

Chairperson's Welcome

As Chairperson of the Children's Law Centre (CLC) and a board member of 6 years I am acutely aware of the important work carried out by the staff team and the impact it has had on children's lives.

Annually CLC works with around 3,000 children and young people, their parents, carers and professionals to provide legal advice, advocacy and representation so they can access the services to which they are entitled. We highlight to duty bearers where services are not meeting the assessed needs of children and young people, and we work in partnership with other representative organisations to campaign for better rights and equality of treatment for children and young people, particularly the most disadvantaged.

For almost 30 years, the Children's Law Centre has been working diligently for children and young people to defend their rights and their access to services. We continue to punch above our weight, having achieved some significant changes in promoting children's rights. This has included enabling those with disability and mental health needs to access services, and supporting those with assessed special educational needs to access the support they need to grow and thrive. We have also dealt with broader issues around the treatment of children and young people in custody, through to supporting the rights of children and young people who are care experienced, LGBTQ+, homeless, those from minority backgrounds and those with rare diseases.

As with all charities, our Board of Trustees provide vital support to this work – bringing a range of expertise that has enabled CLC to provide ongoing support to children and young people across Northern Ireland. They bring a range of skills and experience that drives our strategy, supports our staff team,



and contributes to the defence of children's rights.

With John O'Doherty recently taking over leadership of the centre as CEO, we have conducted a review of organisational governance, identifying key areas to improve the strengths of the charity even further. We are now seeking to recruit up to three new Trustees that will allow CLC to address both the skills gaps and the underrepresentation identified through a skills and representation audit of the Board.

New Trustees will participate in a full induction and ongoing governance training to support effective Board contribution. They will also benefit from developing their skills in charitable governance, as well as learning about our areas of work and the impact of disadvantage and poor decision making on children's lives. They can grow their knowledge and work collegiately with others within a growing network of people who support societal change and want to see how their contribution can make a difference.

If you feel you want to be part of an organisation that drives change to improve children's lives and helps build better futures, we would love to hear from you.

Alicia Toal
Chairperson

CLC's Strategic Plan 2022-25 can be downloaded [here](#)