

# 1

## The Developing Early Years Practitioner

### Chapter overview

For many years, adults working with babies and young children undertook a caring role. The roles and responsibilities of early years practitioners have broadened across education, health and social services. Professional learning and employment opportunities have enabled the development of a knowledgeable confident workforce. The revealing of early years practitioners to a visible workforce with active agency is storied through the chapter. There is opportunity to reflect upon your work-based progression as a developing early years practitioner.

This chapter will:

- Explore the development of early years practitioners' roles and responsibilities.
- Examine historical, research influences and government policy upon workforce reform.
- Discuss the gender construct of the early years workforce.
- Consider the contribution of practitioners' professional learning upon setting, school and service provision.
- Consider the development of a graduate-led workforce.



### Developing roles and responsibilities

Traditionally, nursery nurses were the main practitioners working with babies and young children. Their role has developed with more responsibilities as they have furthered their engagement with children, families and multi-professionals in a range of early years contexts and integrated services. If you were able to go back in time to a nursery or infant classroom 30 years ago, nursery nurses working there would be quietly washing paint pots and brushes in the sink in the corner of the infant classroom or nursery – one of the many daily routine tasks

nursery nurses carried out. These routine tasks also included sharpening pencils, cutting paper, tidying the book corner, washing dirty clothes; all low-graded tasks that, in many cases, the nursery or school teacher preferred not to undertake. However, these were important tasks supporting the work of the teacher, allowing the teacher more time for teaching children. The teacher's higher qualification and skills as a qualified graduate teacher enabled her or him to teach the class or group of nursery children, which a less qualified nursery nurse was unable to do. Nursery nurses worked under the direction of a teacher with small groups of children. It depended upon the nursery or school they worked in how involved they were in planning activities and attending staff meetings. Some nursery nurses participated in planning meetings and attended staff meetings; some were not allowed in the staffroom. Nursery nurses were considered as non-teaching support staff; the exclusion zones reinforced this view.

In the twenty-first century, nursery nurses are no longer an invisible workforce who are 'just washing the paint pots'. They are a visible workforce working with babies, young children, practitioners, professionals and agencies in leadership and management roles, and in complementary teaching roles, undertaking diverse roles within integrated practice in a range of services for children and families, in schools and early years settings, children's centres and integrated children's services in both the maintained and private, voluntary and independent (PVI) sectors. The invisible workforce has been transformed into a visible workforce through professional learning and new employment opportunities.

The job titles for practitioners other than teachers, working in the early years are varied, at times confusing and often not reflecting the diversity of the role undertaken. Job titles reflect the value of that role to parents and to others. The terminology used around a job can cause misconceptions about the role and responsibilities within it (Adams, 2008). The following array of job titles is used for practitioners and teachers working with young children in nurseries and early years settings, children's centres, schools and home-based provision (Hallet, 2008b):

- Childminder
- Children's Centre Teacher
- Classroom Assistant
- Crèche Worker
- Early Years Educator
- Early Years Practitioner
- Early Years Professional
- Early Years Teacher

- Foundation Stage Co-ordinator
- High Level Teaching Assistant
- Learning Support Assistant
- Learning Mentor
- Nanny
- Nursery Nurse
- Nursery Assistant
- Nursery Manager
- Nursery Teacher
- Play Leader
- Pre-school Leader
- Room Leader
- Room Supervisor
- Senior Nursery Nurse
- Teaching Assistant.

The variety of names for various job roles reflects how one suitable title has not been found to describe the complexity of the work of the early years workforce. The term 'nursery nurse' is still the common generic term for those working with young children other than teachers (Adams, 2008), while the term 'teaching assistant' (TA) has become the common generic term for support staff working in schools, acknowledging their contribution to teaching and learning and pupil achievement (DfEE, 2000). The development of integrated practice highlights the case for a new language referring to those working in children's services, with emphasis on an integrated pedagogical approach to working practices (Cameron, 2004).

In the care and education of young children there has been a long history of including the word 'nursery' in a job title, for example, nursery nurse, nursery assistant and nursery manager, to describe the work of early years practitioners other than teachers. The names derive from the qualification and job role of a nursery nurse, a term from Victorian times, when women worked in children's nurseries as nurses looking after the physical health of children in their care. The emphasis on children's health and well-being was promoted by the McMillan sisters (1860–1931). In their open-air nursery schools, children played out on large verandas to breathe in the fresh air associated with robust health – a contrast to the foggy air in the slums of London (MacLeod-Brudenell, 2008). The job title of 'nursery nurse' described this health carer's role well, before education became part of nursery provision (Hallet, 2008b) and continues to be used. Whenever the term 'nursery nurse' is used, it misrepresents the valuable and complex role of caring and educating young children, and working with parents, carers and families. Many

qualified nursery nurses undertake management and leadership roles, using a range of knowledge and skills developed through experience of working in early years provision, as the following case study shows.



### **Case study: *A morning in the life of a nursery nurse***

Edee qualified as a nursery nurse 10 years ago, she works in a large private day nursery. Her working day begins early in the morning, ending late in the evening. Her day begins earlier at home: she gets up her own children, washes, dresses and gives them breakfast, gets them into the car, dropping them off at the childminder's before arriving at the nursery for her working day to begin.

She is the Deputy Manager but today she is Acting Manager as her manager is out for the day on a course. She is able to sit in her chair and even answer the phone . . . But responsibility goes with that. She looks in the diary and there are meetings with parents and a staff meeting to organize. Edee usually works in the Toddler Room; she goes there to brief the supply nursery nurse, covering her role for the day, introducing the parents to her replacement.

Her first meeting is with a prospective new parent who wishes to use the nursery for her baby as she returns to work from maternity leave. Edee greets the parent and her 1-year-old baby and, after introductions and giving the parent the nursery's prospectus, she takes her on a tour of the setting, introducing staff, and explaining the curriculum and provision. On return to her office, she answers the parent's queries and offers the parent a place for her baby in the nursery, beginning the following week.

Her next meeting is with the nursery's cook and a parent who has complained about the quality of the food her child had received, while attending nursery. The parent explained her child, Zoe, wouldn't eat the food provided; she was concerned about the little amount of food she was eating during her time at nursery. The cook explained about the nursery's healthy eating menu, defending her cooking and the quality of the ingredients she used. Edee acted as a mediator between the cook and the parent during a lengthy discussion. Edee helped a compromise to be reached; the parent providing some of Zoe's lunch, the cook providing some food Zoe liked. Both left the meeting happier than when they arrived.

There is a staff meeting to plan with a focus on developing the outside as a learning area. Edee had recently been on a course, 'Taking the inside outside', so prepared a small PowerPoint presentation about the benefits of learning outdoors. She made an agenda for the meeting, including time for the staff to contribute ideas and about how the nursery's outdoor area could be developed for learning. Edee wanted staff to develop ideas and produce a development plan for this initiative to progress by the end of the meeting, so it was important to have a focused agenda with ample time for this thinking to take place. She then joined the staff in the staffroom for her sandwich lunch.

The following questions will enable you to reflect upon Edee's role. She used a range of knowledge and skills as the Acting Nursery Manager in the meetings with the new parent, the cook and the parent, and in planning the staff meeting.

### Questions for reflection: *Reflecting on Edee's day*

Can you identify when she used the following knowledge and skills during these meetings and activity?

- Effective communication
- Marketing
- Decision-making
- Conflict resolution
- Negotiation
- Planning
- Knowledge transfer
- Collaboration.

Following from this reflection, consider the term 'nursery nurse'.

- Does the term 'nursery nurse' really describe Edee's complex and varied role?
- Is there a term that would describe her job role more fully?

The term 'nursery nurse' promotes the gendered nature of the early years workforce which is now considered.

## A female workforce

Traditionally, the early years sector has a predominantly female workforce (Kay, 2005), cultural and social conditioning being responsible for establishing female and male gender roles. Patriarchal systems of society maintain caring for children is naturally women's work (Roberts-Holmes and Brownhill, 2011). Women as child bearers undertake a mothering and nurturing role in the care of children. Many young girls have responded to their career teacher's question 'What do you want to do when you leave school?' with the reply, 'I want to work with children' and have been directed to the local further education college to attend a childcare course.

Females being associated with children are socially constructed through the mothering role, traditionally carried out by women. Women interacting with babies and children in a patient, caring and nurturing way are viewed as having qualities associated with motherhood, therefore in working with children, women will meet babies' and children's needs in a caring way (Reynolds, 1996). There is an assumption that caring for young children is an easy job that can be done by anyone who is kind, loving, warm and sensitive, and who likes children. McGillivray (2008) refers to this as the 'Mary Poppins syndrome'. Browne (2008) describes 'feminine traits' of emotions, sensitivity, creativity and care as integral to working in the early years sector. Through gendered perceptions and the socialization of girls and women, working with babies and young children as nursery nurses, teaching assistants, home-based nannies and childminders, seems attractive, therefore producing a predominantly female workforce.

The gender construct that working with children is women's work, something that women do naturally and are intrinsically better at (Moss, 2003; Peeters, 2007) has influenced the value of the work as of low status. Workforce reform and the development of a graduate-led workforce in the Children's Workforce Strategy (DfES, 2005) is raising the status of the early years workforce but without the reward of increased level of pay. Early years services are critical for the development of young children. However, the workforce is one of the lowest paid and the least qualified (Cooke and Lawton, 2008). Gender is inextricably part of the workforce (McGillivray, 2008); gender role association, low status, low pay and the high proportion of females in the workforce interact with one another (Cooke and Lawton, 2008). Practitioners working in the early years, who are not qualified as teachers, are seen with less regard, which is reflected in low pay (Kay 2005). Historically, the early years workforce is 'under qualified, underpaid and overwhelmingly female' (Miller and Cable, 2008b: 120), a challenge which is beginning to be addressed through government funded higher education and professional awards in raising qualifications, status and professional confidence of the early years workforce (Hadfield et al., 2011).

A smaller number of male practitioners and teachers work with young children mainly in schools, but also in early years settings, children's centres, children's services, and in the extended schools service. Although the numbers of men employed in the early years sector is increasing, male workers are regarded as exceptions to the general rule that childcare is work for women (Cameron et al., 1999). Early childcare and education as gendered women's work, assumes a female workforce reproducing its own patterns of recruitment and training. An examination of gender pedagogy may increase recruitment of men (Peeters, 2007).

Gender is threaded throughout interactions with parents and professionals and within practitioners' everyday professional practice, whether the practitioner or teacher is female or male. In the development of a more highly qualified workforce, generic characteristics for those working within children's services are important, rather than focusing upon gender differences. There is an assumption that children need male practitioners and teachers as role models in their educational experiences. Research by Carrington et al. (2007) found the gender of the practitioner had little influence upon children's level of educational achievement. Practitioners' pedagogical and interpersonal skills are more important in engaging children in learning (Roberts-Holmes and Brownhill, 2011).

The predominantly female workforce with feminine characteristics, traits and qualities should be celebrated; they are leaders of professional practice in an evolving landscape of government policy. Through access to continuing professional learning, professional knowledge and confidence, a workforce with active agency has developed.

## Developing quality through professional awards

Two significant pieces of research, the Rumbold Report (DES, 1990) and the Effective Provision of Pre-School Education Project (EPPE Project) (Sylva et al., 2010), bridge a decade in time but both demonstrate the link between quality of provision and the quality of the workforce, having implications for training and continuing professional development (CPD). The Tickell Review of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum highlights the importance of an experienced, strong, well-qualified and supported workforce upon the educational outcomes of children (Tickell, 2011). The Foundation Years Qualifications Review (Nutbrown, 2012) reviews existing qualifications within the government's review of provision in 2010–2012. A key issue within the review is the content and delivery of early years training courses, highlighting that learning should take place through an integrated balance of high-quality practical experience, theory-based learning and critical reflection.

Historically, the Rumbold Report (DES, 1990) was a catalyst for change in reforming the early years workforce. The report found inequality of educational provision for 3- and 4-year-olds, highlighting the need for a high-quality experience for children, recognizing working with young children is 'a demanding and complex task, those working in it need a range of attributes to ensure high quality experience for children' (DES, 1990: 19). The report identified ways to improve quality

of service by raising the qualifications of the workforce through staff development opportunities, promoting a multidisciplinary approach to working with children and families integrating health, education and care. The introduction of multidisciplinary in-service degrees in Early Childhood Studies increased professional development opportunities for childcare staff. The introduction of professional status awards such as Senior Practitioner Status, Early Years Professional Status and Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) further developed vocational knowledge and skills of the early years workforce.

Foundation degrees introduced in 2000, bridged the gap between vocational and academic qualifications, a higher education award integrating work-based learning with academic rigour (QAA, 2002), safeguarding both the rigour and relevance of initial training for teachers and affording improved opportunities of in-service training for childcare workers. There had been a lack of professional development opportunities and career structures for nursery nurses (Hutchinson, 1992). The inclusion of more support staff within the school workforce in recent years highlighted the training and development needs for support staff such as teaching assistants (Simkins et al., 2009). The recommendations in the Rumbold Report (DES, 1990) drove the development of a plethora of undergraduate and FDs in Early Childhood Studies and Early Years, providing continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities for the early years workforce.

Foundation degrees contributed to the first sector-recognized professional award. The Sure Start recognized Early Years Sector-Endorsed Foundation Degree (EYSEFD) (DfES, 2001) for practitioners working with babies and young children under the age of 8 years, with a minimum of two years' vocational experience, provided opportunity for professional learning for many practitioners, especially women. Nursery nurses, teaching assistants and play workers had access to a long-awaited professional development opportunity. This higher education programme, supported by government funding, demonstrated an overdue financial investment in the early years workforce. For the first time, the predominantly female workforce had the opportunity to access higher academic study with financial support (Lumsden, 2008).

On completion of the EYSEFD, by demonstrating core and route specific outcomes, graduates were awarded the professional status of Senior Practitioner (SPS), a new level of professional practice to help raise standards and recognize experienced practitioners (DES, 2002). However, the Senior Practitioner role and responsibilities were not clearly defined (O'Keefe and Tait, 2004). The role had potential to influence practice, but was never developed. The EYSEFD now has a revised curriculum including the Common Core



of Skills and Knowledge, skills and knowledge that everyone who works with children and young people is expected to have (CWDC, 2010a). The award of Senior Practitioner Status (SPS) is not given on completion of this EYSEFD; the role is generally not used or recognized, being replaced by the Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) award and the more defined role of the Early Years Professional (EYP) as a graduate professional leader of practice (Lloyd and Hallet, 2010).

The HLTA is a professional award for Teaching assistants (TAs) working in schools. On successful demonstration of standards, the award is given to TAs now able to work at a higher level with additional responsibilities, supporting the work of teachers in planning and preparation by undertaking whole class activities. The role developed from the reforming of the school workforce (DfES, 2003) to raise standards and address teachers' workloads. Through the SPS, EYPS and HLTA awards, the knowledge and skills of support staff have been raised and these professional awards have contributed to the further development of a graduate-led workforce, which is considered next.

## Developing a graduate-led workforce

The EPPE Project (Sylva et al., 2010) identified a connection between the qualifications of staff in pre-school settings and outcomes for children, particularly at National Curriculum, Key Stage 1. In settings that were graduate-led by teachers, the quality of provision was higher and there were better outcomes for children. The Children's Workforce Strategy (DfES, 2005) sets out a vision of childcare services becoming among the best in the world with a better qualified workforce and more workers trained to a professional level, including all those leading full daycare provision, and where the professional level is defined as graduate level (DCSF, 2007). Schools in the maintained sector are already led by graduate-qualified teachers. Developing graduate professional leaders in the PVI sector, in children's centres and daycare provision provides parity across the maintained and non-maintained (PVI) sectors.

Reflective practice in which participants are asked to be self-reflective, and to reflect upon their professional practice with children and families, is included in professional awards, that is, the National Professional Qualification for Integrated Centre Leadership (NPQICL) for those leading integrated children's centres and the EYPS for leaders of practice in settings. Findings from the national research study about graduate leadership training (EYPS) showed that graduate-level professional development is improving setting provision and has a significant impact on a practitioner's ability to effect change (Hadfield and Waller,

2011). Government strategy supports the development of an integrated and graduate-led children's workforce through graduate-level professional leadership to help give every child the chance to thrive in their earliest years (Teather, 2011).

## Developing an integrated workforce

An education is the most effective route for young children out of poverty and disaffection (Knowles, 2009), Government policies aim to close gaps in educational achievement, raise attainment and aspirations, and ensure standards of educational excellence for all. The EPPE Project found children had higher-quality care and learning experiences in pre-school settings where children are part of joined-up thinking, multidisciplinary integrated practice (Sylva et al., 2010). Recent government reviews of provision (Allen, 2011; Field 2010) identified the importance of early intervention for young children's learning and development, particularly for vulnerable and disadvantaged children, in securing better educational outcomes and life chances for children. The Tickell Review of the EYFS curriculum highlighted the importance of health and well-being for children's learning, introducing the concept of healthy learning for children's learning and development (Tickell, 2011). The Munro Review of Child Protection (Munro, 2010) brings together the interface of education, health and social services for safeguarding children. Practitioners with reflective abilities are central to implementing government policy into practice (Paige-Smith and Craft, 2011), being able to reflect upon existing provision, and modify and develop provision and practice within an emerging landscape of policy.

Traditionally, professionals in the health, education and social services have worked separately within disparate services. The delivery of more integrated services, developing 'a team around a child' to meet individual children's needs, requires new ways of working, a significant culture change for staff used to working within narrower professional or service boundaries (Siraj-Blatchford et al., 2007). There has been a broadening of job roles through the development of a range of services in establishing integrated practice, as the following job titles show:

- Children's Centre Manager
- Behaviour Education Support Team Leader
- Learning Mentor
- Family Support Worker
- Lead Professional.

The diverse roles in integrated practice enable the development of a multi-agency team around a child, meeting their individual needs. The following case study demonstrates multi-professionals working together.



### **Case study: A multi-agency team meeting**

A multi-agency team working in one of four locality areas within a large town meets for a staff meeting. The team of a probation officer, an educational psychologist, a learning mentor, a social worker, a mental health worker and a safeguarding officer are located within one building. At their weekly meeting each practitioner reports their case load. Together they discuss any emerging issues pertinent to their case load of children and families or to the local area which they serve. Their weekly meeting is a time when they can work together, pass on information, and ask for information and advice. The team working together in one building means that, through personal contact and professional understanding, relationships are established, benefiting effective communication which is central for the operation of the team and building an inter-professional service around the children and families they work with.

The case study highlighting integrated practice helps to ensure children and their families benefit from the complementary skills of a wide range of professionals working together. Multidisciplinary teams can provide well-focused access to more specialized support (DfES, 2004) and access to early intervention programmes. A joined-up service with integrated thinking involves effective two-way communication through partnership working, and trust and respect for each professional's specialism. The case study forms a basis for you to reflect upon your own integrated practice.



### **Questions for reflection: Multi-agency working**

Reflect upon an aspect of integrated practice provided for a child within your provision.

- Consider any benefits for the child and their family.
- Consider any disadvantages for the child and their family.
- What was your role in working with multi-professionals, the child and their family?

The importance of partnership working in integrated practice is now discussed.

## Working in partnership

In developing a fair and just society, support and early intervention to help the most vulnerable children forms a central strand of early years policy (Teather, 2011). The Allen (2011) and Field Reports (2010) recommend intervening early for children's life chances and educational outcomes, particularly for disadvantaged children. The implementation of early intervention programmes requires practitioners to work in partnership with parents, professionals and agencies in an integrated way. The Tickell Review of the EYFS (2011) considered how children with specific needs can be supported as early as possible, highlighting the requirement for a close working relationship between practitioners in health, early years and education alongside parents and carers for early intervention strategies to be effective (Tickell, 2011).

Parents are recognized as children's first and enduring educators, regarded as key partners in supporting children's learning and development (DfES, 2008). The EYFS curriculum recognizes parents and families are central to a child's well-being; practitioners should develop this relationship by sharing information and offering support for extending learning in the home (DfES, 2008). The key person has an important role in developing this relationship, working closely with parents, as a point of contact with an individual child's parents and carers (Elfer et al., 2012). This role highlights the changing nature of practitioners' developing role and responsibilities, which are very different from the lower-skilled role of a nursery nurse 'washing the paint points'. The key-person role requires effective communication skills, observation and assessment, record-keeping and report writing (Elfer et al., 2012).

For practitioners, working with parents and other professionals within integrated practice requires an understanding of the term 'partnership'. What does it mean to work in partnership, as an equal partner? An effective partnership is based upon equality in working together; neither partner has more power in the partnership than the other. The quality of the relationship formed is central to partnership working and takes time to nurture and establish through respect and trust, so partners can ask for and share information (Draper and Duffy, 2010). This free flow of information-sharing helps a child or children, which is generally the purpose of establishing the partnership with parents, professionals or agencies. Figure 1.1 illustrates the key components discussed in a 'partnership sandwich' of practitioners working with parents and professionals effectively through trusting and nurturing relationships of respect and equity.

There is an opportunity for you to reflect upon your partnership working using the 'partnership sandwich' framework for your reflection.

<b>Parents and Professionals</b>
Asking
Relationships
Trust
Nurturing
Equality
Respect
Sharing
Helping
Information
<b>Partnership</b>

**Figure 1.1** A Partnership Sandwich: practitioners working in partnership

### Questions for reflection: *A partnership sandwich*

If you are *a practitioner*, reflect upon your partnership working, either with parents, professionals or agencies.

- Give an example of partnership working from your practice.
- Reflect upon how effective the partnership is for:
  - the child or children
  - parents/carers
  - the setting
  - other professionals.
- Are there any recommendations you could make to improve future partnership working?

If you are *a student* in work placement, reflect upon your observations of partnership working; choose an example with parents, professionals or agencies.

- From observed practice reflect upon:
  - The relationship between the partners, how has this been nurtured?
  - How equal do you consider the relationship?
- Reflect upon how effective the partnership is for:
  - the child or children
  - parents/carers
  - the setting
  - other professionals.
- Are there any recommendations to improve future partnership working?

The chapter now considers the contribution of continuing professional learning for practitioners' personal and professional development and early years provision.

## The contribution of professional learning

Access to higher education awards, foundation, undergraduate, post-graduate degree programmes and sector-endorsed professional awards, has enabled practitioners to engage in reflective professional learning. National findings of the EYSEFD found students who were practitioners had high levels of personal and professional confidence as they progressed through their studies (Lumsden, 2008). Similarly, students' experiences of an Early Childhood Studies undergraduate degree demonstrated a specialized knowledge and confidence within the subject (O'Keefe and Tait, 2004). The national research of graduate-level professional development (EYPS) is having a positive impact upon experienced staff and particularly early career professionals (Hadfield and Waller, 2011). These higher education professional development opportunities viewed within the context of widening participation and lifelong learning, have provided educational opportunities for those who did not pursue higher education when leaving school (Lumsden, 2008), facilitating enhanced specialized knowledge and professional confidence.

A growing self-esteem and confidence are important attributes for early childhood leaders (Rodd, 2006). The developing diversity of practitioner roles within the early years sector highlights the importance of practitioners being reflective to implement government policy into provision and practice (Paige-Smith and Craft, 2011). Research shows that professional learning has a measurable effect on the quality of children's experiences. Practitioners are able to refine their professional knowledge and skills, to enable them to respond to the increasingly complex task of providing high-quality early childhood education (Menmuir and Hughes, 1998). The research study of graduate leaders' training (EYPS) demonstrates the development of EYP leaders' growing professional confidence (Hadfield and Waller, 2011).

Through professional learning an articulate, confident workforce is leading children's services, integrated practice, setting provision and practice. The quiet 'invisible' early years workforce of nursery nurses and classroom assistants has emerged from behind the paint pots to a 'visible' workforce of leaders and managers. Practitioners who are knowledgeably confident, articulate and reflective, are leading policy, practice and change, as this graduate in the FD case study reflects at the end of her higher education studies.

### Reflective practitioner's voice

I seem to walk taller; I know what I am doing and am not afraid to say so.



### Summary

This chapter has storied the development of roles and responsibilities of early years practitioners through the landscape of policy, practice, research and workforce reform. Working in partnership with parents and professionals in integrated practice has been considered as an emerging aspect of the developing role of the early years practitioner. Consideration of gender within the workforce has highlighted the active agency of the predominantly female early years workforce. The contribution of graduate-level professional learning upon practitioners' professional knowledge and confidence has been explored. There has been opportunity to reflect upon relevant issues and work practices through reflective questions.

The importance of reflection in continuing professional learning for early years practitioners is discussed in the following chapter.

### Further reading

This report provides an analysis of issues within the early years workforce:  
Cooke, G. and Lawton, K. (2008) *For Love or Money: Pay, Progression and Professionalism in the Early Years Workforce*. London: Institute for Public Policy Research.

This is an informative book about multi-agency working in the early years:  
Siraj-Blatchford, I., Clarke, K. and Needham, M. (eds) (2007) *The Team Around the Child: Multi-agency Working in the Early Years*. Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham Books.