

- Redevelopment of PlayBoard's website.
- This year seen the formation of four internal subgroups who are each progressing areas of work – Eco Committee, Play and Leisure Committee, Playday Committee and Fundraising Committee.

Over recent years, PlayBoard has developed its presence in the Republic of Ireland undertaking various strands of work including Play Strategy development with Kerry County Council, play training programmes with Cobh Youth Services and Dublin City Childcare Committee.

In seeking to enhance our presence in the Republic of Ireland, PlayBoard works in close partnership with National Childhood Network (NCN), pro-actively advocating for play and engaging with key stakeholders including political representatives, government officials, colleagues, and practitioners from across the children's sector.

PlayBoard staff team undertook a Strategic Planning Review Day aimed at enhancing staff awareness of the strategic vision. Several group exercises encouraged collective ownership and understanding of our operational activity and key aims. A key outcome of the day was a shared vision for the future of play and a desire to secure a Play Strategy and Play Sufficiency Duty for Northern Ireland.

PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS

PlayBoard's vision is of 'A society where the right to play is both valued and realised'. In seeking to achieve our vision, PlayBoard will continue to represent the voice of children, young people and the play sector, advocating and lobbying on their behalf with local and regional government officials, departments, Councillors and MLAs. PlayBoard will continue to build the capacity of the sector to fully engage with children and young people, providing play experiences that support the holistic development and overall health and well-being of children and young people through the provision of training and quality play projects.

PlayBoard will

- Design, develop and deliver play training programmes aimed at both the playwork sector as well as wider sectors that have an interest in, or an influence on play.
- Lead on the completion of research aimed at highlighting the impact of play on individuals and communities.
- Proactively engage with government Departments and Councils with a view to influencing policy and practice.
- Advocate and lobby for children and young people's right to play.
- Provide support, advice and guidance to all who has an interest on play.
- Deliver focused area-based community development projects centred on enhancing play experience within communities.

The three-year Strategic Plan for 2021-2024 has successfully finished its third year of activities. An annual operational plan was agreed for April 2024 - March 2025.

Some of the key challenges and changes for the next year include:

- Completion of the operational plan so that PlayBoard meets its strategic aims and objectives.
- Ongoing support to the play sector in recovering from the impact of Covid.
- Completion of contractual service level agreements in the delivery of face-to-face services.

- Continued focus on supporting the play sector regarding the impact of the Children and Young People’s Strategy.

PlayBoard has been awarded grant funding from the Department of Education to deliver, develop and further children and young people’s play throughout Northern Ireland. PlayBoard is recognised as the Department’s strategic partner for play in NI, a major achievement for PlayBoard, which no other organisation has achieved, and will play a vital role in PlayBoard’s strategic plan moving forward.

PlayBoard will look to develop both its strategic and operational plan to ensure that it is fit for purpose during the economic downturn, appraising different work methods and areas of delivery that will support the organisation in achieving its strategic aims.

PlayBoard Organisation Chart

