

About Early Years Workforce Survey 2019

Verbatim open comment on owner and manager's views on increasing the status and rewards of a career in early years

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What, in your view, would help to increase the status and rewards of a career in the early education and childcare sector?

Professional wage skill required at Level 3 or above.

More knowledge about what our job entails and also more funding to pay wages above the living wage.

Pay levels and parental education as to our role.

Properly funded early years services.

To change the working name from nursery nurse, to childcare professional & to upgrade the understanding of the public; that we are just as important as teachers.

Making the EYPS/EYTS equivalent to QTS. Increasing the funding available to the Early Years sector, so Early Years teachers and practitioners might be on salary bands similar to teachers in Primary and Secondary sectors.

Increased recognition of the importance of the role. Ranking of EYPS as comparable to QTS with comparable rates of pay. Increased rates of pay across the sector as a whole, to make it a viable profession particularly for men.

Better pay and access to qualifications, both of these are contingent on increasing funding levels. The current financial situation is not sustainable.

While understanding the financial demands on the Department of Education, Government and Local Authorities, I feel that funding levels need to be increased so that pay rates can reflect the work of Early Years Teams, without decent wage scales, it is impossible to attract the right calibre of staff when vacancies arise.

The Government paying the correct rate for childcare, so staff could be paid the correct rate.

Higher pay scales. Low funding and pay, can indicate that they are less professional.

Early Education and Childcare need to be treated as an education sector, funding needs to increase to ensure salaries reflect the nature of the profession.

Better pay and higher standards of people entering early years. For too many years people have seen it as 'babysitting' by people not intelligent enough to do anything else. We should call ourselves educators not practitioners. Teachers are seen as professionals, yet we are doing the same if not a more difficult role.

I feel as an early year professional that we are still not given the recognition for the work we do or the support to provide the work we are expected to do, as many believe it's not a profession and we just do it because it's what we love. I absolutely do love my job and would not change it for the world but

feel there needs to be greater awareness of what the role really entails and just how much responsibility and impact we have in the early years.

To be paid equally to others with the same responsibilities and impacts on children's lives, such as pay in accordance with teachers, or at least closer to them. I manage a setting and could get paid more working at Aldi. Also, by the sector being more highly recognised within the Government and those in power, showing the sector more respect, this will help to increase the public eye view on the importance of early years.

More funding from the Government.

Ability to pay a wage that reflects the skills needed to do this job well. Government recognising that PVI settings are often as good (or better) than maintained settings and treating us in the same way.

To be given recognition that the child's education starts in the nursery workplace, and to be recognised for the hard work (with very little funding) that all practitioners put in to achieve the best for the children in their care.

To be recognised by maintained schools and the Government.

For it to be recognised that those working in the early years sector are just as important and professional as others in the teaching profession. For this to be acknowledged through a pay scheme via the Government rather than one that settings have to pay staff. Often settings can't afford to pay staff more than the minimum wage which doesn't make them feel they are regarded in the same way as teachers. This also often means that staff would rather work in a shop stacking shelves as it is paid better than working in a preschool or nursery, with far less stress.

If practitioners were seen and rewarded as professionals instead of as babysitters.

The view of many educators we speak to is that Early Years is regarded as a 'poor relation' to other key stages in primary, secondary and further education, which begets the misconception that the children attending early years provision are not getting the same type of formative learning experience as they will do in future educational environments. This untruth is compounded by Governments and local authorities who offer increasingly little in the way of financial support to important aspects of early years provision and use rhetoric that increasingly speaks of 'childcare' instead of education. As a setting directed by 3 qualified teachers, all of whom have previously worked in either primary or secondary education, it is evident that early years - and, by inference, the practitioners who do so much to enhance the early stages of learning - do not get the same academic and professional esteem as other educators. This in turn has a negative impact on relationships with parents, the retention of staff with higher qualifications, and the image of the profession as a whole.

More funding.

Increased pay and conditions and societal recognition of the role.

Increase in salaries and change in terminology away from childcare towards early education.

Funding available for level 3 staff to be paid more and EYP/EYTS to have same pay and conditions as teachers.

Ensuring parents and other professionals understand the qualifications and requirements that are needed to provide good care and education, this in turn may help them to understand the costs involved and to respect staff. Overall, I find older staff are respected for their experience. Students should also be encouraged to see themselves as a professional (I was by my college on the NNEB course), dress accordingly and present themselves well, but also show enthusiasm for learning and to want to increase their own knowledge, there is so much out there in books and freely available on the internet to research and deepen their own understanding and therefore improve practice. I find it hard to motivate staff to do this, they see no monetary reward, as we can't afford it and little recognition from parents/other professionals.

Being seen as a teacher in the early years, as we can be the first point of contact at the outset of a child's education.

Funding levels that would mean we could pay wages at a professional level.

Increased wage recognition of the work that early years practitioners do, and an increased rate of funding to support this.

Increase in training and being rewarded correctly.

To view the private sector at the same level as the maintained sector (as with private schools).

Employees being paid a decent wage based on qualifications and experience. Public being better informed of what we do. The early years is just as important, if not more so, than when children get to school. Financial support and recognition needs to come from Government.

Better acknowledged by Government, the importance of early years and funded as well as schools, to enable decent wages to be paid; thereby encouraging professionals to remain in early years, attract men to the profession and incentivise staff to take up training opportunities.

Better Government funding so that salaries and training can be increased.

To feel valued and respected as a professional. To be recognised as professionals. We are teachers! We are recognised as mere babysitters and our pay is appalling. Our roles and responsibilities are not understood and are undervalued by Government.

Adequate funding so that we can continue to train staff to higher levels and have greater levels of pay.

The Government paying appropriate funding levels, however, not using the sector as a political football.

To have the same recognition that qualified teachers get. I worked hard to get my EYPS but the standards have changed and I feel it is now worthless. Teachers do not respect early years workers they just see us as babysitters, as do the Government.

Increased recognition from the Government, and proper funding, enabling us to pay the team a wage that reflects their professionalism. Other agencies recognising our skills and knowledge, their interactions and views of the sector rubs off on the parents we work with and the wider public. If fellow professionals don't treat us with respect, there is no way the general public will recognise us.

Better pay and understanding of the job. An increase in Government funding and the removal of the word 'free' from any public funding.

Increased pay to reflect our professionalism, so that we are not just expected to work for peanuts.

Better pay. You get more money working on the tills at Tesco.

Professionals do not volunteer and give their time for nothing; they also know when to say no. Early years professionals are asked to physically care for and educate children and also to hold an admin job alongside this. It is our mission to empower others in this field so that early years is never classed as 'just early years' and 'playing for a living', to make it highly respected. It is not enough that it is seen as a low paid sector and that it is seen as a vocation, it is a vocation, however the real and relevant wages must be reflected.

Making early education statutory would put it on the same level as current schooling but this needs to be done carefully as quality time in the home environment is crucial.

This varies between the PVI sector and school-based nurseries.

More money.

Better funding to pay professional salaries.

More money to provide a professional salary. Also, more for training and cover.

Only one thing - better salaries but we cannot charge parents enough to increase fees to the level they should be, so the only way is for the Government to fund all childcare better, so that we can increase the fees by 50%, parents only pay 50% and we then have enough income to cover all costs of operating AND put salaries up to what they should be e.g. Not starting at £8.21 but starting at £10 PH and then up.

Better funding rates which leads to better pay for staff!

A substantial rise in the financial benefits of working in this sector. At the moment it is still perceived as a 'mainly woman's job' reflected in the very low pay.

Quality of training and criteria for student recruitment should be more professional. The profession then needs recognition for the important role played in educating early years. The pay and conditions should reflect this, and this can only come with recognition from funding streams.

Recognition from the Government that childcare is a profession. School careers officers should have an understanding of childcare as a profession.

It is a complex problem. Money underscores everything, the Government puts too little into the free hours, which leaves the majority of providers without the money to provide decent wages or training. There is also a big divergence in opinion between parents - some highly value early education and embrace it while others see it as little more than a creche or want to keep their children at home as much as possible until they start school. Parents are generally not given much advice/information about the strong benefits of early education.

Parents views need changing as they tend to seek childcare for convenience rather than quality and standards. This perception is driven by the economic "back to work" policies from Government

Higher funding rates, therefore we can pay our staff more.

Giving private nurseries the same recognition as school nurseries! Too many children leave to go to 'proper nursery', (i.e. School). Funding needs to be more balanced so we can give better pay and conditions, but primarily practice needs to be recognised as professional. There needs to be a HUGE shift in how early years professionals are trained, qualified, viewed and paid.

There needs to be sufficient Government funding to encourage people to see early years as a career, with appropriate progression.

I think policy makers spending time with settings, looking at our work and understanding the hard work and effort that goes into the provision, as well as level of education within the workforce, the knowledge we have and the pressures we face to deliver on policy and legislation will allow them to understand that we are professionals, this will hopefully filter down to parents and other professionals.

EYTS and EYPS should be seen as equivalent to teachers in every other phase of education. Possibly a new title for Nursery Practitioners that is recognised and used universally so that staff in nurseries start referring to themselves in professional terms. And of course, sufficient levels of funding, or a change in funding regime that means we can start paying staff what they really deserve.

More funding needed to train and retain staff. Currently, poorly paid, so not always easy to employ people at a higher qualification level.

The correct funding to allow correct wages.

Obviously improved salary and working conditions would enhance the career of early years professionals. Even when we have equivalent qualifications of teachers we are not viewed in the same light. A fully funded early years system would be the only way to achieve this but this is not affordable.

Increase the rate for "free entitlement" funding to a level that reflects the cost to enable us to use that money to raise quality rather than to stay afloat.

Higher rates for EYE funding.

The pay is definitely a factor in finding the right people to work in childcare. Most of my staff do the job because they enjoy it but could earn more doing a cleaning job!!!! Make people understand how important the work done in early years is to a child's development and future wellbeing.

Pay levels, backed up with sufficient funding from Government, so the business is not compromised into paying low pay & the profession is seen as low status, because it's low paid.

For a start the Government needs to recognise and acknowledge PVI settings as being just as professional and important as schools and school-based nurseries!

Formal career progression path to encourage staff to gain academic qualifications, increase in funding to offer appropriate pay scale to graduate managers.

Better funding and acknowledgement from the Government and MP's.

More accessible training for all staff to enhance their professional development.

Pay needs to equal dedication, as at the moment that isn't what is happening, because staff aren't paid for what they do.

More funding from the Government so staff can be paid a higher rate for what they do.

More money - more money - the careers of people in our society are 'valued' based on income. Stop calling it a vocation and pay us for non-contact time.

We are trained to deliver good quality childcare, act on learning difficulties by reporting and enlisting other professionals, sit in child protection conferences etc, yet there is no recognition in our pay scale in comparison with schoolteachers etc.

An increase in 3 & 4 year old funding, allowing us to pay staff realistically for the level of dedication and professionalism they provide on a day to day basis for the children of our future.

Having the funding to be able to pay qualified staff more than minimum wage would be a start.

Better recognition and pay by the Government. More respect and regard for the PVI sector.

More funding for settings. Bringing back grants for employers to cover graduate pay. Opportunities for funding for higher training.

Information sharing with school's health visitors' and social workers, so we can be treated equally and our opinions and knowledge of each child valued.

I think that an EYT qualification should be seen on a par with QTS status, otherwise people aren't motivated to do it. Also, new managers, like myself, should be able to get clear direction as to how to progress in their profession.

The Government and other education professionals need to recognise the importance of our role in scaffolding children's learning and development and building foundations for future learning. Pay does not recognise the important professional role we play, and the sector is massively underfunded. Staff with high levels of education in this profession are paid less than some other sectors, i.e. Retail or cleaning.

Standard pay scales which must be reflected in the funding provided to settings to cover cost.

Better funding rates so we could pay what staff deserve, recognition from the Government etc of the vital role childcare professionals have, the public having a better understanding - it's not 'just playing with children', removal of the word 'free' from funded education - this devalues our profession.

Joint training of senior nursery staff with EYP status to train with reception teachers. To have nursery managers on training with foundation stage co-ordinations in schools. Those in charge of settings or who have a relevant degree/EYP/EYT status to be paid directly by the Government on par with school staff.

Pay, progression, educational opportunities, acknowledgment from public and Government.

Pay, progression, education opportunities, public and Governmental acknowledgment.

Early Years practitioners are not always valued by other educational settings as being important - educating these professionals is needed. Pay - as a teacher with QTS my pay is very poor compared to a teacher of reception children or working in nurseries on school sites. Other colleagues find it difficult to make a living in early years and supplement their wages by working elsewhere e.g. Babysitting.

I don't feel that the early years of a child's life are recognised as being as important as they are. People still view Early Years Practitioners as glorified babysitters. There needs to be more done to show parents etc how important these years are. Nurseries and providers not being recognised as educational establishments by different groups does not help. Pay levels in the Early Years do not help either. How can it be acceptable that a manager of a setting responsible for 60, 70, 80 + children can only demand a salary equivalent or less than an NQT?

More accessible, high quality training; Higher salaries; More male practitioners; Less Government involvement (trust our profession).

More funding is needed from Government to be able to pay wages worthy of professional workers.

Education to families about the importance of EY education for children.

I have found that my opinion is disregarded, even just the next step up from Early Years setting, with Early years practitioners in a school! I feel we are not recognised as professionals at all - perhaps as the Government is willing to fund us so little, we are paid peanuts, we are regarded as monkeys.... Therefore, Government funding needs to increase so all staff can earn a living wage for doing the job they have trained so hard for.

I feel early years workers are looked down at by teachers etc. We believe our role is just as important and we have the children longer in our care, than a teacher in a school.

An appropriate level of Government funding so practitioners can be paid well, low pay lowers the importance of our work in the eyes of the public and parents and doesn't attract the right candidates for this profession.

Better pay and higher standards for the qualifications - it seems the quality of new recruits entering the workforce and the relevant qualifications are not as high. We are dumbing ourselves down by offering childcare course to young people as an 'easy' option to keep them in education/training instead of seeking highly motivated individuals who want to do the job.

Funding for PVI settings that matches the funding received by maintained settings. Funding rates that allow PVI settings to pay practitioners a professional wage that matches their qualifications and experience.

Recognition by the Government, of the vital role we play in the lives of young children. When staff who nurture and educate young children receive a lower wage (due to the shortfall in funding) than those stacking shelves in a supermarket, they feel undervalued and thought of as working in a profession that is viewed as low ranking and unimportant. The rewards of working with young children are many, but until this is matched with fairer funding, we will continue to lose qualified staff to other areas of employment

The lack of money paid for funding fees by Government aren't enough for us to pay wages that reflect the work we do. The amount of paperwork we are expected to provide for each child to show learning and development, especially for SEND children, is not acknowledged or appreciated.

Paying a fair rate to staff, at the moment we are on hourly rates (NLW) and can barely afford to pay them due to low levels of Gov funding on the FEE (30 hrs) scheme. We need to be able to offer staff a salary commensurate with the responsibility of the job I think.

Correct level of funding for wages, training and time to implement SEND support

That the Government recognise that this is a profession and the responsibility to pay goes with it. We are looking after the most cherished little ones in a parent's world and that is a huge responsibility. People do not realise what early years professionals do and the work our jobs entail. As a manager/owner my job is 7 days a week from wages to referrals and managing staff as well as children.

Recognition of the importance of early education through Government funding.

We should receive more funding from the Government to cover the cost of staff wages and bills. I have to pay minimum wage.

An acceptable pay level and our sector will never be considered as a profession until parents completely understand what we actually do.

Same T&C's as a QTS in school - value of Early Years.

If we were able to pay more. If we received more funding to cover actual running costs. It's not free childcare but subsidised.

Funding so that staff can get a decent wage for the role they do.

More funding for children to help increase wages and training.

An increase in funding to be able to pay more to staff and a change of status, to all be seen as teachers of early education and not practitioners.

Being paid a wage similar to a teacher- funded by central government.

If funding didn't keep getting cut, providers would be able to provide higher wages.

Funding from the Government for early years needs to be the same for providers as for schools.

A coherent approach to training and qualifications that is realistic to be approachable by all. You don't need to be a graduate to work in early years, but there is little recognition that EYPS need to be compassionate, as well as qualified.

Formal recognition at national and Government level that working in early years education and childcare is a massively important role as the future generation of leaders are currently being nurtured and let's face it, we do not want another bunch like we have now. The early years workforce holds huge responsibility every day and are unrecognised and paid ridiculously low wages. Appropriate sustainable funding and support needs to be introduced for the role to begin to gain the status it deserves.

Better pay in line with not perhaps teachers but certainly teaching assistants.

Firstly - getting rid of the awful term 'Practitioner'. It simply reinforces the fact that the sector workers are not recognised as anything remotely professional and a 'made-up' title does nothing to hide this. Secondly, ditch EYP/EYT qualifications - they are worthless until such time as they are accorded the same status as QTS. In my experience staff with EYP status are really not adding anything extra, compared to my level 4 Montessori trained staff. I recently applied to do an EYT course and the lack of professionalism in the application process reinforced my views that it is truly a 'mickey mouse' qualification, with some training providers only doing it as a cash grab. Thirdly, properly and equally funding the sector, removing the unequal funding rates from one local authority to another. In calculating funding adequately, non-contact time should be factored in. Requiring all teachers to be degree or Level 6 qualified would bring us into line with Scandinavian countries where early years teachers are treated no differently to teachers of older children. Teachers could be supported by support staff with L2/3/4 qualifications. The real problem is funding - paying QTS a lot more than EYP (and not accepting EYP to teach Reception) means the Early Years sector will continue as a Cinderella career option compared with primary school teaching.

To be able to pay our workforce more, so that their work is appreciated as a schoolteacher's is.

The early years workforce needs more recognition for the jobs they do - we have to achieve qualifications, take on safeguarding and paediatric first aid as a minimum, and are involved in the education of young minds at a crucial time in their life. The fact that I am unable to employ a cleaner because I will only pay minimum wage for the role, primarily because I refuse to pay the cleaner more than my level 2 staff.

Recognition from all and increase in funding and pay levels.

To use language to describe practitioners as professionals and to give the same benefits and pay scales as professionals.

Education begins from birth, not 5 when the child starts school. The Government needs to listen to those working at ground level, not just managers of big chains of nurseries and academics.

What could be more important than supporting very young children and families with young children, in order to make a difference to their life prospects? Professionals in this sector who have the knowledge, skills, understanding, sensitivity to make an impact are vital. It would help if this sector was just not viewed as "childcare" but promoted as the Key to a positive change in our society and not just the second cousin to primary, secondary and further education.

Pay us properly for the EYE rather than portraying us as babysitters while glorifying schools.

The career rewards are poor as wages across the levels are poor, demotivating staff. Anyone working in the childcare sector does not do it for money just dedication.

Yes, I would raise the pay.

Funding levels that enable staff to be paid according to Qualifications and experience. Our manager with Degree and EYPS is paid less than TA in a school, yet we have 26 children registered with us. Increase Government funding basic hourly rate by 50p. Get rid of Category Preschool Playgroup. Have one category of Early Years settings (subcategory domestic/non-domestic/school), Early Years settings to have the option to provide full EYFS (i.e. to include reception year) if EY setting has an Early Years Degree holder. Degree holders with EY Degrees to be accepted as a teacher for EYFS Reception age in school, in state schools as well as independent. I.e. Interchangeable. Preschool has provided SEND,

summer borns and Home-schooled with an additional year very successfully. Social Workers as part of their degree to receive training on other Children's Services i.e. EY settings are not playgroups/parent toddler groups and staff have a high level of expertise on EY learning and development that is not appreciated. Research needed on the involvement of EY settings in CP/CIN cases and attitude of SW's. Schools do not treat EY Settings as equals because of pay differential.

More Government funding, so that highly skilled and motivated staff can be paid at an equivalent professional rate. This would help to improve the general public perception of the job.

Without the pay reflecting it, it's honestly pointless, we are paid the same if not less than people working in Tesco's, and of course people will presume that's how important we are too.

That the Government understand that the first 5 years of a child's life is the most important for them to begin learning and this should be recognised in wages and the profession.

Early years careers should not be sold as an easy option in schools and the sector should be properly funded. Maybe the Government should make early years education statutory and then provide adequate funding to keep our highly trained staff leaving.

If the Government gave the early years professionals the same status as qualified teachers and provided the funding to give appropriate wages.

The Government show their view of children and the professionals who work with them in the low hourly rate paid for funded hours. An increase in funding to enable staff to be paid a professional salary would increase status and morale.

To give us the ability to do speech referrals and direct referrals into health, without the need to see a Health Visitor or GP. GPs often know very little about early years development and we know so much more, so why not let us raise the concerns we have (with permission) directly to the appropriate area. For our opinions to be validated by using the EHCP planning. For EY's to be better funded so that we could pay staff a better salary, but are just over minimum wage.

For the work we do to be recognised and valued by the teaching profession and by Government so that wages can be comparable to that of teachers. Currently there is insufficient funding to pay staff a decent wage and therefore little incentive for them to want to undertake higher level qualifications. Similarly, to the nursing profession, people who work in childcare do so because they believe they make a difference, not for the pay.

Government recognition, increased funding to support qualifications and pay.

Qualifications level 6 and above.

I think that until we are given enough funding to pay staff a professional wage then it will always be hard to attract the calibre of staff that we need in early years.

If early years professionals were paid more, holding a degree in any other sector would come with a much higher income. Govt. Funding for 2 and 3/4 year funding is low and has been cut again this year. This together with the Govt and parents view on free childcare, says it is not important, or worth much. The reality is, it is not free, and settings are having to pick up more and more of the cost, which is reflected in low wages and settings closing. Which is bad for our children and the nation's future.

The ability to offer competitive salaries and conditions which are above the living wage. Better funding and support for nurseries to establish a professional workplace. Training, pay, improved conditions all cost money and the sector is currently chronically underfunded. Many nurseries are in danger of closing, many others are having to cut training in order to keep afloat.

Being recognised on same level as teachers. Better funding and pay to retain good qualified staff.

For the word FREE to not be used when talking about funded hours.

Recognition by Government and other agencies that early years staff are professionals with high level qualifications and/or experience.

Better recognition for the job early years staff do, we are not just a baby-sitting service! Pay rates that reflect the training and experiences of staff especially at management level. A manager with years of experience and a level 6 qualification running a setting is doing a similar role to a headteacher in

school often without the support staff that a headteacher has for the less that a newly qualified teacher gets.

Realistic salaries. Realistic funding. Schools and colleges need to promote early education as a worthwhile profession, not just an easy option for those with low GCSE grades alongside hairdressing and beauty courses. Ensure ALL courses are full and relevant, as many offered at the moment are not!

Government paid more for the education grant, bringing fully trained professional practitioners pay in line with their job role and responsibilities. Presently pay is well below many unacademic job roles. Pay does not represent the hours worked or the role of the profession. Many early years managers attend meetings in their own time with other professionals who are paid considerably more, yet these other professionals can take weeks to provide reports and do not regularly attend important meetings. We do not have any money to pay for training and some training is essential such as safeguarding and first aid which costs the provider a considerable amount of money.

Government support and opinions changing to view early years workers as relevant and important in the education of children. Accepting our professional opinions on early years matters and not expecting settings to "make do" with the changes they enforce with the little funding provided.

Salaries that go towards reflecting amount of study, but this can only happen with increased costs for childcare, so probably down to Government

Sufficient funding from Government to be able to pay wages that reflect the responsibility and workload early years practitioners have.

Increase in funding for grant pupils.

Recognition from Government. EYT having same status as QTS, better funding so better pay.

Having a professional term e.g. Educator used by the Government and all those connected with childcare. A wider understanding of what the role involves - it's not just playing with children. Its Safeguarding, dealing with outside agencies, being responsible for the learning and development of all children in the setting.

The media often show us as 'people who play with children'. Secondary school children are often told 'you're not very academic, have you considered childcare'. A sensible wage to show the professional status.

Increased funding - to facilitate more 'on the job training' which should be mandatory for every practitioner and also more support staff (e.g. Admin / special needs resources management / behaviour specialists) to support childcare practitioners, so they give all their time to the children. And lastly a core group of specialists in fields such as music, dance, art, engineering, gardening, STEM etc, within each Local Authority to provide inspiration for practitioners and children.

Acceptable levels of pay and professional status recognition.

Increase in pay/funding and training structure would motivate people to take the role as a serious career. This would lead to a change in views from other groups such as parents.

Proper funding and minimum training standards.

More male practitioners. Which will only happen if salaries are reflective of the job we do. As a professional and a manager, I earn considerably less than someone who has managed a shop for 15 years yet has no qualifications and less responsibility. Men cannot afford to work in childcare because they are still mainly the chief wage earner.

Money... to make it worth training for.

Fund nurseries properly so that staff can be paid the wages they deserve.

Better pay to make the practitioners feel valued. This cannot be done with the funding issues.

Wages are not of a professional standard there is not the money.

Recognition by the Government of the importance of Early Years and the impact a high-quality setting/trained staff has on child outcomes. Recognition of ourselves as parity with QTS.

When I qualified as an EYP the LEA initially gave me an additional "bursary" to support my salary. That was taken away after a couple of years. I feel I am not recognised by the LEA or Govt for having this qualification anymore and financially it is pointless. Elsewhere I would be rewarded by a company

financially for having a higher qualification. The funding we receive currently does not cover all of our staff salaries and other outgoings and some months if our numbers are low, I have gone without a salary. I had to sell my house as I could not afford the mortgage where I lived, and we did not have enough children to enable me to pay myself a higher salary to cover my living expenses. The Govt should recognise the hard work that early years professionals undertake and reward them financially by increasing the funding and paying a subsidy to those who are qualified to a high level just as qualified teachers are rewarded and recognised as professional educators. We have to follow the same rules as schools re. the EYFS and are monitored/inspected by OFSTED just as the schools are, yet we receive a paltry rate of £4.23 per hour for each child which is not enough to cover my nursery's outgoings. It is very embarrassing telling my staff and applicants that I cannot afford to pay them a better rate of pay because we need a certain amount of children to break even and if our numbers drop the nursery would be unsustainable and then we would have to close. The only way to increase the status of early years professionals is for the Government to recognise what we do and increase funding, give additional supplements to EYPS/EYTS and publicly raise awareness of how important we are. At the moment, people can earn more stacking shelves than working in early years and they don't have half as much paperwork to do, either. Inspections should be more flexible and informal and there should be an understanding that "evidence" is not only proven by paperwork - the inspectors should look at the children, what are they doing, what are they learning, what do parents think of the setting, are the children happy and engaged? That is better "evidence" as to whether practitioners are doing a good job or not and if settings receive Outstanding maybe the LEA or Government should give these settings a financial "bonus" for their achievements and good work.

Need to be able to offer higher salaries i.e. Similar to teachers to attract better qualified staff! If you can only afford to pay the minimum wage you are not going to attract well qualified staff.

Funded early education grant not sold as 'FREE'. Government listening to the early years specialists.

Affordable training.

We don't need more graduates in early years. Just better training for all staff and more money. With the minimum wage going up nurseries cannot cope as we have had no increase in the hourly rate its long overdue.

Being valued and better pay.

Until sensible wages are offered as with other sectors of the educational sector, the Government's view of baby-sitter wages only impounds the low value of a profession that paths the rest of a child's life.

Clear career pathways with defined pay progression. National pay levels in line with teachers to encourage professional motivation and retain the best professionals and keep those with QTS in early years.

Provide all staff with the opportunity to access degree status and pay them in line with teachers.

Schools receive so much more financial support for one-to-one children, we get a fraction, if any, and our staff just have to cope without extra funding for staff. Last year we have 4 children with autism, hardly any financial support was received, yet schools get up to £7000 a year and don't give the support we do.

Being able to offer competitive salaries terms and conditions and career progression.

Considering the qualifications required we are not really recognised as professional by the Government.

Funding rates to rise in line with inflation.

Salaries need to increase for early years practitioners.

Pay should be on a scale just the same as schools if it is to be a respected and valued professions, otherwise we are simply running play groups!

Better pay and more funding in the sector.

Financial support from the Government - improved funding will improve wages - childcare workers must be the most poorly paid 'professionals'. If I ever lose staff, it is always because of the wages they are paid NOT the extremely hard job they do every day.

Decent pay.

The lack of funding shows how our Government views us as workers. They have no respect for the hard work we do.

Better wages!!!!

Improved pay and equal status with school nurseries/nursery teachers.

Pay scale to be in line with Teachers pay in schools. Amount for Funded childcare to be substantially increased to give providers the opportunity to send practitioners on training.

I feel if the overall approach is raised on the professional job that is done then it may be seen as a profession rather than just a job. I do feel this has changed and the profile has been raised of a childcare worker, but it does still need to be raised higher.