

**Westminster Education Forum policy conference:  
Next steps for early years and childcare in England**

*Timing: Morning, Monday, 15<sup>th</sup> September 2025*

**\*\*\*Taking place online\*\*\***

*Draft agenda subject to change*



- 8.30 Registration
- 9.00 **Chair's opening remarks**  
Senior Parliamentarian
- 9.05 **Assessing current childcare and early years provision in England and priorities for its expansion**  
**Professor Chris Pascal**, Director, Centre for Research in Early Childhood  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.25 **Implementing the expanded childcare entitlement - planning, funding and delivery**  
*supporting consistency in implementation / balancing school-based provision with the sustainability of existing private and voluntary nurseries / utilising the school conversion fund / supporting local decision-making on funding, guidance and implementations / targeting provision in underserved areas / assessing outcomes and practicalities of the 300 school nursery pilot / priorities for adapting primary school spaces / addressing potential inequalities in expanded entitlement delivery / parental expectations, affordability and access*  
**Professor Eva Lloyd**, Emeritus Professor, School of Childhood and Social Care, University of East London  
**Gemma Wills**, Headteacher, Exwick Heights Primary School, Devon  
Senior representative, early years provider  
Senior representative, local authority  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.10 **Strategies for improving the quality of provision in early years education and enhancing child outcomes**  
*improving early numeracy, literacy and language development / early identification of children with additional needs / effective transitions from early years to primary school / identifying best practice / assessing the potential impact of expanded entitlement on child development / monitoring and evaluation of child developmental outcomes / mitigating negative effects of increased child-to-staff ratios on child development / priorities for safeguarding*  
**Dr Carla Solvason**, Senior Lecturer, Institute of Education, University of Worcester  
Senior representative, early years provider  
Senior representative, primary school  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.45 **Chair's closing remarks**  
Senior Parliamentarian
- 10.50 Break
- 11.00 **Chair's opening remarks**  
**Jodie Gosling MP**, Officer, All-Party Parliamentary Group for Early Education and Childcare
- 11.05 **Priorities for supporting and developing the early years workforce**  
**Neil Leitch**, Chief Executive, Early Years Alliance
- 11.20 **Next steps for early years workforce recruitment, retention and training**  
*addressing workforce shortages and recruitment challenges / priorities for improving pay, professional status and career progression / reducing barriers to participation in training and development / priorities for diversifying the workforce / long-term workforce strategy and career pathways development*  
**Janet King**, Sector Manager, Education and Childcare, NCFE  
**Dr Frances Giampapa**, Associate Professor, Identities, Language and Education, University of Bristol  
**Dr Victoria Bowen**, Senior Research Associate, University of Bristol  
**Lucy Lewin**, Director, Little Angels Nursery, Uppingham; and Founder, The Profitable Nursery Academy
- 11.35 Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.50 **Strategies to improve the financial sustainability of the early years sector in the long-term**  
*assessing the impact of increased government funded places on private and voluntary nursery provision / options for mitigating financial risks for providers and top-up charges for parents / priorities for maintaining a mixed-market model / strategies to reduce financial risks related to school leasing decisions and cost pressures / assessing displacement effects experienced by private nurseries move from state school premises*  
**Diane Wycherley**, Chief Operating Officer, Tops Day Nurseries  
**Dr Gillian Paull**, Visiting Senior Fellow, Centre for the Analysis of Social Exclusion, London School of Economics  
Senior representative, local authority  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.30 **Policy priorities for improving early years and childcare provision moving forward - next steps for expansion**  
Senior representative, policy  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.55 **Chair's and Westminster Education Forum closing remarks**  
**Jodie Gosling MP**, Officer, All-Party Parliamentary Group for Early Education and Childcare  
**Sean Cudmore**, Westminster Education Forum