

Foundations for Quality

The Independent Review of Early Education and Childcare Qualifications

commissioned by Sarah Teather

Minister of State for Children & Families

Professor Cathy Nutbrown led the Review. She reported her findings and recommendations on 19 June 2012.

The government's response was included as an appendix to "More Great Childcare" published in February 2013.

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Dame Clare Tickell in her Review of the EYFS in 2011, emphasised the importance of having an experienced, well-trained and well-supported workforce, noting evidence that under-qualified and under-supported staff have a detrimental impact on outcomes for children.

She recommended that new entry qualifications should be at a level that confers the equivalent status of the NNEB, widely seen as a gold standard.

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Remit of the Nutbrown Review:

- To ensure the workforce has appropriate skills and knowledge to deliver key priorities, including the revised EYFS and the expanded two-year-old offer
- To address how best to strengthen training, qualifications and career pathways in childcare and early learning for people new to the sector and those already employed there

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Particular issues identified in consultation:

- Minimum entry requirements
- Expertise and qualifications of trainers
- Quality and consistency of assessment
- Time taken to achieve qualifications
- Role of government funding agencies

*adult:child ratios and pay & conditions
were outside the remit of the review*

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Process:

- Call for evidence from early years and childcare workers, employers, trainees and training providers, parents and families
- Consultation events
- Meetings with specific groups
- Role of Sector Skills Councils and Ofqual
- Expert panel

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Emerging issues:

- Recruitment and careers guidance
- Impact of low levels of literacy and numeracy
- Current confusion and variable quality in standards of qualifications and training
- Need to ensure staff and lecturers understand the latest knowledge and adapt their practice
- Lack of status and scarcity of strong professional leadership for the profession
- Need for career pathways and long term vision

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The Report

- Complex but important debate, welcomed by practitioners, parents and trainers
- Findings endorsed by the Sutton Trust
- Professor Nutbrown recognises current financial constraints and proposes strategic development and investment over time
- Recommendations should be read in the context of the Review

www.education.gov.uk/nutbrownreview

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Subsequent developments

- September 2012: New ministerial team appointed.
- Government response to the Nutbrown recommendations included as appendix in document “More Great Childcare” 19.2.2013
- Statement on the costs of childcare awaited

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Main recommendations and government response

- New full & relevant criteria applied from 2013

Accepted, but delayed to 2014; Early Years Educator badge when full and relevant criteria for L3 are met

- All staff included in ratios to be at L3 by 2022

Under consideration; ratios subject to current DfE consultation on childcare staff deployment

- L2 English and maths needed for entry to L3

Accepted in principle; Teaching Agency consultation

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Main recommendations and government response

- Tutors qualified at higher level than the course
- CPD and contact with practice for tutors
- Good or outstanding placements for students

Accepted

- Mentoring and CPD

Accepted in principle; settings and sector to develop

- Research on numbers and roles of BME staff

Keep under review through TA consultation and Childcare and EY Provider surveys

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Main recommendations and government response

- New EYQTS for birth to seven

Not accepted; Early Years Professionals to be seen as equivalent to specialist Early Years Teachers who will have similar training, with entry requirements and standards for new courses the same as for primary ITT. The training will cover the age range from birth to five, will not require a probationary year, and will not lead to Qualified Teacher Status.