

**CHILDREN'S  
RIGHTS  
ALLIANCE**

Uniting Voices For Children



**THE BAR  
OF IRELAND**

*The Law Library*

## Position Overview: Children's Rights Alliance and The Bar of Ireland Catherine McGuinness Fellowship in Children's Rights and Child Law 2018



# Children's Rights Alliance and The Bar of Ireland Catherine McGuinness Fellowship in Children's Rights and Child Law

## 1. Introduction

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**The Children's Rights Alliance unites over 100 members working together to make Ireland one of the best places in the world to be a child. We change the lives of all children in Ireland by making sure that their rights are respected and protected in our laws, policies and services.**

In 2014, the Children's Rights Alliance was privileged to establish a prestigious one-year Fellowship Programme for newly qualified barristers. The fellowship is named in honour of Judge Catherine McGuinness, one of Ireland's greatest children's champions.

The Fellow works as part of the Children's Rights Alliance's Legal and Policy Team on law and policy reform for children's rights in Ireland. Catriona Doherty BL was appointed as the first Catherine McGuinness Fellow and her work with the Children's Rights Alliance was hugely successful during 2015. Following on from this success, we were thrilled to launch a second year of the Fellowship programme in 2016. Beatrice Vance BL was appointed to this position, once again completing a hugely successful Fellowship tenure. Last year in 2017, Aisling Mulligan BL was appointed as the current Fellow marking the Fellowship's continuing success.

### **Partnership with The Bar of Ireland and Family Lawyers Association of Ireland**

In 2014, the Children's Rights Alliance was delighted to commence a funding partnership with The Bar of Ireland and the Family Lawyers Association of Ireland to create this exciting and important position in the Legal and Policy Team of the Children's Rights Alliance.

The merit of the Fellowship was fully recognised by The Bar of Ireland, who in 2016, entered into an extensive three-year partnership with the Children's Rights Alliance to further endorse and support the Fellowship. The Fellowship was officially renamed as the 'Children's Rights Alliance and The Bar of Ireland Catherine McGuinness Fellowship'.

From the outset, the Children's Rights Alliance has been lucky to have secured the vital endorsement of the Family Lawyers Association of Ireland. We believe that this support is especially fitting given Judge McGuinness' prestigious career as a family law practitioner.

Through these important partnerships, the Catherine McGuinness Fellowship has continued to pitch itself as a unique, highly-valued and prestigious Fellowship.

**Front Cover Caption: From left to right –Judge Catherine McGuinness flanked by Beatrice Vance BL and Aisling Mulligan BL, the second and third Catherine McGuinness Fellows respectively.**

## 2. The Role

This Fellowship is designed to create an exciting and important position in the Children’s Rights Alliance Legal and Policy Team. The Fellow is provided with a unique developmental opportunity, enhancing their reputation and future employability. Supervised and supported by the Children’s Rights Alliance, they also play an important role in the team contributing to initiatives that deliver legal, policy and social change for children.

### Specific Areas of Work

The Fellow adds value to the work of the Children’s Rights Alliance by providing the dedicated attention and legal expertise of a qualified barrister. Areas of work include analysing legislation and relevant law and contributing to:

- The annual *Report Card* series;
- *Know Your Rights* information guides, reports to the UN and Council of Europe;
- Formulating responses to queries on children’s rights, entitlements and the remedies available when those rights are breached;
- Increase engagement and networking with the legal community;
- Develop a knowledge bank on rights, entitlements and remedies when children’s rights are breached and engage in training of second-tier information providers.

## 3. Job Description

**Job Title:** Children’s Rights Alliance and The Bar of Ireland Catherine McGuinness Fellow in Children’s Rights and Child Law

**Location:** Children’s Rights Alliance, 7 Red Cow Lane, Smithfield, Dublin 7

**Department:** Legal and Policy Team

<p><b>Description of the unit/department:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Legal and Policy Team is key to achieving the strategic objectives of the Children’s Rights Alliance. This involves monitoring, developing and advocating for the rights of children in Ireland’s laws, policies and services at national, European and international level.</li><li>• The team is responsible for producing a wide range of reports and submissions including the flagship publication, the annual <i>Report Card</i> series, as well as engaging in high-level advocacy, and providing support to members.</li><li>• The team is led by the Legal and Policy Director and supported by the Senior Legal and Policy Officer.</li></ul>
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<b>Reporting to:</b>	A senior member of the Legal and Policy Team
<b>Contract Duration:</b>	<p>The contract is to complete one day per week for one calendar year. The specific days to be worked will be agreed at the beginning of the contract, however, there is flexibility for changes, by agreement, on a week-to-week basis to facilitate both parties.</p> <p>It is expected that the incoming Fellow will commence the fellowship in September 2018.</p>
<b>Contract Type:</b>	Contract for Services
<b>Remuneration:</b>	The Fellow will be paid monthly on receipt of an invoice.
<b>Location of Position:</b>	Children's Rights Alliance offices. However, the Fellow can be facilitated to work from the Law Library to support legal research.
<b>Key Duties:</b>	<p>The work of the Fellow will focus on children's rights and child law and will undertake the following duties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal analysis of relevant legislative proposals that may impact on children. Track their progress through the Houses of the Oireachtas and analyse amendments made. Engage in advocacy activities.</li> <li>• Contribute to the Children's Rights Alliance work following on from Ireland's examination by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, and advocate on the international jurisprudence that flows from the Committee.</li> <li>• Contribute to research on the Children's Rights Alliance <i>Report Card</i>, which monitors and grades Government performance in relation to children's rights. This is the Children's Rights Alliance flagship publication and is highly influential.</li> <li>• Take part in providing legal information to members and youth organisations as part of a national awareness programme on <i>Know Your Rights</i>. This project seeks to address basic information gaps on what legal rights and entitlements children have and what remedies are available when those rights are breached.</li> <li>• Prepare an article for the Bar Review on their work with the Children's Rights Alliance.</li> <li>• Deliver a lecture for Law Library members.</li> <li>• Prepare an article for the Family Law Journal.</li> </ul>

## Person Specification

<b>Qualification:</b>	A newly-qualified barrister (preferably within four years).
<b>Experience and Skills (desirable):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of a number of national legal frameworks;</li> <li>• Experience of international human rights law;</li> <li>• Strong research capacity;</li> <li>• Excellent communication skills, particularly writing skills; and</li> <li>• Experience in producing materials for a varied audience.</li> </ul>
<b>Qualities:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrated interest in and commitment to children’s rights;</li> <li>• Ability to work on one’s own initiative and operate as part of a team;</li> <li>• Ability to be flexible and adaptable to a changing environment; and</li> <li>• Excellent interpersonal and communication skills.</li> </ul>
<b>Post Fellowship</b>	<p>The Fellow will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benefit from a unique developmental opportunity;</li> <li>• Expand their networks;</li> <li>• Enhance their reputation and future employability; and</li> <li>• Become a champion for children’s rights.</li> </ul>