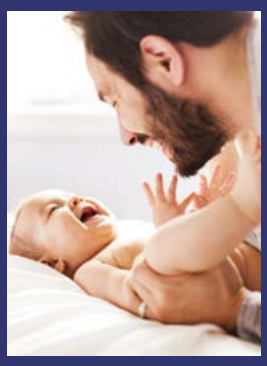
Parent-Infant FOUNDATION

October 2026

Trustee recruitment information



www.parentinfantfoundation.org.uk

@Parent-InfantFoundation

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Parent-Infant Foundation, a company limited by guarantee, company no. 8191666
Registered charity England and Wales (1152082). Charity registered in Scotland No. SC054517

Introduction from our Chair of Trustees

Objectively, the knowledge and importance of parent-infant relationships has reached a new high. Across Government, there is a growing understanding of the importance of investing in the earliest years of life. For instance, in England and Scotland they have prioritised the development of new parent-infant relationships and infant mental health services in their national programmes. Meanwhile, in Northern Ireland and Wales their governments have explicitly identified the importance of babies' brain development in ensuring the future mental health of the nation.

The Parent-Infant Foundation is at the forefront of ensuring the new evidence and growing awareness translates into the creation of services which help those in greatest need. We deliberately prioritise partnership working to bridge the gaps between policy, research, and clinical practice to ensure services can be delivered for babies and families, especially those in crisis situations.

Research and evaluation show that specialist clinical interventions and specialised parent-infant relationship teams can have a positive impact on babies and parents' wellbeing and mental health and improve the relationships between them. Independent evaluations of the Foundation's development expertise in supporting the establishment of new services show that it is highly valued and works. With pride, we can provide examples of working with partners to ensure parent-infant relationships are included in national and local policies too.

The charity is in a healthy financial position with a strong executive leadership team and board of trustees united in delivering a clear vision and strategy. We have good, open, honest and welcoming relationships as we think, learn and take decisions together. As the chair, I am hugely excited about what we can achieve. One of our longest-serving trustees is standing down and we are now recruiting two new trustees to join the board.

We would welcome a range of diverse candidates from different socioeconomic, cultural, and geographic backgrounds across the UK. We understand that sometimes these and other protected characteristics intersect and welcome those who are currently underrepresented across boards within the UK.

We have also identified that the board would benefit from candidates with experience in; early childhood policy or practice, including infant mental health; and income generation and large scale project management. If you do not have experience in these areas but believe you bring other strengths and perspectives, please do not be deterred in applying.

We see recruitment as a two-way conversation. Short-listed candidates will be able to speak to Trustees and our Chief Executive and if you would like to discuss the role prior to applying, please contact CEO Keith@parentinfnatfoundation.org.uk or me as Chair.

We very much look forward to hearing from you and receiving your application.

Claire Wright
Chair of Trustees

About us

The Parent-Infant Foundation is a national, UK based charity proactively supporting the growth and quality of specialised parent-infant relationship teams and services across the UK. We bridge the gap between research, frontline delivery, local commissioning, and national decision-making when it comes to parent-infant relationships.

Our Vision is of a UK in which all parents and carers are supported to create sensitive, nurturing relationships with their babies to lay the foundation for lifelong mental and physical health.

Our Aims are to:

1. Support the quality and practice of existing specialist parent-infant relationship teams across the UK.
2. Grow the number of specialised parent-infant relationship teams across the UK.
3. Work with parent-infant relationship specialists in other services (such as safeguarding midwives, specialist perinatal and infant mental health visitors, social care, and perinatal mental health) to help them support babies' relationships with their primary care givers.
4. Make the case for investment in babies' emotional wellbeing – working in close partnership with and convening friends and allies across the First 1001 Days Movement.
5. Raise public awareness of the critical, life-long importance of early relationships.
6. Develop our organisation to deliver maximum impact .

And we fulfil these Aims through three inter-connected Means, facilitating:

- Expertise: providing information, advice and guidance – both directly to professionals and by convening networks enabling the free exchange of knowledge, ideas and insight
- Evidence: contributing to knowledge and understanding of impact and effectiveness of services
- Influence: winning support from decision-makers and opinion-formers

Our history

A baby's brain develops more in the first two years of life than any other time and a baby's earliest experiences, in particular the quality of the relationship with their main parent or carer, is the most influential factor for their development and future outcomes.

Our vision is of a UK in which all parents and carers are supported to create sensitive, nurturing relationships with their babies to lay the foundation for lifelong mental and physical health.

More than one in ten babies in the UK today are living in fear, confusion and distress.

Not everyone bonds easily with their baby. Parents can be overwhelmed by trauma from their own childhood. Some are struggling with mental or physical health difficulties.

Parent-infant teams support and strengthen relationships between babies and their parents (or carers).

The Parent-Infant Foundation was set up in 2012 to test if specialised parent-infant relationship teams could support families who struggle with these issues.

2012-2018: We started by funding seven teams (Liverpool, Enfield, Brighton, Croydon, Newcastle and Dorset, Essex) to see if these innovators would have a positive impact. We worked directly with them to provide clinical leadership including mental health expertise. There were multiple evaluations of these first teams, finding significant improvements in both parent-infant relationships and parents' mental health.

2019-2022: Based on the evidence from the early teams, we decided to move from hands on delivery to focusing on expertise to scale up new teams and provide connections for a growing network.

At the same time, we campaigned for parent-infant relationships to be incorporated into national policies. We established the First 1001 Days Movement as a formal campaigning alliance with 200 organisations; created Infant Mental Health Awareness Week; and have provided the secretariat to the All-Party Parliamentary Group: Conception to Age Two.

There are currently 51 parent-infant teams across the UK, as well as many more teams in development. However, estimates suggest that more than a tenfold increase would be needed to provide access to specialist support in all parts of the UK. There is considerable variation in funding and structures between the different teams. There has also been a significant increase in parent-infant relationship work delivered by other services.

We updated our strategy in May 2023 to incorporate these changes. We have agreed to our plans for 2026-27 and continue to diversify our funding to ensure a secure and sustainable future. We move forward from a position of strength.

Parent-Infant FOUNDATION

Vision

Our Vision is of a UK in which all parents and carers are supported to create sensitive, nurturing relationships with their babies to lay the foundation for lifelong mental and physical health.

Our work

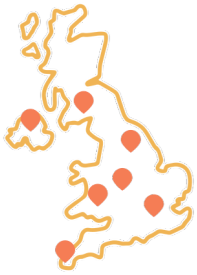
We work to support the growth and quality of specialised parent-infant relationship teams across the UK.

We are the only charity proactively supporting these teams and sharing the importance of their work. We do this regardless of how teams are funded or where in the system they are situated by:

- Enabling and expanding specialised parent-infant relationship teams
- Promoting and driving quality across the network of parent-infant relationship teams
- Giving babies and the services that work with them a clear and compelling voice

Coverage

We work with existing parent-infant teams around the UK and areas interested in setting up a team.



What we can offer

For established and emerging teams we can offer:

Arm's length support during their development journey

A comprehensive, web-based **development and implementation toolkit**

Bespoke consultation and advice

What we do

Membership of the Parent-Infant Teams Network for established teams

A free, multi-disciplinary collective that provides:

- A space for shared learning and information
- Peer support
- Free, regular events including networking days and webinars
- Regular briefings and newsletters
- Every individual team member is invited to join

Access to the Network area of the Foundation website, a repository of team resources contributed by teams around the UK

Focussed evaluation and research commissioned to highlight the need for parent-infant teams, the value of their work and to inform development

Assistance for teams to collect and use data and evidence to ensure high quality services

Policy and campaigning

We lead the First1001 Days Movement and co-ordinate the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Babies (Pregnancy to age 2)

We advocate forspecialist parent-infant provision at a national level

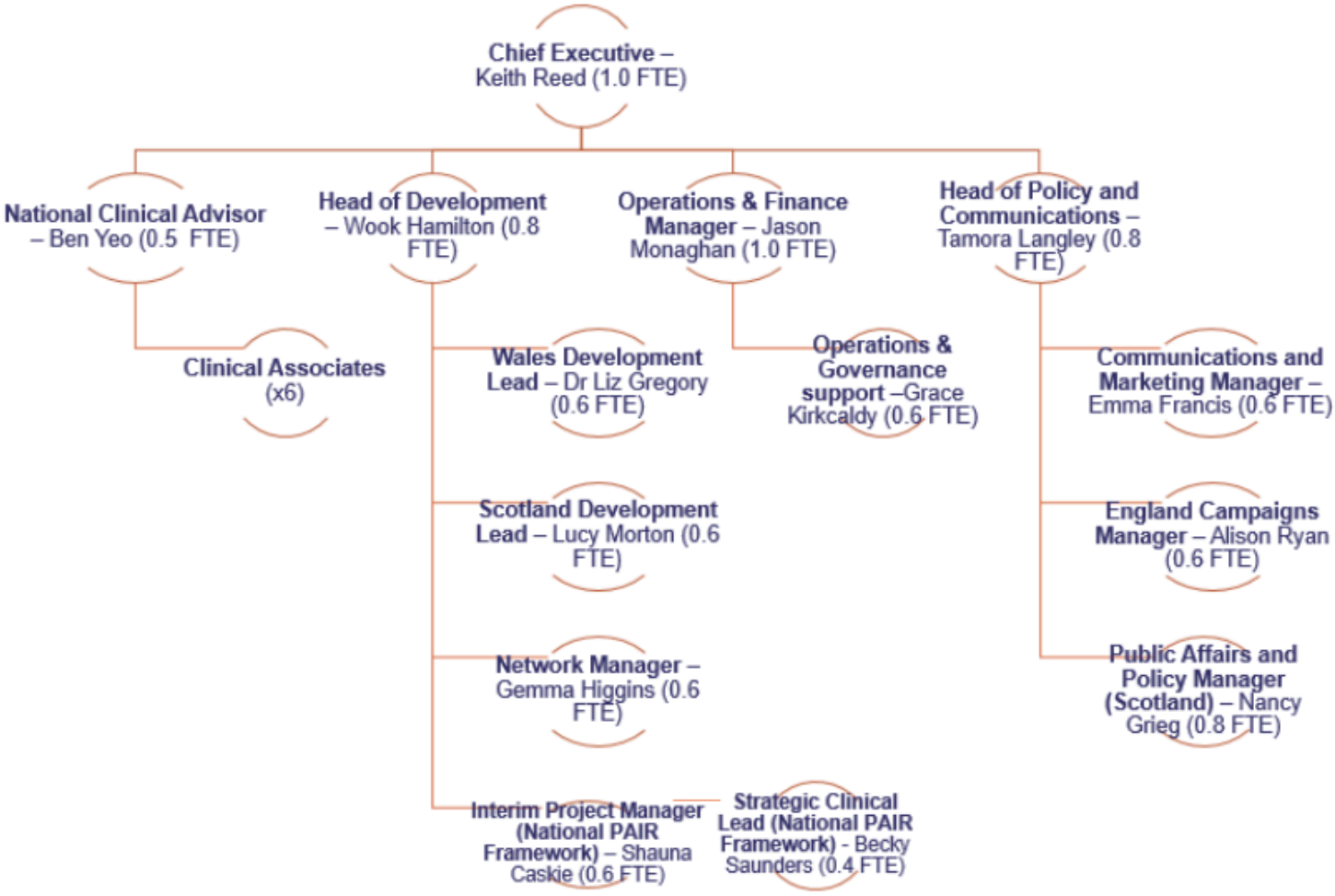
We organise Infant Mental Health Awareness Week to showcase more widely the importance of early relationships and to campaign for change

We provide toolsand resources to aid local conversations

What we don't do

- We don't fund, manage or regulate teams
- We don't deliver content for individual practitioners outside of specialised teams (Other organisations do this, such as AIMH UK, ACP, UKCP, BPS, etc.)
- We don't deliver services or content directly to the public

Our structure



The charity is governed by a small team of six trustees and managed by a team of fourteen staff (FTE 9.5) and a freelance fundraising consultant. The team are all home based. The team meet together every month. The board currently meets every other month. You can find out more about our staff and trustees at www.parentinfantfoundation.org.uk/people

Our financial health

The organisation has received funding from a range of charitable trusts and foundations. Many of these grants are long-term commitments, which help the charity deliver its work with greater certainty. We are grateful to them all.

Our annual income last year was approximately £1.2 million and our official accounts for 2025-26 are currently in preparation. We are budgeting on our income to be over £1million this year. Our latest financial accounts can be found here.

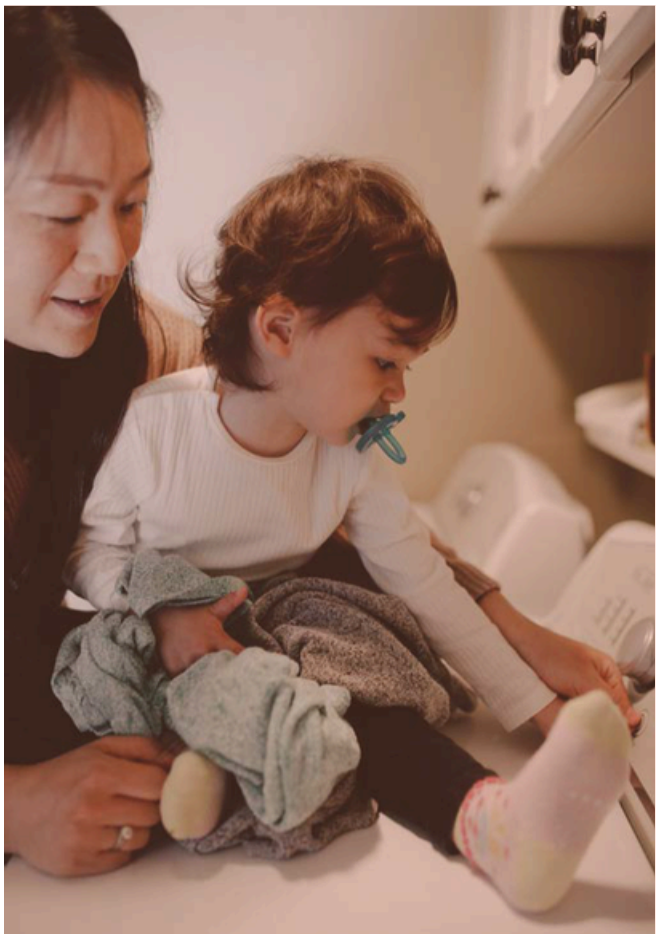
We believe our strategy can be delivered to this income level in the years ahead, but we will take opportunities, when they arise, to do even more. This means we spend time and resources actively building relationships with existing and new funders.

Our impact and the impact of teams

While the first two years of a child's life is a period of the upmost vulnerability, it also offers a window of opportunity. There is a growing body of evidence that specialied parent-infant relationship teams and the interventions they use can help babies by identifying and treating these disturbed patterns of relating, including with the most complex and vulnerable families, by making a positive impact in three vital areas:

- Strengthening relationships between babies and caregivers
- Supporting babies' development and wellbeing (including those most at risk)
- Improving the mental health of caregivers.

We have committed to continue gathering the evidence of parent-infant teams and the interventions they use going forward and publish an annual summary of the latest evidence.



We routinely gather feedback on the development support we provide to professionals and commissioners through our resources, learning events and consultancy advice. Our key resources are viewed and downloaded thousands of times each year.

- Our development implementation toolkit, which helps guide professionals on how to set up services and teams, was rated as useful or very useful by 100% of respondents.
- 96% of learning event respondents found them to be useful or very useful and 84% said their understanding had improved or improved significantly.
- Feedback on our consultancy advice has confirmed it has been extremely useful in helping professionals set up new services or improve their existing practice. An independent evaluation of our support in Scotland has verified this.

Our work with the leading children's charities through the First 1001 Days movement has seeded parent-infant work more widely with inclusion in UNICEF's infant mental health toolkit and NSPCC Scotland's report. Our collaborative approach has engaged partners beyond the movement to share our surveys, speak at our conferences and invite us to contribute to their publications and events.

Our close working with the English Government's Start for Life team has influenced guidance for Local Authorities, and the outcome measures they use in the programme. Furthermore, NHS England's Maternity and Neonatal single delivery plan includes prioritising Start for Life and Baby Friendly initiative adoption (which focuses on infant feeding and relationships). In the past year, we have supported ministerial visits to teams and won new supporters in government. And we have been appointed, by Governments, to expert groups in England, Scotland, and Wales.

Our commitment to diversity, inclusion, and you

The Parent-Infant Foundation is committed to supporting diversity, equity and inclusion across its organisation and in the families, communities and professionals it works with. We consciously work to foster a culture in which everyone connected to the Foundation, including staff, trustees, associates, partners and the families supported by parent-infant relationship teams and services, is recognised, valued and respected as an individual, with opportunities to contribute, grow and thrive

We are interested in hearing from passionate and experienced people across a diverse range of backgrounds, particularly those from historically under-represented groups amongst trustees.

These include people from ethnic minority backgrounds, those who may have a disability, or have experienced parent-infant relationship challenges themselves, or live and work within communities where this is a significant challenge. You do not require previous trustee experience to apply.

We are happy to organise a trustee to shadow and learn from to help you settle in.

The Parent-Infant Foundation recognises that some groups of potential applicants may face barriers to taking on a trustee role. Where possible, we would like to work with you to break these down. As such, we are happy to consider any reasonable adjustments that potential trustees may need to be successful, including adjustments through the interview process.

We like trustees to be present in person and look at accessibility to enable this. We hold meetings in the late afternoon and early evening. We are happy to pay childcare costs. We offer remote attendance via video if in person attendance is impossible on the day. All expenses for taking part in meetings and training are covered.

Role description

Expenses	Voluntary position with expenses provided for travel, childcare and training.
Location	Board meetings take place in London six times a year.
Time commitment	8 - 12 days a year including Board meetings and pre-reading
Term of office	3 years, renewable for a second 3-year term.

Main responsibilities

Our trustees play a unique role in driving us towards our vision of a UK in which all parents and carers are supported to create sensitive nurturing relationships with their babies. They are collectively responsible for the governance of the organisation and for all decisions made by the Board. They set the strategic direction for the organisation, and are responsible for setting organisational policy, defining targets, agreeing the financial plan, evaluating performance, and ensuring that strong relationships are maintained between the Trustees and the staff team.

As a Trustee, you will:

- Ensure that all the Foundation's work is informed by the needs of babies, families and the professionals who work with them;
- Act in the Foundation's best interests;
- Bring personal experience and/or professional expertise to the Board;
- Contribute to key strategic debates within the organisation;
- Provide support and constructive challenge to the Chief Executive and Leadership Team to ensure the effective delivery of our strategic plan;
- Ensure the charity's resources are managed effectively and responsibly, and that risks are identified and appropriately overseen;
- Work with fellow trustees to help ensure the charity meets its legal and regulatory responsibilities, seeking professional advice where appropriate;
- Provide thought leadership and strategic insight into the Foundation's development, research and influencing activities.

With appropriate support, guidance and access to professional advice, Trustees are expected to carry out the responsibilities of the role in a way that reflects a commitment to the following principles:

- The Foundation's mission;
- Safeguarding in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy;
- A duty of care to the charity's employees and volunteers, ensuring a respectful and supportive workplace culture;
- A commitment to diversity, equity, access and inclusion;
- Operating within the Foundation's Code of Conduct, policies and procedures;
- Accountability and transparency;
- Managing risk in line with the charity's Policies & Procedures.

Person specification

Qualifications

We are open to a wide variety of backgrounds, expertise and perspectives and do not seek any formal qualifications for this role. But you must be driven in working to see improvements in the support babies and families receive to help them nurture their early relationships.

(For context, we do ask for formal qualifications for specific roles on our Board: our Treasurer is a qualified accountant; our Vice Chair is a senior clinician registered with their appropriate professional body, as is one other Trustee.)

Experience and knowledge

Our Board has a good range of relevant professional skills and there are no essential criteria in terms of specific experience and knowledge for the roles we are currently seeking.

Looking at the composition of our current Board we are seeking to diversify our breadth of backgrounds, characteristics and viewpoints.

We are particularly interested in candidates who have experience in one or more of:

- Early childhood practice and/or research, including knowledge of infant mental health
- Project management of national programmes
- Charity income generation
- Charity governance or executive leadership, especially in a comparable sized organisation.

However, if you do not have experience in these areas but believe you bring other strengths and perspectives, please do not be deterred in applying.

Recruitment process

Please send a one-page CV and one-page cover letter setting out your motivation and suitability for the role. These should be sent to our chief executive, Keith Reed keith@parentinfantfoundation.org.uk by Wednesday 14th October 2026.

Candidates will be shortlisted by our Chair and at least one other Trustee, who will also conduct interviews. If you would find it helpful, CEO calls with candidates can be booked in for Monday 12th October 2026.

Recruitment timetable

Closing date for applications
Wednesday 14th October 2026

Pre-application calls with our CEO
Monday 12th October 2026

Candidate interview invites sent
Thursday 29th October 2026

Interview date
Friday 6th November 2026
Interviews will be held between 14.00-17.30. These will be online either via Zoom or Teams (if you have an accessibility requirement, please do let us know).

Appointments will be made by the whole board following verbal references

First Board meeting
Tuesday 24th November 2026