



CREC Post-election Statement

CREC Co-Directors Prof. Tony Bertram and Prof. Chris Pascal sum up their thoughts on what the recent election result could mean for Early Years and consider how we the sector should respond in order to protect what it believes in. The prime issue remains as before (see Early Education pre-election statement [here](#)) in the quality of interactions between the children, the parents and the practitioners.

- **The promised expansion of provision for 3 & 4 year olds** to 30 hours per week for working parents, although welcomed by many, has the potential to cause considerable pressures on the sector. There has been no indication as yet of the way in which this will be funded and at what level. The expansion of this offer, as has been seen with the expansion of the two year old offer, has implications for training and CPD if we want to ensure high quality provision for our children.
- **The further development of 'Free' Schools** will require continued and increased challenge from the sector of the notion that teacher qualifications are not necessary despite all evidence to the contrary.
- **Places for 2 year olds** are severely underfunded at present, which has resulted in low take up, particularly in the private sector in areas of greatest need. Schools are therefore being encouraged to take on 2 year olds, however we should be concerned about "schoolification" of 2 year olds in those settings where the specific developmental needs of these children has not been adequately considered. Coupled with this, and not just within the school sector, is a continuing need to provide the necessary training for staff in how to work effectively with two year olds particularly if we want to see this funding make a real difference in terms of narrowing the gap by the time children reach school age.
- **The Baseline Assessment:** A decision on which of the assessment bids have crossed the 10% threshold is expected soon. Once this is known, we can begin to consider what action should be taken next to promote the best outcome for students and staff using these.
- Finally, we need to be vigilant about any attempt to consider all provision before the start of compulsory education as simple 'childcare' and to avoid the framing of the Early Years debate solely around the 'cost of childcare'. We need to keep positioning children at the heart of the discussions and ensure that investment in highly qualified staff to lead child centred pedagogies in high quality Early Years settings remains on the agenda at all times.