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The Early Years Professional and the Early Years Teacher: Complementary but Essentially Different.

A Mixed Methods Study

TACTYC Biennial Research Conference

November 11th/12th 2011

Marriott Hotel York

"Ready' for School? Research, Reflection, Debate'.

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The University of Northampton

November 2011





Overarching Research Aim

An exploration of the concept of professional identity through a critique of the concept, implementation and impact of Early Years Professional Status as a new professional model.





Though much remains to be learned about how to lay necessary foundations during the pre-school years, which will enable children to achieve eventually the fullest measure of their potential, yet enough is known to take some action now...promoting optimal emotional, social and intellectual development; preventing neglect and deprivation; and, most difficult of all, for breaking into the vicious circle of the emotional or intellectually deprived children of today becoming tomorrow's parents of yet another generation of deprived children.





If the children and youth of a nation are afforded opportunity to develop their capacity to the fullest, if they are given the knowledge to understand the world and the wisdom to change it, then the prospects for the future are bright. In contrast, a society that neglects its children, however well it may function in other respects, risks eventual disorganization and demise.

Bronfenbrenner (2005:215)₄





Research Strand

The Early Years Professional and the Early Years Teacher





Research Context

- EYPS imposed in 2006 rather than grown organically—debate over visualisation of new professional.
- Traditionally professions in England have developed along a separatist rather than an integrated model of service delivery.





- Each profession has its own 'professional identity' which shapes and impacts on the services provided
- Historically health, education and social care provision for children and families have reflected the separatist model.
- Childcare Act (2006) –no distinction between education and care





EYPS was initially presented
as broadly equivalent to
qualified teacher status.....

This has been problematic....



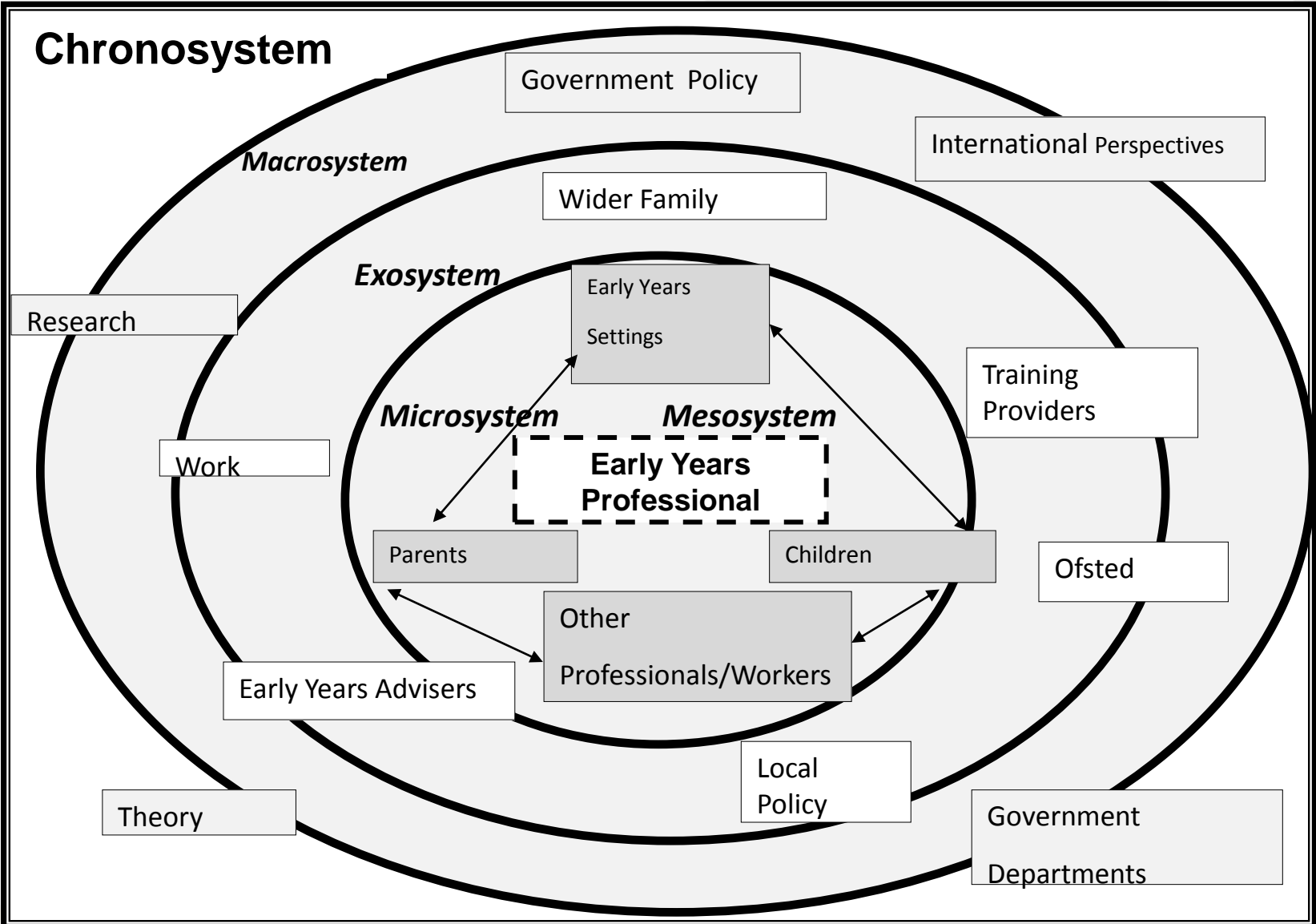


Theoretical Framework



The Human Bioecological Theory of Human Development





Methods

Research Period 2007-2010

Early Years Professionals

Stage One:

- Questionnaires (Baseline after EYPS)
- Case Study Interviews

Stage Two: 1 Year Post Award

- Questionnaires
- Case Study Interviews
- Focus Groups

Stakeholders

Stage One

- Questionnaires
- Case Study Interviews

Stage Two: 1 Year Later

- Questionnaires
- Case Study Interviews
- Focus Group

Research Sample Quantitative

2007-2008

Overview of the number of candidates, awards and research participants

Route	Start	Completed Award	Baseline Questionnaire	End of course Questionnaire (1)	One Year on Questionnaire (2)
First Group 'Pilot'	46	39	0	30 (65% of 46)	5 (13% of 39)
Route	Start	Completed Award	First Questionnaire	End of course Questionnaire	One Year on Questionnaire
Totals	115	96	73	43	44
		76 (Awarded EYPS)	(63% 115)	(45% of 96)	(58% of 76)
					12

Research Sample Qualitative

2007-
2010

Early Years Professionals

	Completion of EYPS	One Year Later
Phase One Interviews	22	23 (18 from Phase One 5 First Group)
Focus Group	Lumsden	1



Stakeholders

Stakeholders	Phase One 2008	Phase Two 2009
Questionnaire	64	46
Interviews	11	4
Focus Group		1





Questionnaires

Qualified Teachers: First Group and Main Sample

	First Group	Main Sample
Baseline		25 (34%)
Questionnaire One	21 (70%)	16 (17%)





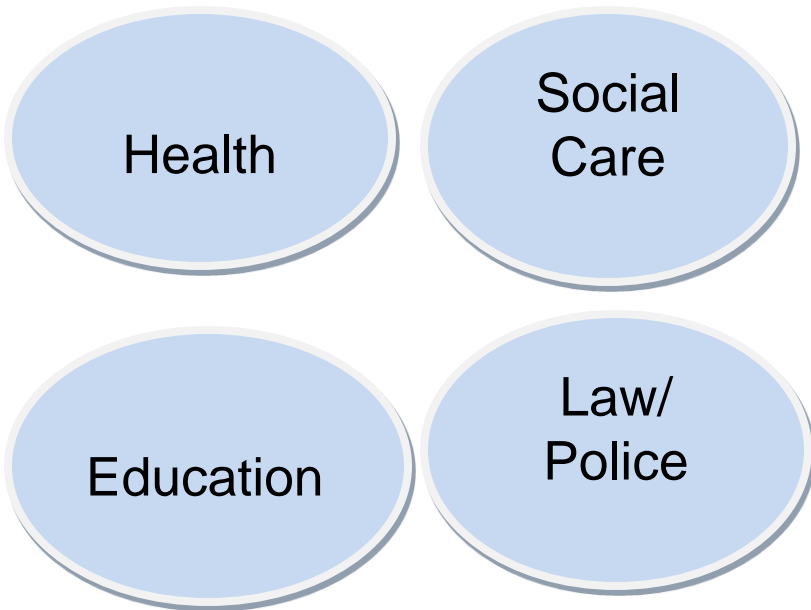
***Interviews:
Qualifications: First Group and Main Sample***

	Phase One	Phase Two
BA/QTS	3	6
BA/PGCE	2	2
	5 /22 (23%)	8 /23 (35%)

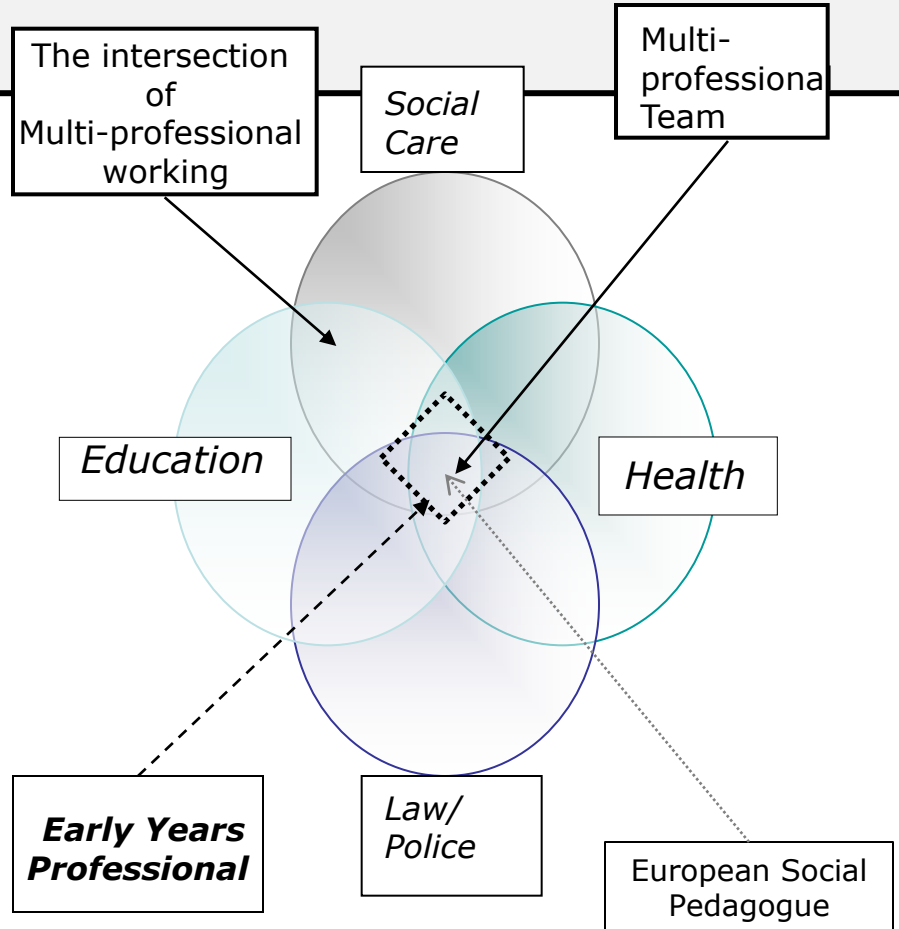


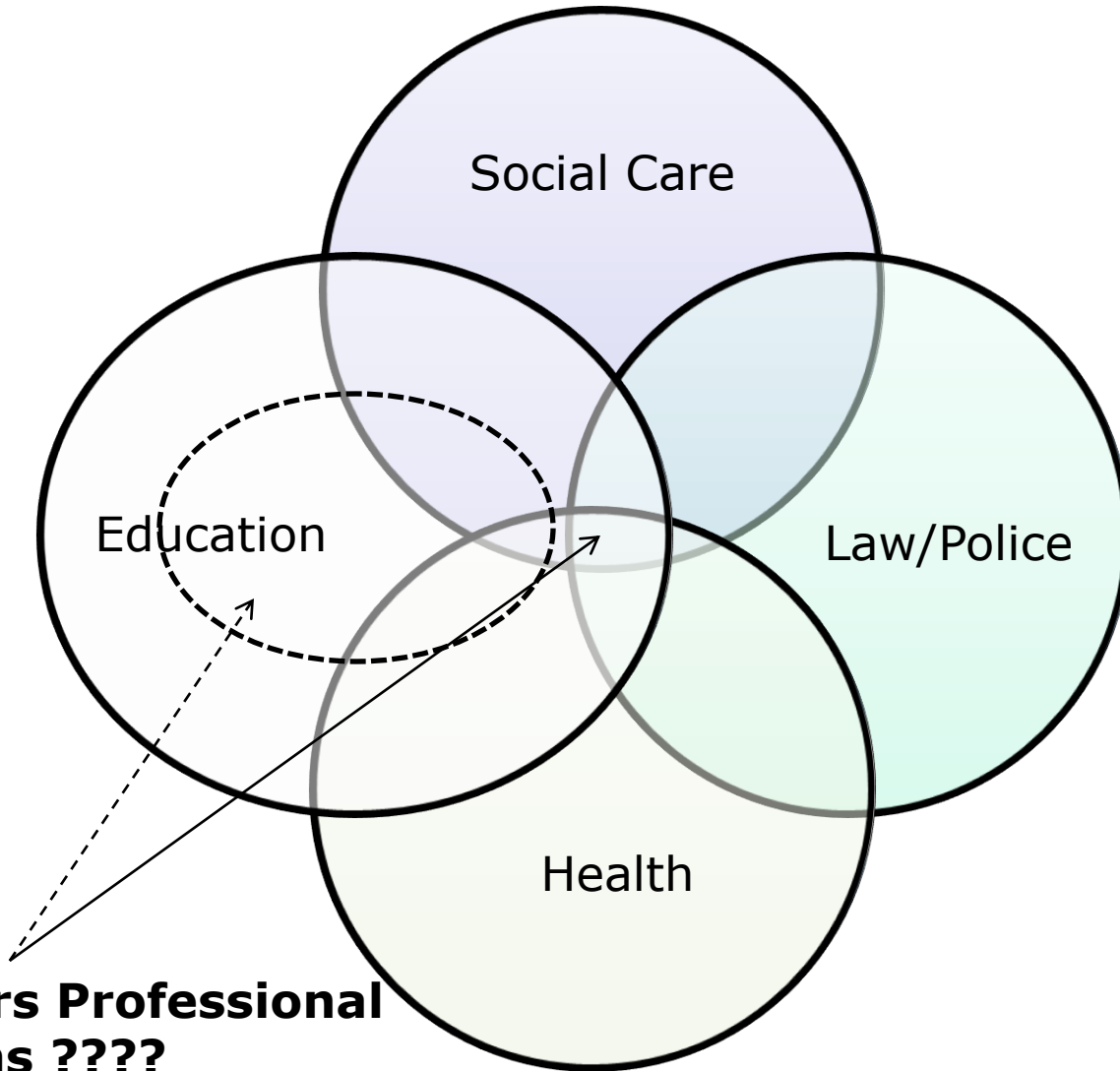


Separatist Professions



The Locus of the Early Years Professional





The Early Years Professional Misconceptions ????



Misconceptions....

- 'Equivalency' means the same as teaching.
- Early Years Teachers will be replaced by Early Years Professionals.
- Early Years Professionals are not as qualified as teachers.
- Early Years Professionals do not have their practice assessed.
- Training not as rigorous.



What the research found...

The evidence emerging from this mixed methods study suggests that understanding the differences and areas of synergy between the Early Years Professional and the Early Years Teacher actually strengthens the importance of EYPS



What the research found...

Baseline Questionnaire

61 (83%)
Early Years
Teachers
should have
EYPS

Questionnaire One

22 (73%) First Group

33 (77%) Main Sample

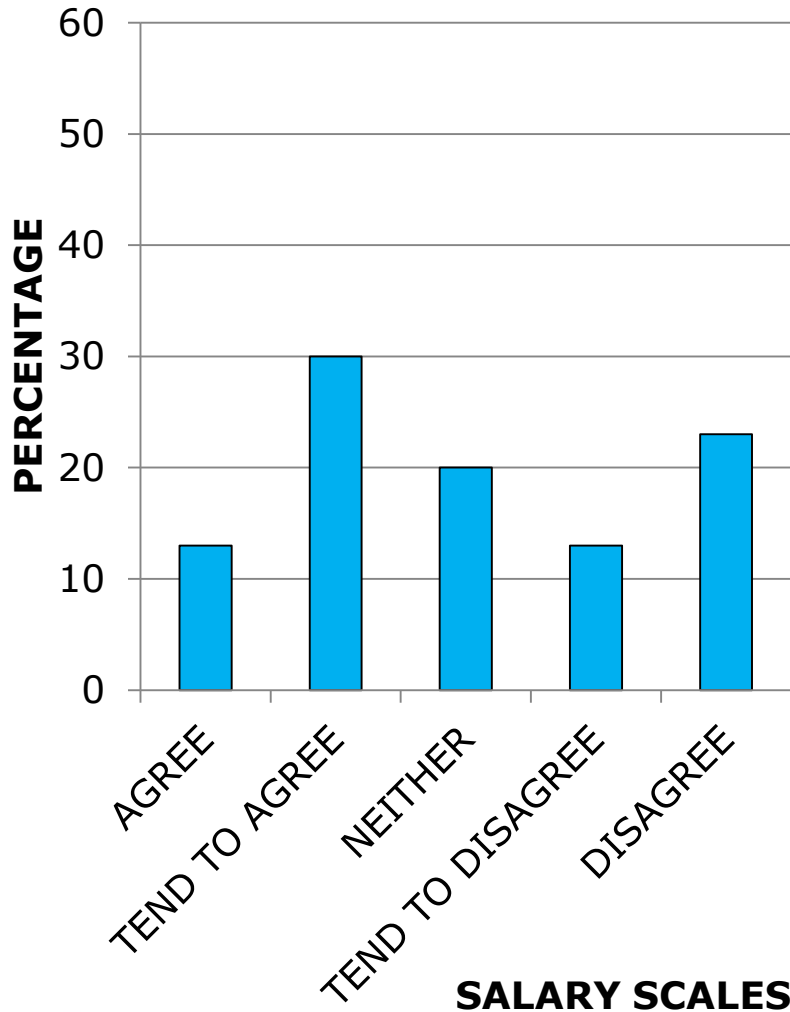
'agreed' or 'tended to agree' that
EYPS and QTS would never be seen
as equivalent.

Questionnaire Two

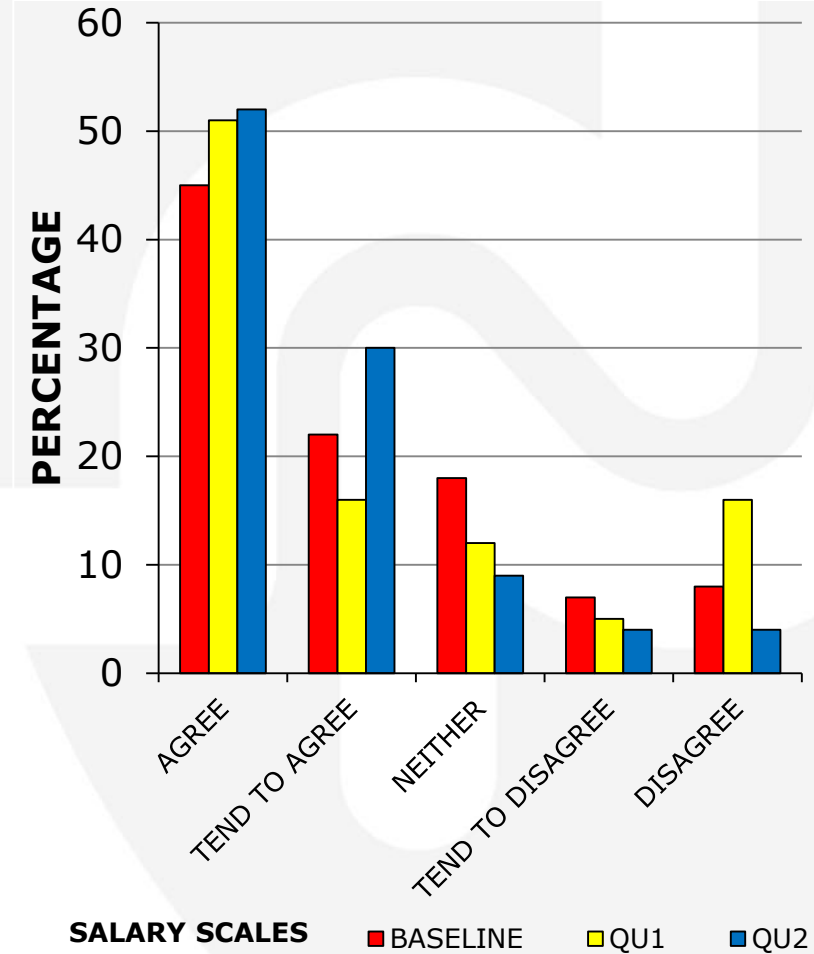
28 (64%) of the Main Sample
believed they should be seen as
equivalent.



First Group



Main Sample





***...sixteen and a half thousand
and xxx is on thirty-two. It just
doesn't make sense..., I sit there
and mentor her on different
things that she could choose, and
I think, hang on a minute, this is
the wrong way round...***

Laura (Short Pathway First Interview)





A Year Later...

In her second interview Laura reported being invited to a meeting to discuss a pay rise thinking she was going to be formally recognised and given the title:

“Early Years Professional”

However she was given

“...about £400 more a year which I bawled my eyes out over because when you’re told you’re getting a pay rise, you think ‘wow’ you know?”



Questionnaire One

- 44 (69%) indicated that QTS and EYS would never be seen as equal
- 33 (52%) believed they should be paid the same
- 19 (30%) pay should not be the same

Questionnaire Two

- 31 (67%) believed EYPS and QTS were equivalent
- 33 (70%) believed they should be paid the same
- 4 (9%) pay should not be the same





**Knowledge
and
Understanding**

Training

**Differences in
EYP/EYT
employment
conditions**

Interpersonal Skills

**The two roles together
are potentially very powerful in
children's centres**

INDIVIDUAL PERCEPTIONS KEY THEMES

**Different relationship with
parents and children**

**Different roles with
some overlap**



John (Short Pathway QTS) ***"It was very enriching; it was very, very good"***

Susan (Validation Pathway), an experienced headteacher, compared the training to her PGCE: ***"I just don't think it has got the rigour..."***

Emma (Short Pathway QTS) Her setting visit was compared by a colleague to the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH):

"I had one of our leadership teachers saying 'wow, this is like the NPQH headship thing'.

Furthermore for Emma being a teacher and having EYPS made her more of ***"...a specialist in early years."***



Stakeholders Views...

Andrea (Pre-school owner) indicated that teachers do not :

"... take them seriously."

Sara (Childminder)

I do have more and more worries now, the more I read and listen to people. I don't like this battle and divide that is coming up between teachers and early years' professional status.





Michelle (Manager Intervention Centre, QTS) suggested:

“In education, I think that they are quite precious about their roles [and] can be very precious about the title...”

That, alongside the National Curriculum

“is one of the reasons I left education.”



Heidi (Headteacher) provides some insights she discussed:

- ***The challenges faced by the early years in general and in her role specifically .***
- ***A divide in schools between primary and early years where the latter is not viewed as always being important.***

Jodie (Headteacher) :

"This is generalised but they look down-they do not see themselves as the same level—undervalue what we do".

Jenny (Foundation Stage Teacher) indicated her colleagues think

"I play all day."



However she also stated:

I would be very unhappy if they were ever to make it equivalent to teaching...I fought long and hard to be a teacher ... You can say the EYP is a graduate-but when you look at a teacher like myself- **it isn't the same.**

Jenny (Foundation Stage Teacher)





"...it isn't the same."

The key theme from the Early Years Professionals and the stakeholders emerging from converging the data findings was that on many levels, EYPS and QTS were not the same.





Liz (SP)

Well, I am coming from it from birth upwards, whereas, I think the teacher training reception year instead of coming up they may need to come down, if you know what I mean, to the early years to know where the children have come from - whereas we are following them through. I think it must be harder for a reception teacher not having the in-depth knowledge of the child development that we have. Knowing how the child has got to that development and how and why they are there and what the progression was.





Nina (Short Pathway):

I don't think it is the same as teaching but I think it should be regarded as equivalent to teaching...at least the same status if not more so because in some ways you do more than a teacher does when you are with such young children....We are concerned with the total welfare of the child and you need to know about their home and their background and the social care that they need as well as the educational needs that they have. I think that teachers should know this but I think it is evident that they don't...I have heard of experiences of teachers who have been used to teaching older children then going to work with younger children. They don't seem to be able to understand the way in which much younger children learn.





Anita Focus Group (EYPS)

Therefore Early Years Professional gives that umbrella of part of your role is management and administration, part of your role is leading and supporting, and part of your role is with the children, teaching them or encouraging them whatever you do, and part of them is, you know, liaising with parents.





So What is the Early Years Professional ?

- The collective and individual voices of those participating in all strands of this research have supported understanding of what it means to be an Early Years Professional.
- Differentiating the Early Years Professional from others working in the broader children's services is vital. Whilst there is commonality with the role of the Early Years Teacher, the Early Years Professional is a separate profession with different roles and responsibilities.





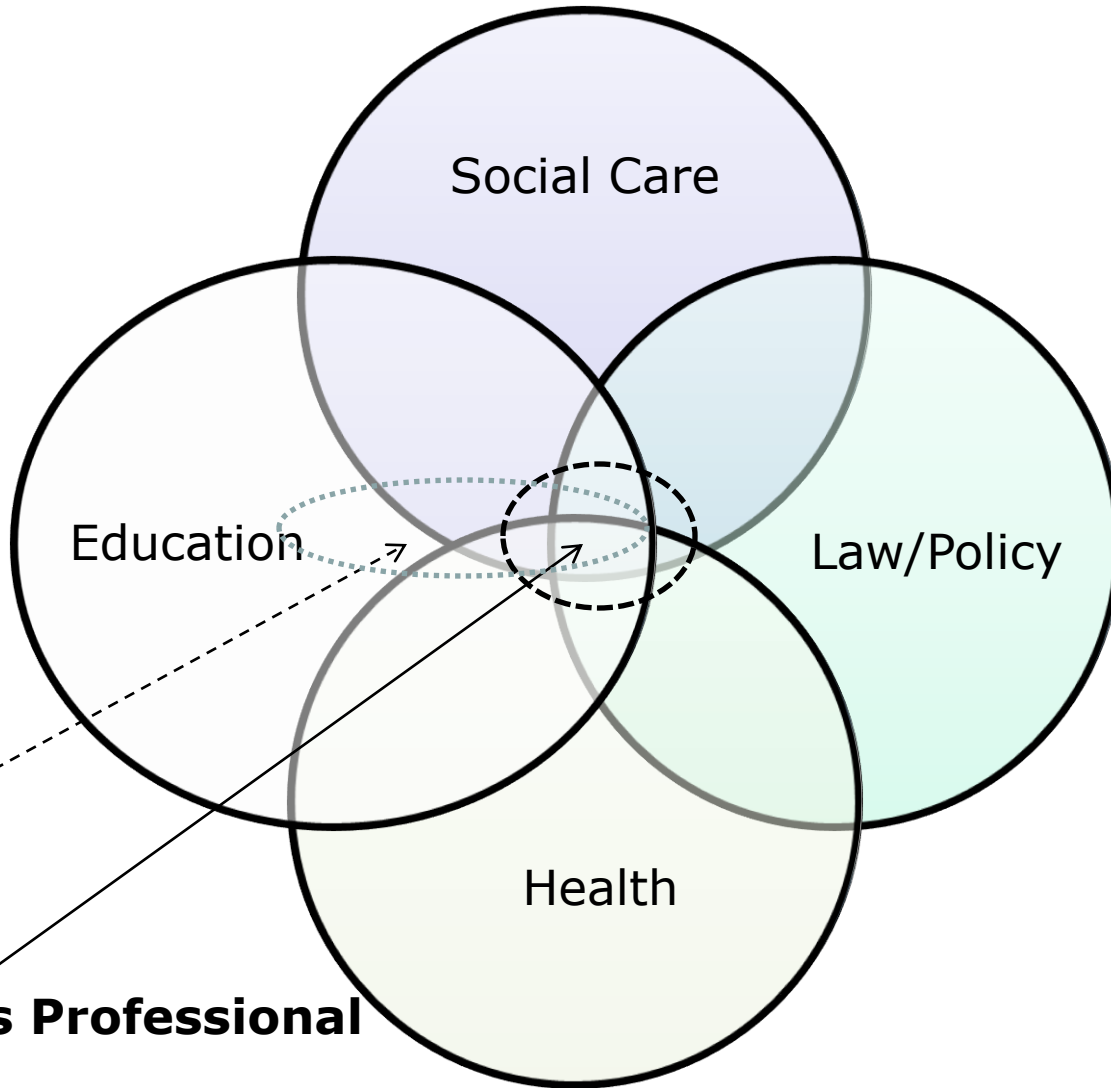
- The teacher has primarily an education focus and those with EYPS the holistic child is central.
- For the Early Years Professional leading and supporting quality experiences for young children, that improves outcomes is central to all they do - they are an advocate for children.
- Indeed their positioning at the intersection of health, social care and education means that they should not just be considered in relation to Early Years Teachers but social work and health colleagues as well.





- Their role also embraces working with parents; therefore they have a role in early intervention not just with children but with their parents/carers as well.
- It also needs to be recognised that Early Years Teachers and Early Years Professionals are complimentary but essentially different professionals.
- Not all Early Years Professionals want to be 'Teachers' and not all Early Years Teachers want to work with the birth to three age range or outside a school setting.





QTS/EYPS

The Early Years Professional





Collective Perspectives

The research participants have affirmed the development and provided evidence that a new space has emerged in the early years and wider children's workforce occupied by:

'An holistic professional leader - an advocate for young children.'

(Lumsden, 2011)





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