

Summary of speech delivered by Joint Chief Executives at the NCMA Conference 2011



Catherine Farrell and Liz Bayram

NCMA Joint Chief Executives



Supporting members to provide high standards of care and learning for children

5 November 2011



**All our members provide the highest
standards of care and learning for children**



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NCMA's new strategy sets out how we will enable all our members to provide the highest standards of care and learning for children. And in the next few minutes we and some of NCMA's trustees will explain in more detail what that means for you as members.

We want you to do the best job possible for the children you look after

We know the challenges you face as professionals:

- To sustain your business in difficult times
- To be recognised as the professionals you are by parents and others
- To access the training and CPD you need to continuously develop

NCMA is here to support you



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All of us at NCMA recognise the fantastic job you do every day and the challenges you are facing and we want to start by thanking you for remaining committed to your profession and to NCMA over the last year.

STANDARDS

We want all our members to provide the highest standards of care and learning for children

- Ofsted Results
Outstanding 10% - Good 59%
- CSSIW registrations holding firm in Wales
- 51% of members are at level 3 or above



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We know, from your feedback as well as data from Ofsted and CSSIW that many of our members are already delivering outstanding care and learning.

Our plan to work in partnership with our members to establish and then maintain the highest standards for their profession, builds on this excellent practice.

We would like to introduce Alison Lodge, one of our trustees, who was a practising childminder, to say a few words about this aspect of our new plan.

“The Board recognised that our members’ wish for greater recognition of their professionalism and for support to further develop as professionals were key to our new strategy. We also recognised that one drove the other so could not be treated in isolation.

Alongside this, research of other sectors showed that a central tenet of every professional association was:

- *Standards setting for its members and supporting them to meet those standards*
- *Rewarding that commitment through greater member benefit*
- *and promoting their commitment to professionalism*

So that is why we are working with members to set the highest standards for their profession.

NCMA members will have a rigorous set of Professional Occupational Standards, based on the UK’s Occupational Standards for our sector, that apply to both England and Wales and are reflective of the minimum requirements set by both Ofsted and CSSIW.

These will set out the competencies, performance, knowledge, skill and behaviours that members believe demonstrate excellent practice.

They will be underpinned by CPD pathways that will support members to achieve those standards.

The standards will reflect the broad diversity of our members – recognising prior experience and learning, as well as formal qualifications and will eventually be linked to NCMA membership criteria that will reward members who work towards the highest standards.

Consultation events are happening at this moment and you can find out more by visiting the stand in the Oak Room.”

Thank you Alison

SUPPORT



All our members can meet those standards through learning, information and advice from NCMA



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NCMA has always worked to encourage as many of its members as possible to undertake training and CPD.

Why?

Because the better qualified you are, the better the care and learning you give to the children you look after. And because the more qualified our members are, the more likely they are to achieve good or outstanding inspection grades and to sustain their businesses.

We would like to introduce Amanda Calloway, another trustee who is a practising childminder in Wales, to talk about this aspect of the strategy.

“When the Board set its strategy a year ago, it was clear that whilst some NCMA members training and development needs were well supported via their local authority, others received little or no help.

So NCMA recognised that it needed to do more to fill this gap - by offering CPD support direct to all its members, as well as where it could via Local Authority contract delivery.

And that is becoming a reality. As well as CYPOP 5 we will soon be able to access the full level 3 diploma via NCMA as well as two new on-line training courses. A safeguarding course accredited by NSPCC and a course on Food Handling, which is nationally recognised and accredited.

I know some members do not think training and CPD is for them – they do not want course work and exams and believe their own experience as a practitioner is enough.

But speaking from experience, as a childminder who invests in professional development because it supports me to do the best job possible for the children I care for, I would say that you should not underestimate the personal sense of achievement and respect from other professionals that you gain along the way.

NCMA's strategy is clear it will not just focus on those members already undertaking CPD, but also establish CPD pathways that engage members who currently think it is not for them.

Our standards will recognise prior experience as well as formal learning. Our CPD offer will not just be formal qualifications, it will also be practice based workshops and events that our members can gain credits to accumulate towards a qualification."

Thank you Amanda

BELONG



- Professional Community
- Peer Support
- Sharing experiences and ideas

Above: NCMA volunteers at an event in Rufford Park, Nottingham



Left: Wrexham childminders at Waterways Garden Centre in Wales



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NCMA also knows how isolating it can be working on your own as a nanny or childminder.

Time and time again, members tell us that it is their local contact that they value most from NCMA.

We want to introduce you to Helen King, both a practising childminder and a trustee, who will explain how our new strategy will provide those local connections.

"Whether you are starting out as a childminder or are a long serving professional, we all value the time we spend together – sharing experiences and challenges, learning together or perhaps taking the children we care for out on group visits

And NCMA's new strategy has that at its heart – helping both nanny and childminder members to belong to networks (be they local, virtual or specialist) so they can come together to share experience and ideas with each other.

Again the strategy is clear this has to be a core offer and not reliant on Local Authority funding.

So we are setting out to develop sustainable peer to peer network models for our members. Models that build on and value the work of volunteers who are already giving members opportunities to share experiences and training together – be that via regional forums, local groups or associations.

Thanks to two years of Department for Education funding, NCMA will be piloting these 6 network models in 30 different areas from January of next year. They will be in areas where no support currently exists or where a local group is keen to work with NCMA.

In year 2, models that work best will be rolled out into every local authority in England. So all members, who wish to, can access one.

Whilst the funding for this work is for England only, the learning we gain will be used to ensure we are able to establish equivalent networks in Wales too during 2012-13.

The ultimate goal is to find the model or models that ensure members who want to come together to share experience, ideas and learning together are helped to do so by NCMA.“

Thank you Helen

REPRESENT

Ensuring members' work is understood and recognised by decision makers in England and Wales



NCMA members at Westminster

NCMA Cymru Manifesto launch in May 2011



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We all know how much early years and childcare has risen up the agendas of government in England and Wales as they acknowledge the major impact it has on the early life chances of children.

NCMA has always worked to ensure the views of its members are understood by national and local government and that their important role in the early development of young children is recognised.

Sue Davis, our new Chair, has experience of both national and local government, and will say a few words about this aspect of our new strategy.

“NCMA has come a long way in representing childminders and nannies e.g. an integrated inspection framework (EYFS) in England and in Wales (Foundation Phase) that demonstrates to parents that childminders do offer the same standards of care as group settings.

No longer is home-based childcare forgotten in policy formulation and NCMA is around the discussion table from the start ensuring members needs and concerns are understood / addressed.

The policy resolutions you raised have been acted upon e.g.

- In 2005 members voted for NCMA to lobby for all childminders to have at least a level 3 qualification within 5 years of registration by 2015. In March 2010, the Labour Government published their aim to make level 3 the minimum qualification level for anyone working in the early years and childcare workforce by 2015. Our discussions with the coalition Government are ongoing and our efforts were reinforced by Dame Clare Tickell who in her independent review of the EYFS, called on the Government to retain the aspiration and commitment to promoting a minimum level 3 qualification.

- In 2009 members called on NCMA to lobby for statutory guidance on the distribution of Capital Grant funding. New guidance for LAs on their use of this funding was published in the last quarter of 2009 and included details which specifically relate to use of the monies for childminders.

The member strategy consultation made clear that this work was of on going importance and integral to ensuring you are recognised as professionals.

The new strategy will be focussed on this – ensuring our influence extends to organisations and departments that work with the other professionals to increase their recognition e.g. health visitors, teachers.

The strategy also recognises that with less local presence NCMA must influence local agendas differently, equipping its volunteers to pursue local policy goals as well as contribute as they do already to national debates.

Nationally that strategy will widen, to embrace the different stakeholders delivering support for children and families So this aspect remains as important as ever – NCMA is your voice.

Will continue to rely on you (on-line consultations, attending regional forums and events like this) to let us know what the issues are that matter most to you.”

Thank you Sue

**STANDARDS
SUPPORT
BELONG
REPRESENT**

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So – as you have just heard – NCMA is changing in many ways to ensure it can deliver the support you as members need and, in particular, fill the gap that reduced local authority support is creating for our members.

As well as responding to this reality, trustees were also committed to ensuring NCMA strategy built on its strengths as a membership organisation and delivers its mission,

- **to ensure all its members achieved the highest standards of care and learning for children and together build recognition of their professionalism**

It was clear that one way to achieve this for our existing members was to consider how greater collaboration with others working in early years could deliver greater recognition of the professional role our members undertake, underpinned by shared goals and experiences.



So this was the starting point for trustees considering the opportunity to widen NCMA membership to a broader community of early years and childcare workers.

As you know from recent communications, the Board is considering this issue over the next few months and is keen to hear members' views.

We wanted to now introduce Jane Comeau, NCMA Vice-Chair, who is a practising childminder and Early Years Professional, to set out why the Board has decided in principle to consider widening NCMA membership beyond childminders and nannies.

Widening our membership could:

- Support us to achieve our vision and mission
- Increase recognition of existing members' professionalism
- Improve benefits for existing members
- Position NCMA as a leader of our sector
- Increase our influence on the issues that matter to members
- Recognise the goals and challenges shared by all of us working in early learning and childcare
- Give NCMA greater independence through reduced reliance on public funding to deliver its strategy
- Deliver a stronger more sustainable NCMA in the long term



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“The slide above summarises the benefits that we as a Board believe widening NCMA membership could deliver.

At the centre of this for me is recognition that as home-based professionals we share much in common with professionals working in group settings and that – being in one professional association, networking, learning and debating issues together, will help us to better understand each other and respect the roles we play in giving the children we care for high quality care and learning.

This will lead to greater recognition of our professionalism as childminders and nannies as our mutual understanding grows. I know because I have seen it happen at a local level when childminders join early years and childcare workers to train together.

Our initial research also shows that individuals working in these settings share our goal – to do the best for the children they care for – and they also share our challenge.

They too feel unrecognised or valued for their professionalism do not receive training, information or advice around how to do the best job possible for the children they care for.

But they do not have an organisation that can support them in the way NCMA supports its members.

I believe that what is unique and special about home-based childcare should be available to all children and – whilst EYFS and the Foundation Phase captures much of that - there is no one supporting individual practitioners to translate that into their day to day practice in group settings.

So there is a great opportunity for NCMA to lead the sector in bringing together the currently fragmented community of people working in early years and childcare and supporting them to do deliver high standards of care.

That is something that as an NCMA member I would be very proud of us doing.

Greater member numbers will also mean greater influence with national and local government – a stronger voice for all our members.

But aside from that, there are also selfish reasons why we as members should consider widening membership – quite simply because it will deliver more benefits to all of us.

In simple terms, the more of us there are, the more buying power we have and the more income NCMA will have to reinvest back into supporting us as professionals.

That said, no one should leave this room believing the Board is proposing a reduced NCMA focus on its childminder and nanny members IF it widens membership to early years and childcare workers.

This proposal has our existing members and our new strategy at its heart.

We are considering this because it would bring added value to members and move us closer to our vision.”

Thank you Jane

We have spent time in this presentation talking about the impact cuts in public funding have had on the work that NCMA delivers and how NCMA is planning to fill that gap for members

The cost of delivering these services cannot be met from our current membership income and other funding streams alone. So the proposal to widen membership is also being considered because it has potential to support NCMA to sustain itself in the long-term and achieve its vision.

It is not the only aspect of our plan to grow income and deliver long term sustainability for NCMA. It sits alongside wider proposals to establish new partnerships with private and voluntary sector partners that allow us to generate income or share the cost of developing and delivering new services for our members. And of course, continued efforts to work with LAs where we can, despite the tough climate.

So proposals to widen membership are not the only route we have to raise funds, but are a potentially significant one that the Board wants to consider given its duty to ensure NCMA is sustainable in the long-term.

Listening to members' views on the proposal to widen NCMA membership



- Listening to current members
- Listening to potential member communities
- Reflecting on views between Jan and March 2012



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Before the Board makes its final decision on widening membership, we have allowed plenty of time to discuss the pros and cons with as many members as we can.

Today from 12 to 2pm you can join us, Amanda Carmichael, Director of Membership and Sue Davis in the Reception Area Lounge to tell us what you think. We will be there for all of the lunchtime break and other trustees and members of the senior team will join us at certain points.

And, of course, you can talk to any of us throughout conference.

In addition, NPF is discussing the proposal at its meeting tomorrow and will then roll out the same conversation at regional forums that take place in January.

We will also undertake further research both with our existing members and early years and childcare workers as we explore what a widening of membership might mean for NCMA and its members.

And of course you can also share your thoughts via the feedback@ncma.org.uk route.

All of this input – as well as other data and information - will be used to inform the Board's decision so please do take as many of the opportunities as you can to tell us your views.

Here to support you as members



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In the time we have had, we hope we have shown what NCMA's new strategy means for you, our members, and how proposals to widen membership will add value to your membership and to NCMA.

We want to leave you with a slide putting faces to the names of the trustees and senior staff who are leading the new strategy and available to talk to you over conference.

We know we cannot deliver any of our new strategy without your support – your contributions as always are key, so please do come and tell us what you think.

Thank you for listening and we hope you enjoy the rest of the conference.