

# FOUNDATIONS FOR QUALITY

The independent review of early  
education and childcare qualifications

Final Report



June 2012

Nutbrown Review

## Foreword

Learning begins from birth, and high quality early education and care has the potential to make an important and positive impact on the learning, development and wellbeing of babies and young children, in their daily lives and the longer term. This country has long understood the importance of early education, with nursery schools having been established for almost a century.<sup>1</sup> We have come a long way since those early days, and I believe that every child in home and group settings today deserves the very best early education and care. This is the principle upon which I have based my Review and this Final Report.



I was glad to accept the invitation from the Minister for Children and Families to lead this Review of early education and childcare qualifications. It has been a huge privilege to work with so many people across the early years sector who are passionately committed to their work with young children and their families. Throughout my Review I have been struck by the professionalism and dedication of those who work with young children, and by their desire to give those children high quality experiences which enhance their lives and learning.

Alongside these positive attitudes and the very many examples of good practice I have seen during the course of my Review, I have found some things that have caused me concern. Our present qualifications system does not always equip practitioners with the knowledge and experience necessary for them to offer children high quality care and education, and to support professional development throughout their careers. Changes are needed, and I have made 19 recommendations for how I believe this should be done – some for Government to consider, and others I hope the sector will take forward.

The quality of children's experiences are at the core of this Report and an important part of this is the status of the early years workforce in society. Early years carers and educators are professionals who need to be able continually to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding. They need to be confident in their own practice and in

---

<sup>1</sup> Fisher Education Act 1918

engaging with other professionals, such as health visitors and social workers. The people who make up the diverse early years workforce need opportunities to progress in their careers, and to become effective pedagogical leaders who understand the learning and development needs of children and can enhance and extend teaching and learning opportunities.

At all times, throughout my Review, I have sought to be realistic in terms of what it might achieve and how change might be brought about. I recognise that the current economic climate means the sector, Government and parents are all under financial pressure. However, the many responses to my Call for Evidence and other events throughout my Review have demonstrated the increasing professionalism of the early years sector, which means it can, with support from Government, bring about change for higher quality experiences for young children. I believe the Government must have a role in demanding certain standards, and I have made recommendations for what these should be. I also believe that more can be asked of the sector in terms of a responsibility to enhance professionalism and ensure high quality provision.

It is now for Government to consider the content of my Final Report and respond to my recommendations. I know from the response to my Interim Report that early years practitioners and others in the sector overwhelmingly share my concerns about the current situation and agree that change is needed. Although this Final Report has, by necessity, outlined the past and present, it is primarily focused on how to improve for the future.

There is an urgency, and though some improvements will not be immediate, others of my recommendations can, and should, happen quickly. Longer term commitment will be needed to arrest a decline in the standards of qualifications and enhance their quality for the future. However, there cannot be compromise on quality and we must be unrelenting in our insistence on improving experiences for all babies and young children. They must have the best.



Professor Cathy Nutbrown  
Independent reviewer

## Contents

	<b>Executive Summary</b>	5
1	<b>A new vision for the early years workforce</b>	10
2	<b>A clear, rigorous system of qualifications</b>	17
3	<b>Starting out in the early years workforce: entry and initial training</b>	35
4	<b>An early years career: progressing to and beyond level three</b>	44
5	<b>Raising our aspirations: qualifications for leadership</b>	55
6	<b>Making it happen</b>	64
	<b>List of recommendations</b>	71
	<b>Acknowledgments</b>	74
	<b>Glossary</b>	81

## List of figures

<b>Figure 1:</b> <i>Research evidence about the impact of high quality early years provision</i>	14
<b>Figure 2:</b> <i>Proposal for the fundamental content of the new level 3 qualification</i>	23
<b>Figure 3:</b> <i>A proposed new set of consistent job titles and roles</i>	46
<b>Figure 4:</b> <i>Some proposed typical routes through a career working in the early years</i>	47

## Executive summary

High quality early education and childcare can have a positive long term impact on children's later learning and achievements, a fact reflected in Government investment over the last two decades in particular. Quality is the key to that positive impact, and staff with the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding are a crucial element of that quality.

There are many examples of excellent practice often led by the small and slowly-growing cadre of graduates. However, some worrying trends have developed too. Some current qualifications lack rigour and depth, and quality is not consistent. I was concerned to find a considerable climate of mistrust in current early years qualifications, and anxiety, which I share on my reading of the evidence, that standards have in some respects declined in recent years.

I am concerned that the current early years qualifications system is not systematically equipping practitioners with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to give babies and young children high quality experiences.

A new long-term vision is needed for the early years workforce, with a reformed system of qualifications to help achieve this. In working towards this vision, a balance must be struck between supporting existing good practice and challenging the sector to ensure provision is high quality in all settings.

This is a challenge for Government and for everyone working in and leading provision for young children. For me, the role of Government is to ensure the necessary standards are being met, but the sector must play a role in determining how these can be achieved as it strives for excellence. The sector is becoming more professional, and Government must support this diverse sector to make its own improvement. In all my recommendations I have specified high and achievable standards, and how Government might apply these. I have also aimed to allow flexibility in how the sector may work towards them.

### A clear, rigorous system of qualifications

We need a rigorous set of qualifications in place to ensure a competent and confident workforce. But the current qualifications system is confusing: there are too many qualifications, and many are not

equipping the workforce with the necessary knowledge and skills to provide high quality early education and care.

Currently, early years group settings must be managed by someone with at least a relevant level 3 qualification. But many level 3 qualifications currently on offer are insufficient in content and standard. I recommend that the content of level 3 qualifications be strengthened, to include more child development and play, more on special educational needs and disability, and more on inclusivity and diversity, and also that qualifications focus on the birth to seven age range.

At present, at least half of early years staff in a setting need to be qualified at least to level 2. In practice, the majority already exceed that level. I do not believe that a level 2 qualification is sufficient to equip a practitioner for work in the early years, and a member of staff with only a level 2 should not be considered 'qualified' for such work. Level 3 qualifications should become the minimum standard for the workforce, and therefore Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) requirements should be changed so that all staff, including those childminders who work with the EYFS framework, should be qualified at a minimum 'full and relevant' level 3 by September 2022. To support the transition towards this requirement, my recommendation is that from Sept 2013, 50 per cent of staff in group settings will need to possess at least a level 3 qualification, and then from September 2015 this should increase to 70 per cent of staff.

### **Starting out in the early years workforce: entry and initial training**

As a country we need to raise our expectations of what it means to work with young children, and attract the best people into the workforce. Literacy and mathematical abilities are essential for anyone working with our young children, so I am recommending that students must already hold level 2 qualifications in English and mathematics before they begin a level 3 early education or childcare course.

Tutors of early years courses are hugely influential in shaping the early years workforce and so they too need to be high quality professionals. All tutors should hold a higher qualification than the course they are teaching. They should have relevant and current early years practice experience, and colleges should allow tutors time for continuing professional development and for practice in settings.

Practice placements are an essential part of training and are the first experience many students get of working in early years settings. Students need to observe and work alongside practitioners whose practice is high quality and also need to be well supported while on placement. Only settings that are rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted should be able to host students on placement. Colleges and training providers should consider a setting's ability to take students on placement before partnering with them.

### **An early years career: progressing to and beyond level 3**

If young children are to get the early education and care they need, there must be a substantial change in the way working with young children is perceived. An early years career should be just that: a career. There need to be clear roles in the early years workforce, linked to qualifications, and clear routes for capable people to progress to more senior roles. I have recommended that more staff should hold at least level 3 qualifications, so there should be support in place to help them achieve those.

I want to see a raising of standards in the early years and enhanced professionalism in the workforce. Continuing professional development for all who work with young children is an essential part of this, so individual practitioners and the settings they work in must prioritise it. I am recommending that all new practitioners should have professional support in their first six months of employment, in the form of mentoring. The arrangements for this should be led by the sector. The Government should support this by bringing together online induction and training modules that can be accessed by all who work in early education and childcare.

### **Raising our aspirations: qualifications for leadership**

Excellent pedagogical leadership is vital in improving the quality of provision, and all early years practitioners can aspire to be pedagogical leaders. Progression opportunities need to be accessible for all capable and committed women and men, and I recommend that the Department for Education conduct research to ensure Black and Minority Ethnic groups are not being excluded from more senior roles.

Research has shown the huge positive impacts of graduate leadership on areas of child development such as early literacy and social development. The Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) has already significantly contributed to improving quality, but Early Years Professionals (EYPs) have been dissatisfied with their lack of parity with those who hold Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). I believe we should establish an early years specialist route to QTS, building on the best aspects of the EYPS. Having qualified teachers leading early years practice will raise the status of the sector, increase professionalism and improve quality. The early years specialist route to QTS should build on, and eventually replace, current routes to EYPS. This will, I believe, end the dissatisfaction expressed to me by many who hold EYPS, that the promised parity with teachers has not materialised. The Government should consider, as a priority, the transition arrangements to the early years specialist QTS for those holding EYPS so that they may, if they wish, become the first to achieve early years specialist Qualified Teacher Status.

I understand the arguments for the introduction of licensing for the early years workforce, but I question whether it would bring value in light of the recommendations I have set out in my report. I am therefore not recommending that the Government should introduce a licensing system at this time if my other recommendations are accepted and implemented.

### **Making it happen**

It will be for Government to consider and respond to my recommendations. However, in my Review I have sought to be realistic, and to consider how my recommendations might be achieved, and what impacts they might have in the sector. I do not underestimate the financial pressures that Government, the early years sector, and families are facing. I have endeavoured to keep my recommendations, as far as possible, cost neutral, although some of them will have cost implications. I hope all are seen as efficient and effective investments in the future of the youngest in our society. Ultimately, it is my judgment that getting the best from the substantial investment in early education, for example the very welcome extension of the free entitlement, can only be achieved if we significantly raise the quality of the early years workforce.

I have spoken throughout my Final Report about the role of the sector in driving improvements and raising standards of qualifications, enhancing



the quality of young children's experiences in early education and care. I believe that there may be opportunities for Government to support the sector to take on more responsibility. For example, I think it is worth exploring whether the staff:child ratios specified in the EYFS framework could be changed such that qualified teachers could reasonably work with more three and four year olds whatever the setting, as they do in schools.

## 1. A new vision for the early years workforce

### My vision for early childhood education and care

Babies and young children must have the very best early education and care. If those working with young children have the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding, they have the potential to offer the formative experience all young children deserve, supported by the significant Government investment in the early years. This means that the Government and the sector need to prioritise the training and development of all early years practitioners.

My vision for early childhood education and care is one where:

- every child is able to experience high quality care and education whatever type of home or group setting they attend;
- early years staff have a strong professional identity, take pride in their work, and are recognised and valued by parents, other professionals and society as a whole;
- high quality early education and care is led by well qualified early years practitioners; and
- the importance of childhood is understood, respected and valued.

There are examples of excellent practice that meet these aims, but this is not the case in all settings, and the time is right to set our sights higher and demand excellent work with all young children across the sector. This requires:

- An increase in the number of qualified teachers with specialist early years knowledge who lead practice in settings, working directly with babies, young children, and their parents, using their pedagogical expertise to support young children's learning, play and development.
- Early years teachers who lead, and are supported by, an effective team of early years practitioners, qualified at a

minimum of level 3, with all staff taking professional pride in their work, and continually seeking to extend and develop their knowledge and skills.

- Those who are working towards early education and childcare qualifications to be taught and supported by qualified and knowledgeable tutors, who are experienced in the early years. Tutors, as much as the practitioners in the setting, must take pride in their professional development, and regularly engage in practice in settings, ensuring their skills and pedagogy are current.
- Only those candidates who are confident and capable in their literacy and numeracy are able to enrol on these level 3 courses. Level 3 qualifications must be rigorous and challenging, requiring high quality experiences in placements, giving students time to reflect on and improve their own practice.
- A rigour of qualification such that employers can have confidence that those who hold a recognised qualification have the necessary depth and breadth of knowledge and experience to be ready for work in the setting.
- Employers who support new members of staff, and take the time to induct them to the setting and their role, and ensure they have good support and mentoring in place for at least their first six months.

- 1.1 The love and care that children receive from their families in their first few years, and throughout their childhood, are fundamental to their healthy growth and development. Parents influence children's values, behaviours and ambitions, and lay the foundations of who their children are and what they might become.
- 1.2 Alongside the influence of parents, and other family members, early years practitioners can have an important role in children's development, learning and wellbeing. Before statutory school age, nearly all children spend some time in an early years setting – a nursery class, a reception class, a full day care setting, a pre-school play group, or with a childminder. With parents, it is these early years settings, and the people working in them, that have the

greatest influence on children's all round development and later outcomes, and this influence can be an extremely positive one, as Figure 1 shows.

- 1.3 Successive Governments have recognised this, and the early years have become a focus of public policy and investment. Most recently the Government has committed, from September 2013, to providing free early education for the most economically disadvantaged 20 per cent of two-year-olds, with this entitlement extended to 40 per cent from September 2014. This is an incredible opportunity to have a positive, long-lasting impact on the lives of our most vulnerable children. Meeting this new demand will be a challenge for the sector, a challenge that has caught the attention of politicians and of the media.
- 1.4 There are other challenges for people working in the sector. For implementation of the reform of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) following Dame Clare Tickell's review, with the emphasis in the new framework on quality of learning, and effective practice.
- 1.5 Making early education available is important, but providing more places is not the only challenge. We must be certain that the two year olds receiving the free entitlement are experiencing early education and care of the highest quality possible. This must come from talented, sensitive people with the appropriate skills, knowledge and attitudes to support young children's learning and development through exploration and play, and to work with their families. They must do all they can to ensure that the significant investment leads to the anticipated benefits. To achieve this, we must raise our expectations of early education and childcare. It is not solely a matter of providing the necessary number of places, it is a matter of providing the best experiences possible for young children.
- 1.6 We know the huge importance of healthy brain development early in a child's life. Children's experiences in the first few years can have a lasting impact on their later development, social interactions and life outcomes. The evidence tells us that if these experiences are positive, if children experience high quality early education and care, this can have a lasting, positive impact on educational outcomes and more. We know that children learn much in sustained interaction with other children, as well as with adults, so we need adults who are attuned to children's learning

and development needs, who can support their play and foster early interactions between young children. Furthermore, the evidence has also shown us that high quality early years provision can narrow the gap in attainment between economically disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children. We know that high quality provision matters and that poor and mediocre provision will not benefit children.

**Figure 1: Research evidence about the impact of high quality early years provision.**

## The impact of high quality early years provision

Statement	Evidence
Quality early years provision has a lasting positive impact on child outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attending a high or medium quality pre-school had a lasting effect on social and behavioural outcomes<sup>1</sup>.</li> <li>Pre-school quality is a significant predictor of later Key Stage 2 performance in both English and Mathematics<sup>1</sup>.</li> <li>Where children attended higher quality settings, there was a positive impact on language ability<sup>2</sup>.</li> </ul>
High quality early years provision narrows the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disadvantaged pupils benefitted significantly from good quality pre-school experiences<sup>1</sup>.</li> <li>In the case of mathematics, high multiple disadvantaged pupils who attended high quality pre-schools had significantly greater attainment than high multiple disadvantaged pupils who did not attend pre-school<sup>1</sup>.</li> </ul>
Perception of quality is a key factor for parents when choosing a childcare provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The two biggest factors for parents when choosing pre-school providers were related to quality – provider reputation and quality of care given<sup>3</sup>.</li> </ul>
The qualification level of staff in the setting improves quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better qualified staff teams offered higher quality support for older (30 months to 5 years) children developing communication, language and literacy skills and their reasoning, thinking and mathematical skills, as well as higher overall curricular quality<sup>4</sup>.</li> </ul>
The introduction of a graduate leader improves the quality of provision in settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Settings which gained a graduate leader with the graduate level Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) made significant improvements in quality for pre-school children (aged 30 months to 5 years) as compared with settings which did not<sup>4</sup>.</li> <li>Furthermore, the more time Early Years Professionals (EYPs) spent in rooms with children, the greater the impact they had on the quality of provision in that room.</li> </ul>
Having a qualified teacher in an early years setting has the greatest impact on quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Having trained teachers working with children in pre-school settings (for a substantial proportion of time, and most importantly as the curriculum leader) had the greatest impact on quality, particularly on pre-reading and social development<sup>5</sup>.</li> <li>Both mathematical and scientific scores were very positively affected by the presence of a qualified teacher<sup>7</sup>.</li> </ul>
Parents want well qualified and trained staff working with their children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>87% of parents think qualifications and training are important for early years staff<sup>8</sup>.</li> <li>29% of parents said they would be willing to pay more for childcare with better qualified staff<sup>8</sup>.</li> </ul>
Most of the early years workforce are already qualified to level 3 or higher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>50% of the early years workforce are qualified at level 3<sup>6</sup>.</li> <li>Around another 20% of the workforce have a qualification higher than level 3<sup>6</sup>.</li> </ul>

### Selected references

- 1 Siraj-Blatchford, I. et al. (2011), Performing against the odds: developmental trajectories of children in the EPPSE 3-16 study, Department for Education, Research Report DFE-RR128
- 2 Smith, R. et al. (2009) Early Education Pilot for Two Year Old Children Evaluation. DCSF Research Report 134.
- 3 Smith, R. et al. (2010) Childcare and Early Years Survey of Parents 2009. Department for Education.
- 4 Mathers S. et al (2011) Evaluation of the graduate leader fund final report. Department for Education. Research Report DFE-RR144
- 5 Sylva, K. et al. (2004) Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) Project: Findings from the pre-school period. Department for Education and Skills. Research Brief RBX15-03.
- 6 Brind, R. et al. (2011) Early education and childcare provider survey 2010, Department for Education.
- 7 Mathers, S. et al. (2007) Quality of childcare settings in the Millennium Cohort Study. Sure Start. Research report SSU/2007/FR/025.
- 8 Unpublished data from a survey of parents conducted by Netmums on behalf of the Nutbrown Review, 2012.

## Quality and the early years workforce

1.7 The biggest influence on the quality of early education and care is its workforce. Those who engage with children, supporting their

learning and interaction with their environment through play, can affect their wellbeing, development and achievements.

- 1.8 When we talk about the ‘quality’ of staff, their qualifications are key. The evidence in Figure 1 shows that highly qualified teams of early years practitioners are more effective in developing children’s communication, language and literacy, reasoning, thinking and mathematical skills.
- 1.9 We know that play is fundamental to children’s wellbeing, learning and development, and it is essential that early years practitioners understand, value and support young children’s play in its various forms, from babyhood and throughout their early years.
- 1.10 The evidence also suggests that those with higher levels of qualification – degree level specialism in early childhood – have the greatest impact. Research has shown the benefits that graduate leaders and, in particular, qualified teachers bring to early years settings. They have positive impacts both in terms of curriculum and pedagogical leadership, and in terms of measurable improvement in children’s outcomes in early literacy, social development, mathematics and science. There are many examples, too, of teachers working with other professionals in the arts to provide children with rich arts-based learning experiences, thus fostering children’s creativity and imagination.
- 1.11 The challenge is how best to ensure that the qualifications system is as effective as it can be in developing the blend of skills, knowledge and understanding, to enable early years practitioners to provide excellent early education and care.
- 1.12 Despite the wealth of evidence about the benefits of high quality early years provision, and the role of qualified staff in ensuring this, during the course of my Review I have heard many concerns from the sector about the standard of training available. I set out the major areas of concern in my Interim Report, and I received many messages of agreement in response. Some comments, however, suggested a lack of understanding of the complex and important role early years practitioners undertake. Some appear to think that working with young children means nothing more than changing nappies and wiping noses. This is a misconception of what it is to work with young children and an insult to young children

themselves whose needs are as important and complex (if not more so) as those pupils in the later years of schooling.

- 1.13 Those many practitioners who took the time to contact me were proud of their work and passionate about the quality experiences they offered to young children. However, they were concerned by what they see elsewhere in their sector, and by the lack of status afforded to their profession in our wider society. Many expressed dismay at the lack of public understanding, or appreciation, of the work they do.
- 1.14 There is a clear case for change and some quick action is required. As well as setting out the evidence and the views of the sector, my Interim Report asked some key questions about how the difficulties in the qualifications system might be addressed. In this Final Report I seek to answer those questions, to set out a practical and affordable way forward, to set a higher expectation for what those working with babies and young children can do, and to create the career opportunities that dedicated practitioners deserve.

## My report

- 1.15 I started this report by setting out an aspirational and achievable vision for the early years workforce, based on the best practice I have already seen, what I believe the sector to be capable of and, above all, what babies and young children need.
- 1.16 This Report contains my recommendations to Government, to training providers, and to the sector. It describes why I think they are the best solutions to the current situation, and sets out how, by developing clearer career structures and opportunities for those working with young children (from recruitment to an initial training course to becoming a leader in the sector), better quality provision for children will result.
- 1.17 The first fundamental step, however, is to get robust and reliable qualifications in place, and to ensure their content and processes properly prepare the workforce for effective work with babies and young children. My next chapter addresses the qualifications system.



## 2. A clear, rigorous system of qualifications

2.1 Successive Governments have committed to helping those working with babies and young children to improve their skills. The increase in the number of people with ‘full and relevant’<sup>2</sup> qualifications and the introduction of the Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) have led to a welcome and increased sense of professionalism in some parts of the sector. We need to support this by creating a qualifications system that is easy to understand, has clear progression routes, and ensures that early years qualifications are effective in developing the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding to work with babies and young children. However, as my Interim Report showed, the current qualifications picture is complex and confusing, often fails to help people to progress in their careers, and has led to a worrying decline of confidence in early years qualifications and to a lowering of what we can confidently expect for young children.

2.2 In summary, the evidence shows:

- Dramatic growth in the number of early years qualifications from around three in 1980 to many hundreds today;
- A smaller number of qualifications, that can still be taken today, that count as ‘full and relevant’;
- A lack of trust amongst employers as to which qualifications properly equip potential staff to work effectively;
- Confusion amongst potential students and learners about which qualification to choose and how it will help their careers;
- Broad agreement that there needs to be standardisation to ensure consistency in qualifications, but concern about moving to a single qualification.

---

<sup>2</sup> The Teaching Agency are responsible for assessing whether a particular qualification should allow a member of staff to count in the staff:child ratios specified in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework – so, essentially, whether that qualification properly equips a person to work effectively with young children. The Teaching Agency judge qualifications against a set of criteria, which they hold, called the ‘full and relevant’ criteria. More information can be found at:

<https://www.education.gov.uk/eypqd/qualification-search>

- 2.3 Reform is needed so that we can be confident in what people learn on early years courses, and to ensure that those entering the profession, as well as those who wish to advance their careers, know which qualifications they need and why. This would give the sector the confidence to know that all students are being well prepared to enter the profession and to progress within it. I also believe that a clear and effective system of qualifications will have a positive impact on how people perceive the early years sector – as a sector that understands its worth and priorities, and has a transparent and effective way of equipping staff with the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding to make a difference for young children.
- 2.4 In this section I set out what the content of qualifications should be so that we can be confident that they properly equip practitioners to care for and to support babies' and young children's early learning and development. I also consider how the qualifications structure needs to change to create consistently robust qualifications, and what qualifications we should expect people to hold.

### What do those working in the early years need to know and be able to do?

- 2.5 What does it mean to be 'qualified' to work with babies and young children? In my view, there are certain fundamentals we should expect of qualifications, in terms of what those training to work with babies and young children need to know and be able to do. In the first instance, these fundamentals relate to the content of courses, linked to a **thorough understanding of child development and play**, providing a grounding in the social, emotional, physical and cognitive development of children from birth to seven. This means understanding how and why children do what they do, when they might develop certain skills and abilities, how best to meet their developing needs and interests, how to encourage their play at different stages of their development, when there might be issues of atypical development – and whether these are a cause for concern – and what a practitioner can and should do to encourage and support children as they grow and learn.
- 2.6 But I also believe that the way people learn is important, the pedagogical processes they experience to ensure that knowledge

is coupled with an **understanding of how it can be applied most effectively**. All babies and children are different, and working with them should never be a matter of ‘ticking boxes’ – reducing the complexities of children’s developing minds, bodies and emotions to a set of simplistic targets and statements. To be effective, early years practitioners must be able to make careful observations of children, and interact with them to form an understanding of each individual child, applying what they know about how children develop and play in a reflective and considered way.

- 2.7 Of course, all of those working in the early years – whatever their job title and role – must be carers as well as educators, providing the warmth and love children need to develop emotionally alongside and as part of planned and spontaneous learning opportunities. Overall, practitioners must bring these aspects of care and education together to provide the very best experience for each and every child. In other words, care and education must not be mutually exclusive – all learning can take place in a caring atmosphere that responds to children’s all round needs, and a caring atmosphere can also be one in which young children learn and develop.
- 2.8 So, in terms of what early years practitioners need to know, I would like to start by highlighting the importance of all those who work with children **understanding language development**. The evidence for strong support of young children’s early language development is overwhelming, and the environment in which children communicate influences language development.<sup>3</sup> Given the correlation between language and communication development and outcomes later in life, it is important that an understanding of how to encourage and support early language development, from birth, forms a core part of any qualification.
- 2.9 No study of child development would be complete without a solid **understanding of special educational needs and disability**. Indeed, a key part of understanding how and when children typically develop is being able to notice signs of slower, or

---

<sup>3</sup> For example, Roulstone, S. et al (2011) Investigating the role of language in children’s early educational outcomes, DfE ref RR134, which showed that language development by age two predicts performance on entry to primary school.

different, development and whether an apparent delay in development is an indication of other special educational needs or disabilities. Early years practitioners need to know what to look for, how to respond to it, and how to interact with parents and the range of other bodies, professionals and services that may play a part in supporting a child with special educational needs or who is disabled. Importantly they need to be able to work inclusively, so that the individual needs of all young children are identified and met in the context of interdisciplinary collaboration with other related professionals and with families.

- 2.10 It is important to be clear on the role of play in child development. We know that play is key to children's wellbeing, learning and development, and the EYFS makes specific reference to the place of play in early learning. I want to see an understanding of the importance of play reflected as a central feature of qualifications. It is vitally important that babies and young children have rich and varied opportunities to play both indoors and outside, and I regard it as a fundamental part of their early education and care. It is worth making clear in qualifications that an **understanding of the importance of play in children's lives and learning** – both guided exploratory play through a well-planned environment, and play which allows children to explore their world for themselves – is part of fully understanding child development and fostering independent and enquiring minds. It is necessary, therefore, that adults understand their roles in providing for play, including when they should participate to extend and support learning, and when they should observe and not interfere.
- 2.11 There are, of course, some areas that are non-negotiable in terms of content. These include **safeguarding and child protection, health and safety, nutrition, basic first aid, and understanding legal frameworks and obligations**, such as the Equality Act. These should remain a core part of any qualification. I would also like to add **inclusion and diversity** to this list. Every child is different, every child unique, coming from varied backgrounds and cultures. The ability to respond in an informed, sensitive and appropriate manner is essential if all children are to experience the education and care they deserve. This means practitioners need to develop an openness to learning about children's rich and varied ethnic and religious backgrounds, including children from travelling communities and children from single parent and same-sex parent families, and also in working with looked after children. All of this

equips practitioners to value, and to work meaningfully and effectively with, all children in their setting and their families.

- 2.12 I have considered carefully the age range that qualifications should focus on and am persuaded that qualifications for early years staff should be specific to the early years age group. The current level 2 Certificate and level 3 Diploma, covering the birth to nineteen age range, feel too broad to me to be meaningful, so I would like to see early years qualifications **focusing on the birth to seven age range**, which would include material relevant to the pre-birth period and to Key Stage 1. Some components of a qualification could cover a broader age range or indeed look at specific topics relevant to children over seven years of age, but these should be a secondary focus with the majority of the course content focusing on the years from birth to seven.
- 2.13 As stated above, as well as what early years practitioners need to know, I believe the way people learn – the pedagogical processes they go through – is fundamental to any effective early years course. In particular, there are four issues of pedagogical process that are essential to understand. First, the **importance of observations and assessments** as a tool by which a proper understanding of a child can be reached. This has long been the bedrock upon which early years practitioners have built their practice and it must be a core skill that all potential early years practitioners acquire.
- 2.14 Second, I am convinced by the case that **students should be experiencing practice in a variety of settings** as they prepare for work with young children, so that they can see different ways of working and learn from a variety of expert practitioners. I find it worrying that someone can move from being unqualified to becoming a setting leader without ever experiencing work in another early years setting.
- 2.15 Third, students must learn **how to work effectively with families**. The most impressive knowledge of child development and ability to identify individual needs and support a child will count for little if that information cannot be shared effectively with parents and carers. At the same time, practitioners must learn how to regard parents as experts on their own children and listen and learn from them so as to support each child's well-being, learning and development. Work with families includes holding one-to-one

conversations, arranging group events to share information, and visiting families in their own homes as part of early intervention and support programmes. From my own research I know the positive impact that working effectively with parents can have on children<sup>4</sup>, so I believe this must be a core part of any early years course.

- 2.16 Fourth, I believe that there is real merit in **taking time to study**, allowing the opportunity to reflect on and discuss what has been learnt, and to try new approaches and ideas within the supportive framework of a taught course. I do not want to place a minimum amount of time that a course should take nor prescribe minimum numbers of guided learning hours. As courses are designed, it is right that there is the flexibility to take into account prior learning and experience, and different modes and methods of teaching and learning. That said, given the wide range and depth of content I have described above, and the need to devote sufficient time to observations and placements, I believe that for someone new to the sector, a level 3 course would likely need to take around two years full-time equivalent study to complete. Any less than this would probably be insufficient to allow time to teach students with limited experience and knowledge the necessary content, and for students to develop and demonstrate the range of practical aptitude they need.
- 2.17 If we consider the fundamental content and pedagogical processes that I have set out above, it quickly becomes clear that the current level 3 Diploma does not offer – by itself – what I think is necessary to ensure that those achieving it could be considered ‘qualified’ to work effectively with babies and young children. Based on my assessment of what is needed, Figure 2 below sets out what a new level 3 qualification could look like:

---

<sup>4</sup> Nutbrown C., Hannon P. and Morgan A. (2005) Early literacy work with families. *Policy, practice and research*. London: Sage

**Figure 2:**

<b>Proposal for the fundamental content of the new level 3 qualification</b>	
<b>Content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a thorough understanding of child development. This should make up at least 60 per cent of any course, and should cover:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Child development and learning from birth to seven – including issues of attachment, social development, health and wellbeing, neuroscience and brain development, learning theories, and cognitive development</li> <li>○ Special educational needs and disability issues</li> <li>○ Language development</li> <li>○ Play</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Provide an understanding of, and explain responsibilities in relation to, safeguarding and child protection issues, health and safety, nutrition, basic first aid, and legal obligations and duties.</li> <li>• Cover issues of diversity and inclusion, including how every child can be given the best possible early years experience, paying due attention to their background and heritage, and welcoming and supporting different types of families.</li> <li>• Provide an understanding of the importance of working in partnership with parents to support their children’s learning and development.</li> <li>• Ensure that students learn how to apply knowledge in a reflective and appropriate way, differentiating between the needs of each child.</li> </ul>
<b>Pedagogical process</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equip students with the skills to undertake and reflect on observations and assessments, and to know how to use these effectively and appropriately, and to share them with parents.</li> <li>• Ensure that students undertake good quality learning placements, in at least three different and appropriate settings, to last a total equivalent of a minimum of twenty per cent of the total course duration.</li> <li>• Equip students with an understanding of why engaging families in a two-way process is important, and the skills to do this effectively.</li> </ul>
<b>Other</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate that it has valid, reliable assessment and awarding procedures (via external scrutiny).</li> <li>• Demand that students enrolling on courses have an acceptable level of English and mathematics.</li> </ul>

2.18 A level 3 qualification, based around this model, would ensure that those taking it have a rigorous and substantial learning experience, demanding in its content and supportive in the way it is delivered, leading to a trusted qualification. This should ensure that those achieving the qualification have the best chance of gaining the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to be effective

when they first enter and continue on their career in the early years. So, the question becomes: if this is what we want level 3 qualifications to look like in the future, how do we move from where we are now, to where we want to be?

### Changing 'full and relevant' qualifications

- 2.19 The current system has a number of different ways to regulate the content and number of qualifications. In line with other sectors, there is a set of National Occupational Standards (NOS) that awarding organisations must respond to when designing qualifications. There is also a set of responsibilities placed on Awarding Organisations and Ofqual to ensure that qualifications are suitable. In addition, the Teaching Agency maintains a list of 'full and relevant' qualifications that have been assessed against a set of criteria and deemed to be appropriate for those working within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Only staff who hold these 'full and relevant' qualifications can count in the staff:child ratios.
- 2.20 The Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC<sup>5</sup>), recognising the very real need to stem the proliferation of qualifications that has been such a confusion for the early years sector over the past twenty years, attempted to introduce a different way of regulating qualifications. By developing a single qualification at level 2 (the Certificate) and at level 3 (the Diploma), it sought to reduce dramatically the number of qualifications on offer, creating a more straightforward and understandable market, and to control the content by specifying in detail what must be taught.
- 2.21 These efforts are laudable, and I acknowledge that it is too soon to offer a definitive judgement on the success of those qualifications. I am, however, concerned that the Diploma, which can be completed in one year, may not allow sufficient time to study the depth and breadth required. And I cannot ignore the significant disquiet that has been expressed to me about the single qualification approach. Many have suggested to me this approach is too restrictive, not allowing sufficient flexibility, such that highly

---

<sup>5</sup> This function is now the responsibility of the Teaching Agency.



regarded and successful qualifications would have no place in the future. In particular, Montessori and Steiner organisations have contacted me to express their disquiet at moving to a single qualification that, as they see it, excludes their approaches, narrowing choice for parents.

- 2.22 The ideal approach would seem to be one that strikes the right balance by demanding a consistency of content and pedagogical process, responding to Figure 2 above, whilst also allowing sufficient flexibility for different qualifications and philosophies. An answer, I suggest, is to make better use of the ‘full and relevant’ criteria to help us achieve this.
- 2.23 The Teaching Agency is required to maintain the ‘full and relevant’ list. Any qualification can be mapped against these criteria. Therefore, the ‘full and relevant’ criteria for future qualifications can be changed so that they demand the optimum content and process, without stating that there is only one recognised qualification. In other words, we create a ‘middle way’ – where qualifications are created to respond to more robust and extensive criteria, without being overly prescriptive.
- 2.24 I would expect the Teaching Agency, working with Ofqual, to consult the sector on the revisions to the ‘full and relevant’ criteria, and suggest that Figure 2 above provides the point we need to start from. Other areas could be included in courses as long as the central criteria were met. I suggest that, by making better use of the existing power to define which qualifications are considered ‘full and relevant’, Government can ensure that courses are more demanding and robust, and reduce the proliferation in their number.
- 2.25 This approach implies that the Teaching Agency will have an ongoing role in assessing which qualifications meet the new ‘full and relevant’ criteria. The Teaching Agency and the Department for Education, working with Ofqual as necessary, should consider the most efficient way to manage this process. The approach also raises a number of issues to consider:
- how to manage legacy qualifications;
  - how different early years approaches and philosophies can fit into the new ‘full and relevant’ criteria; and
  - what this means for the number of qualifications in the future.

## Legacy qualifications

- 2.26 By legacy qualifications, I mean every qualification that will have been achieved before the new ‘full and relevant’ criteria come into effect. How will these qualifications be treated under the new arrangements?
- 2.27 I do not believe it would be practical to apply the new ‘full and relevant’ criteria retrospectively. This would be disruptive and it would be difficult to achieve a consistent approach that took account of the skills gained through experience. Therefore, the most sensible approach would seem to be that qualifications are assessed against the ‘full and relevant’ criteria in place when they were awarded. This will ensure that nobody is unfairly disadvantaged by changes to the system.
- 2.28 At the same time, I believe there would be merit in drawing a distinction between the existing ‘full and relevant’ criteria and the new criteria that I am recommending in this report. This distinction would enable employers to make decisions based on whether a practitioner has a qualification that meets the new requirements, whilst also taking into consideration other qualifications and skills gained through experience.
- 2.29 In some ways, this approach mirrors that taken when graduate teacher training routes were introduced from the 1970s onwards. Those who had undertaken non-graduate Certificates of Education still retained their Qualified Teacher Status and were employed on the same basis as those who had undertaken the graduate BEd route. Schools made recruitment decisions that recognised the different nature of qualifications, whilst exercising judgement over the experience of applicants. It seems appropriate that we consider a similar model for the early years, to help employers make informed decisions. Therefore, the Teaching Agency should work with Ofqual to consider the best way to badge qualifications.

## Montessori and Steiner

- 2.30 I have received specific representations from Montessori and Steiner settings and trainers, who are concerned that the move to a single qualification does not accommodate their particular

approaches and philosophies. I have a great deal of respect for the different approaches that these settings take in the care and education of young children, and I have seen for myself what they can offer when provision is high quality. I am persuaded that it is important that these approaches are not inhibited by too rigid an approach to early years qualifications. At the same time, I think it is reasonable that, in order to ensure consistency across the sector, Montessori and Steiner qualifications should demonstrate that they meet minimum expectations of quality and content.

- 2.31 By removing the intention to move to a single acceptable qualification in the future, I believe, the main concerns expressed to me by Montessori and Steiner organisations have been addressed. I do not believe there is anything inherent in the suggestions I have made for the new ‘full and relevant’ criteria that would prevent Montessori and Steiner specific qualifications from being developed in the future that fit within the overall framework I am proposing. Many Montessori and Steiner settings operate successfully within the EYFS, often receiving ‘Good’ or ‘Outstanding’ ratings from Ofsted. I would expect the Teaching Agency to consult Montessori and Steiner organisations, alongside the rest of the sector, as they develop the new ‘full and relevant’ criteria, but do not believe that the fundamentals I have set out above are at odds with the Montessori or Steiner approaches.

### Avoiding another proliferation

- 2.32 The proliferation in the number of early years qualifications was a key concern identified in my Interim Report. The growth over the last twenty years or so has led to a confusing qualifications market that has made life more difficult for employers as well as those enrolling on courses. By moving away from the single qualification model, I am aware of the risk that we see another proliferation in early years qualifications.
- 2.33 I expect the new ‘full and relevant’ criteria to act as a check on this growth. The new criteria will be rigorous and comprehensive, and Awarding Organisations will need to make a significant investment to develop a course that meets all criteria. This, by itself, should act as a brake on proliferation as qualifications become more demanding to develop and operate.

2.34 So, I am not minded at this time to recommend a stronger intervention to control the market. I would, however, expect the Teaching Agency to work with Ofqual to monitor the number of qualifications being developed and offered, and to act to prevent any proliferation of qualifications in the future, using the powers already possessed by Ofqual.

### **Recommendations on qualification content and process**

2.35 The arguments in favour of having a consistent but flexible qualifications structure are persuasive. It will allow us to be confident that the qualifications being undertaken do cover the appropriate subject matter and make use of teaching methods that combine theoretical knowledge with practical experience. Revised 'full and relevant' criteria offer an effective way of providing this consistency without moving to an overly prescriptive single qualification model. They need not be retrospectively applied, avoiding any negative impact on those already working in the sector. And this approach provides a minimum set of standards against which other philosophical approaches can develop their own qualifications for consideration.

**Recommendation 1**

*The Government should continue to specify the qualifications that are suitable for staff operating within the EYFS, and the Teaching Agency should develop a more robust set of ‘full and relevant’ criteria to ensure qualifications promote the right content and pedagogical processes. These criteria should be based on the proposals set out in this report.*

**Recommendation 2**

*All qualifications commenced from 1 September 2013 must demonstrate that they meet the new ‘full and relevant’ criteria when being considered against the requirements of the EYFS.*

**Recommendation 3**

*The previously articulated plan to move to a single early years qualification should be abandoned.*

**Recommendation 4**

*The Government should consider the best way to badge qualifications that meet the new ‘full and relevant’ criteria so that people can recognise under what set of ‘full and relevant’ criteria a qualification has been gained.*

2.36 I would like to add that, within my suggested changes to the ‘full and relevant’ criteria, I do not want to specify or restrict the ways in which courses should be offered. In my Interim Report I made reference to some concerns raised in my Call for Evidence about work-based routes. Many people gain early years qualifications through work-based routes, and these can offer benefits to settings and employers. I believe that these routes are suitable for training early years practitioners as long as they meet the new ‘full and relevant’ criteria that I have described, and they are as thorough and rigorous as any other route to qualification.

**A minimum level of qualification across the workforce**

2.37 I have spoken solely about level 3 qualifications so far. My Interim Report raised the specific question of whether we should seek to raise the minimum level of qualification across the workforce and, if so, to what level and by when. Moving to a minimum of a level 3

qualification has been widely argued for, not least by Dame Clare Tickell in her review of the EYFS.

- 2.38 I have approached the question from a different direction, by setting out what I believe should be taught in early years qualifications before thinking about levels. I believe the sophisticated understanding and practice I have described in my proposed new ‘full and relevant’ criteria can only be attained through a breadth and depth of study that suggests a full level 3 course. I cannot conceive of a way to develop a level 2 course that can act as anything other than an introduction into the sector, as it would lack sufficient depth and rigour. It has been put to me that a level 2 qualification is ‘better than nothing’; that it is a way of ensuring that those taking it have at least a basic level of understanding. Whilst I agree that this might be useful if it helps them progress to a level 3 qualification, I am not convinced that a level 2 qualification – in itself – offers sufficient scope to develop the appropriate skills and knowledge needed for practice, nor to enhance the quality of children’s early years experiences.
- 2.39 I do not believe that a level 2 qualification – by itself – should mean that someone is ‘qualified’ to work unsupervised with babies and young children. This does not mean that those currently working in the sector with level 2 qualifications are not competent – they have experience and often other training that helps to ensure they play an invaluable role. It may also still be right to continue offering level 2 qualifications as an introductory route, for some, into a ‘full and relevant’ level 3 qualification.
- 2.40 Although there are many unqualified staff who are caring, loving, and have relevant experience and knowledge, it is important that this is supplemented by a systematic programme of learning and personal development, leading to an appropriate qualification, if we are to be confident in their good practice. I do not mean that staff with qualifications below level 3 should be prevented from working with babies and young children, but I question whether they should be considered fully ‘qualified’.
- 2.41 At the same time, I am aware of the need to recognise the current shape of the early education and care sector. At present only a setting leader needs to possess a ‘full and relevant’ level 3, with half of the remaining staff needing to possess a ‘full and relevant’ level 2, and the rest of the staff can be unqualified. I do agree that

level 3 is the ideal minimum requirement for all staff working with babies and young children, as suggested by Dame Clare and reiterated by the Government as an aspiration for the future.

- 2.42 This ideal minimum of level 3 should apply wherever the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is being followed. Therefore this would apply across the whole sector, including many childminders.
- 2.43 I recognise that childminders are different from other early years practitioners. It is only really in the last fifteen years or so that we have increased expectations of what childminders should do. The existing EYFS already makes exceptions for childminders, recognising the differences between home and group settings. Whilst some embark on childminding as a career, many are attracted to it as a way of working that fits in with other commitments in their lives (for example, raising their own children) and view it as a job for a defined period of time.
- 2.44 Currently childminders are not required to have any qualification (though many do). Introducing a requirement for all childminders to hold a level 3 qualification would have a disproportionate impact on this part of the sector. By including childminders in the requirements placed on group settings there is a risk, some argue, that we exclude the flexible childminder from the system – those who would find it difficult having to study for a qualification, with the time and money that would involve.
- 2.45 However, in my view, all children learning within the EYFS must receive an equal standard of care and education, and their families should expect this from any setting providing the EYFS. It is therefore my judgment that any childminder providing the EYFS must meet the same qualifications requirements that we expect of practitioners in group settings. Childminders are part of the picture of early years provision, therefore I can find no justification for exempting those who work with children alone in their homes from the need to hold qualifications.

### **Moving to a minimum level 3**

- 2.46 For all types of setting, there are significant financial pressures to consider under this proposal, both in terms of the cost of training staff and the additional wages that a level 3 qualified member of

staff might expect to receive. These financial pressures affect settings, staff, students, and of course parents, and I am uncomfortable in adding to them in the current economic climate.

- 2.47 Nevertheless, the qualification levels of staff are important enough that I want to see the aspiration for a minimum level 3 become a clear target. This will necessarily involve a long-term approach, not least because it will take time to make the changes I have recommended to level 3 qualifications, and the sector will need time to adapt and respond. But I also want to see progress, with specific and tangible milestones. One way to achieve this, and thereby build a strong and effective workforce for the future, is to revise the EYFS requirements on the proportion of staff required to hold a 'full and relevant' level 3 qualification.
- 2.48 Ultimately, the long term target should be that all staff counting against the staff:child ratios in the EYFS should possess at least a 'full and relevant' level 3 qualification. Whilst this may already be the case for some settings, it will take others some time to achieve. The target date will need to be far enough in the future to give time for staff to learn and settings to adapt, but close enough to prompt immediate action. I believe ten years should be sufficient time.
- 2.49 In the interim, I propose quick action so that a minimum of 50 per cent of staff in group settings must be qualified to at least level 3 – making clear that staff with a level 2 qualification or below should not be considered 'qualified' for such work. The EYFS requirements should later be revised further so that a minimum of 70 per cent of staff in a setting should be qualified to at least level 3, before moving to the final ambition of all staff counting towards the staff:child ratios in the EYFS being qualified to level 3.
- 2.50 This approach has advantages. First, it makes clear that level 3 is the new benchmark – nothing below that should count as 'qualified' as far as the sector is concerned. Second, given that we know more than 70 per cent of staff already have at least level 3<sup>6</sup>, it is not unreasonable to expect that this ambition can be delivered. The only reason for moving in stages is to give time for the uneven spread of qualified practitioners in the sector to work through – so

---

<sup>6</sup> Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey 2010, published by the Department for Education in September 2011 (OSR17/2011)



settings that are currently meeting the bare minimum have time to adapt.

- 2.51 Any new expectation of level 3 qualifications will be a challenge for childminders, given that any change would be a substantial shift from the position of having no qualification requirements. Fewer childminders are qualified at level 3 than the workforce as a whole, though this is increasing (around 47 per cent in the most recent figures, up from 36 per cent in 2007). This suggests my proposed new minimum standard of level 3 could have a disproportionate impact on this part of the sector. However, the National Childminding Association (NCMA), amongst others, has made a strong case to me that any distinction for childminders creates a two-tier system in which childminders are seen as a second class, less well qualified option for early education and childcare.
- 2.52 I agree with this view. My instinct is to focus on the benefits for children and, no less than in group settings, well qualified and skilful childminders can make a significant positive difference to the babies and young children they work with. It seems to me that there is an obvious distinction to be drawn between childminders delivering the EYFS, and those providing shorter, wrap-around care (who are already given the flexibility not to offer the full EYFS). Where a childminder is delivering the EYFS we should, as a principle, expect them to be well qualified and able, just as we do for staff in a group setting.
- 2.53 Childminders cannot respond to interim targets, for the simple reason that where a childminder works alone the setting cannot have 50 or 70 per cent qualified staff – they are either qualified or not. My expectation is that childminders should be exempt from the phasing, but not from the final target to have reached level 3 by 2022, on the same terms as others working in the early years.

**Recommendation 5**

*The EYFS requirements should be revised so that, by September 2022, all staff counting in the staff:child ratios must be qualified at level 3.*

**Recommendation 6**

*The EYFS requirements should be revised so that, from September 2013, a minimum of 50 per cent of staff in group settings need to possess at least a 'full and relevant' level 3 to count in the staff:child ratios.*

**Recommendation 7**

*The EYFS requirements should be revised so that, from September 2015, a minimum of 70 per cent of staff in group settings need to possess at least a 'full and relevant' level 3 to count in the staff:child ratios.*

### 3. Starting out in the early years workforce: entry and initial training

- 3.1 Practitioners are the most valuable asset in any early years setting. They are the single biggest contributor to the quality of provision, and they can be the driving force towards improvement. They are also often what parents and carers value most when choosing early education and childcare.
- 3.2 It is absolutely essential that we have high quality practitioners working with babies and young children. To do that, we need to ensure we recruit the best people and give them a high standard of training and support.

#### Attracting the best people

- 3.3 I know that a career in early childhood education and care can be engaging, varied and rewarding. An early years practitioner has the rare privilege of knowing that the care and education they offer young children today can have a profound impact on them, now and in later life – making a difference not only to individual children, but ultimately to the wider society in which they live.
- 3.4 Yet, as I set out in my Interim Report, recruiting good practitioners to the workforce can be difficult. I regard this as an indication that the early years workforce does not hold the status in society that it deserves. It is still the case that working in the early years is too often seen as a low level job which involves, as some have expressed, ‘wiping noses’ and ‘playing with kids’. It is not always regarded as a professional occupation that demands good qualifications, strong communication skills, and expertise in child development and early learning. We need to raise our expectations, and make early education and childcare a more attractive sector to work in. We have a responsibility to young children to do this.

#### Demanding better literacy and numeracy

- 3.5 Literacy and numeracy are essential skills used in everyday life. They allow us to communicate with each other both in writing and orally, and to understand the universal language of numbers.

Employers in other professions want to recruit people with strong literacy and mathematical skills. Courses for other professional sectors require applicants to hold qualifications in English and mathematics as proxies that demonstrate their literacy and numeracy. In this respect, the early years sector has fallen behind.

- 3.6 At present there is no requirement to hold English and maths qualifications until higher levels (for example, to enter EYPS courses). Some courses require students to catch up in their English and maths while they study. For example, some routes to level 3 demand level 2 English and maths by the point of completion, but not entry. However, during my Review I have become aware that learners who fail to pass the English and maths components can still receive an early years qualification, which will still be considered ‘full and relevant’, and entitle them to apply for jobs working with young children.
- 3.7 Building on their home experiences, it is in early years settings that children are first systematically introduced to the written word, and mathematical concepts such as number, shape and size. I want all early years settings to be places where children discover a world of books, stories and rhymes, and where they are challenged and supported to explore and to question. This is not just about the mechanics of addition, subtraction, reading and writing. An early years practitioner should be sufficiently confident in their own literacy and numeracy to bring a story to life imaginatively and help children explore through play concepts such as number, size, weight and shape – and they must be able to do this in a way that engages and enthuses young children to enjoy learning and to discover more.
- 3.8 A common concern in my Call for Evidence was about practitioners’ communication skills. Spoken and written communication with families is essential to early years practice. How can an early years practitioner be confident and effective in communicating with families when they are not confident in their own literacy?
- 3.9 I believe we must raise our expectation of practitioners’ literacy and mathematical abilities. One way to do this could be to require that a student must have a level 2 in English and maths before they can successfully complete a level 3 early years course. In her review of vocational qualifications, Professor Alison Wolf was clear

that literacy and numeracy must not be left behind once a student takes a vocational route, and that they should be supported to catch up on their level 2 English and maths while they are studying.

- 3.10 However, I believe that in the early years sector we must be more rigorous because of the nature of the work. If we are going to improve the quality of early childhood education and care, we cannot allow individuals to ‘slip through’ without their level 2 English and maths in place.
- 3.11 Furthermore, it is my opinion that someone studying towards their early education and childcare level 3 should be able to dedicate their time to that subject, and will be less able to succeed in it if they are distracted by attempting to catch up on other skills. Students need to be able to read professional literature, make observations, write notes and complete written assessments, as well as read and tell stories, and hold extended conversations with children. If they cannot do these things, then they are not yet ready for the course, or for working with babies and young children.

### **Recommendation 8**

***Level 2 English and mathematics should be entry requirements to level 3 early education and childcare courses.***

- 3.12 The most appropriate mechanism to make this happen would be through the new set of ‘full and relevant’ criteria for level 3 qualifications, which I have already recommended in this report. To be clear, in line with my earlier comments, I do not believe it is practicable to insist that current members of the workforce with a ‘full and relevant’ level 3 qualification, but who lack a level 2 in English and maths, are forced to obtain new English and maths qualifications. I do believe, however, that they should be encouraged and supported to do so.
- 3.13 My recommendation is for level 2 English and maths qualifications to be part of the entry requirements to level 3 courses. During my Review, I have heard different views on whether all English and maths qualifications at level 2 are equally rigorous, with some people suggesting that GCSE English and maths should be the requirement. I recommend that the Teaching Agency, when consulting on the new ‘full and relevant’ criteria, should take views

on whether GCSE should be the minimum requirement, or whether other level 2 qualifications should be accepted to demonstrate literacy and mathematical skills.

- 3.14 The introduction of more stringent entry requirements could help attract more young people who are leaving school with good exam results, and who may not otherwise have considered a career in early education and childcare. It would help put an end to the view that early years is an option for those who are ‘not bright enough’ to do other jobs, or a ‘last resort’ for those who have left school unqualified. Overall, we will have improved the standard of entrants to courses, and raised our expectations of the workforce, with children as well as those who embark on a high status early years career being beneficiaries.

### High quality training: the role of tutors

- 3.15 Today’s course tutors play a direct role in shaping tomorrow’s early years workforce. Early years students’ experiences whilst training will influence their practice when they begin working in settings, and have an impact on children’s day-to-day experiences and, ultimately, their outcomes. If we want to raise the quality of early years provision, we need to improve the quality of training and raise our expectations of those who deliver it.
- 3.16 Over 60 per cent of respondents to my Call for Evidence felt training providers did not teach qualifications in a way that ensured consistent outcomes for learners. There was a concern that the variation in the quality of tuition, and indeed in the quality of tutors themselves, mean learners receive very different experiences depending on where they study. More worryingly, people have raised concerns that some tutors lack fundamental early years knowledge, experience and awareness of current developments in early education and care.
- 3.17 This detracts from the high quality teaching that I know also takes place. The very best examples of this demonstrate sophisticated understanding of current thinking on cognitive psychology, play, work with families, neuroscience as it relates to babies, and understanding of emotional development and the importance of attachment in the earliest years. There are many passionate and inspiring tutors across the sector, delivering training that ultimately

enhances the well-being and life chances of our young children. I would like all students training to work in the early years to be able to learn from such tutors.

- 3.18 My Call for Evidence also revealed that some tutors are teaching courses at the same level to which they themselves are qualified. By this I mean that, for example, some level 3 courses are being taught by tutors who hold only a level 3 qualification themselves. This should not be acceptable.
- 3.19 Tutors need to be able to convey knowledge to their students with confidence and authority. For this reason, I believe that tutors should be qualified at a higher level than the course they are teaching. So, for instance, tutors teaching a foundation degree should as a minimum have an honours degree appropriate to early years education and child development. I am aware that there must be exceptions to this principle at the highest qualification levels.
- 3.20 I am aware there are some tutors teaching early years courses whose own background is in another subject, such as social work. I do not wish to exclude them, as they are important in building multi-professional understanding. However, I believe that all early years tutors should have relevant and current practical knowledge of the early years field, so that they understand the current realities of working in an early years setting.
- 3.21 Tutors should always take pride in being specialists in their field. The best tutors have a strong understanding of the sector, current knowledge, including of the latest government initiatives, and keep themselves at the cutting-edge of practice. The best way to achieve this is for tutors to engage in regular continuing professional development (CPD) to update their knowledge. Tutors must also have recent direct early years practice experience, conducting regular visits to settings to observe and refresh their practical skills in working with children and families.
- 3.22 These seem to me to be basic expectations of professionals, so it concerns me that this does not always happen. I have considered the options around mandating these expectations, but I am wary of being overly bureaucratic. There are existing mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of training, and I think these could be used more effectively.

- 3.23 For example, Awarding Organisations already have a duty to ensure that the colleges and training providers they are working with employ staff who are competent to teach the qualification. Awarding Organisations should exercise their powers more rigorously, to ensure courses are being run by appropriately qualified tutors.
- 3.24 Colleges and training providers are able to recruit the tutors that run their courses. They must take responsibility for ensuring their tutors are qualified to the appropriate level, that they have the necessary time and capacity to carry out CPD and direct experience of practice, and that they are in fact doing so.
- 3.25 All involved in providing learning routes to qualifications, including the tutors themselves, have a duty to ensure that students are receiving excellent training and support, so that they attain their qualifications only when they have the necessary knowledge and skills, and are fit and confident to provide education and care for our youngest children.

**Recommendation 9**

***Tutors should be qualified to a higher level than the course they are teaching.***

**Recommendation 10**

***All tutors should have regular continuing professional development and contact with early years settings. Colleges and training providers should allow sufficient time for this.***

**Putting theory into practice: high quality placements**

- 3.26 Educating and caring for young children involves both theory and practice. I have spoken about how important a good theoretical understanding of child development and play is, but this knowledge needs to be supported by experience of working alongside experienced professionals to interact with and support babies and young children.
- 3.27 For this reason, placements are an essential part of any early years student's training. These provide the opportunity to see and



experience the realities of practice in settings. This time in settings allows potential practitioners to apply what they have learned in the classroom, to carry out observations and to gain experience of being with and working with young children.

- 3.28 Already in this Final Report I have specified the percentage of time students should spend on placement in settings, but I also believe the quality of placements is an important factor in a practitioner's initial training. It is the settings themselves that largely determine what students get out of their practice placements. If we want qualifications to equip early years practitioners with the skills, knowledge and understanding they need to work with young children, it is important that students undergo placements in settings which are themselves effective, and are demonstrating good practice. Settings that host students must also have the capacity to guide and support them through their experience, so they can understand what they are seeing and develop confidence in their practice with children.
- 3.29 Many responses to my Call for Evidence raised the long-term impact of poor quality placements. It is possible, even likely, for a student undertaking a placement in a poor setting to pick up bad habits, witness inappropriate practice, or for them to feel lost and confused when there is a lack of support. This could be a tremendous waste of that student's potential, and ultimately detrimental to the young children they will work with.
- 3.30 If we are to avoid the perpetuation of poor practice then I strongly believe that all settings hosting students on placements must be of high quality. Students must have the opportunity to see and experience good practice in the setting. It seems obvious to me that there should be a minimum standard that a setting must meet before being able to host students.
- 3.31 Whilst settings are largely responsible for the quality of practice placements, my Call for Evidence raised concerns about the extent to which training providers communicate with and support settings. I therefore believe that training providers should take greater responsibility for the quality of practice experience their students receive as they work towards their qualification. They must not be able to view placements as anything other than integral to the course they are providing.

**Recommendation 11**

***Only settings that are rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted should be able to host students on placement.***

**Recommendation 12**

***Colleges and training providers should look specifically at the setting's ability to offer students high quality placements.***

**Apprenticeships**

- 3.32 Apprenticeships are a key route into work in the early years sector. The Government's commitment and drive to encourage take up of apprentices by employers is welcomed, and an impressive 92 per cent of employers who employ apprentices believe Apprenticeships lead to a more motivated and satisfied workforce<sup>7</sup>.
- 3.33 We are seeing increasing numbers of people embarking on this route into working in the early years, giving them fulfilling opportunities to work with young children and gain practical experience, whilst gaining a sense of the importance of child development. The Children and Young People's Workforce (England) Apprenticeship framework is already available at level 2 and level 3, for those looking to join the workforce or who are already in it but want to gain these qualifications.
- 3.34 I welcome the intention to introduce a new Higher Level Apprenticeship (level 4) in Child Care Studies Skills which would be issued through the sector skills council, Skills for Care and Development. This could support my vision for a more highly qualified workforce, assuming it responds to the content and pedagogical processes I set out in Figure 2. I believe this will add to the range of development opportunities available for those who want to improve their skills and knowledge whilst still working in the early years sector.
- 3.35 While I believe that Apprenticeships are a strong entry route into the early years workforce, I want to be explicit that the recommendations I have made regarding initial training must equally apply to these routes. For example, I have made

<sup>7</sup> According to public information provided by the Apprenticeships service.

recommendations in this Final Report on the percentage of time spent in practice placements. I believe that Apprentices must not gain their experience exclusively in the setting that employs them, but must also have opportunities to experience practice in other settings.

- 3.36 This chapter has addressed how we can make sure the very best people join the early years workforce, and how they can gain the necessary experiences and support to prepare them for the realities of working in an early years setting. But we already have thousands of people working in early years settings. We cannot raise standards in the sector without taking action to develop and support those already working in it.

## 4. An early years career: progressing to and beyond level three

- 4.1 As I set out in my Interim Report, qualifications are closely linked to career progression. In any sector, an individual seeks additional qualifications and training so that they can take on new roles and responsibilities. They also, not unreasonably, expect to be rewarded in line with this, including through pay, status, working conditions and job satisfaction.
- 4.2 In the early years sector, this does not always happen. My Review found that there is a lack of clarity about what skills are needed for different roles, and which qualifications will provide these skills. Progression routes available to early years practitioners are not well understood, and many people have reported a lack of opportunities available to them, especially to progress to senior and leadership roles.
- 4.3 It is not clear to what extent the lack of clear progression routes is dissuading people from joining the sector, or even encouraging them to leave it. I am very concerned that this is undermining the status and professionalism of the early years workforce.
- 4.4 In order to improve the recruitment and retention of excellent staff, and to make it possible to build a career in early childhood education and care, we need to make sure it is just that: not just a job, but a career. This is essential if we want the early years sector to grow, improve in quality and to become a respected and highly regarded profession.

### Progressing to level 3

- 4.5 In this report I have set out my recommendation for a gradually increasing number of staff required to hold a level 3 qualification up to 2022. This is an ambitious but achievable target.
- 4.6 I know that there are practitioners working with young children now who are competent and talented, and who have years of experience, but do not have qualifications. I do not want to lose this talent from the sector, nor disregard the substantial contribution these individuals have made to children's lives. I am recommending that level 3 should be our new standard, but I want

to be clear that this standard cannot be reached unless we support those already working in settings to progress.

- 4.7 I am also aware that newly qualified people do not arrive in settings immediately ready to lead practice. We need to allow for those who are still on their journey to level 3, such as Apprentices and students on a range of courses, to see experienced practitioners in action and learn from them, have contact with children, and gain practical experience.

### A structured career pathway in the early years

- 4.8 I want to move towards an early years career path that is structured, clear and easy to understand. I would also like to see an end to the habit that seems to be prevalent at the moment, of referring to a person by the level of qualification they hold rather than the role they perform, for example, “This is Josie, she’s our level 3”, rather than, “This is Josie, she is in charge of our baby room”. This is unhelpful because it is belittling to the individual, and unclear to those working outside the early years, and to parents, what this really means. We need to move towards a greater sense of professional roles and identities, ensuring that early years staff have clear and intelligible roles, responsibilities and status, which are understood and adopted across the sector. This would make clear practitioners’ level of qualification and confer a shared expectation of role and status.

4.9 I suggest a new set of job titles as follows:

**Figure 3:** A proposed new set of consistent job titles and roles.

Job title	Level of full and relevant early years qualification	Included in ratios for EYFS?	Role includes
Early Years Assistant/Trainee	Unqualified, level 2, perhaps on a training route to level 3	No	Supervised support work within a setting, learning on the job.
Early Years Apprentice	Unqualified, level 2, on an Apprenticeship route	No	Supervised support work within a setting, learning on the job.
Early Years Practitioner	Level 3	Yes	Leading practice within a room, working directly with children and families, could be a manager in a small setting.
Senior Early Years Practitioner	Level 4 and above	Yes	Leading practice across a number of rooms, working directly with children and families, could be a manager.
Early Years Professional	Graduate, with EYPS	Yes	Leading practice across a setting, working directly with children and families, could be a manager.
Early Years Teacher	Graduate, with QTS	Yes	Providing overall pedagogical leadership for a setting, working directly with children and families, and supporting staff with lower levels of qualifications.

4.10 If the sector were to embed these new role descriptions in practice, it would be a big step towards real professionalism in the early years. Every person working in the early years would have an identity, and one that they can easily explain to parents and the range of other professionals they work with. Everyone would understand an individual's role in the setting, and the extent to

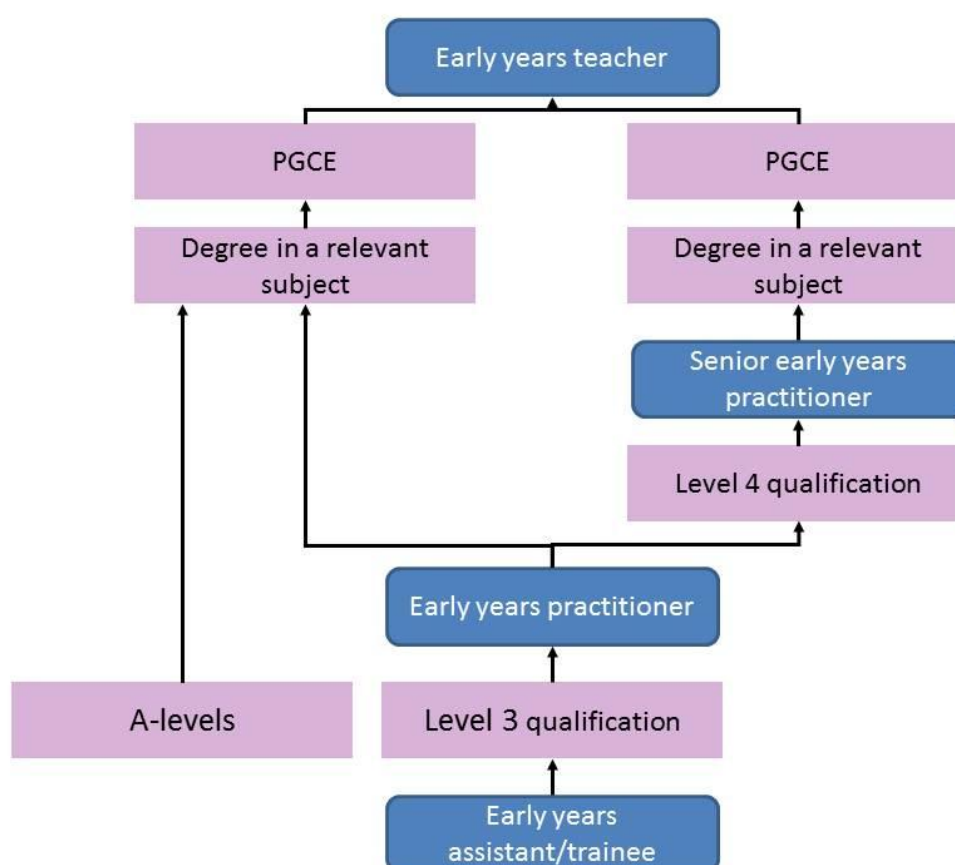
which they need to work under the direction of a higher qualified member of staff or are able to direct others. Individuals would also have a clear next step in their career to work towards, and long term goals to aspire to if they wish, and they will know what qualifications they must achieve to reach those goals.

- 4.11 I do not intend the roles listed in Figure 3 to replace the wide range of different specialist roles that people working with babies and young children might have. For example, an individual might be a senior early years practitioner but also be, and describe themselves as, a special educational needs coordinator (SENCO).

### A new progression route

- 4.12 This new set of roles, and the qualifications needed to work in them, could help to create a stronger progression structure. This could lead to a career that looks like this:

**Figure 4:** Some proposed typical routes through a career working in the early years.



- 4.13 The career routes in Figure 4 are intended to be simple examples – the diagram does not represent the full range of different routes and qualifications available. For example, it does not show Apprenticeship routes, nor the range of different qualifications at levels 4 and 5 – all of which can be valuable opportunities.
- 4.14 As suggested in Figure 4, I believe that someone who holds a level 3 early education and childcare qualification, that meets the new, strengthened ‘full and relevant’ criteria that I have recommended, should be able to progress from this on to a degree level course. I suggest that when the Teaching Agency consults on the new ‘full and relevant criteria’, higher education institutions and UCAS should be consulted on how best to ensure this.
- 4.15 However, an individual may wish to progress more gradually, taking level 4 qualifications and becoming a Senior Practitioner, before looking towards an Early Years Teacher role. An individual, equally, may decide that an Early Years Practitioner or Senior Early Years Practitioner role is right for them, so not to study for further qualifications.

### Progression for all

- 4.16 It is important to me that all progression routes should be available to all people who are capable of meeting the standard, and who have the enthusiasm and dedication to want to do so. In my Interim Report I reflected the suggestion made to me that by introducing tougher qualifications requirements there may be a risk this would have an unwelcome effect on practitioners from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups. This is because it has been suggested, albeit anecdotally, that fewer Black and Minority Ethnic practitioners are likely to be qualified at level 3 and above, and more are likely to be unqualified or qualified at level 2.
- 4.17 I want to be clear: I am not suggesting that BME staff are less likely to be able to achieve higher level qualifications, nor, for that matter, qualifications to demonstrate their English and maths skills. What I do want to ensure is that, as we look to improve the levels of qualifications and skills across the sector, this is done in a way that offers viable progression routes for all members of the workforce with the drive and skills to succeed. Young children benefit from being cared for and educated by well-qualified



practitioners who represent the diversity of heritage and backgrounds in our society.

- 4.18 The suggestion that BME practitioners tend to have lower level qualifications is based on anecdotal evidence only. During my review, I actively sought evidence to confirm or deny this, but was not able to answer the question comprehensively. I have been concerned by how little we know about the make-up of our workforce at the different qualification levels, particularly on this point about BME practitioners.
- 4.19 I would like to understand better how my recommendations might affect people from different ethnic backgrounds, however, without the necessary evidence I am not able to. At their core, my recommendations seek to improve the quality of care and education all our young children receive and so raising our expectations of qualifications and staff is essential. But equally, I do not want my recommendations to have negative impacts on any practitioners, including those from BME backgrounds, so we need more information about the make up of the early years workforce.

### **Recommendation 13**

***The Department for Education should conduct research on the number of BME staff at different qualification levels, and engage with the sector to address any issues identified.***

### **Men in early education and childcare**

- 4.20 I want to address an issue which is raised often: how can we address the gender imbalance in our workforce and encourage more men to seek careers in early education and childcare? Men are estimated to make up only one to two per cent of staff in early years settings, depending on setting type, and this has consistently been the case over many years<sup>8</sup>. It is clear to me that this is a much wider issue than early education and childcare qualifications. Rather, it is about widespread social perceptions of what it is to work with young children and the widely held belief that this is 'women's work'.

<sup>8</sup> Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey 2010, published by the Department for Education in September 2011 (OSR17/2011)

4.21 I believe young children benefit from spending time with men as well as women, and I have considered whether there is something specific I could recommend to help more children have this experience. I have visited settings during the course of my Review where there is a good gender balance on the staff, but these are rare. I am inclined to think that the more general approach of raising quality and standards through qualifications, establishing clearer career routes and improving the perceived status of the early years workforce will help more men see the value of the profession, and encourage them to consider working with children.

### **Better professional support and development for early years practitioners**

4.22 If we want the early years sector to grow, to reach higher standards of quality, and to be led by an increasingly professional workforce, then we must improve the training and support that practitioners receive at all stages of their early years career.

4.23 An individual does not stop learning and developing once they have completed their initial training and become qualified. They need support when they first begin practice, and they need further training to enhance and develop their knowledge and skills, and to keep pace with new research and developments, nationally and internationally. This is well recognised by professions such as teaching and nursing, and it must be equally true for the early years.

### **Strengthening support for new staff**

4.24 I have already mentioned the importance of students being well supported by settings while on practice placements. But it is not only students on placement who need this support. Too often practitioners embarking upon their first early years role after qualifying are in a position where they must work unsupervised, and without ongoing support and advice.

4.25 For newly qualified staff the first six months are a time when much new knowledge and experience is acquired and assimilated, and confidence around child and family interaction is being developed.

During this time leaders and other experienced staff in a setting have a crucial role to play in creating an environment that is welcoming and supportive to new colleagues, and ensures all staff are able to learn, reflect on and improve their practice.

- 4.26 In my view, all new staff should start their job knowing what they can expect to receive by way of support from the setting, from their very first day of work, and this needs to be consistent across the sector. Such support needs to be in place from the very first day for all new practitioners.
- 4.27 New staff need time to reflect on their practice, to link it to their understanding of theory, and the time to be able to discuss this with more experienced practitioners. The settings that do best in supporting new staff designate an experienced practitioner as a mentor. This approach should be used in all settings.
- 4.28 There are clear links between the quality of setting and the capacity of the setting to provide good support for all staff. A new member of staff will not benefit from being mentored by a practitioner whose own practice is poor. Consequently, I believe that if the setting is Ofsted rated below Good, the mentoring should come from an outside source to avoid perpetuating poor practice.
- 4.29 All staff need some access to mentoring and support, so settings should consider the support structures in place for senior staff including leaders and managers. I do not want to impose a formal system of mentoring. I trust the sector to consider where this mentoring should come from and what arrangements they might put in place. I would also hope that Ofsted could consider how mentoring in a setting fits within the wider provision of continuing professional development opportunities when it undertakes inspections.

#### **Recommendation 14**

***Newly qualified practitioners starting in their first employment should have mentoring for at least the first six months. If the setting is rated below 'Good', this mentoring should come from outside.***

## Ensuring Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is available to all

- 4.30 Good quality CPD enables existing practitioners to build on their knowledge and skills, and to keep up to date with relevant research, practices and initiatives, including learning from examples in other countries. Practitioners who undertake regular CPD show a proper respect for the children and families they work with, taking a professional pride in their work, and demonstrating an understanding of their responsibility to constantly improve their practice and enhance the experience they are able to offer young children.
- 4.31 Access to, and the quality of, CPD were continually raised by practitioners over the course of my Review. In my Call for Evidence over half of those responding (56 per cent) said the range of training and qualifications did not meet the needs of those currently in the workforce as well as new entrants. An overwhelming 72 per cent identified cost, both of the training and of cover while staff are away from the setting, as the main barrier to accessing CPD. This was a particular concern raised with respect to small private settings, but is an issue for all.
- 4.32 It is a concern that practitioners who want to develop their knowledge and skills are not able to access CPD. We need to provide greater opportunities for professional development and I believe there should be an expectation that leaders, managers and owners of early years settings prioritise CPD and the professional growth of their workforce, including themselves. I warmly welcome the move from Ofsted to look for evidence of staff CPD as part of their new inspection framework for early years settings. Settings will be asked to provide evidence of how they are supporting staff development and needs, and a description of their programme of CPD and training.
- 4.33 I want to ensure some consistency and commonality of CPD across all settings, along with a freedom to be innovative and creative according to the needs of the young children they are responsible for. The introduction of freely available, online modules seems to me to be one straightforward way to expand the information available to early years staff in a flexible and accessible way. For example, modules could be made available to update practitioners on new Government initiatives, on new

understanding from neuroscience, on the fundamentals of child development, and on examples of innovative and effective practice. Online modules could also help to induct new staff to early years work.

- 4.34 I hope that this online content will act as a stepping stone for new practitioners' reflective thinking and self-evaluation, as well as a signpost to help them find further resources. All this can be offered independently of their setting, and regardless of the quality of that setting.
- 4.35 I expect that the sector will want to lead development of the online content for itself, reflecting the sector's own needs and priorities. But I suggest the Teaching Agency and the National College should oversee this to ensure consistency and quality, working with others in the sector to consider what support all new early years practitioners need to ensure their competence and confidence to practice, and also how the modules should be developed and delivered.

#### **Recommendation 15**

***A suite of online induction and training modules should be brought together by the Government, that can be accessed by everyone working in early education and childcare.***

- 4.36 However, I am well aware that not all CPD can, or should, be done online. Early years practitioners need opportunities to discuss their practice and learn from each other, in order to develop their practical skills. The best professional development uses a blended approach including high quality materials, work-based learning and support, visits to other settings, experiences which challenge thinking, attending conferences, and provision of mentoring from outstanding leaders and peers.
- 4.37 In her review of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Dame Clare Tickell spoke of the wealth of knowledge and expertise that already exists across the early years sector which could be tapped into. I agree, and I suggest that we make better use of this. I know of many examples where exceptional private settings and maintained nursery schools, childminder networks and children's centres are working with other settings to share their experience and expertise, and to improve local practice.

- 4.38 I think there may be opportunities around the Teaching Schools approach, led by the National College. Teaching Schools identify and coordinate expertise across a group of partner schools, using their best leaders and teachers to support initial teacher training, CPD and to provide more general school-to-school support. Teaching School designation is available to any type of school in England, including nursery and primary schools where early years provision takes place. I think the Teaching Schools approach of school-to-school improvement is one that could present opportunities and benefits for the early years sector.
- 4.39 A similar approach is the Teaching Centre model, used by the Pen Green Centre for Children and their Families, which I visited during my Review. This model encourages nursery schools and children's centres demonstrating outstanding practice to share their expertise and support with other early years settings in their region. I think this approach offers a positive way to drive improvement and develop pedagogical leadership in a sector-led and flexible way, responding to local needs. I hope that the Government will draw on the lessons learned from this model, and consider whether there are opportunities for expansion.
- 4.40 This chapter has set out what a future early years practitioner should be able to expect from their career – including what their career ladder could look like, and what education, training and support they should be able to access to help them climb that professional ladder. I have set out the roles on the highest rungs of such a ladder as being 'Early Years Professional' and 'Early Years Teacher'. These are roles for pedagogical leaders, and my next chapter will focus on them.

## 5. Raising our aspirations: qualifications for leadership

5.1 I have set out in this report the need for work in the early years to be a career choice, and for practitioners to be supported as they progress and develop their skills as professionals. Ultimately, all early years practitioners should aspire to be leaders, of practice if not of settings, and all practitioners should be capable of demonstrating some pedagogical leadership regardless of qualification level.

### Leadership in the early years sector: the current picture

5.2 A lot of good work is already being done to improve leadership of the sector. The National College has been working closely with the sector to expand and develop leadership, focusing on three key areas:

- Improving the supply and quality of early years leadership.
- Developing leadership capacity through professional networks that share and develop knowledge and good practice.
- Working alongside practitioners to establish a robust approach to sector led system improvement locally.

5.3 This commendable work is still at a pilot stage. I hope we can learn from the piloting about leadership development in a way that will be meaningful to the sector and can clearly demonstrate a positive impact on the experiences and outcomes for children and their families.

5.4 Another significant contribution of the National College is its delivery of the National Professional Qualification for Integrated Centre Leadership (NPQICL), which is predominantly undertaken by leaders of Children's Centres. In my Call for Evidence I heard mixed views on the NPQICL, but I note the National College's current efforts to refresh the programme and make it more widely available. There is also a move to make it more flexible and modular in its approach. I think links could be made with my earlier recommendation about online CPD modules, in order to make short modules on leadership development available for anyone working in the early years.

- 5.5 These are important developments in supporting setting and sector leadership, but I am most interested in leadership with an advanced understanding of pedagogy – where the leader is working directly with children in the setting, leading by example and supporting the other staff with their practice, encouraging reflection and refinement. While management of the day-to-day running of the setting – staffing, planning, and budgeting – is important, it is too often I hear from highly qualified, talented practitioners that they spend too much time in the office and not enough with the children.
- 5.6 In my vision for the early years sector, pedagogical leaders are those practitioners who have extensive knowledge and understanding of child development, of play, of individual needs of children and their families and how to support them all. They are experts in their field. They know how to develop children’s interests and plan to extend their learning and apply this expertise to everyday practice. They share it with the other practitioners to ensure every child is receiving care that is warm and welcoming and supports their physical, cognitive, social and emotional development and learning.
- 5.7 There are already such leaders in the early years sector, but too few, and not in all settings. The evidence for the positive impact of good pedagogical leadership in the early years is overwhelming. I believe that it will be these highly qualified and passionate leaders who play the biggest part in raising standards in the sector and improving the quality of provision for children and their families. This is why I am dedicating a whole chapter of my Final Report to leaders and leadership.

### The impact of graduate level pedagogical leadership

- 5.8 Evidence shows that when a graduate leader joins a setting they have a significant positive impact on the quality of provision in that setting. Not only that, but the more time a graduate leader spends working directly with children, the greater the impact they have on those children, as Figure 1 shows.
- 5.9 A graduate education makes a real difference. It has even been suggested to me that everyone in the sector should be a graduate. Whilst I understand the rationale, I think this would be



unnecessary. If we establish stronger non-graduate qualifications, we shall be able to extend the workforce to build strong teams with a range of qualifications, who are all capable of doing excellent work with children and their families. However, the ambition that every early years setting should be led by a graduate who engages in daily direct work with babies and young children is one that I think can make a big difference to the quality of children's experiences and to their outcomes, I think this is achievable and I strongly support it.

- 5.10 So, who are these graduate pedagogical leaders? Right now in the system we have people with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), people who have gained Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) , (and some who hold both), and also those who hold relevant degrees and postgraduate qualifications, for example in Early Childhood Studies.
- 5.11 Early Years Professionals (EYPs) have had an undeniably positive impact on the early years sector – one that I wish to celebrate. Let there be no doubt: I have been impressed with the level of commitment and knowledge shown by the EYPs I have met, and I understand well the positive impact they have had on the status and professionalism of the early years sector and on children's experiences and outcomes, as Figure 1 shows.
- 5.12 My concerns about the EYPS stem from evidence I received from many EYPs themselves, who have told me that the status has not given them all they had hoped for. They had expectations of a greater status, on a par with teachers, and improved pay and conditions. Once they had received their EYPS this was not the case. However hard we try, I do not believe a status that is not the same as QTS will ever be seen as equal to QTS.

### Early years teachers

- 5.13 Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) has universal currency across the education sphere. The concept of a 'teacher', and what this term means in terms of initial training, education and status, is understood by all. In my Interim Report, I spoke of the widespread support I have heard for increasing the number of people with QTS in the early years sector - with a clear focus and depth of knowledge on the years from birth to seven - as a way of both

increasing quality and improving the status of the early years as a whole.

- 5.14 This is an idea I agree with wholeheartedly. Teachers have a particular impact on children's experiences and outcomes in vital areas of child development such as early literacy and social development, and the evidence shows that teachers improve children's mathematical and scientific knowledge and understanding. Teachers understand the need to balance the curriculum so that all aspects of learning – aesthetic and scientific – are part of babies' and young children's early years experience.
- 5.15 For me, early years teachers are both caring and sensitive to young children's need for emotional security and skilled in encouraging their play and exploration, so as to support the all-round growth, development and learning of the young children they care for and teach. Early years teachers form part of a differently qualified, multidisciplinary team who are clear about their roles and work collaboratively together in the interest of children from birth to seven, and their families.
- 5.16 There are already people with QTS working in early years settings. These are predominantly working in maintained settings, notably nursery schools and reception classes. Despite this, current routes of initial teacher education (ITE) mean that a person working in the early years who wishes to obtain QTS can specialise only in the ages of three to seven years. There are no ITE routes covering the birth to three years age range that is so essential for anyone working in the early years sphere. This feels like a clear omission to me and, given the strong support for the introduction of an early years specialist route of teacher education throughout my Review, I am clearly not alone in this view.
- 5.17 As I have said, I do not believe a status that is not the same as QTS will ever be seen as the equal of QTS. For this reason, the new early years specialist route to QTS must be as rigorous and demanding as any other QTS route, and will in fact be the same, save for its particular specialism. An early years teacher will need to demonstrate the same skills and meet the same standards as are required by any other teacher. I think of an early years teacher as being 'specialist' in early child development, play and learning as elsewhere a teacher might be 'specialist' in a particular curriculum subject. For this reason, any candidate wishing to enrol

on an early years route to QTS should already have degree level expertise in a relevant field. This could appropriately be a degree in Early Childhood Studies, but might, for example, be a degree in psychology or sociology where the candidate gained strong experience working with young children, and a solid grounding in their development and learning needs.

- 5.18 In line with my strong belief that an early years specialist QTS be completely equal with any other QTS, the same existing arrangements and requirements for acquiring QTS should apply to this route. I believe a person enrolled on a route to early years specialist QTS should be held to the same standards as someone training to teach a particular subject to pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4. With the EYFS we have an education system in this country that begins from birth. It feels right to me that young children should have teachers in the same way as older pupils do. An early years specialist route to QTS, focusing on the years from birth to seven, will help build better foundations for learning, and smooth the transition into school and through to Key Stage One.
- 5.19 It would be for the Department for Education and the Teaching Agency to consider in further detail how a new early years specialist route to QTS would work, and for them to work closely with ITE providers to develop and establish courses. But I strongly suspect this will be something that existing ITE providers will see as an exciting opportunity. I anticipate that those institutions which are already accredited to provide ITE and also offer early years courses, such as EYPS routes, within the same institution will be able to set up the new early years specialist route in time for a September 2013 intake, in other cases partnerships may be formed to offer such courses. I would then hope to see an increased number of providers of the early years specialist route in September 2014 and beyond.

**Recommendation 16**

***A new early years specialist route to QTS, specialising in the years from birth to seven, should be introduced, starting from September 2013.***

## The future of EYPS

- 5.20 My recommendation about a new early years specialist route to QTS presents an obvious question over the future of the EYPS, and what will happen to those who have already attained it, or are working towards it.
- 5.21 Although I have a concern over the perceived status of the EYPS, I am clear that the subject knowledge it imparts is valuable. I see any early years specialist initial teacher education route as building on the strengths of the EYPS, combining it with QTS to create a stronger route to a more robust qualification, better attuned to the rest of our education system. That is why I think the early years specialist route to QTS should build on and eventually replace current routes to EYPS. However, I believe it is important that provision be made for EYPS to continue to have currency, and also support those who hold it to have the opportunity for early transition to QTS if they so wish.
- 5.22 It will be for Government to consider how best to make the transition from EYPS to the early years specialist QTS, including over what timescales this will happen. But I do want to highlight some particular issues and suggest some options to resolve them. There should also be some support in place for EYPs who wish to seek QTS. I hope that there will be a number of accessible, affordable routes to enable them to do this if they so choose, without delay.
- 5.23 A typical route to the early years specialist QTS will be an early years degree (Early Childhood Studies being an appropriate example) followed by a PGCE. Many EYPs will already hold early years specialism at degree level, so should be able to gain QTS after a PGCE course. They would be eligible for the same financial support as any other candidate enrolling upon a PGCE – including bursaries and student loans.
- 5.24 There are already arrangements in place for those working in a teaching role but who do not hold QTS, for example someone teaching in an independent school, to be awarded QTS if they can demonstrate they meet the necessary standards and requirements. These assessment-only routes are fast and affordable, and may suit someone who holds EYPS and is confident they could demonstrate they are working at a QTS level.

I would hope that this route can be made available to all those with EYPS who wish to take it.

- 5.25 Transition arrangements for EYPs to gain QTS should be in place from September 2013. It is important to ensure that all those currently working towards EYPS, or about to start on EYPS routes, can access them quickly. I expect, for example, that for many EYPS providers it would be straightforward to adapt their EYPS course so that students would gain QTS at the end of it. I also believe that some ITE providers will see an opportunity here, and could develop a course whereby EYPs can extend their knowledge and achieve QTS. This could even be, for appropriate candidates, a distance learning or online course.
- 5.26 I hope that EYPs, and indeed all early years practitioners and leaders, will see this report as an opportunity to take their professional development further, and to aspire to a new level of pedagogical leadership. This addresses the lack of parity between EYPS and QTS, as well as being a fundamental step on our journey towards a professional early years workforce that has the status in society that it deserves.

#### **Recommendation 17**

***Any individual holding Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) should be able to access routes to obtain QTS as a priority.***

### **Maintaining and increasing graduate leadership**

- 5.27 What I have recommended in this chapter will transform graduate leadership in the early years sector. At the same time as these changes, it is essential that the number of graduate leaders be maintained and increased, and that we ensure graduate leaders are working where they are most needed. Notably, I want to see more graduate leaders working with babies and the very youngest children, and also want to see more graduate leaders, including teachers, in private, voluntary and independent settings.
- 5.28 I hope that following my report all types of early years provider will want to employ more graduates, both to take advantage of the pedagogical leadership of the new early years specialist teachers, and also as part of their wider drive to improve quality. But I

appreciate that employing graduates will present new financial pressures for settings.

- 5.29 This is an issue I hope the Government will take a keen interest in, not least to ensure the effective delivery of the two year old offer. The Government has a range of levers it can use to encourage graduate leadership.

### **Recommendation 18**

***I recommend that Government considers the best way to maintain and increase graduate pedagogical leadership in all early years settings.***

## **Licensing**

- 5.30 The question of introducing a licence to practise for the early years has attracted interesting and thought provoking debate about the best way of improving status and standards in the early years.
- 5.31 There are strong arguments that introducing a licence to practise has the potential to increase the quality of childcare provision and improve recruitment into the sector by setting higher minimum standards for those entering the profession and securing an ongoing, public commitment to CPD at point of registration.
- 5.32 However, there are difficult questions, around whether the system of licensing would be operated on a voluntary or mandatory basis, who will manage it, how the system would be monitored and quality assured, the potential costs in terms of annual subscriptions, and whether the system would inadvertently exclude lower paid staff members from accessing CPD opportunities.
- 5.33 At its core, the main intended benefit of licensing would be improving quality and raising status and I come back to the question of what added value it would bring in light of the recommendations I have set out. My recommendations already seek to address improving status, standards and quality of CPD. If these were accepted and implemented by the Government, would a licensing system make a significant extra impact, particularly in light of the potential costs?

5.34 I do not think the time is right for the Government to introduce a licensing system for the early years workforce. However, if there is a move within the sector for licensing, and representatives and members of the sector were to come together to develop their own practical and affordable model for how this would work, I would encourage the Government to support this.

**Recommendation 19**

***I am not recommending that the Government impose a licensing system on the early years sector. However, the Government should consider supporting a sector-led approach, if an affordable and sustainable one emerges with widespread sector support.***

## 6. Making it happen

- 6.1 Throughout my Review, my intention has always been to develop a set of recommendations, based firmly on the evidence, that are ambitious *and* realistic. At the beginning of this Report, I set out my vision for the early years sector – as one that offers the very best for babies and young children, in large part by having a highly skilled workforce who see themselves as part of a valued and respected profession. Based on the conversations I have had over the last few months, I know this is a vision that is widely shared across the sector.
- 6.2 My challenge has been to determine the best way to move towards this vision, recognising the current qualification situation in the sector as well as the wider issues and pressures facing parents, staff, providers, and local and national Government. Ultimately it will be for the Government and the sector to decide how they want to take forward my recommendations, but I want to set out some thoughts and suggestions around three areas: cost; the impact on the system; and the interaction with wider early years issues.

### Cost

- 6.3 I do not underestimate the financial and cost pressures that we are facing. For example, early years settings spend over 70 per cent of their expenditure on staff costs (including salaries and training)<sup>9</sup> so it seems logical that any changes to staff requirements will have substantial impacts on setting costs. And, although it does not necessarily follow that any increases in staff costs will be passed on to parents, I am mindful of the risk.
- 6.4 At the same time, I hope that my Report has made absolutely clear that the quality of provision – driven by the skills, knowledge and understanding of early years staff – is of fundamental importance. I cannot sacrifice the drive to improve quality for children purely to reduce costs.

---

<sup>9</sup> Brind, R. et al. (2012) Childcare provider finances survey, DfE Research Report ref DFE-RR213



- 6.5 I have endeavoured to keep as many of my recommendations as possible cost neutral or low cost, although I hope all are seen as efficient and effective investments. That is why, for example, I have not recommended introducing a mandatory licensing system or a centrally managed system of staff mentoring, both of which would have carried significant investment costs and necessitated a bureaucracy to oversee them. Instead I place my trust in the professionalism and good intentions of the early years sector, challenging it to live up to its responsibilities, and further demonstrate its professionalism, by leading improvements in performance.
- 6.6 I have sought to use existing systems and processes where possible, for example by working with Ofsted to provide an incentive for settings to invest in CPD for staff, and by asking Ofqual, as part of its current duties, to work with Awarding Organisations to ensure that tutors have the necessary skills and knowledge.
- 6.7 There are, however, some recommendations that will carry costs. In particular my proposals to: change level 3 courses; insist that all practitioners have a level 3 qualification as a minimum within ten years; demanding level 2 qualifications in maths and English as an entry requirement to a level 3 course; insisting that tutors have regular CPD and contact with the sector; and the introduction and promotion of a new early years specialist route to QTS.
- 6.8 Any changes to level 3 courses are bound to have cost implications, especially where those changes are seeking – as I am recommending – increases in rigour and depth of study. In most cases, this will likely result in courses taking longer to complete and potentially costing more to operate. These costs are likely to be felt by the further education sector (and therefore by the Skills Funding Agency), as well as students, particularly those over the age of 19 who carry a greater share of the costs of their courses.
- 6.9 I am not an expert in the complex world of further education funding, and I cannot anticipate what the costs for new level 3 courses will be. Factors such as whether courses are offered in a college or training provider, via a work-based learning route, are undertaken full- or part-time, the age of students, and the impact on supply and demand, will all make a difference to any additional

costs to be met by the public purse or by students. And the way in which my recommendations are taken forward will also have an impact on what additional spending may be required.

- 6.10 I am nonetheless confident that better level 3 courses will offer better value for money, better investment in the future, and better experiences for babies and young children. Too many current courses are not equipping those taking them with the skills and knowledge they need, so much of the money currently being spent is not being spent well, and young children are missing out. Better courses, which may well cost more money, must represent a more effective and efficient investment for Government and individuals, than courses that are failing to do what we need them to do.
- 6.11 There will also be costs in moving towards the target of all staff counting towards the staff:child ratios possessing a 'full and relevant' level 3 qualification by 2022. A recognition of these potential costs is one of the reasons why I am recommending a long-term approach to achieving this target, to give the sector time to spread out training and costs, to make it more affordable.
- 6.12 By demanding a level 2 in English and maths before enrolling on a level 3 course, there will be costs involved in offering additional English and maths courses. Some of these costs may be carried by the Government, and others met by individuals. But, even aside from the importance of these skills for early years education and childcare, the investment returns of more in the wider workforce having better English and maths skills are well understood and supported.
- 6.13 Colleges and training providers will have to find the time and money to support tutors in undertaking continuing professional development and in spending more time understanding current early years practice. Although I am sympathetic to the financial pressures that colleges and training providers are operating under, these do not offer a sufficient reason to prevent tutors from maintaining and improving their skills. That said, I do not think that significant costs are always needed – CPD can be about learning from existing good practice and may only involve the cost of travelling to visit to a different setting. In my own University of Sheffield, we run an annual conference on a current topic of interest to early years practitioners that is inexpensive and provides an opportunity to hear about current research, and

networking with others in the City and region, and there are many other similar examples. These examples indicate that good and relevant CPD need not always be expensive.

- 6.14 There will undoubtedly be costs associated with the introduction of a new early years teacher education route. Universities offering PGCEs, for example, will spend money in developing new courses. And the Government will have to consider how best to support the initial training and employment of new teachers.
- 6.15 Whilst I am keen to see the route introduced early, I have intentionally left flexibility in how quickly and widely it is taken up, so that the Government can consider the best way to finance the expansion of early years teacher numbers. I have specifically mentioned the need carefully to consider the best way to manage any transition from the EYPS to a new early years teacher education route.
- 6.16 I would expect the Government carefully to consider what level of bursary be made available to undertake an early years teacher education programme. My starting assumption would be that bursaries should be in line with those offered from primary teacher training routes – so, around £5,000 on average for a primary PGCE – but there may be other approaches to consider. I have also asked the Government to consider how to ensure that graduate leaders are employed where they are most needed in the system, for example in working with the most vulnerable two-year-olds, and this may involve financial and other incentives.
- 6.17 Given the range of implementation options, it is impossible for me to place a figure on any additional costs. Indeed it seems possible that they could be negligible, although more investment would have an impact on the speed and coverage of implementing my recommendations. I would encourage the Government and the sector to move as quickly as finances and practical implementation issues allow.

### Impact on the system

- 6.18 I have endeavoured to write a report that can have a significant impact upon our qualifications system, and our early education and care provision. I hope my recommendations lead to improved

quality and better daily experiences and later outcomes for babies and young children. That is why I accepted the invitation to lead this Review. But this also demands that I remain realistic in my ambition for future development. It is right that we are ambitious and that we set a long term vision for the sector that we want to become, but change, if it is to be effective, takes time and demands that the sector as a whole and individual early years practitioners embrace new possibilities.

- 6.19 Whilst I believe that my proposals are based firmly on the evidence I have gathered and the views that have been expressed to me, this is a diverse sector and there will be differences of opinion on whether my recommendations are the 'right' ones. Some, such as the recommendation to revise the 'full and relevant' criteria, will inevitably involve further consultation. This is absolutely correct. Others involve fuller conversations with the wider education system, such as the recommendation to introduce a new early years specialist route to QTS. These ongoing conversations will help to ensure that the implementation of my recommendations is done sensitively and properly.
- 6.20 I have intentionally set challenging timescales because I believe that we should work quickly to improve the early years experience of the babies and young children. I do not want to lose the momentum that this Review has generated, so would encourage the sector and Government to take up the challenge, to embrace change, and to be clear that any delays are only to avoid perverse incentives that I have been unable to take account of. I hope, therefore, that the response to my proposals focuses on the best way to implement them as quickly as possible.
- 6.21 I also want to make clear that everything I have heard, everything I have said, and all that I am recommending is intended to build on the strengths of a sector that has consistently impressed me with its passion and commitment. I do think that there are ways to improve the situation and there are challenging issues to address. But these are the issues and challenges that I have been told by a self-reflective and ever confident sector, and many, many individual practitioners, that are keen to improve even further.

## Interaction with wider early years issues

- 6.22 I have been given the specific remit of reviewing early years qualifications and, although that remit has already taken me into many other areas of the early years sector, I am conscious of other challenges and issues in the early years. In particular, I have tried to set my work in the context of the two-year-old offer as I believe that this major expansion of provision will only have the desired impact if it is matched by high quality experiences with sensitive, skilled, committed and well qualified staff.
- 6.23 I am also aware of conversations taking place on the cost of childcare and whether deregulation of the sector in certain circumstances may be a way to reduce financial burdens. I do not want to get into the specifics of this debate, except to offer two points. First, it would be reasonable to expect that reductions in regulation would make the need for a better qualified workforce more (not less) important. Second, I want to underline once again the importance of ensuring that early years provision is of a high quality, and offer the thought that it is worth investigating the link between high levels of qualification and different staff:child ratios for three- and four-year-olds. I do not think there is any case for changing the ratios for babies and two-year-olds, but I think it is worth exploring whether better qualified staff could reasonably work with more three- and four-year-olds (as is the case for teachers in nursery and reception classes).

## Concluding comments

- 6.24 My Review of early education and childcare qualifications has allowed me to interact with some of the very best of the early years sector. I have been consistently impressed with the dedication and passion of so many people who work with babies and young children – often with less encouragement than they deserve, and for less money than they could earn elsewhere. I have also been most concerned to find the flaws in the current qualifications system, and to hear from those who are struggling to improve their skills and prospects how the system is working against their ambitions.
- 6.25 I am left with a clear impression of a sector that is increasingly seeking to become more professional and knowledgeable. I want

to make sure we build on this progress and offer those who want to develop new skills and knowledge the best support.

- 6.26 Just as Lloyd-George's Government of 1918 had the foresight to legislate for the establishment of nursery schools almost a century ago, I hope, our current Government will act to bring about the changes I have recommended, thus enhancing early education and care. Government action together with a commitment to take on responsibility across the sector, will, I believe, realise the vision I set out at the beginning of my Report. We shall then have a well-qualified workforce taking pride in its professional knowledge and ability. Change will take time and it will not always be easy, but it is necessary and it can be done.

## List of recommendations

### Recommendation 1

The Government should continue to specify the qualifications that are suitable for staff operating within the EYFS, and the Teaching Agency should develop a more robust set of 'full and relevant' criteria to ensure qualifications promote the right content and pedagogical processes. These criteria should be based on the proposals set out in this report.

### Recommendation 2

All qualifications commenced from 1 September 2013 must demonstrate that they meet the new 'full and relevant' criteria when being considered against the requirements of the EYFS.

### Recommendation 3

The previously articulated plan to move to a single early years qualification should be abandoned.

### Recommendation 4

The Government should consider the best way to badge qualifications that meet the new 'full and relevant' criteria so that people can recognise under what set of 'full and relevant' criteria a qualification has been gained.

### Recommendation 5

The EYFS requirements should be revised so that, by September 2022, all staff counting in the staff:child ratios must be qualified at level 3.

### Recommendation 6

The EYFS requirements should be revised so that, from September 2013, a minimum of 50 per cent of staff in group settings need to possess at least a 'full and relevant' level 3 to count in the staff:child ratios.

### Recommendation 7

The EYFS requirements should be revised so that, from September 2015, a minimum of 70 per cent of staff in group settings need to possess at least a 'full and relevant' level 3 to count in the staff:child ratios.

### Recommendation 8

Level 2 English and mathematics should be entry requirements to level 3 early education and childcare courses.

**Recommendation 9**

Tutors should be qualified to a higher level than the course they are teaching.

**Recommendation 10**

All tutors should have regular continuing professional development and contact with early years settings. Colleges and training providers should allow sufficient time for this.

**Recommendation 11**

Only settings that are rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted should be able to host students on placement.

**Recommendation 12**

Colleges and training providers should look specifically at the setting's ability to offer students high quality placements.

**Recommendation 13**

The Department for Education should conduct research on the number of BME staff at different qualification levels, and engage with the sector to address any issues identified.

**Recommendation 14**

Newly qualified practitioners starting in their first employment should have mentoring for at least the first six months. If the setting is rated below 'Good', this mentoring should come from outside.

**Recommendation 15**

A suite of online induction and training modules should be brought together by the Government, that can be accessed by everyone working in early education and childcare.

**Recommendation 16**

A new early years specialist route to QTS, specialising in the years from birth to seven, should be introduced, starting from September 2013.

**Recommendation 17**

Any individual holding Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) should be able to access routes to obtain QTS as a priority.



**Recommendation 18**

I recommend that Government considers the best way to maintain and increase graduate pedagogical leadership in all early years settings.

**Recommendation 19**

I am not recommending that the Government impose a licensing system on the early years sector. However, the Government should consider supporting a sector-led approach, if an affordable and sustainable one emerges with widespread sector support.

## Acknowledgments

I would like to offer my sincere thanks to everyone whose contributions made my Review possible, and who helped to shape my recommendations. First and foremost I would like to thank the members of my Expert Panel:

Nicola Amies, Bright Horizons  
 Sharon Curtis, Ellesmere Children's Centre  
 Chelle Davison, Leeds Metropolitan University and SEFDEY North East  
 Michael Freeston, Pre-School Learning Alliance  
 Julian Grenier, Sheringham Nursery School  
 Ann Hedley, early years adviser  
 Trisha Maynard, Canterbury Christ Church University  
 June O'Sullivan, London Early Years Foundation  
 Megan Pacey, Early Education  
 Fiona Pethick, Ofqual  
 Helen Perkins, Solihull College  
 Sue Robb, 4 Children  
 Wendy Scott, TACTYC  
 Purnima Tanuku OBE, NDNA  
 Stuart Turner, NCMA

The following organisations and individuals contributed to my Call for Evidence, met with me or otherwise shared their opinions and helped me develop my thinking:

4Children  
 A+ Education  
 Action for Children  
 Alison Wolf, Kings College London  
 Aspect  
 Aspire Training Team  
 Aylesbury College  
 Baring School  
 Barna-Bus Pre-School  
 Barnet LA  
 Bath Spa University  
 Bedford Borough Council  
 Birmingham LA  
 Birmingham Metropolitan College  
 Black Leaders Group, Sheffield  
 Black Voices Network

Blackburn College  
Blackpool and The Fylde College  
Booktrust  
Bourne Valley Nursery School  
Bradford College  
Bradford LA  
Brent LA  
Bright Horizons  
Bristol LA  
British Association of Professional Nannies  
Bromley LA  
Buckinghamshire LA  
Busy Bees  
CACHE  
Calderdale LA  
Cambridge Development and Learning Limited  
Camden LA  
Canterbury Christchurch University  
Carol Aubrey, University of Warwick  
Casterbridge Care and Education Ltd  
Central Bedfordshire LA  
Chelwood Nursery School  
Child Base  
Childcare Consultancy  
Children and Young People, Welsh Government  
Chrissy Meleady, Early Years Equality  
Church House Day Nursery  
City & Guilds  
City of Bristol College  
Coram's Fields Children's Centre  
Council for Disabled Children  
Craven College  
Croydon LA  
CWDC  
Dame Clare Tickell  
Dan Goodley, Manchester Metropolitan University  
Darnall Community Nursery  
Department for Education, Northern Ireland  
Department of Social Care, Registration and Inspection, Isle of Man  
Derbyshire LA  
DfE Workforce Co-production Group  
Dorset County Council  
Early Childhood Forum

Early Childhood Studies Degrees Network  
Early Education  
Early Years Childcare  
Early Years Equality  
Early Years Network, Tower Hamlets  
Early Years Unit, Scottish Government  
East Riding College  
Edexcel  
EDI  
Elaine Hallett, Institute of Education, London  
Ellesmere Children's Centre  
Enfield LA  
Essex LA  
Family and Parenting Institute  
Farnborough College of Technology  
Forest Way School  
Fraser Brown, Leeds Metropolitan University  
Funshine Day Nurseries  
Gateshead LA  
George Hoskins and Catherine Rushforth  
Greenwich LA  
Gypsy, Roma and Traveller EY Workforce Support Group, Sheffield  
Hadland Care Group  
Happy Child Training  
Health, Social Services, Early Years Department, Guernsey  
Helen Carr  
Helen Hodsdon, University of the West of England  
Herefordshire LA  
Holland Park Pre-school and Day Nursery  
Hounslow LA  
Institute of Education  
Iram Siraj-Blatchford, Institute of Education, London  
Isle of Man  
Islington LA  
Jane Lane  
Job Marston & Hall Green Children's Centres  
Julia Jones, University of the West of England  
Just Learning Ltd  
Karen Mackay, Busy Bees  
Kathy Sylva, Oxford University Department of Education  
Kent and Sussex Montessori Centre  
Kids Unlimited  
Kingston University

Lambeth LA  
Lancashire County Council  
Learning Through Landscapes  
Leeds City College  
Leeds LA  
Leeds Metropolitan University  
Lewisham Opportunity Playgroup  
LEYF  
LGBT Early Years Workforce Support Group, Sheffield  
Lincoln College  
Little Acorns Group  
Little Echoes Day Nursery  
Liverpool John Moores University  
Liverpool LA  
London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham  
London Early Years Foundation  
Ludlow College  
Manchester Metropolitan University  
Margy Whalley, Pen Green Centre  
Montessori Centre International  
Montessori Partnership  
Montessori Schools Association  
Montessori schools – various other representatives  
NAHT  
NASUWT  
National Children’s Bureau  
National College  
National Men in Childcare Support Group  
NCFE  
NCMA  
NDNA  
Nelson Thornes  
Netmums  
New College  
Newcastle Under Lyme College  
Newman University College  
NHS Bristol  
Norland College  
North Lincolnshire LA  
North Warwickshire & Hinckley College  
Northamptonshire LA  
Northumberland LA  
Northumbria University

OCR  
Ofqual  
Ofsted  
Open University  
Oxford Brookes University  
Oxfordshire LA  
Pat Broadhead, Sheffield Early Years Champion  
Pearson  
Pen Green Centre for Young Children and their Families  
Playwise Limited  
Pre-School Learning Alliance  
Preston College  
Professional Officer for Health Visiting, DH  
Puffins of Exeter Ltd.  
Race Equality Foundation  
Roehampton University  
Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames  
Sandwell Council  
Sandwell LA  
SCOPE  
Scottish Social Services Council  
SEFDEY  
SERCO  
Sheffield Children's Centre  
Sheffield Hallam University  
Shropshire LA  
Skills for Care and Development  
Skillsfirst  
Solihull Approach  
Solihull College  
Solihull LA  
South Birmingham College  
South Gloucestershire Council  
South Thames College  
Southend LA  
Spectrum Montessori  
Staffordshire University  
Star Bank School  
States of Jersey  
Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship  
Steiner schools – various other representatives  
Stockport College  
Stoke

Stonewall  
Swindon College  
TACTYC  
Tate House Playgroup  
TDA  
Ted Melhuish, Birkbeck, University of London  
Telford & Wrekin Council  
The Barna-Bus Pre-School  
The Children's Society  
The Chiltern College  
The Communication Trust  
Totnes Children's Centre  
Tower Hamlets  
Trafford LA  
Trio Childcare Connections  
Twinkles Nurseries  
Unison  
University Campus Suffolk  
University of Birmingham  
University of Derby  
University of Huddersfield  
University of Hull  
University of New England (Australia)  
University of Northampton  
University of Sheffield  
University of the West of England  
University of Worcester  
Vauxhall Neighbourhood Council (Liverpool)  
Voice  
Wakefield College  
Wakefield LA  
Warwickshire College  
Weavers Fields Children's Centre  
York College  
Youth Music

It would not be possible to name them all here, but I would like to thank all the early years workers I met on visits, and also all those childminders, early years workers and others who attended my consultation events in an individual capacity.

I would also like to thank Alison Oakins, Lorna Serieux, Emily Wilson and Gareth Conyard, and all others at the Department for Education who helped and supported me during the course of my Review.



## Glossary

CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CWDC	Children's Workforce Development Council
DfE	Department for Education
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage
EYP	Early Years Professional
EYPS	Early Years Professional Status
FE	Further Education
HEI	Higher Education Institution
NCMA	National Childminding Association
NDNA	National Day Nurseries Association
NNEB	National Nursery Examination Board
NOS	National Occupational Standards
NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
Ofqual	Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
PGCE	Postgraduate Certificate in Education
QTS	Qualified Teacher Status
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
UCAS	Universities and Colleges Admissions Service

© Crown copyright 2012

You may re-use this information (excluding logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/> or e-mail: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at Department for Education, Castle View House, East Lane, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 2GJ.

This document is also available from our website at [www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk).