

Trustee nominations 2024: candidate personal statements

Helen Farmer

Dedication, enthusiasm, and passion are crucial characteristics that I believe are required to create change in early childhood education. As an early childhood lecturer in higher education, I am able to influence my students' thinking by encouraging them to reflect on their practice and pedagogy. Furthermore, ensuring that the children in their care receive the greatest possible outcomes and a high-quality education. Prior to this, I was in senior management in early childhood settings. Supporting children's right to play is a significant representation of advocacy and what I stand for, which is why I chose to pursue a doctorate in education, where I am currently investigating innovative change in early childhood and digital technology. Digital capital and digital literacy is something I have identified as a need to address in early childhood. Thus, the lack of integration and limited access. I aim to use these findings to discuss change in policy and regulatory frameworks. Working together is another important attribute where we can initiate change, and I believe this is something I can contribute to in this role. Research is critical for initiating change because it highlights the significance of early experiences and allows us as professionals to contextualise what 'quality' early development and care looks like. Becoming a trustee will allow me to continue reflecting on my own practice, pedagogy, and professional development. It will allow me to not only question, but also challenge present regulations and policies in order to improve and strengthen the quality of early childhood services. However, I feel it is critical that the 'child' remains at the core of any change that is implemented.

Cassie Jude

With over 20 years of experience in educational leadership, specialising in early years education, and a proven track record in raising educational standards globally, as a values-driven leader, I have a reputation for quickly uniting culturally diverse teams, fostering collaboration, and promoting a positive learning environment. My leadership skills are underpinned by strategic planning, policy development, and operational management, which I believe align well with the responsibilities outlined for the trustee position.

Throughout my career, I have demonstrated a commitment to educational excellence and innovation. I have successfully led initiatives such as integrating technology in Apple Distinguished Schools and achieving outstanding leadership and management ratings from both ADEK and Ofsted. I promoted the development of enabling environments where children could foster independence, inquiry-based learning, and high engagement levels. This leadership led to staff achieving Walker Learning Accreditation and the leadership team attaining leadership awards.

As the Founding Vice Principal at GEMS Wellington School Qatar, I was responsible for establishing the early years and primary departments of a British curriculum school for students aged 3 to 18. This included embedding a love of learning across the school. I have also written articles on early years education and presented at conferences, further reinforcing my dedication to the field. In several leadership roles, I have worked closely with marketing and PR companies to promote the schools I have led.

I work effectively as part of a team, using my coaching skills to listen, ask pertinent questions, and contribute to collaborative decision-making. I am confident in my ability to set a strategic vision and think creatively to contribute positively to the board's goals, monitor performance, and protect the organisation's assets. My adherence to Nolan's seven principles ensures that I maintain the highest ethical standards in any governance role.

Nazma Meah

Early education is a vital organisation for the early years sector, and I would feel honoured to be part of the organisation, to support, guide, help and manage its activities in furtherance of the objects set down in the constitution.

I am an owner/manager/practitioner/EYTS in the early years sector and have been involved for over 20 years. In that time, I have seen numerous changes being implemented by the Government and Early education has been an essential source of information and guidance to ensure I am fully up to date with legislation and changes. As a Director and Manager, I have ample experience in finance and accounting and understand budgets and accounts. I have ample experience in safeguarding and the legislation around it.

I am very passionate about the early years and continue to fight for the recognition that early years needs and feel that becoming a trustee of an organisation that leads in that fight, is the correct next step for me.

I am a committed person, so when I know I can commit to something, that's when I will step forward. Now is the right time for me to become a trustee, hence I am putting in my application. I can give the time and effort to the role and ensure that I am doing it justice. Having to lead teams of staff, I have become a very good team member and foster the skills of tact, diplomacy, impartiality, and confidence. Fairness is very important to me as I feel that everyone, regardless of race, religion, culture or gender deserves the best. I have been a school Governor so understand Nolan's seven principles of public life and truly stand by them.

I feel that I have the qualities and skills that Early Education are looking for in a trustee and would welcome the chance to use these to support the organisation.

Sarah Sanger

At Woodentops we are passionate about creating independent, curious learners. I believe supporting colleagues to deliver their individual missions is a crucial part of driving excellence in early years teaching. Early Education plays a vital role in our sector through education and training opportunities and also networking.

Currently our sector is facing many challenges and the views and voices of independent nurseries have never been more important. If elected I would support the goals of the charity and board and help drive the recognition of the value of a

highly skilled workforce which in turn drives access to high quality provision. I would also be keen to assist in the growth of membership and networking opportunities. I believe that nurseries need all the support they can get and we are stronger together with the assistance of excellent charities like Early Education.

On a personal note I bring a wealth of knowledge from over 25 years both inside and outside the education sector, with a background in finance, strategy and research before moving into early years. I founded Woodentops Nurseries nearly 15 years ago in South London. Early Years is in my DNA, having grown up with a kindergarten running out of the front room of our house. I have 3 children, all of whom attended nursery and it has always been my aim to provide exceptional care and education for other local families.

Nominated without need for election as the only candidate from Scotland:

Myra McRobbie

I have been an Early Education member for several years and have held the position of vice chairperson, chairperson and committee member during this time.

After qualifying with my SNNEB, I then went on to do my PDA in early years and then my BA in early years with Aberdeen University.

In my work role I am early years project officer for Aberdeenshire council. Overseeing the placement of 1-year olds up to those not attending school, working with our childminders who offer funded places as well as being involved in the strategy side of settings operating within Aberdeenshire, partner providers as well as local authority.

The day job although not directly working with children daily I am very much ensuring as an authority we are doing our utmost to ensure we are getting it right for our children.

Child development and transition are two areas which I have a high level of interest in.