



9TH ANNUAL BABY ROOM CONFERENCE

Debating Quality and Its Significance

Tuesday 01 May 2018

10am - 3.30pm | Canterbury Campus

PROGRAMME



Research Centre for
Children, Families and Communities



Canterbury
Christ Church
University



Research Centre for
Children, Families and Communities

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Dear Colleague,

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to our 9th Annual Baby Room Conference: Debating Quality and Its Significance.

When Professor Kathy Goouch and I established the Baby Room conference in 2010, we intended to provide a research-informed day for networking and professional learning, which focused on education and care for babies from birth to two years of age. That overarching aim is still central to our aspirations for the conference.

Every year since 2010, the day has offered an opportunity to hear from respected researchers and practitioners in the field of education and care for babies and children from birth to two, which is beginning to gain greater prominence internationally. As the numbers of babies in out-of-home education and care services increase around the world, discussion often turns to the quality of provision: what are the conditions that enable there to be good quality provision and practice, who decides what is 'good' and what happens when quality is poor? These are just some of the myriad questions about what quality is and is for. In 2011, one of today's conference speakers, Professor Helen Penn wrote that, *'Quality might best be viewed as a search for improvement, a search to provide the best we can for the for the young children who are being educated and cared for by other people than their parents, but it is a search where the topics, the strategies and the methodologies still require much elaboration'*¹ Since quality is not a static concept, this quotation feels equally relevant in 2018.

The decision to focus this year's conference on concepts and issues of quality was not taken lightly - it is a vast and difficult topic - but today's presentations are designed to play around with the idea of elaboration and to prompt discussions. There is no suggestion that we will all



go home with easy solutions or simple definitions; but there is a hope that we take away with us some new insights, questions, provocations and debates that will extend the process of elaboration beyond the confines of the conference to the diverse professional settings and relationships with colleagues, babies and their families.

Each year we have been enthused and encouraged by the commitment of our delegates to improving provision and practice: to questioning and deepening our understanding of the context for babies' ECEC; the roles that adults and environments (found and created) might play in each baby's or young child's living and learning; and babies' active contributions to emergent pedagogies. You may be new to our conference or perhaps you are a repeat attendee; you might be local or maybe you've travelled many miles to be with us today. Without you, there would be no conference and we are delighted you have joined us. Research from the OECD's TALIS survey (2013) has indicated that professional learning can be influential when connections are made between knowledge and understanding - which emerges from events such as conferences - and subsequent action. So today, we ask you to consider critically the relevance of our speakers' presentations for your own context and practice and ask questions; talk with other delegates to challenge or extend that understanding; and reflect upon what you might do with your insights. To this end, you will find a triplicate form in your conference pack, which asks, 'Are you feeling inspired?' We hope you will be inspired and will tell us about three things you will take away from today's event and, more importantly, that you will use this as a prompt for subsequent explorations, discussions and actions.

Professor Sacha Powell

*Director, Research Centre for Children, Families and Communities
Canterbury Christ Church University*

¹Penn, H. (2011). *Quality in Early Childhood Services. An International Perspective*. Maidenhead: Open University Press, p.6

PROGRAMME

09.30 to 10.00	Registration and refreshments	Old Sessions House Room Og12
10.00 to 10.15	Welcome by the Dean of Education, <i>Dr John Moss</i>	Old Sessions House
10.15 to 11.00	Dr Mihaela Ionescu	
11.00 to 11.15	Q&A facilitated by Dr Catherine Meehan	
11.15 to 12.15	Dr Peter Elfer; Sonia Berry; Kath Shields; Dr Amanda Carr	
12.15 to 13.15	Lunch and time to network and browse exhibitor (<i>CCCU Bookshop</i>)	Old Sessions House Room Og12
13.15 to 14.00	Professor Helen Penn	Old Sessions House
14.00 to 14.15	Q&A facilitated by Dr Catherine Meehan	
14.15 to 15.00	Professor Sacha Powell	
15.00 to 15.15	Q&A facilitated by Dr Catherine Meehan	
15.15 to 15.30	Closing remarks by Professor Emerita Kathy Gouch	

CONFERENCE EXHIBITOR

Canterbury Christ Church University Bookshop
<https://bookshop.canterbury.ac.uk>

SPEAKERS

Dr Mihaela Ionescu

Dr. Mihaela Ionescu is the Program Director in ISSA (the International Step by Step Association) a membership association that connects professionals and organizations working in the field of early childhood development (www.issa.nl). She is an early childhood education expert, holding a BA in Education Sciences, a Master Degree in Management and School Administration and a doctorate in Education Sciences.



She has been working for the last 30 years in many capacities in the education field: primary school teacher; researcher; education policy developer – curricula for preschool education, early childhood national strategies, early childhood standards; trainer and manager of programs aiming to improve the quality of early childhood education and care services.

As the ISSA Program Director she is deeply involved in strategic program development and in developing and implementing programs aimed at providing equitable and high quality early childhood services in countries from ISSA regions (Europe and Central Asia), by strengthening and supporting ISSA members' capacity to work with professionals, parents, administrators and policy makers. She has coordinated the development of many resources in ISSA, most of them focused on process quality and professionalism in early childhood services. Over the years she has worked as international consultant for UNICEF and World Bank projects in countries of the CEE/CIS region, supporting governments to develop and implement quality standards for early childhood services and in-service training programs.

Dr Peter Elfer

Peter Elfer is Principal Lecturer in Early Childhood Studies: School of Education; University of Roehampton. He is also a Trustee of the Froebel Trust and a Vice President of Early Education. His research has focussed on babies, under threes and the adults who work with them in nursery, thinking about questions like the following:



What is it like to look after another person's baby or toddler? What does the work involve? How 'hard' or 'easy' is it? What sort of person is able to do this work really well? And what sort of support do practitioners need if they are going to be able to do a good job?

Kath Shields

Kath Shields is Childcare Manager for Durham County Council and Manager of Selby Cottage Childcare Centre where she has worked for the past 25 years. The Centre's ethos focusses on wellbeing for all and has been rated Outstanding by Ofsted since 2008.



Sonia Berry

Sonia Berry is an enthusiastic Early Years Education Advisor for Durham Local Authority. Sonia has worked in the early year's sector for over 25 years within a range of different early years' settings and positions.

Sonia works collaboratively with settings and schools to support the development of good practice in the early years. She has a sound working knowledge of child development and draws on this to support and challenge the thinking of the practitioners she supports.

Sonia's passion lies within the very early years, supporting babies and those practitioners who support them within nurseries. Most recently, Sonia has supported a group of baby room practitioners to develop a project specifically aimed at raising the profile of these specialised professionals which has led to their role and the work they do being celebrated, developed and upheld.



Amanda Carr

Amanda Carr is a developmental psychologist with an interest in children's social-cognitive development. She is interested in how children think and learn in the course of interaction with others, particularly with parents during early home-learning interactions. She also conducts a programme of work examining the impact of new technology on child development. Amanda is Director of Psychology at Canterbury Christ Church University and is also a mother of two (Milo, 6 years and Seren, 18 months).



Professor Helen Penn

Helen is Emeritus Professor of Early Childhood at the University of East London, and currently Visiting Professor at Thomas Coram Research Unit, Institute of Education, UCL. Helen Penn has been researching private for profit childcare in the UK, Europe and globally for many years. Her book, co-edited with Eva Lloyd *Childcare Markets: Can They Deliver an Equitable Service?* was published by the Policy Press in 2012. She is currently working on two European projects, exploring the relationships between staffing, accessibility and affordability in the private childcare sector. Her new book, a work memoir entitled *Be Realistic: Demand the Impossible*: will be published by Routledge in August.



Professor Emerita Kathy Goouch

Kathy Goouch has been a teacher and researcher for more than forty years. Throughout this time she has engaged in teaching, researching and writing about babies, young children and the people who care for them and help them to learn. Her research and publications are particularly focused on early literacy, communications and interactions, most recently between babies in day care settings and their professional carers. Kathy's recent involvement with funded research and development projects has focused on the professional learning of practitioners as they talk and sing with babies. She has co-directed The Baby Room research projects with Sacha since 2009.





1. To connect to the University's Guest WiFi, select 'WiFi Guest' on your mobile device.
2. Your device should connect automatically, however you will need to **register with The Cloud** in order to use the service.
3. When you attempt to access a web page for the first time, you should be redirected to a welcome page.
4. Click 'Continue' to either register, or login.
5. If this is your first time using WiFi Guest on The Cloud, click 'Create Account'.
6. Fill out the registration page with the required information.
7. After completing the form, you will be asked to name your device so you can manage your connections later.
8. Once you have provided a name for your device, your registration will be complete. You can now access free WiFi on your device.
9. **Returning users**
Once you have followed these steps, your device will be registered with The Cloud. When you return to use WiFi Guest, the system will recognise your device, and you will not need to login again. Simply click 'Go' and you're online.



Research Centre for
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If you would like more information on any of our research projects, or would like to contribute to future projects, please contact us :

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