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Early Years Professional Status: A Narrative Study of Leadership and Contradictory Professionalism

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Abstract

In 2006 The Children's Workforce Development Council introduced the Early Years Professional (EYP) as a new graduate level leader of practice and change agent. The EYP was tasked with improving quality in early childhood education and care (ECEC) in England, particularly in the private voluntary and independent (PVI) sector. Professional status was a new phenomenon in this sector and a narrative approach was taken in this study to explore, the experiences and perspectives of four experienced practitioners as they undertook a programme of training and education to become EYPs. Narrative in this study has informed the collection, interpretation and presentation of the data. The first layer of analysis presents the data as monologues which privilege the voices of the participants before the data is deconstructed for two subsequent layers of analysis.

The second layer of analysis draws on the work of Bourdieu to explain how feminine stereotypes of care have shaped the participants' experiences of professionalisation. This thesis argues that professionalisation does not entirely overcome primary conditioning but can increase access to cultural and economic capital and help the workforce resist exploitation. The data are considered in relation to contemporary debates, particularly those concerning performativity and the professional mandate. It is argued that performativity can threaten practice that is built on an ethic of care, leading to ontological insecurity. This thesis posits that the ontological insecurity, associated with EYPS, tends to be transitory and is outweighed by the value, status and access to resources that being a professional brings to the participants. It also argues that the professional mandate is found to be, at best, fragile and, at worst, rejected by significant stakeholders, thus threatening professionalisation of the sector.

The final layer of analysis draws on the multiframe model of Bolman and Deal which offers insight into how organisational structures and practices shape participants' experiences of becoming an EYP and their ability to lead practice, and bring about change. The findings suggest that the role of the professional in ECEC challenges traditional hierarchical organisational structures and the professional is often ill prepared for leadership. Drawing on this multiframe analysis the study synthesises an adapted Change Curve Model with the multiframe model to generate an integrated model of leadership which the practice leader can draw upon to identify the stages of change, and the actions which can be employed at each stage. This model extends knowledge of leadership in ECEC and underpins practice leadership in a sector which is increasingly framed by the raising standards policy context and increased accountability.

Acknowledgements

List of Abbreviations

BERA British Educational Research Association

CWDC Children's Workforce Development Council

DfE Department for Education

DFEE Department for Education and Employment

DfES Department for Education and Skills

ECEC Early Childhood Education and Care

ELEYS Effective Leadership in the Early Years Sector

EPPE Effective Provision of Pre-School Education

EYE Early Years Educator

EYFS Early Years Foundation Stage

EYP Early Years Professional

EYPS Early Years Professional Status

EYT Early Years Teacher

EYTS Early Years Teacher Status

Fd Foundation Degree

FdF Foundation Degree Forward

FE Further Education

HE Higher Education

NCTL National College of Teaching and Leadership

NDNA National Day Nurseries Association

NNEB Nursery Nurse Examination Board

NVQ National Vocational Qualification

OECD Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

OfSTED Office for Standards in Education

PACEY Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years

PVI Private Voluntary and Independent

SEF Self Evaluation Form

TA Teaching Agency

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This chapter begins by setting out the purpose for the study and then explains the role of the Early Years Professional (EYP) and how the training programmes for Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) were delivered. The chapter then moves on to introduce my positionality and rationale for the study. It then presents an overview of early childhood education and care (ECEC) in England and highlights key policy developments and contemporary debates on professionalisation in ECEC. The chapter then sets out the aim and objectives of the study and provides a brief overview of the methodological approach taken to address the aim and objectives. Finally, this chapter explains the significance of the study and its implications for future practice and theory.

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences and perspectives of practitioners who worked in ECEC as they undertook a programme of study to become an EYP. In 2006 the New Labour Government introduced EYPS as a way to raise quality in ECEC particularly in the private voluntary and independent (PVI) sector. The rationale for the introduction of EYPS provides an essential context for understanding the experiences and perspectives of the participants in this study as they worked towards EYPS. Until the mid 1990s, ECEC was generally considered to be a private matter for families and Pugh (2010) argues that, until this time, there was a lack of political conviction, at government level, that children mattered. As a result, government funding for early childhood services was inconsistent and provision of ECEC, in England, was fragmented (Selbie et al. 2015). Tomlinson (2013) posits that, following years of debates about the most effective method of improving long term educational, social and economic outcomes for children, the New Labour Government initiated a strategy of early education as the most cost effective approach. The government also held that a key way of improving outcomes for children was lifting children out of poverty through supporting mothers into work. Therefore, in its *National Childcare Strategy* (NCS) (DfEE 1998), the New Labour Government promised accessible, affordable and high quality childcare. Reardon (2013) points out that, at this time, quality in the ECEC sector was variable and the workforce in the private, voluntary and independent (PVI) sector had low levels of qualification, i.e only 60% of the workforce was qualified to level 3, and of this group only 12% was qualified to level 4 or above, compared to 80% in the school sector (DfES 2006). By 2004, research into The Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) (DfES 2003) had shown that there was a significant relationship between the quality of a pre-school centre and improved child outcomes, and that there was a positive relationship between the qualifications of staff and ratings of quality.

Children made more progress where the curriculum leader was qualified at graduate level (DfES 2003). The results of this study, commissioned by the earlier Conservative Government, led the New Labour Government to focus on raising qualification levels, particularly, in the PVI sector and this led to the introduction of EYPS at level 6. In order to meet the NCS commitment to raise quality across the sector, the government set targets to have an EYP in every children's centre by 2010 and every other PVI setting by 2015. EYPS was designed to establish the standard,

> *For the professional skills, understanding and practice experience to be required of someone taking a coordinating role and ..... to articulate a clear ambition for career progression routes which enables the sector to grow its own professionals* (DfES 2006 p.30).

The New Labour Government had an ambitious vision to professionalise the ECEC workforce working in the PVI sector in less than ten years. Although there was considerable debate about professionalism and professionalisation in ECEC during the subsequent period, as expressed by Oberheumer (2005), Moss (2006b) and Osgood (2009), the effect of professionalisation on the PVI workforce in England has not been explored. Professionalisation in ECEC beyond the maintained sector was a new phenomenon in England and , therefore, it was, when first introduced and still is under-researched. This study, therefore, contributes significant new knowledge and understanding of the area. Importantly, it places individual practitioners, who, Osgood (2009) argues, have been silenced, at the heart of the research to extend our understanding of the effects of professionalisation on the workforce and their practice.

1.2 The Early Years Professional (EYP)

The Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) was set up in 2005 as a quasi autonomous non- governmental organisation (QUANGO) by the New Labour Government, initially to support the implementation of *Every Child Matters* (Tomlinson 2013). In 2006, CWDC launched EYPS, a new professional status aimed primarily at the ECEC workforce in the PVI sector. CWDC (2006) set out its aim that the EYP would be a '*change agent'* (p.4), tasked with improving and leading practice in settings for the full age range of children from birth to the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which was age 5. CWDC set the expectation that candidates would demonstrate that their knowledge of the EYFS would inform their practice and, '*their leadership of others'* (CWDC 2010 p.99). CWDC viewed leadership as linked to improvements in quality and outcomes for children, but said little to define the leadership role beyond stating, '*they exercise leadership making a positive difference to children's wellbeing, learning and development'* (CWDC 2010 p.17). The EYP was

expected to be a '*catalyst for innovation and change*' (CWDC 2010 p.17), bringing about rapid and dramatic change for children and their families (Tomlinson 2013).

In 2009, CWDC commissioned a three year study to investigate if EYPS was achieving its aims as set out in the previous paragraph. In this study, Hadfield et al. (2012) explored how EYPs were improving and sustaining practice quality through pedagogical processes and wider leadership. The study highlights that EYPS had had a positive impact on workforce development. Participants in the study felt more confident about taking on a leadership role in their settings after achieving EYPS, and felt that gaining the status had improved their ability to carry out improvements in the setting. However, Hadfield et al. (2012) also identify a lack of clarity about the leadership role in the EYPS standards and variation in practice from setting to setting. Whalley (2012) suggests that, as the role of the EYP developed, EYPs themselves were adding to our understanding of leadership. This thesis extends knowledge and understanding of leadership in ECEC by exploring the role of the EYP as a leader and change agent ten years after the introduction of the programme.

1.3 Delivery of EYPS pathways

The New Labour Government announced that CWDC would take the lead on the development of EYPS, as one of its first priorities, and they introduced the first phase of EYPS training in 2006, to commence in January 2007. CWDC set out 39 standards (appendix 1), forming the basis of the assessment for EYPS, and describing what EYPs needed to know, understand and be able to do in practice with children from birth to the end of the EYFS (Reardon 2013). The first candidates were assessed through written accounts, interviews and witness testimonies, while in 2009 an observation of practice was introduced into the assessment process. Initially there were four main pathways to achieving EYPS with a common assessment process for existing practitioners and new graduates. The validation pathway allowed very experienced graduate practitioners to gather and document evidence, over a four month period, to demonstrate their competence against the standards. The short pathway lasted six months and was also intended for graduate practitioners, but those needing some additional training to demonstrate competence against the standards. The long pathway offered a top up from a foundation degree to an ordinary degree, and was also for practitioners who undertook it over a twelve month period. Finally, the full pathway was an intensive one year pathway for graduates with limited or no experience of the sector. In 2011, Sarah Teather, the Minister of State for Children and Families, launched a review of EYPS to be carried out by CWDC. Subsequently, the review was taken over by the Teaching Agency (TA) as the Coalition Government closed CWDC alongside the majority of quangos. The review of EYPS led to its re-launch

in 2012, with responsibility for EYPS transferred to the TA. The original 39 standards became the '8' TA National Standards for EYPS (appendix 2) and the four pathways became the Graduate Practitioner Pathway (GPP, 6 months), Undergraduate Practitioner Pathway (UPP, 12 months), Graduate Entry Pathway (GEP, 12 months) and Undergraduate Entry Pathway (UEP, 24 months) (Reardon 2013). The participants in this study, who were already members of the ECEC workforce, enrolled in September 2012 on the UPP and were assessed using the '8' TA National EYPS Standards.

1.4 My positionality and rationale for this study

This section explains my personal interest and experiences which have the potential to influence the research process but my positionality is discussed further in chapter 4. My interest in this field arose out of professional experience, including my role as a deputy leader in a pre-school (1995-2000) and my current university role which began in 2004. I am employed at a university in the North of England and I am currently the Course Leader for the BA (Hons) Early Years. However, I was initially employed to design and deliver the part time Foundation degree in Early Years, a degree for early years practitioners working in the PVI and school sectors. In England 'early years' usually refers to the lives of children from birth to age five and is shaped by the interaction of demographic trends, economic conditions, prevailing ideology, historical factors and educational theories (Jackson and Fawcett 2009). As 'early years' may not be a term which is well understood beyond the English context, I have adopted, in this thesis, terminology used by the Organisation for Economic Development (OECD), which has worked to establish an international understanding of quality provision for young children. The OECD has labelled policy and provision which relates to young children prior to school entry as ECEC (OECD 2012).

When I took up my first role at the university, foundation degrees were in their infancy and attracted additional funding from the government through a widening participation fund. The New Labour Government wanted to widen the participation of those with working class backgrounds into Higher Education (HE), not just for reasons of social justice but also out of economic necessity (Leitch 2006). Foundation degrees were introduced with the dual task of widening participation in HE and addressing skills shortages in specific sectors (FdF2007), with ECEC one such sector (Leitch 2006). The ECEC sector, as Campbell et al (2005) point out, was centrally placed to support economic prosperity as it allowed mothers to participate in the labour market and it was also a source of employment, particularly for women. The Foundation degree in Early Years enabled ECEC practitioners to study whilst they worked so that they were able to earn and learn at the same time. The learning outcomes of the course emphasised practice and becoming reflective practitioners, and

offered mostly mature women the opportunity to attend university. Many had their course fees paid by the Local Authority (LA) and received additional incentives such as laptops and bursaries. These students were identified at the time as non- traditional students as they tended to be older than traditional undergraduates, have lower entry qualifications and were likely to be from working class backgrounds (Longhurst 2007).

Having worked on the foundation degree with such non-traditional students, I was included as part of the university team which tendered to CWDC to deliver EYPS. The university was successfully awarded a contract to deliver the Long Pathway, Short Pathway and Full Pathway. After a short period of intense work to validate the programmes and recruit students, EYPS was launched in January 2007. I was the Course Leader for the Long Pathway and part of the strategic management team for EYPS. The New Labour Government's agenda to improve social justice, and its ambition to end child poverty, allowed me to participate in the initiative to give access to HE to working class women, and indirectly improve ECEC. My close involvement with the development of the foundation degree and then EYPS triggered my keen interest in issues relating to professionalisation of the workforce, and this interest served as an impetus for this study. Furthermore, during this time my personal, professional and political convictions were in synchrony and this was immensely satisfying, providing a springboard for my plans to undertake research in this area.

1.5 An overview of Early Childhood Education and Care in England

In order to understand the significance of EYPS it is necessary to explain how ECEC is organised in England. Therefore, this section provides an overview of the sector. The Department for Education (2014) describes ECEC settings as *'maintained schools; non-maintained schools; all providers on the Early Years Register; and all providers registered with an early year's childminder agency'* (p.4). Provision is offered in a diverse range of settings and the split system of privately owned, voluntary, independent (PVI) and maintained settings is often referred to as a mixed market or mixed economy of provision (Selbie et al. 2015). Nursery Education Funding (NEF) is available in England for fifteen hours a week for the most disadvantaged two year olds and all three and four year olds. Public funding for these places is available to nursery and primary schools in the maintained sector as well as the PVI sector (Pugh 2014). In 2013, one third of funded places were in the maintained sector (802,000 children) and two thirds in the PVI sector (1,209,000 children). Since 1997, there has been a substantial increase in for–profit provision, with over 60% of full day care settings now privately run, and this matters because the for-profit model is difficult to operate in the most disadvantaged areas (Pugh 2014).

There are significant consequences for the workforce in the mixed market model, with disadvantages for practitioners in the PVI sector. Practitioners in the PVI sector are responsible for delivering the same curriculum and are subject to the same regulatory body as those working in a maintained setting in the same area. However, those in the maintained setting are more likely to be qualified teachers, to be on a national pay scale, and they are more often represented by unions (Pugh 2014). The qualifications of practitioners in the PVI sector range from level 3 to degree level and they receive variable levels of pay (Selbie et al. 2015). One explanation for the difference in pay and conditions, identified by Selbie et al. (2015), is the longstanding separation between education and care in England, where the institutionalised care of young children has low status and low pay as it is perceived as an extension of maternal duties. Lewis (2003) suggests that the very term '*childcare'* (p.3) has a dispiriting and dutiful heaviness hanging over it.

Given these recognised disparities, the long term vision of New Labour's policy document *Every Child Matters* (DfES 2004) was that the separate professions associated with children's services, health, education, social care and legal services would be integrated. Lumsden (2010) describes the EYP as occupying a new professional space located at the intersection of health, education and social care. However, because EYPs are, as Roberts-Holmes (2014) suggests, discursively constructed in the PVI sector, they have not attracted the pay and conditions afforded to their colleagues in education. Separation between education and care is reinforced by the variation in funding arrangements between childcare and education. Early childhood education is a state entitlement for some two year olds and all three to four year olds, but the cost of additional childcare falls to parents, with some subsidy through the tax and benefits system (Selbie et al. 2015).

Selbie et al. (2015) also explains that the traditional separation between education and care is further perpetuated in current policy. This is because early childhood education is conceived as being about early intervention and child development and is associated, primarily, with children aged three and four in preschool. Childcare, however, meets the needs of working parents and is associated primarily with children under three. Some attempt has been made through policy to reduce the separation; for example, the EYFS brought together the curriculum documents and regulatory framework for ECEC in an attempt to bring about a more holistic approach to education and care (Selbie et al. 2015) and, in 2006, The Childcare Act placed the onus on LAs to only provide childcare places where the EYFS was offered. Pugh (2014) also acknowledges that there have been attempts to integrate care and education, and states that the task would be '*eased if a satisfactory term could be found to describe this educare provision'* (p.10). Within the European Union, a broad definition of ECEC is offered which attempts to provide consistency and clarity, and suggests equal

weighting be given to education and care. ECEC is defined as *'provision for children from birth through to primary education that falls within a national regulatory framework, i.e. it has to comply with a set of rules, minimum standards and/or undergo accreditation procedures'* (Eurydice 2014 p. 153). Despite attempts to integrate education and care, Pugh (2014) argues that amongst government agencies there is still a perceived distinction between childcare provided in the PVI sector and early education as provided in the maintained sector. Low levels of pay and conditions in the PVI sector simply reinforce the division between education and care, and might explain why the workforce is overwhelmingly female at 97% (DfE2014).

ECEC has been predominantly a female profession for over a century, in spite of a number of government campaigns and targets to reverse this trend (Tomlinson 2013). Cameron (2007) suggests that men could be attracted into the workforce through professionalisation; however, to date this has proved largely unsuccessful (Tomlinson 2013). This might be explained, in part, because it is hard to dispel the taken for granted, feminised traditions of care and also because, as pointed out by Cameron, Moss and Owen (1999), gender issues are not adequately discussed by society, the government and in the sector.

A graduate level professional status is a new phenomenon in England, particularly in the PVI sector. Wright (2011) explains that the PVI sector has been relatively slow to develop in that the predominant form of early education from 1870 and for 130 years was in state primary schools. This was despite the philanthropic initiatives of church, charitable institutions, and individual pioneers such as the McMillan sisters. Maintained nursery provision grew during World War 2 and subsequently fell, until, in the 1960s, the pre-school movement and voluntary groups began to fill the gap (Wright 2011). Even into the 1990s, ECEC services were discretionary, with low levels of public funding (Pugh 2010). Wright (2011) posits that the introduction of a new initiative, such as EYPS, into a sector which developed slowly from a series of grass roots movements is likely to induce stress and uncertainty in the workforce. Furthermore, contemporary debates on professionalism, as discussed below, suggest that professionalism itself is in flux and therefore likely to be experienced in complex, and unpredictable ways by EYPs. Issues and questions related to wide and shifting models of professionalism are discussed in the next section.

1.6 Contemporary debates on professionalism

Whitty (2008) writes about the *'shifting phenomenon of professionalism'* (p.28), stating that previously the most established professions such as law and medicine enjoyed *'licensed autonomy'* (p.28).However increasingly, even for these professions, professional status is now determined by

the state through employment and regulation, and this brings high levels of accountability and control. Whitty (2008) further suggests that professionalism is in the process of being redefined; the traditional exclusive, autonomous model is giving way to a modern professionalism where professionals are called upon to work differently, for example more collaboratively, in partnership with colleagues and stakeholders.

The introduction of EYPS was an attempt by the government to professionalise the ECEC workforce within the PVI sector and children's centres, and initially CWDC emphasised that EYPS, although not the same, was equivalent to qualified teacher status (QTS). The comparison to QTS was important because it influenced the type of professionalism and professional the sector might expect. There was also an initial expectation that the EYP might benefit from improved status and greater parity in pay and conditions with teachers. Yet parity between professions should not be expected; Crook (2008) and Whitty (2008) point out that teachers, along with other modern professionals, including engineers, nurses, and social workers, have been described as 'quasi professionals', trailing behind law and medicine in status, recognition and autonomy. The current disparity between EYPS and QTS can be illustrated effectively when considering pay. In 2014 despite childcare being worth more than four billion pounds to the economy, the average salary of an ECEC practitioner in the PVI sector was six pounds seventy nine pence an hour (Gaunt 2014). It has been difficult to find the average salary of an EYP but one of the participants in this study is paid seven pounds fifty pence, while another is paid eight pounds an hour. This last amount is equivalent to an average yearly salary of sixteen thousand pounds, whilst a newly qualified teacher in 2014 would expect a starting salary of twenty four thousand pounds (DfE 2014).

In addition to the '*shifting phenomenon'* of professionalism identified by Whitty (2008) and the lack of parity between professions, discussed above, other academics including Ball (2008) and Ritzer (2001) are concerned with the contemporary descent of professions into performativity. Ball (2003) states that performativity can be understood as a mode of regulation of the performance of an individual's productivity or output. He blames performativity for reducing the professional to a technician and he goes on to describe the educational professional's relentless pursuit of external targets, with the individual continually pushing themselves to perform better against externally imposed measures of productivity (Ball 2008). Friedson (2001) suggests that the work of the professional cannot be standardised and, therefore, performance management can be seen as contradictory to professionalism. Oberheumer (2005), however, brings a contrasting view of the effect of external performance management targets on the ECEC workforce. She suggests that, rather than undermining professional autonomy as suggested by Ball (2008) and Friedson (2001),

such targets may bring the EYP recognition and status. Performativity is discussed further in the literature review.

The contrasting views of Oberheumer (2005) to those of Ball (2008) and Friedson (2001), as discussed above, are an example of contradictory discourses in ECEC. Wright (2011) draws our attention to further contradictory discourses when she states that the literature offers no clear answer to the question of whether caring for children, as a form of employment, is emancipative or oppressive for women. She states that it is plausible to argue, from a historical perspective, that ECEC supports the emancipative over the exploitative view, in that educating women for domesticity and to bring up children, as a form of employment, was initially progressive. Watts (2000) claims that the role of governess, in the nineteenth century, allowed single women to support themselves financially, and that teaching was a respectable option for middle class women not rich enough to be unemployed. Wright (2011) describes teacher training offered by the Froebelian Kindergarten Movement in the 1800s as enlarging women's fundamental rights and professional opportunities. More recently, in the 1960s, the Pre-school Learning Alliance offered specialist training for parents to work with children and this marked a move towards training and employing women with small children. Wright (2011) suggests that this may represent a step towards independence for these women, rather than a form of oppression. However, Osgood (2006) argues that working in ECEC can be viewed as oppressive to women as it facilitates a move from unpaid work to underpaid work, primarily for working class women, a move that allows middle class women to go out and do the better recognised and rewarded work. Skeggs (1997) and Colley (2006) also draw attention to the subordinate position of women in ECEC by virtue of their class and gender. In addition Taggart (2011) points out that the emotional nature of work in ECEC leaves women open to exploitation and he suggests that the current system would collapse if the workforce withdrew their unpaid labour.

Osgood (2009) points out that the ECEC work force, itself, has been constructed by policy discourse in contradictory ways and that policy discourse affects the professional identity of those working in ECEC. When EYPS was introduced, Osgood (2009) describes a sector which was simultaneously tasked with meeting the complex needs of the most disadvantaged children and becoming the means by which women could participate in the paid labour market. However, she argues that, at the same time, the New Labour Government repeatedly claimed that ECEC practitioners presided over poor quality care and that the whole service needed reform. Despite this contradictory construction, Osgood (2009) argues that the ECEC workforce, by occupying a key position in government policy, has become the means by which the government can achieve its vision for an economically successful nation, and the amelioration of many societal ills. Osgood (2009) reminds us

that policy impacts on the emerging professional identity of the ECEC workforce and this argument resonates with the work of McKimm and Phillips (2009), who state that professional identity does not develop in a vacuum. They suggest that it is shaped by a complex interplay of personal values and beliefs, professional ethics and codes of practice, and the legal framework. In turn these are influenced by the organisational practices, communities of practice and wider societal and cultural influences which are constantly in flux (McKimm and Phillips 2009).

 As identified in the previous section, there are a number of contemporary and at times contradictory debates relating to professionalisation in ECEC which demonstrated that professional identity is in flux and shaped by a complex interplay of social and cultural factors. Professional identity, therefore, can be understood as a social construct with collective experiences and features for example gender, class and performativity which this study was designed to explore, as seen in the aim and objectives set out below.

1.7 Aim and objectives of the study

The introduction has explained key stages in the policy development of EYPS and my professional experience of the ECEC sector. It has also introduced debates about professionalisation of the ECEC workforce in England. This account provides the context for the aim and the objectives of this study. The aim of this study was to explore the experiences and perspectives of practitioners in ECEC as they undertook a programme of study to achieve EYPS. The objectives were; firstly, to understand and explain how social and cultural experiences shape the way practitioners experience professionalisation and secondly, to understand and explain what effect professionalisation has on their practice and how this affects their view of themselves. The aim and objectives of this study were addressed through the following research questions:

The research questions were:

1. To what extent do social and cultural experiences shape the way the practitioners in ECEC experience professionalisation?

2. What effect does professionalisation have on practitioners leading practice and on how they view themselves, and their practice?

In selecting a methodological approach and choosing the methods of data collection, the researcher always hopes to get a better understanding of the subject matter at hand (Denzin and Lincoln 2005). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) also note that the choice of research practices depends on the questions

that are asked, what is available to the researcher in the context, and what the researcher can do in the setting. The following section provides a brief introduction to the methodological approach and the methods of data collection chosen to address the aim and objectives of this study. The methodological approach is fully explained in Chapter 4.

1.8 Methodology and methods

In developing the methodology and methods, a narrative approach was taken, where story and narrative are closely related. Story consists of all the events to be depicted, for example all the salient events as told by the participants. Distinct from this, the key element of narrative is that it organises a sequence of events into a whole, so that the significance of each event can be understood through its relation to the whole (Elliott 2005). The study focused on the experiences and perspectives of four practitioners enrolled on the UPP as they worked towards and achieved EYPS. The participants were each interviewed four times over a period of 14 to 15 months with the final interview taking place some four to six weeks after the participants were notified that they had achieved EYPS. I used semi-structured interviews to collect data and adopted a conversational approach to build mutually trusting relationships as recommended by Oakley (1981).

The narrative approach was extended into the interpretation and presentation of the data. The data was subjected to three layers of analysis. In the primary analysis the intent was to privilege the voice of the participants, and so the data was presented as a series of monologues created from the participants' own words. The secondary analysis was consistent with a thematic narrative analysis as proposed by Riessman (2008) as it presented and interrogated segments of the data in light of theory to address the objectives of the study. As the study was exploratory, it was necessary to follow this with a third layer of analysis which explored the affect of organisational structures and practices on the participants' experiences of becoming a professional. Therefore, the tertiary analysis drew on the work of Bolman and Deal (2013) and their multiframe model which promotes understanding of organisations and offers insight into improving leadership practice, and managing change in organisations. The Bolman and Deal (2013) framework was selected because it resonates with the conception of the EYP as a leader of practice and a change agent. Furthermore, the multiframe analysis offered divergent interpretations of what was happening in the organisational context and this enabled me to develop a leadership model which is discussed in the following section.

1.9 Significance of the study

In addressing the aim and objectives of this study there have been a number of significant findings which will be outlined briefly in relation to each objective. Full details can be found in Chapters 6 to 8.

Objective 1 was to explore to what extent social and cultural experiences shape the way the practitioners in ECEC experience professionalisation. To meet this objective, the data was interrogated with respect to key literature including Bourdieu (1992) and Skeggs (1997) to consider how gender and class shaped the way the participants experienced professionalism. The findings firstly confirm those of Skeggs (1997) who argues that working class women choose to work as practitioners in ECEC because they have restricted access to capital (Bourdieu 1992). However, an additional finding from this study is that the participants, unlike the women in Skegg's (1997) research, aspired to wider access to capital that they perceived might accrue through having a degree and, to a lesser extent, EYPS.

The study also explored the nature and the effects of performativity for the participants. Ball (2008) suggests that performativity can lead the practitioner to lose sight of the personal, social and emotional aspects of the work that are important to them; he calls this '*ontological insecurity*' (p.54). However, this study appears to contradict Ball's (2008) assertions as it has found that the '*ontological insecurity*' experienced by the participants was transitory and did not undermine their personal and emotional commitment to working with young children.

 The study also considered the effects of professional recognition by the significant stakeholders on the participants, where the significant stakeholders included colleagues and parents. The key finding was that endorsement and recognition of EYPS was variable amongst the significant stakeholders and this had particular significance in settings where the EYP was more qualified than the manager. In these settings the EYP encountered resistance and a significant finding from the multiframe analysis suggests this is because the EYP challenged traditional organisational structures, particularly where vertical lines of authority were inflexible. In two settings, this led to destructive power struggles which had a negative impact on the participants' experiences of becoming a professional.

Objective 2 was to explore what effect professionalisation had on practitioners leading practice and on how they view themselves and their practice. A key finding was that achieving EYPS provided three out of four of the participants with validation for their work and this went some way towards reversing feelings of low self-esteem and self-worth. Furthermore, EYPS seemed to impact positively on participants' practice, particularly their ability to lead. A key finding from the multiframe analysis

suggests that as effective leaders the four participants developed valuable skills of reflection and political skills, including the skills of negotiation, alliance building and agenda setting.

A further key finding was that the effective leadership of the participants was built on moral leadership which supported and protected the workforce. This is important in ECEC where, as this study confirms, caring can leave practitioners vulnerable to exploitation. Moral leaders are positive role models even when times are challenging. Finally despite the positive effect of achieving EYPS on the participants' feelings of self worth and self esteem and the positive effect on practice, professionalisation seemed to contribute to the turbulence that is a characteristic of the early years workforce. In this study two of the participants moved onto new jobs in ECEC shortly after achieving EYPS, and another participant planned to find a job in a school to pursue QTS. The multiframe analysis suggests that half of existing managers and leaders in the settings paid little attention to the 'cultural glue' that binds individuals to the organisation, and were unable to align the needs of the organisation with those of the individual. Therefore, the final key finding is that the participants as effective leaders identified the symbolic forms which bind individuals to the organisation and endeavoured to match the motivational needs of the employee to the needs of the organisation.

 A significant contribution of this thesis is the development of a new leadership model arising from the findings of the multiframe analysis, my own improved understanding of leadership in ECEC, and a strong belief that the participants in this study were not adequately prepared to be leaders and change agents (CWDC 2010). The multi-frame analysis supports understanding of how organisational structures and practices in the setting shape leadership of practice. These findings are summarised above in relation to the objectives of the study but are presented again as they underpin the new leadership model;

- The EYP as a graduate professional challenged the traditional organisational structures in the four PVI settings. This was particularly problematic in the settings where the professional was more qualified than the manager and where the vertical lines of authority appeared to be inflexible.
- The four participants, as effective leaders, developed skills of reflection and political skills of negotiation, agenda setting and building alliances to bring about change.
- The effective leadership of the four participants was built on moral leadership which supported and protected the workforce.

- The four participants, as effective leaders, identified the symbolic forms which bind individuals to the organisation and endeavoured to match the motivational needs of the employee to the needs of the organisation.

The proposed new model, the Change Curve Four Frame Model of Leadership synthesises the Bolman and Deal (2013) framework with the Change Curve Model (Kubler- Ross 1989) and is informed by the findings set out above. It provides a valuable resource to support the work of practice leaders, enabling them to anticipate how another individual might react to change. For every stage of change, the model suggests actions which the practice leader can employ to overcome resistance to change. This model is discussed in detail in Chapter 8.

Whilst data was being gathered for this study EYPS was replaced by EYTS and, in 2014, the National College of Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) introduced new occupational standards for the Early Years Educator (EYE) at level 3 and level 6. Therefore, it is likely that in the next few years there will be EYPs, EYTs and graduate level EYEs employed in the PVI sector. It is not possible to say what effect this array of graduate professionals will have on the sector; however, the link between continuous improvement in ECEC and effective leadership continues to be emphasised (Ofsted 2015). Therefore, the importance of practice leadership and the ability of leaders to bring about change remains important. The findings from this study can support future practice leaders in ECEC, whether they are an EYP, EYT or an EYE.

1.10 Chapter summary and Organisation of the study

This chapter has presented the rationale and, in summary form, the context for this research as well as a brief explanation of the methodological approach taken to address the aim and objectives of the study. It has also provided a brief overview of the key and significant findings, as well as the implications for practice leaders in ECEC. Chapter 2 provides a more detailed account of seminal ECEC policy which provides essential background to and contextualises the introduction of EYPS and EYTS. Chapter 3 presents a review of the literature relevant to an understanding of contemporary debates on professionalism, and it includes discussion of a range of international perspectives and approaches to professionalisation in ECEC. This chapter also provides a review of the current and emerging literature in the field of leadership in ECEC which has particularly informed this thesis. This includes an overview of the Bolman and Deal (2013) multiframe model which is significant in the study's tertiary thematic narrative analysis of data. Chapter 4, the methodology chapter, provides a

detailed explanation of the narrative approach to collecting and analysing the data, and includes discussion of the ethical considerations which have shaped this research study. This is followed by three chapters concerned with the presentation of the findings. Chapter 5 is the primary analysis, the monologues; these are a presentation of the participants' stories of becoming a professional. Chapter 6 is the secondary analysis of the data which is a thematic narrative analysis. This analysis exemplifies themes relevant to the contemporary debates of professionalism and explains how social and cultural experiences shaped the experiences of the participants. The chapter also includes discussion of the effect of professionalisation on the participants and their practice. Chapter 7, the tertiary analysis of the data, follows and draws on the Bolman and Deal (2013) framework to provide a multiframe perspective on how organisational structures and practices shaped the experiences of the participants. Following this analysis, Chapter 8 draws on the findings from chapter 7 to present a new model of leadership. The model offers the practice leader in ECEC a way to understand organisational change and strategies to support the professional in leading and changing practice. The final chapter presents a conclusion to the study. It summarises the contribution which the study makes to knowledge of professionalisation in ECEC and in the emerging field of leadership in ECEC in the PVI sector. It considers potential strengths and limitations of the study and includes my reflexive thinking on the study. The chapter also identifies areas for future research to build on the findings of this study.

Chapter 2: Policy in Early Childhood Education and Care in England

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the significant aspects of government policy which contextualise this study, and underpin the introduction of EYPS. It expands on the policy summary included in Chapter 1, explaining, for example, how the *National Childcare Strategy* (NCS) (DfEE1998) was part of a wider policy agenda to support women into work and how *Every Child Matters* (ECM)(DfES2004)*,* as an overarching policy for children's services, contributed to the formulation of the 39 EYPS standards. The chapter begins with a focus on New Labour Government policy developments from 1997 to 2010 which foregrounded the importance of raising qualifications in ECEC, particularly in the PVI sector, and saw unprecedented levels of government investment in training and development of the workforce. The chapter then turns to focus on Coalition Government policy developments between 2010-2015 and identifies a number of seminal policy reviews which led to the introduction of EYTS. This account of policy relating to EYTS is included because, although it did not inform the study's initial aims and research questions, this policy development occurred as a background to the research, whilst the participants were working towards EYPS, and it was relevant to their experiences of, and perspectives on, becoming a professional.

2.2 Early childhood education and care policy in England 1997-2010

During the 1980s and 1990s there were unclear and conflicting messages from successive governments about what was required from policy relating to ECEC, for example as to whether the focus should be on preparing children for school, providing day care for working parents, or prevention of developmental delay and juvenile crime (Pugh 2014). The New Labour Government came to power in 1997 and inherited a system split between early education and day care which Moss (2014 p.347) describes as '*patchy*'. Moss (2014) also asserts that, at that time, England was consistently near the bottom of the European league table for public investment in ECEC, meeting neither demand nor need. During thirteen years of the New Labour Government, ECEC became a policy priority. In 1998, the New Labour Government set targets for the quality and quantity of ECEC in the *NCS* and Osgood (2009) states that, within the policy climate at the time, ECEC was constructed as the crucial means by which full employment, particularly the employment of mothers, could be achieved. The government introduced a new standards and inspection regime and placed much greater emphasis on training and development of the workforce (Pugh 2010). Childcare places increased and significant reform of the workforce began. At this time the ECEC workforce was

largely the domain of working class women (Osgood 2005), with low levels of qualification, as discussed in chapter 1. The New Labour Government's commitment to investment in training and developing the workforce was influenced by the findings from EPPE (Sylva et al.2004) as described in Chapter 1.

During the period from 1998 to 2008 the government reiterated the need to radically reform the children's workforce in order to improve employability for parents and outcomes for children. These ideas were promulgated in two key policies, *ECM* (DfES 2004) and the *Ten Year Childcare Strategy* (DfES 2004a). *ECM* (DfES 2004) took prevention as its starting point, focusing on entitlements for children, and its long term vision was the development of integrated health, education and social care through children's centres and extended schools (Pugh 2014). Contemporaneous with this, the *Ten Year Childcare Strategy* (DfES 2004a) stated that practitioners working with pre-school children should have as much status, as a profession, as teachers in schools (Reardon 2009). In 2006, *The Childcare Act* placed a statutory duty on LAs to take lead responsibility for ECEC; they were given the responsibility to raise quality, improve delivery and achieve better results (HMSO 2006b). Running parallel to this, the New Labour Government demonstrated serious commitment to workforce reform by commissioning a comprehensive review of qualifications and career structures in the sector, and following this review, in 2006, it presented its *Children's Workforce Strategy* (DfES 2006). The strategy announced that the newly formed Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) would lead on training and development of the ECEC workforce and it set targets for a graduate leader in all children's centres by 2010 and in every PVI setting by 2015. With this goal in mind, the CWDC built on existing foundation degrees and related higher education courses for the ECEC workforce to launch a new graduate status, EYPS in 2006 (CWDC 2006). Assessment for the status was based on 39 standards developed by CWDC (2006c). The New Labour Government pledged in excess of £900 million to developing EYPS, with large sums allocated to attracting potential EYPs and to supporting settings to improve the quality of their provision; this was the first time any English government had pledged such a high level of funding to improving the ECEC sector (Tomlinson 2013).

The 39 CWDC standards for EYPS (CWDC 2006C)(appendix 1) supported the *ECM* agenda, the *Ten Year Childcare Strategy,* the Childcare Act 2006 and the introduction of EYFS. Together these strategies and policies reflected the New Labour Government's vision that EYPs would transform the ECEC sector, thus providing better outcomes for children (Reardon 2013). It is possible to identify the proposed integration of the *ECM* (DfES 2004) agenda within the original 39 standards for EYPS (CWDC 2006c). The aim of *ECM* (DfES 2004) was to develop a shared responsibility across all

children's services for safeguarding children and improving children's wellbeing, where well being was defined by reference to five outcomes: be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well being. An additional aim of ECM (DfES 2004) was to shift the focus of professionals from dealing with the consequences of difficulties in children's lives to preventing things from going wrong in the first place (DfES 2004). Standard (S)3 and S 23,for example, set out the expectation for the EYP to understand factors which affect a child's well being and if necessary refer the child to specialist support (see appendix 1). *ECM* (DfES 2004) placed great emphasis on multi-professional teamwork and this focus was also included in the EYP standards, for example, S36 (appendix 1). The 39 standards for EYPS differed from the QTS standards for teachers (TDA 2007) in that they supported a pedagogical approach in which, '*children should be nurtured in order to flourish*' (CWDC 2010 p.3), rather than an approach which emphasised teaching.

2.3 Early childhood education and care policy in England 2010-2015

The New Labour Government began in a period of economic growth that ended abruptly with the financial crisis of 2007-2008, although spending cuts to children's services did not become a reality until 2011 (Reardon 2013). The Coalition Government took office in 2010, committed to deficit reduction through cuts to public expenditure. They quickly commissioned a number of independent reviews into children's lives, particularly with respect to health and well-being, education, child protection and the wider impact of poverty on their life chances (Field 2010; Allen 2011; Munro 2011; Marmot 2010). The New Labour Government had also commissioned a review of the EYFS to be carried out by Dame Claire Tickell and this was published under the Coalition Government in 2011. Subsequently the findings of these reviews were distilled into one policy document, *Supporting Families in the Foundation Years* (DfE2011). In this document the Coalition Government set out their vision for ensuring that all children, whatever their background, should be able to fulfil their potential. It stated '*It is the child's experiences during the first years that shape their future development and their achievements later in life'* (DfE 2011 p.2). Therefore, the success of this policy was predicated upon early intervention, where early identification and help was seen as a means to reduce health inequalities, protect children and to break the cycle of poor outcomes experienced by some children and families. This was reminiscent of the previous government's *ECM* policy (Reardon 2013) and, in common with *ECM* (DfES 2004), it also drew upon research findings from EPPE (Sylva et al. 2004, 2010), indicating a need to support the aspiration for higher level qualifications for practitioners working with young children. Sylva et al. (2004) set out in the EPPE research to investigate whether higher quality pre-school provision made a difference to the intellectual and social behavioural development of young children, and identified some principles for ensuring high

quality provision. The findings suggested that quality made a difference and that there was a positive relationship between the qualifications of staff and ratings of quality (Sylva et al. 2010). Sylva et al. (2010) also found that the greatest impact on quality was when the curriculum leader was a trained teacher and this was linked specifically with better outcomes in pre-reading and social development at age five. Osgood(2009) points out that this view of quality, with a focus on better outcomes, positions children as relational to adults and as particularly vulnerable and, therefore, as required to be given '*the best start in life*' (p.736). She further suggests that childcare is only deemed good quality if it can be assessed and measured against a middle class norm and that the effect of this is that it is assumed that ECEC should be like middle class mothering. Osgood (2009) argues that concerns about the regime to establish quality in ECEC are silenced in government discourse and that government discourse on quality masks the low pay, and poor working conditions associated with the workforce.

The Coalition Government continued to focus attention on ECEC and Tickell, in her 2011 review of the EYFS, called on the government to retain the ambition to have a graduate led workforce in the ECEC sector, and recommended greater clarity in identifying career progression routes to EYPS and QTS. In doing so, Tickell (2011) failed to recognise that foundation degrees were already available as a progression route to EYPS. Tickell (2011) also noted that she had heard positive reports about the National Professional Qualification in Integrated Centre Leadership, a qualification specifically for managers of children's centres, but did not draw on evidence provided by Mathers et al. (2011) to endorse EYPS. The review by Mathers et al. (2011) had shown that EYPs were contributing to overall improvements in quality in settings, and adding value in the areas of literacy, planning and inclusion. However, Tickell (2011) drew attention to serious concerns regarding the content and quality of qualifications within the sector, and the continued gender bias in the ECEC workforce. As a result of these concerns, the government commissioned a review of early education and childcare qualifications by Nutbrown.

At the same time, the Coalition Government had set in motion reforms to local government and to public services, including health and education, significantly reducing the number of government quangos (Pugh 2014). In 2012, CWDC was closed and its programmes of work, including EYPS, were taken over by the Teaching Agency (TA). Tomlinson (2013) points out that, when the Coalition Government came to power, only a fraction of the previous funding was announced for the continuation of EYPS as a workforce development strategy. In spite of the closure of CWDC and the lack of endorsement by Tickell (2011), EYPs were identified in the revised EYFS released in March 2012. They were included, alongside qualified teachers, as part of the statutory requirement for

staffing arrangements (DfE2012b) but the ambitious target to have a graduate leader in every PVI setting by 2015 was removed from policy. Following the publication of the revised EYFS, Nutbrown's review of early education and childcare qualifications was released. Nutbrown (2012) acknowledged the positive impact that EYPS programmes had on individual practitioners and on the quality of settings, whilst pointing out that the lack of parity between EYPS and QTS caused frustration in the sector. This led to a report recommendation, not to strengthen government support for EYPS, but to introduce a specialist early years route to QTS (0-7years), with an additional conversion qualification being made available to EYPs. There was no similar recommendation for qualified teachers to engage in any additional training, even though they may have gained little knowledge of early child development (0-3 years) during their training. Thus the Nutbrown review simultaneously endorsed EYPS and critiqued it, reinforcing the lack of parity between QTS and EYPS.

In 2013, Truss as Childcare Minister announced the publication of *More Great Childcare* (DfE 2013) as a government response to the Nutbrown Review (2012). Significantly, the report announced that EYPS would be replaced with Early Years Teacher Status (EYTS), to end the disparity in status between QTS and EYPS. However, as Jones (2014) points out, workforce quality costs and Truss (2012) in her role as Deputy Director of Reform, a right wing think tank, had previously argued that childcare was not good value for money for parents or the government. The government did not want the high costs of a highly qualified workforce to be passed on to parents as they recognised that the cost of childcare was one of the most significant barriers for mothers who wanted to work (DfE 2013). Therefore, *More Great Childcare* (DfE2013) proposed that ratios of children to practitioners should be increased in the PVI sector, from 1 practitioner to 3 children (1:3) to 1:4 with children aged 1 or 2 years and from 1:8 to 1:13 for children aged 3, if the practitioner was an EYP. As Jones (2014) explains, this was strongly opposed by parents and many owners, managers and practitioners in the PVI sector, and, as a result, this proposal was dropped. This was problematic for the Coalition Government in terms of economic implications because they wanted to attract more mothers into the workforce given that one of the most efficient ways of lifting children out of poverty appeared to involve supporting mothers into work (Field, 2010). Furthermore, Truss (2012) argued that the economy would benefit from the untapped potential of mothers who were not currently in work.

In 2013, the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) merged with the Teaching Agency (TA) and announced new criteria for Early Years Educator qualifications at level 3 and 6, and published Teachers Standards for Early Years, relevant to practitioners working with children aged

from birth to five. Thus EYPS was replaced by EYTS. Nutbrown, in 2012, had called for a specialist early years teaching route but, in her response to *More Great Childcare,* suggested that without QTS,

> *Yet again those who work with young children are offered a lesser status, and we should realistically anticipate poorer pay and conditions than those who work with older children* (Nutbrown 2013 p.7).

The Coalition Government signalled that they continued to support ECEC services in *Supporting Families in the Foundation Years* (DfE/DH 2011). It introduced funding for free childcare for the most 'vulnerable' two year olds, and continued to fund places for all three and four year olds (Tomlinson 2013). However, this has taken place within the wider context of severe cuts to public expenditure and sweeping reform of the welfare system. This has led to considerable tensions between increasing the quantity of provision and ensuring quality is maintained (Pugh 2014). Furthermore, in 2015, the Conservative Government pledged to increase the amount of free childcare for working parents from fifteen hours per week to thirty hours per week. Whilst this equates to a subsidy of five thousand pounds for parents earning less than one hundred and fifty thousand pounds per year, the government has not, as yet, announced any increase in the funding to be paid to the ECEC setting (McMahon 2015). This is likely to add significantly to the tensions between quantity of provision and quality. The NDNA (2015) reports that PVI settings are struggling to recruit EYTs and retain EYPs. This might be explained by the government subsidies to the sector which leave a funding shortfall of twenty percent (McMahon 2015), making it difficult for the PVI sector to afford comparable rates of pay to those paid to teachers in the school sector. PVI settings, particularly in areas of economic deprivation, cannot pass on the costs of employing an EYT to parents.

There are other recent developments to the education system which might explain why it is difficult for the PVI sector to recruit and retain EYTs and EYPs, including the introduction of academies. Within the academy system the senior management team has discretion in determining the appropriate qualifications of staff, and in setting their terms and conditions of employment. Significantly, it is no longer necessary for teachers to have QTS to work in an academy (DfE 2015), and therefore, EYPs and EYTs can seek employment in an academy where pay and conditions may be better than in the PVI sector. The *Education White Paper* (DfE 2016) sets out the government's vision that all schools should be academies by 2020 and, if this happens, then it is likely to become increasingly difficult for PVI settings to recruit and retain EYPs and EYTs because of competition from academies in terms of pay and conditions.

Moss (2014) argues that, despite all of the policy initiatives of New Labour, The Coalition and Conservative Governments between 1997-2014, the old divisions between childcare and education persist. The level of qualifications in the PVI sector has increased overall; there has been a 27% rise in the number of practitioners qualified at level 3 or above to 87%, and 13 % of this group are qualified to level 6. Nevertheless, the average salary in the PVI sector remains low at £6.80 per hour (DfE 2014). The NDNA (2015) report that 88% of the settings they surveyed employed a graduate but struggled to recruit EYTs because of pay and working hours. In the same survey, the NDNA report that staff turnover was on the increase at 14% per year, with 5% leaving the sector each year for a higher salary. The number of graduate level practitioners has increased and it appears that many settings are willing to employ a graduate; however, salaries remain low and are a significant barrier to recruiting and retaining EYTs (NDNA 2015). Moss (2014) suggests that the position of the workforce has improved somewhat but it remains divided between '*a professional minority and a vast majority of technicians, with the latter still relatively poorly educated and scandalously poorly paid*' (p.354).

2.4 Chapter summary

This chapter outlines the complexities of key ECEC policy developments in England, alongside related debates on the provision of ECEC and the position of the workforce. This discussion provides a frame of reference for this thesis by outlining some key stages in the development of ECEC policy with relevance to the introduction of EYPS and EYTS. ECEC received considerable attention under the New Labour Government and this chapter begins with an examination of this government's policy agenda from 1997-2010. The New Labour Government embarked on a radical reform of ECEC and unprecedented levels of funding were allocated to improving the levels of qualifications, identified as key to quality in the sector. EYPS was launched and ambitious targets were set for an EYP to be employed in every children's centre by 2010 and every PVI setting by 2015. Initially the Coalition Government remained fairly committed to EYPS, despite removing the targets. However, this was short lived and, in 2013, EYPS was replaced by EYTS. The introduction of EYTS and its location within the remit of the TA signalled a policy move towards greater parity across the divided workforce; however, disparity remains in the terms and conditions of employment across the ECEC sector. Although the levels of qualification in the PVI sector have improved, particularly in terms of Level 3 practitioners, pay remains low, the split between education and care persists and parity between professionals across the ECEC sector has not yet been achieved. These continuing policy issues have significant implications for the practitioners whose narratives are central to this thesis. Policy and legislation are key contributing factors that shape the participants' experiences and perspectives of

professionalisation and contribute to their emerging professional identity. The following chapter is a review of the literature relevant to this thesis and it moves on from the discussion of ECEC policy, relevant to the workforce, to consider a wider range of social and cultural factors for example, gender, class and performativity and their affect on the participants' experiences. The literature review presents key debates which inform research into professionalisation of the workforce in ECEC and further contextualises this study.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a critical review of the literature and in combination with Chapter 2 it frames and contextualises this study. It includes key theoretical perspectives which are central to the interpretation of the data to explain the participants' experiences of professionalisation. From the outset the chapter presents critical views of the professional and alternative perspectives on professionalism. This is followed by a review of literature which considers professionalisation in ECEC as an opportunity to define a new professional, one that emphasises the relational and emotional aspects of the role. The chapter then debates the possible consequences of performativity for the professional working in ECEC, drawing primarily on writers concerned with professional issues in teaching. It then moves onto provide a profile of the ECEC workforce as it existed prior to professionalisation. The chapter then considers how gender, class and power have shaped the workforce and the individual practitioner's identity. The literature then focuses on some potential dilemmas of professionalisation and the possible consequences of professionalisation for the wider ECEC workforce. The chapter then draws on a range of relevant international perspectives in order to fully explore professionalisation in ECEC. Finally the literature review turns to focus on the role of the EYP as a leader of practice and change agent. It considers the emerging debates relating to pedagogical leadership in ECEC and discusses the extent to which a formal position of power and authority is required to implement change. The review includes an outline of the central concepts of the multi-frame model proposed by Bolman and Deal (2013) to explain organisational life and leadership challenges. This model is included as it has been drawn on heavily in the analysis of the data and to support the findings of this thesis.

3.2 Critical views of the professional

From the outset it is useful to try and understand what the terms 'professional' and 'professionalism' mean. As EYPS is new there is a limited amount of literature available to draw on which relates specifically to EYPS, therefore I looked to some of the authors exploring professionalism in teaching. This is relevant, since Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) and Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) have some common elements, for example sharing graduate level status, an expectation of meeting government imposed standards, and involving close work with children and young people. However, there is a key difference between EYPS and QTS and that is the requirement for the EYP to lead practice, and to be a change agent. The following section considers the nature of professionalism more broadly.

Crook (2008 p.10) provides a useful historical perspective on professionalism. He reminds us that such terms as '*profession*', '*professional*' and '*professionalism*' are contested terms and change over time. Therefore, it can be difficult to provide one definition. Crook (2008) describes the distinguishing characteristic of a professional as having '*an intellectual technique acquired by special training*' (p.16). He argues that a profession can only exist where there is a bond between the practitioners and this bond must take the shape of a formal association. Crook (2008) does point to other traits which have been associated with a profession including: systematic preparation with a taught, intellectual component and observation of norms or codes of practice; an emphasis on service to others ahead of personal reward; and high levels of personal integrity.

The literature which discusses the demise of the professions provides further insight into the contested nature of professionalism. A range of authors including Schon (1992), Ritzer (2001), and Ball (2003, 2008) raise the issue of government control as part of this discourse of the demise of the professions. Schon (1992), in his seminal paper, describes a crisis in confidence with and amongst professionals. He points to the fact that the public have demanded increasing external regulation of professional practice, therefore bringing into question the professions' privileged social position and autonomy. In this classic paper Schon (1992) states that it is timely to reconsider the question of professional knowledge that traditionally had its roots in a positivist epistemology of practice. He challenges whether this professional knowledge can ever really '*take full account of the competence practitioners sometimes display in situations of uncertainty, complexity and uniqueness*' (p.56). He proposes instead an epistemology of practice based on reflection.

The epistemology of practice based on reflection, first identified by Schon (1992), has become a central facet of the EYP role. Moss (2006) and Appleby (2009) suggests that it is the key process for ECEC practitioners developing a professional identity. In fact Moss (2006) adopts the term '*reflective professional practitioner*' (p.39) and Moss (2006) calls for this professional to resist performativity and establish autonomy. However, the literature exploring professionalism in teaching, suggests that reflection, rather than helping to resist performativity, becomes a tool for performance management. Crook (2008) explains that reflective practice has a special appeal to teachers as it embodies experiential learning, and leads to improvement in practice. The EYP is required to be a reflective practitioner and a corollary effect is anticipated. Therefore, the process of reflection ultimately becomes a tool for performance management. If performance management leads to improvements in practice, it becomes difficult to understand why it must be resisted. Performativity, it is argued by Ball (2003) is remaking the professional; whereby the ethics of competition and performance replace the older ethics of professional judgement and cooperation. He also suggests

that the primacy of caring relations has no place in a world of performativity. Ball (2008) discusses the effect of performance management systems on the '*subjectivities of individuals'* (p.51); he states '*performativity invites us and incites us to make ourselves more effective, to work on ourselves and to feel guilty and inadequate if we do no*t' (p.51). Furthermore, he points out that performativity is enacted through externally imposed measures and targets, against which the professional must position them self. These targets offer the possibility of being better, better than others or even the best. Ball (2008) posits that this creates uncertainty for the professional, as discussed further on page (38), and is a tactic for destabilisation of the workforce, and that performativity is most powerful '*when it is inside our heads and our souls'* and '*when our moral sense of ourselves and our desires are aligned with performativity'* (p.52). In reality this can lead to individuals feeling that they can never meet external requirements, and that practice is never good enough. Osgood (2009) suggests that this is exactly what was achieved by the New Labour Government, who created uncertainty in the ECEC workforce, constructing them in contradictory ways; as both the salvation of society and as shambolic. She argues that the government cultivated the discourse of ECEC in crisis and the need for radical reform. Thus the work force was primed for professionalisation, and EYPS was seen to be the only way to end the crisis in ECEC.

For some performativity is viewed as inevitable; Whitty (2008) argues that increasingly professional status is controlled through state regulation and employment. However, performativity need not be seen as the demise of the professional, more a part of '*shifting phenomenon of professionalism'* (Whitty 2008 p.28). There is a suggestion that this is an opportunity to redefine professionalism and herald in the new professional.

3.3 The new professional in early childhood education and care

Some, for example Rodd (1998) and Oberheumer (2005), call for a new democratic professional in ECEC. This may be inevitable as Barnett (2008) points out that it is impossible for professionals to hold onto their epistemological authority as in the knowledge society everyone is knowledgeable to some extent. The democratic professional also espouses values and practice associated with the '*social pedagogue'* model (Stephens 2009 p.343). Stephens (2009) explains social pedagogy as practiced in Norway and suggests some ways in which it might influence policy and practice in the United Kingdom. He proposes that the defining feature of best social pedagogic practice is the '*capacity to become a secure adult base in a child's life'* (p.345). He borrows the term 'secure base' from Bowlby and his theory of attachment, and stresses that the emphasis is on human relationships based on openness and equality, as opposed to supervision and hierarchy, seen as a feature of

practice in England. Stephens (2009) states that there is a connectedness between the teacher and learner, where the affiliation is expressive rather than instrumental. Whereby the bond between the child and the teacher is more than can be conveyed through actions, it is emotional and full of feeling. There is much agreement with these assertions in the writing of Elfer (2007, 2008, 2010) and Manning-Morton (2006) who describe the fundamental importance of relationships and attachment in ECEC practice in England. Elfer (2007 p.186) also acknowledges that *'working professionally with young children is an intensely personal undertaking'*. Manning-Morton (2006) and Osgood (2006b, 2010) are keen to define a new professional who is characterised by the intensely personal and emotional nature of early childhood education and care. Osgood (2006b) has described the '*ethic of care and emotional labour'* (p.193) as the cornerstone of practitioners' understanding of themselves, and wants to draw on this to construct the new professional, calling for '*professionalism from within'* (p.193).

3.4 Challenges to a new professionalism in early childhood education and care

While the previous section introduces the possibility of a new professionalism, there are, however, some considerable challenges, highlighted in the literature, to a new professionalism in ECEC. Osgood (2006b, 2010) identifies how the qualities of care and emotional labour are denigrated in the dominant discourse of professionalism. She uses a feminist lens to consider why practitioners are '*powerless'*(2006 p.193) to resist the policy reform they are often opposed to and cites the work of Weiler (1988) who explains this powerlessness and passive resistance as *'the internalisation of male hegemony that leads women to devalue their own worth'* (Osgood 2006 p.193). This is considered in relation to the work of Bourdieu (1992) and his theory of habitus and primary conditioning, where the child learns the attitudes, beliefs and behaviours of the group they are born into, this is discussed in detail on page (39). Furthermore, performativity, as described in the preceding section appears incompatible with a new professionalism which is exemplified by an ethic of care and built on relationships. As Ball (2008) argues, sociability is lost through performativity, and an emphasis is placed on managing social relations and viewing them in relation to outcomes. Therefore, relationships are only valued for their performative worth. Ball (2008) suggests that this can lead to *'ontological insecurity'* (p.54), whereby professionals call into question the meaning in what they do, and lose sight of what is important in what they do. Performativity is likely to deflect attention away from the personal, social and emotional activities underpinning ECEC which have no immediate, performative value. These activities are the 'cornerstone' of the ECEC professional, as identified above (Osgood 2006, 2010; Elfer 2007, 2008; Manning Morton 2006). Therefore, the '*ontological insecurity'*, described by Ball (2008), may be a significant experience for an EYP; this in

turn is likely to make performativity increasingly difficult to resist. Ball (2008) goes onto describe performativity as '*a moral system that subverts and re-orients us to its ends*' (p.54). He acknowledges the masculinisation of the teaching profession through performativity and paints a bleak picture of its potential toll on the professional, leaving them stressed, anxious and totally changing the way they experience their work and the satisfaction they get from it.

It may not be possible to resist performativity but Osgood (2010) does suggest it might be subverted, in part, by practitioners who continue to care and form relationships with children. This is likely to persist because caring for young children brings high levels of satisfaction (Skeggs 1997; Wright 2011). Performativity is not necessarily viewed by the workforce as such a bleak proposition. Oberheumer (2005), writing about professionalisation of the ECEC workforce in Germany, proposes that some practitioners welcome the improved status that increased state regulation implies. However, she also notes that adhering to a prescribed framework can be at odds with the professional's own understanding of play, learning and care and this is significant as to care and be caring is emphasised as integral to the practitioner's identity (Colley 2006; Elfer2007, 2007b).The following section looks to the work of Bourdieu (1992, 1977) and Skeggs (1997) to illuminate how caring becomes embodied in the practitioner's identity.

3.5 Gender, class and caring in early childhood education and care

For deeper insight and analysis of the workforce the work of Bourdieu (1977, 1992) has been significant as has the work of Skeggs (1997) . Her research was conducted within a very different policy context; some time before EYPS was introduced. Nevertheless, her work remains relevant to this study as it provides a rich and detailed exploration of class and gender in ECEC. This section considers, initially, through the work of Bourdieu (1977, 1992) and Skeggs (1997) how class and gender are central to the subjective construction of women as carers, and how this leads them into the ECEC workforce. It then draws on the work of Wright (2011), Osgood (2006,2 009) Colley (2006) and Taggart (2011)to consider how the positioning of caring as the work of working class women limits the value and status of working in ECEC, and leaves the workforce open to exploitation. Then a contrasting position is considered which shows women exercising agency and making a positive choice to work in ECEC.

Skeggs (1997) draws on Bourdieu's metaphors of capital, economic, cultural, social and symbolic because as she argues it '*provides the greatest explanatory power to understand the intersections of class and gender in subjective production*' (p.7) and, therefore, can be used to explain why women continue to work in ECEC with its associated low status and low pay. Skeggs (1997) argues that when

we are born we enter an inherited social space from which comes access to and acquisition of differential amounts of capital. Social space can be understood as referring to Bourdieu's model of society which consists of a network of interrelated fields, where a field is a structured system of social positions (Jenkins 2002). Positions in each field are determined by virtue of the access they afford to the resources (capital) which are available in the field (Skeggs 1997). Bourdieu (1977) suggests a model of class based on the distribution and access to capital and the properties capital confers on the holder; the properties being strength, power and consequently profit on the holder. Furthermore, gender, class and race provide the relations in which capitals are organised and valued. Masculinity and whiteness are valued and can be capitalised on to further the assets already held, whilst femininity is not a strong asset to trade and capitalise on (Skeggs 1997). Whilst the access to and acquisition of capital is not fixed, those with access to capital exercise power to culturally and economically exploit others, limiting their ability to gain capital.

Skeggs (1997) suggests that for women, particularly working class women, institutionalised caring has become a form of feminine cultural capital they can trade although it provides only restricted access to potential forms of power. Furthermore, Bourdieu (1992) suggests that the external constraints of gender, class and access to and acquisition of capital become embodied; they are repeated in the everyday practices of individuals and groups. Bourdieu (1992) explains the embodiment of dispositions and classificatory systems as '*habitus*' (p.52); he describes habitus as embodied history, and argues that 'habitus' is internalised as '*second nature* '(p.56) so that practices are seemingly autonomous. Habitus is a number of things but can be understood as a product of history, a bringing together of individual and group practices. It is a shared body of dispositions and is produced and reproduced by everyday practice (Jenkins 1992). Habitus is a product of what people do, and in turn practices are the product of habitus. Habitus is the '*conductorless orchestration which gives regularity, unity and systematcity to the practices of a group' (*Bourdieu 1992 p.59). Bourdieu (1977) describes habitus as a law laid down in a person's earliest upbringing, through the internalisation of the same objective structures, and he argues that individuals carry with them at all times their present and past positions in the social structure; in short, it can mean '*knowing one's place*' (1977 p.82). For a practitioner in ECEC 'knowing one's place' and the habitus they embody has, therefore, largely been determined by class and gender.

 Bourdieu (1977) wrote that sexual identity is the major element in social identity and the child constructs its sexual identity at the same time as it constructs its image of the division of work between the sexes. The child uses a socially defined set of biological and social indices. Maternal and paternal functions are constituted and domestic duties, including child care, are assigned to the

mother. At the same time, mothers are viewed as kinder, more emotional than fathers, and fathers as more powerful. This early conditioning may partially explain why the ECEC workforce remains overwhelmingly female in 2015. This early conditioning in combination with symbolic violence could be a powerful force in making the practitioner ill adapted to professionalisation(Bourdieu1992). Bourdieu (1992) offers his theory of symbolic violence which is explained by Jenkins (2002) as *'the imposition of systems of symbolism and meaning i.e culture, upon groups or classes in such a way that they are experienced as legitimate'* (p.104). In this way, power relations are *'misrecognised'* and perceived as legitimate which permits successful imposition and systematic reproduction. The exercise of Bourdieu's (1977) symbolic violence, as described by Jenkins (2002), is through three types of pedagogic action or education; diffuse education which occurs through social interaction; family education; and institutionalised education, for example at school. Pedagogic action reflects the interests of dominant groups, in England these are the middle and upper classes. Therefore, Skeggs (1997), Osgood (2006) and Colley (2006) argue that it is in the interests of the dominant groups for pedagogic actions to continue to direct working class girls into ECEC, and working class girls accept this as legitimate because they are conditioned to be caring.

Women have been positioned historically to the practice of domestic duties and childcare (Wright 2011, Skeggs 1997), and therefore, working in ECEC presents itself as a natural choice and this continues to perpetuate ECEC as women's work. Society remains unequally divided on gendered lines (Wright 2011) and the association of childcare with women's work and as an extension of their natural, domestic duties means it has not acquired true economic status (Wright 2011). Therefore, women with limited access to capital are further positioned by historical legacies to work in ECEC, which limits their acquisition of capital, thus perpetuating the '*status quo'* (Jenkins 2002 p.81).

Skeggs (1997) found that the working class women in her study utilised the capital they had access to, and this included their femininity, which was inextricably linked to caring. She further suggests that these women had little concept of self and that they *'live by constructing relationships with others'* (p.162). Colley (2006) also discovered that it was important to the students in her study to be 'caring', with the best practitioners equated with the most caring. This is echoed in research from Denmark, where Olesen (2001) found that practitioners who worked with young children ranked being caring and liking work with children as most important. Whilst Stephens (2009) espouses care as being a fundamental part of the human condition, it is still predominantly associated with women's work when linked with institutionalised care of young children. Osgood (2005, 2009) points out that it is actually mainly working class women's work, and posits that they are a means to enable 'middle class' women to go out and do the real work. The inference that ECEC is not 'real work',

more an extension of natural, maternal duties, legitimises low pay in the sector. Low pay sends a powerful message about worth to the practitioners and to society, and reinforces their low status.

Although low pay and low status are undoubtedly instrumental in rendering the ECEC workforce as *'powerless'* (Osgood 2005, 2009), the very act of caring, a fundamental part of the human condition, plays a part. To care for others and to be perceived as caring are at the core of the ECEC practitioner's identity (Skeggs 1997, Colley 2006, Osgood 2006), so much so that they judge themselves and other women as selfish if they put their own self before others. Skeggs (1997) discusses the work of Diprose (1984) who describes this as the dispersal of their identity to others. This selflessness goes unrewarded in society; it is at best taken for granted, at worst derided. By subsuming so much of their identity into being caring, Taggart (2011) argues that practitioners leave themselves open to financial and emotional exploitation; for example, Colley (2006) found that the practitioners thought their low salaries showed that they really cared. It has emerged in the previous section that a caring identity and the practice of caring are deeply embodied in women through historical traditions. Caring for young children has low economic value and can leave practitioners open to exploitation. However, the work of Wright (2011), considered next, presents something of a counter argument to the idea that women who work in the ECEC sector can be represented as an homogeneous group of working class women, who are powerless to resist their own need to care and the resulting exploitation.

Wright (2011) suggests that some women make positive choices to work in ECEC. The women in Wright's study integrate personal, familial and vocational elements to balance the different aspects of their lives. In her study of students on a child care diploma course, being a mother is a core facet of their identity, and the part time nature of their work in ECEC fits well with this role. Wright (2011) draws on her Integrated Lives Theory (Wright 2009), which describes the reciprocal relationships involved between work, family, education and community for ECEC practitioners. She describes the harmony which can exist between these contexts because the students choose co-realisable possibilities, making decisions which keep these elements in balance. Wright (2011) draws on the Capability Approach, devised by Sen (1999), which suggests the female practitioners are making choices from a range of options, or capability set, which best meets their needs. Wright (2011) uses this to explain why she observed high levels of personal satisfaction in her students. Her work does not deny that the capability set may be limited by gender or caring responsibilities for their own and other people's children; however, Wright (2011) argues that they make the choices willingly.

It is not my intent to set the work of Wright (2011) in opposition to that of Skeggs (1997), Colley (2006) and Osgood (2005, 2009) who suggest that the women in their studies had little choice but to work in ECEC. However, Wright (2011), unlike these authors, suggests that ECEC was not the only occupation open to the women in her study. For many, particularly the women who had children, it suited their immediate needs and opened up further opportunities for those who chose to seek them out. Nevertheless, Wright's (2011) use of the Capability Approach echoes Skegg's (1997) analysis which described the women in her study as utilising the capital they had access to. It seems that the women in both studies were making the best of what was available to them, and it is clear, in the work of all these writers (Wright 2011, Skeggs 1997, Colley 2006 and Osgood 2009), that the skills associated with ECEC are not adequately recompensed, and that caring for others can lead to exploitation of the carer. However, Wright (2011) wonders if, in the longer historical perspective, working in ECEC might be viewed as emancipative rather than exploitative for women. She points out that educating women as governesses and teachers, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, offered them education and financial independence when they previously had none. In addition, teacher training in the Kindergarten movement, which began in the 1860s, was seen to be enlarging women's fundamental rights. Moving forward into the 1960s, the Pre-school Learning Alliance offered specialised training and job opportunities to parents, enabling mothers with young children to enter part time work (Wright 2011).

In summary it has been suggested that a caring identity is deeply embodied in women through historical tradition and that the institutionalised care of children has little economic value. Nevertheless for some women working in ECEC is a positive choice which allows them to balance the different aspects of their lives. It is not clear yet if, in the longer term historical perspective, working in ECEC will be considered emancipative or oppressive to women. The following section explores other dilemmas related to professionalisation in ECEC.

3.6 Dilemmas of professionalisation

Much of the research referred to in the last section (Skeggs 1997, Colley 2006) was conducted before the introduction of EYPS in 2006. There was very little expectation in this period that working in ECEC, unless you were a teacher, would ever require degree level qualifications, and be considered a profession. EYPS was introduced in 2006 as part of the Labour Government's ambitious and far reaching ECEC policy, which was central to their wider social justice agenda (Pugh 2014). Much of the policy agenda impacted on women, potentially increasing their access to educational and economic capital, which in turn, it was hoped, would impact favourably on children. There was

much in common in this policy with developments in Germany, where the first BA courses in pedagogy in early childhood were launched in 2003 (Hohmann 2007). However, as research by Theobald (2003) into professionalisation of care for the elderly in both Sweden and Germany has revealed, there have been a number of unforeseen and unintended consequences of such developments. In both Sweden and Germany, social care is predominantly the preserve of low and middle qualified females. Theobald (2003) reports that, in both countries, instead of reducing inequalities, professionalisation has in fact increased inequality by restricting accessibility to services of care receivers and increasing labour market problems for less qualified workers. Therefore, it is possible that professionalisation of the ECEC workforce could lead to greater inequalities for women and children.

The government in England also wanted to emulate the German framework in order to attract more men into the workforce. As Hohmann (2007) points out, more men did enter the system in Germany to qualify as social pedagogues but most did not choose to work with young children, preferring to work with school aged children or adults. It is not clear how attracting more men into the workforce would reduce inequalities for women, especially as Osgood (2006) points out most men in the workforce appear to occupy positions of higher status. Tomlinson (2013) states that '*it would appear that professionalising the early years workforce by means of education has proved unsuccessful in the main'* (p.24) and has been particularly unsuccessful in attracting more men into the sector. Cameron, Moss and Owens (1999) found that the feminised traditions based on a motherhood model found in nurseries excluded men, even when they were overtly welcomed. They also found that gender issues were rarely discussed, hidden in a discourse of individuality. Even in societies which are considered to have higher levels of equality in working life, as in Sweden, only three percent of the ECEC workforce is male (Persson and Broman 2014). The contemporary Swedish model of ECEC is often held up as good model and was built around the principle of equality. The state took over training of preschool teachers in the 1960s and Persson and Broman (2014) suggest it was an early and highly explicit professionalisation strategy. Nevertheless, this strategy has been unable to alter the gendered occupational structure of the workforce. Men have entered the workforce in Sweden but Persson and Broman (2014) argue that they occupy leading positions in colleges and elsewhere, rather than caring for children.

Even though men can be very successful and achieve positions of power in ECEC, the feminised nature of the workforce may indirectly exclude them and it could be argued that the low status, and low pay in the sector does not make ECEC attractive to men. Tomlinson (2013) also offers another explanation for the lack of success in attracting men into the workforce, arguing that ECEC policy still

remains disconnected from education policy as a whole; this is despite the recognition that what happens in the early years has a significant impact on later years. According to Tomlinson (2013), the lack of success in professionalising the sector and attracting more men should not be a surprise given that the professionalisation of teachers has not been resolved in over a hundred years, and she also points out that teaching has a significant bias towards female teachers. In considering the dilemmas of professionalisation it appears that it has not reduced the gender imbalance in the workforce although some men have achieved positions of power in the sector. It is also possible in the longer term that professionalisation in ECEC could increase the cost of high quality childcare reducing accessibility to service users as seen in Germany and Sweden.

Jenkins (1992) argues that habitus can be transformed by changing circumstances and professionalisation is a considerable change to the social field occupied by the ECEC workforce. Barnett (2008) also argues that the availability of, and access to social, cultural and economic capital has changed through the enormous increase in the access to knowledge particularly through the internet. Whilst some individual professionals working in ECEC might gain access to enhanced opportunities for better pay and working conditions, as a result of changes to the social field, others may not, because, as Pugh (2014) asserts, the challenge of remunerating professionals in ECEC remains, as discussed in chapter 2. Therefore, in the short term it seems that external changes to the social field are unlikely to bring sustained access to new capital which will be enough to outweigh '*the persistence of the effects of primary conditioning*' (Bourdieu 1992 p.62). Some in the ECEC workforce may benefit from professionalisation however the literature suggests that professionalisation may not be uniformly welcomed by the workforce. As Skeggs (1997) found in her study, there was considerable antipathy towards the women who '*got above themselves'* (p.78). Also professionalisation might jeopardise some of the women in Wright's (2011) study, who maintain balance in their lives by working part time, and have limited professional aspirations. They could face being left behind or feel coerced into higher level study and more demanding job roles. It is entirely possible that some practitioners in ECEC may find themselves ill-adapted to professionalisation (Bourdieu 1992), this is considered further as part of the discussion of symbolic violence on page (40).

An additional dilemma challenging professionalisation in ECEC is the strength of support from significant stakeholders. Whitty (2008) argues that recognition as a professional increasingly relies on the '*bargain'*(p.32) struck with the state, known as the professional mandate, as well as acceptance by society and stakeholders. Tomlinson (2013) suggests that support for professionalisation in ECEC is fragile and the findings of Mathers et al. (2011)lend support to this

argument as they found that overwhelmingly parents did not consider staff qualifications when choosing childcare. If there is any suggestion that an EYP is likely to add even more to the cost of ECEC, then acceptance and support by society, and stakeholders could be withdrawn. Therefore, it is just possible, if rather perverse, that performativity, might, in the short term at least, rescue the government project of professionalisation of the workforce. Whitty (2008) argues that accountability through meeting targets strengthens the '*professional mandate'* (p.32) and is a characteristic of professional identity.

The following section considers a range of international approaches to professionalisation in ECEC . Extending the scope of the literature to include these perspectives further supports critical understanding of professionalisation of ECEC in the English context.

3.7 International perspectives on professionalisation in early childhood education and care

It is not just in England that a complex and evolving policy framework influences the development of ECEC. Campbell-Barr et al. (2015) point out that across the globe there is increased interest and investment in ECEC. Increasingly international governments recognise the value of early education and care in supporting children's development and also in supporting parental employment. Campbell Barr et al. (2015) also state there is increasing international recognition that quality of the service matters and there is particular interest in the quality, and qualifications of the workforce which is delivering ECEC. The OECD (2012) suggests that internationally higher qualifications are found to be strongly associated with better child outcomes but, where the remit for early education and care is split, different standards are set for staff qualification levels. The OECD (2012) found that, generally, practitioners associated with delivering early education, such as pre-school teachers, had higher initial qualifications than care staff. They also found that more professional development opportunities are available for teachers than care staff. The work of the OECD (2012), therefore, appears to show that it is a widely held view internationally that educating young children is distinct from caring for young children and that it requires higher levels of knowledge and skill. Consequently the OECD (2012) recommends that there is a need for governments to think beyond curriculum dichotomies and this should be extended to the split between education and care. There has been some attempt in England to unify care and education through the introduction of EYFS; however, Moss (2014) argues the split persists.

Whilst International policy developments in ECEC show that there are contrasting ideas around the nature of the ECEC workforce, Campbell-Barr et al. (2015) argue that in many countries decisions

about the skill set required for working in ECEC have become a top down political process, embedded in increasingly bureaucratic procedures. The inclusion of a range of international perspectives on ECEC should lead to a more in depth critical understanding of professionalisation and what the future might hold for the workforce in England.

Vrinioti (2013) draws our attention to the Bologna Process in 1999 as the catalyst to improving the education of early childhood workers across Europe. This trend follows the common and widely accepted assumption that preschool education is the basis for lifelong learning and that preschool education, as highlighted in the PISA Study of 2001, had failed to instil positive attitudes to learning in the fifteen year old students surveyed (Vrinioti 2013). Therefore, in order to improve the preschool system, priority was placed on improving the education of early childhood workers and this is an ongoing process in many countries at the current time (Campell-Barr and Georgeson 2015). It is not possible within the confines of this review to discuss the varied approaches adopted by all the different countries to the education and training of early childhood workers; however, the literature reviewed does include examples from Germany, Greece, Italy and New Zealand. Moss (2000) reminds us that the approach of each country is developed in line with their dominant constructions of young children and of early childhood workers, and also that each country has different systems of provision for ECEC; hence there are no universally recognised standards defining professional competence in this field. Nevertheless, Vrinioti (2013) suggests that early childhood workers in contemporary societies are confronted with common problems, leading to similar themes emerging in ECEC, with consequences for professional education and training. This includes increased emphasis on cognitive learning, language acquisition, systematic assessment of children's learning and development, intensive cooperation with parents, and children's rights. Vrinioti (2013) argues that, whilst such themes can be used as criteria to develop education and training for early childhood workers, professional competence should also include *'critical reflection upon the conditions under which professional knowledge is applied'* (p.153). Vrinioti (2013) does not identify leadership as one of the emerging themes or criteria which might be used to develop training for the professional in ECEC but does align professional competence with reflection. The process of reflection can be closely associated with changes and improvements to practice which resonates with the EYP as a change agent. However, Reardon(2013) identifies that in England there is an expectation that professional competence in ECEC includes leading the practice of others.

In Italy ECEC is provided within a split system, with distinct services for the under threes and for children aged three to six, and the initial professional preparation, qualification requirements and status vary in relation to the age group practitioners work with (Lazzari et al. 2013). Lazzari et al.

(2013) explain that the Educatori (practitioners working with the under threes) do not have a defined professional profile but most regional laws do require them to hold a degree at tertiary level (three years). The Insegnanti (teachers working with children aged three to six years) are required to hold a five year university degree that qualifies them for pre-primary and primary school teaching. Therefore, parity exists between practitioners working in services for three to six year olds and primary school teachers, but not with those practitioners working with the under threes. The different qualification requirements have resulted in different working conditions and a significant gap in status across the ECEC sector in Italy. This gap is increasingly affecting the working relationships between Educatori and Insegnanti (Lazzari et al. 2013). Roberts-Holmes (2013) writing about the ECEC workforce in England exposes a similar gap. Pointing out that, despite the fact that EYPs and qualified teachers implement the same unified foundation stage curriculum, their pay and conditions continue to represent the historic split between education and care and this could, as in Italy, affect the working relationship between these practitioners. Furthermore, the gap in pay and conditions signifies the gap in status and power and signals that the EYP is not equal to the teaching professional.

 Vrinioti (2013) argues that In Greece there is also a split system of care and education. Some Universities have been offering academic studies for pre-school pedagogues for more than 25 years but the focus is normally on working with children aged between four and six years. Crucially the education of those students aiming to work with pre-schoolers in some parts of Greece is very different to that of students being educated for primary and secondary teaching, possibly intensifying the divide between practitioners working in the preschool sector and later sectors of education (Vrinioti 2013). Vrinioti (2013) also argues that in some parts of the Greek higher education system, the programme of academic studies has not adapted to deal with childcare and education in contemporary society.

In contrast the University of Bremen is taking the lead in offering a Bachelor degree which qualifies graduates for work in primary schools and early childhood education. This reflects the integrated care and education system offered in parts of Germany and in contrast with the split systems of Greece and Italy, (Vrinioti 2013). Whilst the degree in the University of Bremen was only launched in 2005, Vrinioti (2013) argues that it should improve the status of practitioners working with preschoolers (ages three to six years). It is important to acknowledge that Vrinioti (2013) is only reporting on a small study based in Thessalonica in Greece and Bremen in Germany and it cannot represent each country as a whole. Hohmann (2014) reports that more generally in Germany there have been some reforms of the training and education of the ECEC workforce with the introduction

of degree level courses for Childhood Pedagogues or Early Pedagogues. She points out that the introduction of these courses led to concerns in Germany that higher qualifications would lead the workforce to expect new roles within ECEC and to have higher income expectations. Hohmann (2014) states that, although it is too soon to know if the integration of the new pedagogues into the ECEC landscape has worked, if they cannot achieve higher salaries, they will choose to work in areas other than ECEC. Hohmann (2014) also explains that employers often lack information about the qualification. Additionally although both Greece and Germany have established programmes which are contributing to the European policy started in the Bologna Process of improving '*professional preparation for work in early childhood settings*' (Vrinioti 2013 p.161), it is noticeable that, unlike EYPS, professional preparation in Greece and Germany does not always include practice with children under three.

The increasing professionalisation of the ECEC sector (Dalli 2008) is not confined to Europe, and policy initiatives to improve the quality of education and care through workforce development have been ongoing in New Zealand since 1986 (Cherrington and Thornton 2013). Dalli (2008) points out that England looked to New Zealand as one of the country's leading the way in creating a professionalised workforce for ECEC. Diverse provision exists at service level in New Zealand and settings are licensed as either teacher led or parent led. Parent led services are predominantly play centres or Maori language nests and teacher led services include kindergartens, education and care services and home based services (Cherrington and Thornton 2013). There is no separation between care and education and the Early Childhood Education (ECE) Strategic Plan 2002 introduced the requirement for 100% registered teachers in teacher led services by 2012; however, this target has since been revised to 80% (Cherrington and Thornton 2013). Ostensibly there appears to be parity between early childhood teachers and primary teachers in New Zealand; however, starting salaries for kindergarten teachers (early childhood teachers) appear to be lower at thirty five thousand New Zealand Dollars ($35K) rather than forty six thousand New Zealand Dollars for primary teachers ($46K). The difference in salary might be because it is possible to become a qualified kindergarten teacher with a diploma rather than a full Bachelor degree, and kindergarten teachers are more likely to be employed in the private sector (Ministry of Education New Zealand 2014).Internationally there are moves towards raising the levels of qualification of the ECEC workforce and as Hordern (2013) argues this can be seen as leading to semi-professionalism in the early childhood sector across a range of countries. However, as Vrinioti (2013) and Lazzari et al. (2013) suggest, it appears that practitioners, even if they are described as teachers, working in ECEC across a range of countries, enjoy less prestige and often lower salaries than those in the more established teaching profession.

Vandenbroeck et.al. (2013) criticise an imposed model of professionalism as seen in England and across a range of countries. They argue that that the transnational framework of competencies, argued for in the Bologna declaration, lead to a narrow technical professionalism, rather than a reflective professionalism. Hordern (2013) also argues that when practitioners lack control over the body of knowledge that defines their practice, and the pace of reform, this leads to ongoing dependence on government and the more dominant *'welfare professions such as teaching and social work for validation of this model of professionalism'* (p.107).

Vandenbroeck et al. (2013) suggest that the international consensus for professionalisation has not prevailed everywhere and, in England, Payler and Locke (2013) found that there are practitioners who have formed negative opinions of the policy to professionalise the workforce. They concluded that the rationale for change was not understood and confusion surrounded the role of the EYP. The participants in their study felt that raising the status of the workforce might undermine the vocational nature of work with young children and undermine existing, experienced leaders and managers (Payler and Locke 2013). Locating EYPS predominantly in the PVI sector has positioned it almost entirely in opposition to existing teaching qualifications and inadvertently strengthened the traditional division between the PVI sector and the maintained sector (Roberts-Holmes 2013).

This review of some international perspectives of professionalisation in ECEC shows that it is progressing across a range of countries including Italy, Germany, Greece, New Zealand and England. It appears that in most of the countries featured in this discussion disparity between education and care persists and this leads to a lack of parity in pay, and in levels of training between those working in education and those caring for young children. The following section turns the focus of this review to considering the role of the professional as a leader of practice and change agent.

3.8 The Early Years Professional as leader and change agent

As the previous sections in this review explain, professionalisation of the ECEC workforce in England is beset by philosophical and practical uncertainties and challenges. It has also been highlighted that the journey from practitioner in ECEC to professional in ECEC might be problematic. In the workplace the EYP, must consider their role as a leader and change agent as Roberts-Holmes (2013) points out *'the central role of an EYP is to lead practice in the workplace with the aim of inspiring other early year's practitioners around them; they are envisaged as change agents'.* (p.341)

Thus, EYPs are designated as purely pedagogic leaders with no direct association with management. However, this designation as pedagogic leader is problematic because the term, as Heikka and

Waniganayake (2011) point out, is not uniformly understood and it can be associated with a specific role, function or style of leadership. Furthermore, in practice, leadership and management are often interwoven, *'encouraging the view that leadership is the exclusive domain of one person'* (Jones and Pound 2008 p.9), usually the person in a position of power. This section begins with an outline of some of the ways in which leadership has been theorised and draws on some international perspectives to gain a deeper understanding of how leadership in ECEC in England has been conceptualised. As Murray and McDowall Clark (2013) write, there is confusion and disunity about what constitutes leadership in ECEC and this is also discussed in the following section.

Coleman and Earley (2005) identify a number of ways in which leadership has been theorised which include:

1. Focusing on the qualities or traits of the individual as leader.

2. Seeing leadership as contextual and dependent on followers, and leaders as working in a particular context.

3. Considering Leadership as being shared or 'distributed' throughout an organisation.

4. The extent to which leaders focus on people or task achievement

5. Leadership styles associated with gender.

6. Leadership which emphasises the importance of emotions and emotional intelligence.

Coleman and Earley (2005) suggest that these basic ways of theorising leadership underpin current theories about styles of leadership which are prevalent in education today, and they argue that it is possible to understand each style in terms of influence, in terms of *'who is exerting it; what it is exerted for; and what are its outcomes'* (p. 14). In the formation of EYPS CWDC built upon the findings from EPPE and also the study into the Effective Leadership in the Early Years Sector (ELEYS) by Siraj Blatchford and Manni (2006) and their findings suggested that leadership, particularly leadership for learning, appeared to enhance later outcomes for children. This led to EYPS being inextricably linked with leadership.

Dalli (2008) argues that ideas from professionalisation in ECEC in New Zealand have influenced professionalisation in England, and this extends to ideas about the role of the professional as a leader of practice. In New Zealand, the Education Reform Office (ERO) (2015) reported on quality in early childhood services and on reviewing leadership concluded that

High quality services have leaders who are inspirational, enthusiastic and innovative thinkers.
These leaders manage change effectively, motivate others to make change and have a good
awareness of pacing change that leads to improved quality. (p.6)

The report also goes on to acknowledge that the emerging discourse in early childhood in New Zealand focuses on pedagogical leadership, where the focus is on high quality teaching and learning and it involves '*change conversations*' (p.17) within the workplace. ERO (2012) identify four overarching principles of pedagogical leadership and the key assumption of these principles is the 'change agent' or continuous improvement dimensions of the work.

The four overarching implementation principles of pedagogical leadership identified by ERO (2012 p.17) are that it:

- has staff with credibility and expertise
- is ethical, creative, strategic and focused on improvement
- uses effective professional learning and development processes
- should be part of an effective set of networks.

Internationally, Roberts-Holmes (2013), in England, Cecchin (2009b), in Denmark, and Coughlin and Baird (2013), in Ontario, add weight to the emerging discourse on pedagogical leadership, with all in agreement that the pedagogical leader is a change agent. Cecchin (2009b) describes the pedagogical leader as being able to influence the common professional thinking and practices of the setting. She also emphasises the relational dimensions of pedagogical leadership and points out that these relationships are complex and fluid, and that they can lead to conflict.

Leadership is part of management but 'pedagogic leadership' suggests a break from the traditional associations of leadership with power, authority and hierarchy. Coughlin and Baird (2013) describe the pedagogical leader as individuals who see themselves as '*partners, facilitators, observers and co-learners'* (p.1). This suggests that there can be many pedagogical leaders in a setting, a principle endorsed by Nutbrown (2012). She calls for all practitioners, regardless of qualification, to be capable of demonstrating some pedagogical leadership, suggesting coexistence of pedagogical and organisational leadership. Coleman and Earley (2005) describe the growing belief that leadership, particularly in education, should and can be shared throughout an organisation. This resonates with Jones and Pound (2008) and Nutbrown (2012) who make the point that distributed leadership is becoming increasingly important in ECEC. Distributed leadership may take a variety of forms but, in

short, '*the role of leaders is seen to be evolving into leading others to lead themselves'* (Jones and Pound 2008 p.48). It could be argued that this style of leadership is particularly suitable to ECEC with its highly feminised workforce, as the approach is based on collaboration and power sharing, stereotypically feminine leadership traits which emphasise relationships and privilege democracy (Hard and Jonsdottir 2013). Although Rodd (2006) indicates that ECEC practitioners may prefer this style of leadership, in practice masculine associations of leadership with power and control are difficult to dislodge. Furthermore, Aubrey et al. (2012) found, in their investigation of early childhood leadership, that in the PVI sector leaders spent much of their day engaged in general administrative and managerial tasks, leaving little time to focus on practice. The participants in Aubrey et al.'s (2012) study also described their organisations as hierarchical in structure, with strategic decision making taking place at the 'top', although there was a strong sense of collegiality and pooling of initiative observed by the researchers. Aubrey et al. (2012) suggest that it is possible for a distributive model of leadership to emerge from a group working together in this way, although Jones and Pound (2008), state that '*ideally distributed leadership should be the result of conscious and deliberate action by the designated leader'* (p.49).

The original standards for EYPS defined the leadership role as,

> *catalysts for change and innovation: they are key to raising the quality of early years provision and they exercise leadership in making a positive difference to children's well being, learning and development*. (CWDC 2010 p.17)

The same standards acknowledged that what this leadership entails will vary from setting to setting. Nevertheless, the expectation is that EYPs will be '*change agents'* (CWDC 2010 p.16) and might be described as transformational leaders. Coleman and Earley (2005) state that transformational leaders are role models and they demonstrate high standards of ethical and moral conduct. Furthermore, they inspire their followers and encourage innovation and creativity by questioning the existing state. There is an emphasis on development including individual staff development through coaching and mentoring.

Hadfield et al. (2012) developed an EYP centric model or '*bottom up model'* (p.13) which emphasises aspects of practice the EYP can influence regardless of their position in the leadership structure of the setting. This practice leadership encapsulates improvement activities, led by an EYP, which focus on improving process quality. This model recognises that improvement activities are bounded by wider structural issues which the EYP may or may not be able to influence (Hadfield et al. 2012). The practice leadership of the EYP is limited but it is also potentially enhanced by structural factors such

as staff ratios, levels of staff qualifications, funding for equipment and working conditions. Ultimately, Hadfield et al. (2012) suggest that this model allows the influence and effectiveness of the EYP to be measured objectively over time and to be differentiated from organisational leadership.

Heikka and Waniganayake (2011) add to the debate about the most effective type of leadership in ECEC. They argue that leadership in ECEC combines pedagogical leadership and distributed forms of leadership. They suggest that early childhood leaders are responsible for creating a community that fosters learning and communication. This resonates with Oberhuemer's (2005) idea of participative or democratic professionalism, which seeks to empower through co-construction of learning. Murray and McDowall Clark (2013) argue that the introduction of EYPS has provided an opportunity for a more inclusive and participative leadership perspective and the participants in their study suggest that a participative style, underpinned by the caring purpose central to ECEC, is possible. However, Murray and McDowall Clark (2013) also caution that the impetus for a more participative style of leadership, started with EYPS, could be jeopardised by EYTS. It is possible that, in the longer term, the introduction of EYPS and EYTS could reinforce the dependency culture created when leadership is seen as residing in nominated individuals. Nevertheless, participative styles of leadership have been shown to be effective in improving quality in ECEC as shown in the research of Siraj-Blatchford and Manni (2006). Furthermore, research by Hadfield et al. (2012) shows that EYPs can be instrumental in improving outcomes, particularly, for children aged three to five years. However, 67% percent of the participants in this study already held a position of authority in their setting, including as owners and managers of a setting (34%) or as middle managers, for example room leaders (33%). Therefore, whilst the models of leaderships discussed so far focus on the leader relying on influence rather than authority, the findings from the Hadfield et al. (2012) study have not resolved the key debate in respect of the extent to which a formal position of power and authority is required to implement change.

The attitude to and the exercise of power in leadership in ECEC as discussed in the previous section is complex. Hard and Jonsdottir (2013) describe the highly feminised nature of the workforce as creating a workplace culture within a '*discourse of niceness'* (p.319). 'Niceness' is entwined with the expectation and ethic of care which then prevails into an expectation of intra-staff behaviours. Hard and Jonsdottir (2013) found in their study that the '*discourse of niceness*' led to problems of leadership enactment. An attempt to be collaborative stifled difference, leading to conformity and a lack of discussion about difference in order to avoid conflict. Paradoxically, this led to behaviours which they describe as '*horizontal violence'* (p.317), defined as '*psychological harassment'* which can

include verbal abuse, humiliation, excessive criticism, exclusion and denial of access to opportunity, as well as discouragement, disinterest and withholding of information. This is in stark contrast to the 'discourse of niceness' but demonstrates frustration in the workforce with the avoidance of debate and open discussion around leadership and power (Hard and Jonsdottir 2013). In addition conformity in leadership and practice is likely to stifle change and improvements to care and education which is somewhat at odds with the role of the EYP as change agent and where this discussion began.

McDowall-Clark (2012) offers an alternative and, perhaps, more optimistic view of the enactment of leadership by an EYP to that described by Hard and Jonsdottir (2013). She describes an informal, emergent leadership style, catalytic leadership, which is distinguished from more common concepts of leadership as it is supportive and non-confrontational because the EYP is a catalyst bringing about change through small, incremental steps. In this model of catalytic leadership, change is not dependent on the EYP having authority, but influence and '*change surfaces through recognition of possibilities rather than being enforced from above*' (McDowall-Clark 2012 p.398). Perhaps this informal style, which brings about small changes, does avoid 'horizontal violence' and, as McDowall-Clark (2012) states, *'fits well within the moral purpose and explicit value base of early years'* (p.399). Whilst this approach to leadership is attractive because it seems to be a realistic and non-confrontational fit with practice in ECEC, catalytic leadership might also be slow at bringing about meaningful change to practice. If the changes are small, incremental and slow they may have little impact on the outcomes of children who are attending the setting for a relatively short period of time.

Whilst there are a range of styles and models of leadership possible in ECEC, as set out above, success as a leader can be elusive. This is because leadership does not take place in a vacuum but is set in a social, cultural and organisational context (Bolman and Deal 2013). Bolman and Deal (2013), suggest that successful leadership can be facilitated through understanding how organisations work so that the leadership role can fit the setting, rather than a one size fits all approach. This is useful when theorising leadership in ECEC as there are a range of different types of organisations within the PVI sector, a shifting policy framework and a changing social and cultural context. Leadership in ECEC must be fit for purpose but also capable of withstanding change and be able to make sense of rapidly shifting events and policy (McDowall-Clark and Murray 2012).

Bolman and Deal (2013) suggest that we carry mental models or frames in our head, that is a set of ideas and assumptions which help us understand a particular territory, in this instance the

organisation. They further suggest that it is necessary to use multiple frames, to re-frame and seek alternative perspectives to gain a better understanding of an organisation. They have identified four frames from the literature on leadership in organisations; these are the structural, human resource, political and symbolic frame and they are explained in the following section.

3.8.1 The structural frame

The structural frame depicts a rational world and treats an organisation as a factory (Bolman and Deal 2013). This frame emphasises organisational architecture, including how the organisation allocates responsibilities, and the rules, policies, systems and hierarchies created to coordinate the activities of the organisation. One of the central assumptions underpinning the structural frame is that, if formal roles and responsibilities are suitably allocated, peoples' performance will be maximised. Simpson (2010) and Payler and Locke (2013) found that considerable confusion exists around the role of the EYP, and, as Bolman and Deal (2013) assert, problems occur when organisational structure does not fit well with current circumstances. Bolman and Deal (2013) suggest that there is no such thing as an ideal structure and in every organisation the structure must evolve to fit the circumstances.

The structural frame looks beyond individuals to examine the organisational architecture at work and Bolman and Deal (2013) state that if structure is overlooked an organisation often misdirects energy and resources. They suggest that a team structure emphasising hierarchy and top down control works well for simple, stable tasks, but during times of change, such as the introduction of an EYP, the structure of the organisation must also change to develop lateral forms of communication and coordination. The following section turns to the human resource frame which in contrast, to the structural frame, focuses on what organisations and people do to and for one another.

3.8.2 The human resource frame

Bolman and Deal (2013) state that the human resource frame views the organisation as an extended family. However, individuals and groups within an organisation have different needs and will often compete for power and resources which can cause conflict. The most successful organisations do a better job of responding to the needs of both employees and customers and, through the lens of the human resource frame, we are reminded that people want things that go '*beyond money*' (p.120) from their work. Bolman and Deal (2013) suggest that viewed through the human resource frame the key challenge is for organisations to find ways for individuals with all their limitations to get the job done, whilst feeling good about themselves. There are a range of motivational strategies which

can be implemented to strengthen the bond between the individual and the organisation such as job security, paying well and training. Other strategies seek to empower staff through participation, job enrichment and egalitarianism but, as Bolman and Deal (2013) point out, *'broader, more egalitarian sharing of power is resisted worldwide'* (p.153). Furthermore, they suggest that managerial skills and understanding can be in short supply and, when managers are unable to handle the social, economic and practical elements of change, they revert to self protection. For an EYP to succeed when the manager feels vulnerable, for the reasons suggested by Bolman and Deal (2013) they will require political skills such as bargaining, negotiation and compromise; this leads into the political frame.

3.8.3 The political frame

Rather than viewing the organisation as a family, the political frame, as outlined by Bolman and Deal (2013) views the organisation as a jungle and is concerned with organisational politics, conflict, coalitions and power. For a sector with such a gendered workforce, which is imbued with and dependent upon the cultural stereotypes of women as caring and nurturing, there may be some reluctance to apply this frame. It is in fact this reluctance to consider ECEC settings through this frame which can lead to problems, as identified by Hard and Jonsdottir (2013). Yet Bolman and Deal (2013) remind us that the same dynamics of conflict, power and coalitions are found at every level of human affairs. Within the political frame, power is the most important asset and power can be defined as *'the potential ability to influence behaviour, to change the course of events, to overcome resistance, and to get people to do things they would not otherwise do'* (Bolman and Deal 2013 p.190).

The political frame suggests that power comes from the control of scarce resources and that most important decisions involve allocating scarce resources. Bolman and Deal (2013) explain that conflict over scarce resources is at the heart of day to day dynamics in the political frame. They argue that conflict is not necessarily problematic; it can stimulate creativity and new ideas but, if there is too much or it is poorly managed, then it can lead to in-fighting and destructive power struggles. Bolman and Deal (2013) suggest that, whilst *'efforts to eliminate politics are futile'* (p.208), it is possible to develop skills as a political leader and *'still do the right thing'* (p.208). It could be helpful for the EYP to develop suitable political skills; Bolman and Deal (2013) suggest that, at the start, an effective leader must set an agenda, that is outline a goal or vision, and outline a strategy for achieving the goal. The key political skill in setting the goal and outlining the strategy is sensitivity, that is the leader knows how others think and the agenda responds to their concerns. The effective leader should also develop a political map which means they anticipate potential challenges and

identify individuals who are likely to resist change. Bolman and Deal (2013) also write that the key to getting things done is through relationships; it is important to have friends and allies and equally important to foster informal communication with potential opponents. The effective leader may need to bargain and negotiate in order to make changes and Bolman and Deal (2013) suggests that the leader should adopt an approach of conditional openness. This approach starts with open and collaborative behaviour and maintains this approach unless the individual is adversarial. Then the leader responds accordingly and remains adversarial until the opponent makes a collaborative approach. The implications of Bolman and Deal's (2013) political frame are that the EYP should ensure that this is carefully managed to avoid political differences leading to conflict which could impact negatively on children, their families and other members of staff. The EYP might draw on their ethic of care and should be comfortable that their actions are in the best interests and feelings of others.

3.8.4 The symbolic frame

Bolman and Deal (2013) suggest that the symbolic frame, unlike the other frames, sees organisational life as serendipitous and the symbolic frame '*abandons the assumptions of rationality prominent in other frames'* (p.16)*.* The symbolic frame views organisations as cultures driven by rituals, symbols, stories, heroes and myths (Bolman and Deal 2013). The individuals working in the organisation are actors who must play their parts appropriately otherwise problems may arise; rituals and symbols lose their meaning (Bolman and Deal 2013). Myths, vision and values imbue the organisation with purpose. However, as identified in chapter 1 there are unclear and conflicting messages about what this purpose is in ECEC (Pugh 2014). Pugh (2014) questions if ECEC is to provide stimulation for a child's developing brain, or is it about reducing the benefit bill and enabling single parents, particularly women, to enter the workforce, or perhaps prevention and early intervention are the main drivers for provision (Pugh 2014). The implications of Bolman and Deal's (2013) symbolic frame are that if the purpose of ECEC is not clear, the actors in the organisation, including the EYP, may lose sight of the values and vision which give their roles a purpose and they, therefore, may not act appropriately. An effective leader recognises that myths, values and vision bring cohesiveness and so must strive for clarity. A number of authors (Skeggs 1997; Colley 2006; Osgood 2006) identify that caring for young children is at the heart of the ECEC practitioners' identity. The implications of the symbolic framework (Bolman and Deal 2013) are that the EYP may use the shared ethic of care at the heart of practice in ECEC to create a cohesive and clear purpose in a setting.

The central concepts of the 'Four-Frame Model' proposed by Bolman and Deal (2013) are useful in offering an explanation of organisational life. In addition the four frames can provide an image of leadership and articulate the basic leadership challenges, while, through reframing, it is also possible to generate solutions to the challenges faced by leaders. Therefore, in Chapter 7 I have drawn upon the four frame model of Bolman and Deal (2013) in the analysis of the data. Furthermore, following the presentation of findings, in Chapter 8 I have drawn on the four frame model to identify the challenges that the EYP might face as they implement changes in a setting. I also use the Bolman and Deal (2013) four frame model to suggest some essential strategies that an effective leader might use to overcome these challenges.

3.9 Chapter summary

This chapter has considered critically diverse perspectives on professionalism and there is some argument that it is, threatened by performativity (Schon 1992, Ball 2008). However, Whitty (2008) argues that professionalism is a shifting phenomenon and in fact the professional mandate can be strengthened by state regulation. The chapter then discussed critical perspectives on the professional in ECEC, there are calls for the professional working in ECEC to be a democratic professional underpinned by an ethic of care (Manning-Morton 2006). However, Taggart (2011) points out that the caring professional can be open to emotional and financial exploitation. The chapter then moved onto consider the significant social and cultural factors which shape the practitioners experience of becoming a professional specifically, gender and class. The work of Bourdieu (1992, 1977) particularly his ideas of capital and habitus were discussed to offer a possible explanation for why women, often working class, make up the majority of the workforce in ECEC. He suggests that through primary conditioning women identify themselves and are identified by society as caring, and working class women use the available economic and cultural capital to work in ECEC. Thus, caring for children is seen as natural women's work and has little economic value. The literature review considered a range of international approaches to professionalisation in ECEC and as in England many countries have moved towards raising the levels of qualification of the ECEC workforce. However, as in England it appeared that international efforts to professionalise their workforces have been unable to eradicate the split system of education and care, and the lack of parity between professionals in each sector (Vrinioti 2013).

The literature review then explored the EYP as a leader of practice and change agent (CWDC 2010) and included the debate about the most effective types of leadership in ECEC. Heikka and Waniganayake (2011) argue for leadership which is both pedagogical and distributed. The chapter

explained that within ECEC, particularly in the PVI sector there is no answer to the debate about the extent to which a formal position of power and authority is required to implement change. Therefore, the chapter considered other emerging models of leadership for example those of Hadfield et al. (2012) who argue for an EYP centric 'bottom up' approach, and McDowall Clark (2013) for a catalytic model whereby the EYP is a catalyst for small incremental changes. Then, in order to be able to interrogate the data and address the aim and objectives of the study it was necessary to include an overview of the multiframe model of Bolman and Deal (2013). This model has been selected to illuminate the effect of organisational structures and practices on the experiences of the participants as they worked towards EYPS.

The following chapter moves on from the critical review of the literature to explain the methodological approach used in this study and explains how the literature considered in this chapter provides a framework for the analysis of the data.

Chapter 4: Methodology

4.1 Chapter introduction

In this study, I explored the experiences and perspectives of practitioners who worked in ECEC as they undertook a programme of study to become an EYP. This chapter sets out the methodological approach used in this study, which is a narrative approach, and begins by explaining why this approach was selected. The opening section of the chapter also provides an overview of the philosophical underpinnings of the narrative approach and its roots in the qualitative research paradigm. In this section my standpoint is clarified for the reader so that they have an understanding of the ontological and epistemological positions of the study. The chapter then moves on to explain the methods used to generate the data and outlines the frameworks used to interpret and analyse the data. Validity and reliability of the approach to collection and analysis of the data are discussed and the final phase of the chapter is a reflexive consideration of the ethical principles underpinning this study.

This chapter explains how the methodological approach meets the following aim and objectives of this study. The aim of this study was to explore the experiences and perspectives of practitioners in ECEC as they undertake a programme of study to achieve Early Years Professional Status. The objectives were; firstly, to understand and explain how social and cultural experiences shape the way practitioners experience professionalisation and secondly, to understand and explain what effect professionalisation has on their practice and how this affects their view of themselves. The aim and objectives of this study were addressed through the following research questions:

The research questions were:

1. To what extent do social and cultural experiences shape the way the practitioners in ECEC experience professionalisation?

2. What effect does professionalisation have on practitioners leading practice and on how they view themselves, and their practice?

4.2 Methodological approach

During the taught phase of the doctoral programme I was influenced by the work of Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) and their writing on ethnography. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) explain that an ethnographic approach to data collection often includes observation, listening to conversation and collecting extensive field notes of daily practice. Therefore, in keeping with such an

ethnographic approach I planned at the pilot phase to spend time in an ECEC setting in order to generate data. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) point out that negotiating access to the field can be problematic and this certainly proved to be the case for the pilot. Although I was able to recruit two participants early on in the pilot phase, negotiating access to the settings became very protracted. I had completed the necessary safeguarding checks but complex policy changes which impacted on the first children's centre setting and personnel changes in the other setting meant permission was delayed, and then rescinded. At the pilot phase it became apparent that negotiating access to settings would be problematic; a heightened awareness of child protection creates barriers which can be time consuming for the part time researcher to negotiate, and as Roberts-Holmes (2014b) points out institutions can regard the researcher as a potentially threatening and unwelcome intrusion. Therefore, out of necessity I decided that for the pilot study I would carry out semi-structured interviews with the participants away from their settings.

This pilot phase highlighted the valuable insights that could be gained from participants' stories. My first question asked Lorna how and why she had started working in ECEC, she replied ' *Where shall I begin?*' I realised that she was telling me a story as she went back to her time, some fifteen years earlier, when she had worked in an independent school. She wove together emotional, personal and professional experiences and aspects of herself (appendix4). As the study was exploratory in nature I had not prepared a list of specific questions, rather I had followed King and Horrocks' (2010) guidance to prepare a list of issues to be covered and flexible, open ended questions that could be adapted to suit the particular interview situation (appendix 3). The interview resembled a conversation; it meandered between past and present and, although not neat, it offered meaningful insight into her perspectives and experiences. The pilot phase was extremely important in shaping the methodological approach to this study. It convinced me that that rich data could be generated from this type of semi-structured interview and I wanted to retell Lorna's story.

At the time of conducting the pilot study, I had no idea if story telling could be considered as an approach to generating and analysing research data but drawn by Lorna's story I moved towards a narrative approach. Riessman (2008) points out that transforming a lived experience through language and constructing a story, oral storytelling, is an everyday practice. People have a rich historical tradition as story tellers and it is through story that we are connected to life (White and Drew 2011). I have come to realise that storytelling is part of the narrative method and respects individuals as subjects with histories and intentions (Riessman 2008).

4.3 Narrative method of enquiry

The roots to narrative enquiry might be traced back to the '*Traditional Period*' of qualitative research (Denzin and Lincoln 2005 p.14), where qualitative researchers tended to go out into the field and write accounts of the native or 'other' in distant lands. During this period, the early 1900s to the Second World War, qualitative researchers took a positivist approach which assumed they could create an objective, value-neutral, timeless and unchanging account of experiences. Around the time of the Second World War, in the '*Modernist Phase*' (Denzin and Lincoln p.17), qualitatively oriented researchers challenged the positivist paradigm that assumed ethnographers produced objective, timeless accounts and were critical of the treatment of 'the other' in research, as practiced by traditional researchers. They were drawn to research practices that would let them give a voice to '*society's underclass*' (Denzin and Lincoln 2005 p.16). During this period positivism was challenged and the tenets of post-positivism according to Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) gained credibility. It was recognised that research is influenced by the values of and theories used by the investigator and that an understanding of reality is constructed by and between the participants. The Modernist Phase was characterised by a move away from positivism and its ontological position of a real, apprehendable reality, and its epistemological position of an objective truth (Guba and Lincoln 2005). Denscombe (2002) writes that social reality became seen as subjective, created in the minds of people and through their interactions. What is more, it was suggested that data can be distorted by the very act of collection in that humans react to the knowledge that they are being studied, so they may act differently to how they act under normal circumstances. Therefore, if these arguments are accepted there is no possibility of an objective reality or truth (Denscombe 2002).

This short history is included here because the Modernist Phase signalled a shift away from positivism toward interpretivism, and Geertz (1973) argues that the old positivist phase was giving way to a more pluralistic and open ended perspective. This brought a range of new and more experimental forms of enquiry into the paradigm of qualitative research, amongst them narrative enquiry. However, Guba and Lincoln (2005) argue that the non-positivist orientation had created a problem, called the '*Crisis of Representation'* by Denzin and Lincoln (2005 p.17), whereby the researcher can no longer capture the lived experience of the participants; rather, the experience is created in the text written by the researcher. This leads to questions of how qualitative research can be evaluated if it is a subjective text. Brewer (2000 p.43) suggests that the antidote to the crisis of representation is '*reflexivity'*. Reflexivity acknowledges that data is affected by the orientations of the researcher which in turn are shaped by their socio-historical locations, values and interests.

In the methodological approach to this study I have been influenced by theories of research methodology in concert with works from literature, most notably for this study Alan Bennett's

Talking Heads, and also occasionally by a radio program, for example concerning representations of truth in film, or a conversation with a colleague about the work of Oscar Lewis. These are included in this chapter as part of the reflexive process and in line with the narrative approach, they are part of the story of the methodological approach adopted to address the aim and objectives of this study. Reflexivity is the process of reflecting critically on the self as researcher (Guba and Lincoln 2005). In line with this approach, this chapter includes some personal reflections on my thoughts and actions as a researcher. This chapter explains the processes used to collect and interpret the data and so makes explicit how the claims to knowledge explored in Chapters 6, 7 and 8 were generated and explains my methodological decisions.

By choosing to adopt a qualitative methodology and a narrative approach, I have eschewed a naive form of realism which assumes an absolute truth and I acknowledge that the narrative accounts in this study will only ever achieve a degree of '*verisimilitude*' (Denzin 1997 p.13), that is a version of reality. In line with Guba and Lincoln (2005) I would describe myself as a post positivist, a realist, I believe that there is a reality but it is imperfectly apprehendable, value laden and subjective. In this study I have drawn heavily on the work of Skeggs (1997) as discussed in Chapters 1 and 3; however, I have not positioned myself as a feminist researcher. I believe that gender and class are fundamental to understanding and explaining the perspectives and experiences of the participants in this study; however, I am not comfortable with living up to the assertion by Denzin and Lincoln (2005p.185) that feminist research is '*committed to action in the world*'. It would be unrealistic to assume that this study would be a call to action, although I do agree with Freedman (2001) who argues for changes to the social, economic, political and cultural order to overcome discrimination against women. I have also drawn on the work of McNamara (2009), a feminist ethnographer, who advocates for women participating together in a collaborative form of investigation, and describes giving of the self on the part of the researcher to build a relationship of some intimacy between the participants and the researcher. However, whilst I believe a trusting, respectful and relatively intimate relationship was built up between me and the participants, as the author and researcher I did retain ultimate authority. Furthermore, this study was not conceived as an emancipatory project and, in choosing a qualitative approach, I was not persuaded by Denzin and Lincoln (2005) who describe the practice of qualitative research as transforming the world. Nevertheless, choosing narrative enquiry as part of a qualitative approach '*has the potential to offer a complex and nuanced account of the individual*' (Dillon 2010 pg.1) and through the intensive analysis of a small body of empirical materials, this study has provided a rich description of the social world and contributed to the field (Denzin and Lincoln 2005).

4.4 Understanding narrative

There is not a single definition of narrative; it carries many meanings, but is often used synonymously with story (Riessman 2008). Whilst Cobley (2001) agrees that story and narrative are closely related, he describes story, plot and narrative as blending together but separate. Story, suggests Cobley (2001), consists of all the events to be depicted; plot is the chain of causation which dictates that the events are linked; and narrative is the showing or telling of these events. White and Drew (2011) also recognise the separateness yet connectedness of story and narrative, suggesting that story can be understood as the verbal account given by the participant, whereas narrative might be understood as the crafted and intentional written version of the participant's account. In the social sciences, Elliott (2005) brings narrative and story together and suggests that a key element of either narrative or story is that it organises a sequence of events into a whole, so that the significance of each event can be understood through its relation to the whole. Furthermore, Polkinghorne (1995) describes narrative as a '*discourse form in which events and happenings are configured into a temporal unity by means of a plot*' (p.17). This focus on the temporal unit is important when thinking about the potential of narrative for research purposes because it reflects the increasing recognition of the importance of the temporal dimension for understanding the interrelation between individual lives, and social contexts (Elliott 2005). Temporality suggests that there is some sequence to events, and presupposes that events are related to each other by linking a prior choice or happening to a subsequent event. It is worth noting that the participants in my pilot study did not necessarily organise their stories chronologically; they tended to move between past, present and future in their accounts. However, as I organised their stories into a narrative, it was possible to see the significance of each event to their whole experience of becoming a professional and this further convinced me that a narrative approach was appropriate.

Whilst narrative may, as Riessman (2008) argues, be understood in general usage as anything beyond a few bullet points, she reminds us that not all talk or text is narrative and that the fundamental criterion of narrative is the consequential linking of events or ideas. This consequential linking is not, as Elliot (2005) states, to infer causality or the 'law' like status of cause and effect, but rather to shape the narrative and impose a meaningful pattern (Riessman 2008), for example I have imposed a pattern on the participants' responses to the interview questions in constructing the monologues in Chapter 5 . In the telling of their stories, the participants re-present, revise and edit their remembered past and their stories must always be considered in context of the interview, '*for storytelling occurs at a historical moment with its circulating discourses and power relations*' (Riessman 2008 p.8). What is more, the story is co-constructed through interaction with the

researcher and through the narrative shaping by the researcher both during and post interview. This co-construction is in line with Denscombe's (2002) notion that social reality is constructed and subjective, which resonates with my view of a value laden, imperfectly apprehendable, subjective reality.

4.5 Narrative enquiry as a research method

'What's the story', or 'what's your story' are lyrics which feature in songs by Oasis and Ella Fitzgerald; both appear to be trying to use story to make sense of an experience and the way people behave. Songs might tell stories or ask for stories to be told and, as Riessman (2008) points out, the practice of storytelling is a universal way of knowing and communicating. In this study narrative has been used to refer to the crafted intentional written version of the participant's story as told at interview (White and Drew 2011). As a methodology, Connelly and Clandinin (2006) propose that narrative enquiry is the study of experience as story; it is to view experience as a phenomena for study. Stories have great appeal; they offer comfort and familiarity. Storytelling is part of our cultural and historical repertoire, present as myths, folklore, nursery rhymes, and fairy tales, and in many other forms. As children we begin to know ourselves through the stories we are told and tell. Stories, in their many forms, often intimate and emotional, are part of practice in ECEC, and so it is probably not surprising that the participants and I, as the researcher, are drawn to them as a way of organising and representing experiences. Stories are fundamental to who we are, for example Riessman (2008) and Elliot (2005) suggest individuals and groups construct identities through storytelling and this resonates with Bruner's (1993) work. He suggests that self concept is constructed through narrative, that there is a narrative self or narrative identity. Bruner (1991) also asserts that narrative cognition or storied knowing is part of the human repertoire for knowing the world. Elliott (2005) describes the narrative researcher as having an interest in the process of change over time and an interest in the self and representations of the self. This study focused on the process of change, from a practitioner, in ECEC, to an EYP, and offers some insight into how the participants view and represent themselves, whilst working towards EYPS. Therefore, Elliott's summary fits with my rationale for choosing narrative enquiry.

Stories may well be fundamental to the human condition but Clandinin, Pushor and Orr (2007) warn that the very ubiquitousness of story can lead to complacency in the researcher. They caution against an assumption that narrative enquiry is easy, just telling and listening to stories. Furthermore, working with stories can bring other challenges for the researcher. They may assign some sort of special truth to participants' stories rather than subject them to critical analysis (White

and Drew 2011). As a researcher, I also have to be concerned with how the audience might perceive the participants' stories, if this study can contribute to knowledge about the experience of professionalisation. The audience may consider stories as unreliable, too closely associated with the telling of tales. This can be a problem for qualitative researchers; as Brewer (2000) points out, lay people and policy makers often categorise qualitative researchers as tabloid journalists, reporting interesting but unproven anecdote and hearsay. For positivists, the data and findings of the ethnographer and indeed the narrative enquirer may be considered too subjective, mere '*idiosyncratic impressions of one or two cases*' (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007 p.6).

Concerns with truth will be woven throughout this chapter but controversy surrounding the Oscars in 2013 has helped develop my thinking on this subject. The nominations for best picture that year were Lincoln (2013) , Zero Dark Thirty (2013) and Argo (2013); each film retells the story of an historical event as told through a range of sources, journalists reports, firsthand accounts, and historical documents. Whilst each film has never claimed to be more than a fictionalised and dramatised account of the events, the mere suggestion that they represent the truth incensed some, particularly politicians in the United States (ABC News 2013). When Affleck as director of Argo was interviewed he explained that, in the film, he was less concerned with whether a car bomb was delivered in a Chevy Impala or a Volkswagen, and more with the 'bigger picture', the emotional connection; he referred to this as poet's truth (BBC 2013). There has long been a tradition in poetry of intertwining fictional and non-fictional narratives as in The Iliad and The Odyssey by Homer, which deal with the events of the Trojan War (Cobley 2001). Furthermore, the practice of writing history relies not on objective, knowable truth but on a representation of what can be derived from other sources (Cobley 2001); thus, the historical record offers a re-presented, selective account of what actually happened. Historians have used narrative to re-present actual events because narrative '*plays a large part in facilitating human apprehension of the world*' (Cobley 2001 p.31). This is not to suggest that this study is fiction but to acknowledge that narrative is only ever a re-presentation of a selective account to provoke an emotional connection and facilitate apprehension (Cobley 2001). Therefore, when one of the participants was unable to remember her exact age when she left nursery, as depicted in a photograph, this did not detract from the significance of the event to her story. Whilst the word 'story' has connotations of falsehood and misrepresentation (Polkinghorne 1995) and stories can be factually inaccurate, the narrative researcher's focus is on what the substantive elements of the accounts tell us about the social world (Elliott 2005).

Polkinghorne (1995) suggests that a narrative approach allows the researcher to understand happenings from the perspective of the contribution and influence they have on a specified

outcome. Furthermore, he argues that a narrative approach helps to preserve the complexity of human action where human action is understood as the outcome of the interaction of a person's previous learning and experiences, their present situation and proposed goals and purposes. Therefore, a narrative approach is appropriate for exploring the experiences of the practitioners as they become professionals, and also to explain how social and cultural experiences shape their experiences. However, narratives impose meaning on events and experiences, not only when they are evaluated but also through the very act of structuring them into a story, with a beginning, middle and end; narrative has considerable power to organise our understandings, representations and interpretations of people's lives (Elliott 2005). As the researcher, I have therefore been mindful of the caution given by White and Drew (2011) not to overburden the voice of the participant with too much evidentiary weight; their story must be subject to critical analysis and their voice understood as historically, and culturally located with contradictory interpretations

Narrative enquiry is more than a conceptual tool; it also shaped the methods used to collect, interpret and present the data. Below I explore each of these issues in turn and describe each of these processes.

4.6 Data collection

The next section explains how the participants were selected for this study.

4.6.1 Sampling

The sample for this study came from two groups of part time students who worked full time in ECEC and had enrolled on the undergraduate practitioner pathway for EYPS. One group was based at the university where I work, the other at a partner college. The UPP was designed to allow working practitioners with a relevant foundation degree to 'top up' their qualification to ordinary degree level and achieve professional status. The students attended a weekly twilight session, either at college or university, for their degree studies and six EYPS days spread throughout the year which were held at the university. The students enrolled on the course in September and the assessments for EYPS were to take place in the following July. To recruit the participants I visited both groups during a twilight session and explained my proposal. I also left my contact details and within two weeks I had recruited two participants from each group.

The participants who volunteered make up a purposive sample, drawn from a small group and selected on the basis of their relevance to my study (Silverman 2010). King and Horrocks (2010) state that qualitative researchers seek to recruit participants who represent a variety of positions in

relation to the research topic; therefore it could be considered risky to ask for volunteers as they might not represent a variety of positions. However, asking for volunteers was intended to maintain a power sensitive and respectful approach to recruiting participants. In any study the variety of positions is bounded by the focus of the study and all of the potential participants had to meet certain admissions criteria in order to be accepted on the UPP. They had a foundation degree or equivalent relevant qualification and had to be employed in a PVI setting which was located in an area of disadvantage. All of the students were female and white which was, and still is, representative of the workforce in ECEC (The Daycare Trust 2012). Therefore, the pool of potential participants was determined by these criteria. Considering the admissions criteria which determined access on to UPP and the profile of the workforce as largely female and white, the sample is representative of some key dimensions of the workforce. In particular they work in a range of settings including a children's centre, pre-school and private day nursery. They occupy different positions including, manager and owner, pre-school assistant and nursery nurse and they are aged between twenty and fifty with experience of working in the sector ranging from five years to twenty eight years. Therefore they offer a variety of positions of the phenomenon being studied.

A brief overview introducing each participant is included below, and a more detailed pen portrait of each individual can be found in Chapter 5.

Emma, was the owner and manager of a small private day nursery; she was in her early forties and the mother of four children. She had been a scientist for ten years before becoming a child minder and had owned the nursery for four years. Emma had completed a level 3 qualification and the Foundation degree in Early Years.

Lauren, was the youngest participant at twenty one and she worked as a nursery officer in a privately owned pre-school. After her A levels, she joined the pre-school and as she had also worked there during the school holidays she had been employed there for almost five years. She had completed her level 3 qualification at the setting and then studied part time for the Foundation degree in Early Years.

Debbie, was twenty six and, like Lauren, had done her A levels and then got a job in a private day nursery. Whilst at the private nursery, she had done a level 3 qualification in child care and then a foundation degree. When the study began Debbie was the Deputy Manager of day care for a children's centre. The children's centre was part of a school and, although there was a manager of day care, the Head Teacher had managerial responsibility for the children's centre and day care.

Karen, was the most experienced practitioner; she was in her fifties and had worked in ECEC for twenty eight years. She had an NNEB qualification and had worked in many different settings. During the research study she was the pre-school room leader in a committee run but privately owned nursery. She had studied part time to complete the Foundation degree in Early Years.

The decision to recruit participants from the university cohort and the college was in part practical. As each cohort of students was small, I needed to ensure that the potential pool of available participants was as large as possible. Recruiting participants from the university and the college also strengthened the variety of positions within the sample. The participants were working in settings located in different LA's. In addition their experiences of studying at university or college were also likely to be different. Lauren and Karen, based at the university, had a pre-existing relationship with me, in that I had taught them on the foundation degree. I have no doubt that this relationship influenced their decision to volunteer. Perhaps their volunteering was in some part due to the traditional imbalance of power which subordinates the student (Bishop and Glynn 2003); perhaps they wanted to help or please me. However, I was not involved in their preparation or assessment of EYPS, and unable to influence their progress on the programme. When asked why they had volunteered, Karen said she hoped it might help others and influence policy makers, while Lauren replied '*If no one volunteers where would that leave research?*'

Although I had not taught the students at the college, I was known to them as the Course Leader of the validating university and therefore represented a position of authority. Although the participants may 'misrecognise' the power relations (Jenkins 1992 p.104) in their decision to take part, both had personal reasons for volunteering and exercised agency. Debbie linked her volunteering to her experience of studying for a degree, '*I enjoy it (studying) and this might be useful, I want to go on and do my Honours at some point and this fits in'*. For Emma, her background as a scientist influenced her decision, '*from my work I know how important research is'.* The next section outlines how the data was collected from my sample of four participants.

4.6.2 Interviews

Narrative interviews tend to be semi-structured and they can be understood as a device which facilitates empathy (Elliott 2005). This empathy can help build a reciprocal relationship between the researcher which Oakley (1981) argues is essential, both morally and ethically. I discovered during the pilot phase that a semi-structured approach allowed me to respond naturally to the participants and to listen to their responses, rather than worry about which question came next. This approach attempted to ensure that the participants were regarded as individuals and not objects to be mined

for information (Oakley 1981). Oakley (1981) and Barr (2010) argue that a narrative approach, using semi-structured interviews, gives the participant the opportunity to tell their story and this shifting to a more conversational approach can be power sensitive. King and Horrocks (2010), also suggest that a conversational approach can preserve the dignity of the participant, reducing their anxiety, and minimizing the deleterious effect of status differences on an interview situation. Semi-structured interviews suit the exploratory nature of this study and underpin the ethical approach to the research.

A narrative approach to data collection can be a challenge for the researcher as Chase (2005) argues that it requires a conceptual shift on the part of the researcher, to view participants as having stories to tell and voices of their own. Furthermore, Elliott (2005) suggests that the interviewer must stimulate the interviewee's interpretive capacities as it is during the interview that the participant's story is created and the interview is the site for the production, and construction, of data . Fontana and Frey (2005) point out that in any interview in which two people are involved the interview is an active collaboration and this leads to a contextually bound and mutually created story.

 Although there does not seem to be an ideal number of interviews for this length of study, Seidman (1998) and Elliott (2005) suggest that three interviews are needed per participant and should not exceed ninety minutes in length. Although, they do not say why the interviews should not exceed ninety minutes I suggest that more than ninety minutes would be an imposition for participants. I carried out four interviews with the participants which were timed to coincide as closely as possible with key points in the UPP which lasted twelve months. The key points selected for the interviews were:

- Within 4 weeks of starting the EYPS programme,

- Post progress review approximately 12 weeks into the programme,

- Post final assessment approximately 12 months after the start of the programme.

- Post award of EYPS, approximately 15 months after the start of the programme.

The timing of the interviews ensured that the gap between interviews was not too long.

 Table 1 sets out the details of when each participant was interviewed and the duration of each interview.

Table 1 Interview Schedule

Interview number	participant	date	duration
1	Emma	23/10/12	63 mins
	Karen	10/10/12	68 mins
	Lauren	10/10/12	47 mins
	Debbie	11/11/12	56 mins
2	Emma	4/3/13	42 mins
	Karen	6/3/13	49 mins
	Lauren	6/3/13	49 mins
	Debbie	4/3/13	66 mins
3	Emma	24/6/13	85 mins
	Karen	20/6/13	68 mins
	Lauren	18/6/13	65 mins
	Debbie	2/7/13	62 mins
4	Emma	1/10/13	26 mins
	Karen	14/11/13	61 mins
	Lauren	14/11/13	36 mins
	Debbie	1/10/13	49 mins

4.6.3 Interview site

It is important to consider where interviews should take place King and Horrocks (2010) suggest that the physical environment can have a strong influence on minimising differentials in power and status, and also on how the interview proceeds. Physical and psychological comfort is important for the researcher and the participant (King and Horrocks 2010), and on the whole my participants seemed to be most comfortable either at the university or in college, rather than in their place of work or a cafe. Fortunately I was able to secure a small private room in both settings. Whilst the choice of venue was practical, as interview times could be arranged to coincide with visits to their

place of study, it also offered psychological comfort in the form of privacy and protection from possible censure from friends, family or staff at their place of work. I did conduct one interview with Debbie at home; she was very busy with arrangements for her wedding and she was trying to use her time efficiently. It was a very comfortable setting; however, the interview was disrupted by drilling and hammering, and the early arrival of her fiancé. I also carried out one interview with Emma in her setting; this was at her invitation and as the owner and manager she was able to arrange for the interview to take place uninterrupted in her office. Emma was very comfortable in this environment and importantly it helped build rapport; however it was not practical for Emma to repeatedly use her time and office in this way. King and Horrocks (2010) describe building rapport with the participant as a '*key ingredient*' (p.48) of qualitative interviews.

4.7 Interview schedule and plan for participant feedback

4.7.1 Interview 1(interview guide appendix 5)

The first interviews took place approximately during their fourth week on the programme. This allowed the participants enough time to settle into their studies and coincided with the second of six EYPS study days. This day introduced the participants to the EYPS standards and provided an overview of the programme and the assessment process. All of the EYPS days took place at the university and the students from the college and university were taught together. The purpose of this initial interview was to collect pertinent biographical details and I began by asking them to introduce themselves and to explain where they worked and to describe their current job role. I asked them to explain why they had chosen to work in ECEC and why they had decided to become an EYP. I had previously asked the participants to bring in four or five photographs which included people, places or times that they considered to be significant or had some relevance to their decision to work in ECEC and to becoming an EYP. Cole and Knowles (2001) point to photographs as helpful in establishing a chronology of sorts, and as a way of remembering important life themes and critical incidents. Photographs are often used by practitioners in ECEC to document children's learning and development experiences and they can be useful to share information with the children, parents and colleagues. Therefore, I believed that these participants would feel comfortable using photographs to share their experiences with me. I also took some of my own photos as I felt this would contribute to a more open, trusting relationship (King and Horrocks 2010), reduce the power imbalance and if necessary provide an ice breaker. It is common for participants to feel some anxiety; they may worry about not having anything interesting to say or try to work out what the researcher wants them to say. I thought that by using photographs some of this initial

anxiety might be lessened and, whilst this did appear to be the case for three of the participants, this was not true for Debbie. She was orphaned as a young child and she either did not have many photographs of her early life or chose not to bring them to avoid painful memories. I came to realise, some considerable time after the interview, that by including photographs I could have made Debbie feel very uncomfortable. It is possible that Debbie felt I was exerting pressure on her to conform to what appears to be expected from the interview, in the same way that King and Horrocks (2010) identify that leading questions or judgmental responses exert pressure on the participant. Whilst I had given considerable thought as to how to formulate my questions and had an opportunity to test my interview technique in the pilot study, I had not considered the possible adverse impact of using photographs on the participants or the study. However, for the other participants the inclusion of photographs did appear to be a positive and productive experience. Karen's picture with her sister helped her remember her experiences at nursery which were significant to her decision to work in ECEC. Similarly Lauren used the photograph of her aunt to explain how important she had been in Lauren's decision to work in ECEC, and to highlight her support as Lauren worked towards EYPS.

McNamara (2009) states the researcher must build in a debriefing mechanism as the research process can be unsettling for the participants; therefore, I built in two opportunities for participant feedback after interviews 1 and 3.

4.7.2 Interim feedback 1

The first interim feedback occurred between weeks twelve and fourteen of the programme and was an opportunity to share, via e-mail, the key points from the initial transcription, and to ask the participants for their thoughts and comments. Debbie commented that '*It was good to talk like that, it's good to get it out'* which suggests that the interview process had some cathartic value for her. Karen and Emma said it was hard to remember what they had said but that '*it seems fine*' and Lauren made no comment. By providing interim feedback to the participants they had an opportunity to reflect and reconsider their participation in the study, which McNamara (2009) suggests maintains an ethical and participatory approach. It also allowed me to keep in touch with the participants between interviews.

4.7.3 Interview 2 (interview guide appendix 6)

These took place at the midpoint on the EYPS pathway. As part of the EYPS pathway, the participants were required to complete a reflective self assessment which forms the basis of a progress review meeting with their university mentor. This seemed a logical point at which to hold the second

interview which could be tied into their progress on the EYPS program. I asked the participants to bring the progress review form, DR01, with them as I thought it might be a useful starting point for this interview. Only one participant brought the form to discuss; however, this did not prevent the participants from discussing their progress and experiences on the pathway. As the interviews were semi-structured, I had identified the following prompts to guide the discussion. The prompts were focused on changes to their practice, the impact of the experience of the programme on relationships both personal and professional, and who knew they were doing the course and what they thought.

4.7.4 Interview 3 (interview guide appendix 7)

These interviews took place shortly after the final assessment, approximately twelve months into the pathway. In the case of Lauren and Karen, the interviews took place only days after the final assessment, while Debbie and Emma were interviewed two weeks after their final assessment. I began this interview by asking how the assessment went and then followed up on specific lines of enquiry which I had identified from the previous interviews. Daiute (2014) suggests that narrative enquiry is valued for individuality and remains personal. She suggests that researchers can conduct a systematic narrative enquiry while the design of the interviews remains sensitive to what the participants might share. Daiute (2014) argues that narrative enquiry is dynamic and that it is a social process occurring in life. Therefore, just as I would in life I adapted my interviews to be personal to what the participants had told me in previous interviews. With Lauren, I was keen to know if she was still considering going onto complete her honours degree and undertake QTS and if so why. With Karen and Debbie I was eager to find out how their managers had reacted and what their next steps would be. In the interview with Emma I wanted to find out if she thought that having achieved EYPS it would make any difference to the future of her setting.

4.7.5 Interim Feedback 2

At this point, some fourteen months after the first interview I sent through the crafted narratives of the interviews. I refer to these crafted narratives as monologues and these are discussed in detail on page(78). I hoped that these narratives would, as Denzin (1997) describes, map the real experiences of the participants, offering a version of reality , which was recognisable to the participants. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) suggest that validity can be established by taking account of the perspectives of the actors involved in the situation and that multiple perspectives can be a source of insight into those experiences. Lauren did not comment on the narrative, while Debbie wrote *'although I don't remember saying all that, it does sound like me, like something I would say'*. Karen

also wrote that she thought the narrative sounded like her but she also thought that she sounded '*whingey*' and she wanted it to be known that she was grateful to be working towards EYPS. Karen's response prompted me to consider the potential tension which surrounded the ownership of data. In my reading of the narrative it simply had not occurred to me that Karen was 'whingey' but I must acknowledge that I had selected from her interviews what I thought was interesting to my studies and there was some risk to this approach, not least, that I used my position of power to shape a particular version of social reality (King and Horrocks 2010). Furthermore, as researchers we seek to problematise and perhaps this caused me to distort the monologue to emphasise problems, tensions and issues. Karen did not want me to alter the text but she was keen for me to know that she was grateful for the opportunity to become an EYP. This might be, as King and Horrocks (2010) point out, because most participants want to be represented in a positive light.

4.7.6 Interview 4(interview guide appendix 8)

This was the final interview and took place three months after the final assessment some 15 months from the start of the programme and once the participants had been awarded EYPS. It was important to let this time pass for the participants to get used to being an EYP and to ascertain if EYPS had made a difference to them and their practice. Furthermore, the government had announced that EYPS had been replaced by EYTS just after the third interview and it was important to explore what the participants thought and felt about this change.

4.8 Giving form to and interpreting the data

Once the interviews are over, Barr (2010) points out that the participants should be able to rely on the researcher to do their job, which is to give form to and interpret the data. I transcribed the oral narratives as close to verbatim as possible, and then transformed the transcription into a written text (transcriptions for Lauren appendices 8-11). There are multiple literary devices and models available to present the data in the form of a narrative. Polkinghorne (1995) for example, emphasizes the centrality of plot as a way to set the temporal range, provide criteria for the selection of events, temporally order the events and then to clarify the meaning events have as contributors to the story. White (1978) suggests that, to develop a narrative, attention should be given to cultural context, the embodied nature of the protagonist, significant other people, the protagonists' choices and actions, history, temporal structure and analysis. Whilst Wolcott (1994), Polkinghorne (1995) and White (1978) offer academic and theoretical models to present data as narrative, they seemed remote and disconnected from the participants whose stories were so alive in my head. I arrived at an approach using three layers of analysis, the intent of the first layer was to

preserve the participant's voice, the second layer offered a thematic narrative analysis drawing on key debates identified in the literature and the third layer, also presented a thematic narrative analysis specifically to explore the effect of organisational structures and practices on the participants as they worked towards EYPS. The three layers of analysis are explained in the following section.

4.8.1 First layer of analysis

The construction of this layer of analysis was heavily influenced by the work of Oscar Lewis (2011) *The Children of Sanchez* . Lewis was an anthropologist who repeatedly returned to Mexico to interview the Sanchez family and had spent years living close by, studying the urbanization of peasants. I have been influenced by the technique Lewis adopted to present the narratives whereby each member of the family tells his own story in his own words (Lewis 2011). He suggests this method tends to reduce investigator bias because the accounts are given in the words of the subjects themselves, and preserves for the reader the emotional understanding and satisfaction that the researcher experiences working with the subjects (Lewis 2011). The individual accounts in Lewis' study are compelling but together they are powerful as they reveal some of the universal characteristics of the '*culture of poverty*' (Lewis 2011 pg xxxvii). The individual accounts produced in this study preserve the unique story of each participant and revealed some characteristics of professionalisation within ECEC in the PVI sector.

In preparing his interviews for publication, Lewis eliminated his questions and then selected, arranged and organised the materials into coherent life stories (Lewis 2011). Whilst it is relatively straightforward to eliminate the interviewer's questions, selection, arrangement and organisation of the data are somewhat more complex. Plot, as Polkinghorne (1995), urges is central to narrative and the study itself provides the framework for the plot (becoming a professional) and sets a temporal range (the length of the EYP programme and the participant's life time). The plot also ultimately determines the criteria for selection used by the researcher (Polkinghorne 1995); however, the very act of listening and re-listening to the interviews convinced me that I had to find a way for the reader to hear what I heard. The participant's voice would repeatedly scroll through my head, rather like the news headlines on the bottom of a television screen.

This oft repeated monologue led me to the next significant influence in the presentation and organisation of my data, Talking Heads by Alan Bennett (2007). I am unable to fully explain how my brain made the connection between a play I had watched in the nineteen eighties featuring Patricia Routledge in A Lady of Letters and my data. Perhaps it is because Alan Bennett predominantly

presents the stories of northern women in Talking Heads, and the participants and I are northern women. Also, the women in Bennett's stories might be considered unremarkable, mundane and parochial, with little to tell us about life, until they begin to talk. They are women who have not been listened to, often powerless. The participants in this study might also be considered unremarkable and to lack power and status; therefore, the monologue is an opportunity for them to be heard. I understand that there is a risk of associating the monologues I present with Bennett's fictional stories; they too might be considered to be fiction. However, Lewis (2011) acknowledges that his life histories *'have something of both art and life'* (p. xxxiii) yet he believed '*this in no way reduces the authenticity of the data or their usefulness to science'* (p. xxxiii).

Appendix (13) illustrates how the monologues were constructed. Each interview was transcribed then listened to a further four or five times. I made copious, hand written notes at each listen to immerse myself in the data and to identify significant elements for the plot. I sketched out the basic story, see appendix (13) and then began identifying text from the transcript which would fit the plot. The text was cut and pasted and reordered until it formed a coherent whole. Each monologue affords the reader an opportunity to analyse, interpret and impose their own meaning on events and is the first layer of analysis. However, the researcher must also, as Barr (2010) asserts, do their job and bring theory to bear on the data to provide critical analysis or interpretation of the data.

4.8.2 Second layer of analysis

The monologue was an opportunity to bring the work close to the participants by preserving the holistic nature of their story, nevertheless, it was necessary to shine a light (Skeggs 1997), a theoretical light, on the data to add to the existing knowledge and understanding of professionalisation of the ECEC workforce. The second layer of analysis was a thematic narrative analysis, drawing on the work of Riessman (2008) who argues that thematic narrative analysis is differentiated from grounded theory in that prior theory, normally eschewed in the early stages of a grounded theory study, guides all of the narratives. She also suggests that sequences of narrative are preserved rather than segmented to keep the story intact. The sequences of data selected should, in a thematic narrative analysis, seek out causal connections among the major plot elements and identify common and diverse elements across the narratives (Daiute 2014). In this study the major plot elements, or themes, were identified from the literature for their significance to debates concerning professionalisation in ECEC. The themes identified were, gender, class care, performativity and professional recognition and the professional mandate. I have worked with a single narrative at a time and reproduced lengthy excerpts of interview data which were selected to

illustrate general patterns across narratives, or uncover different explanations of the experiences and perspectives of becoming an EYP. Causal connections were sought out in each narrative, for example the influence of early caring experiences on the participant's decision to work in ECEC (see analysis appendix 14). Riessman (2008) highlights that in this type of analysis the emphasis is on the told and the primary focus is on what is said. Thematic narrative analysis is unlike grounded theory as it does not involve a detailed thematic analysis which relies on the deconstruction of data (Riessman 2008).

4.8.3 Third layer of analysis

The third layer of analysis was necessary because it emerged from the data that organisational structures and practices had a significant effect on the participants' experiences as they worked towards EYPS. Therefore, in order to fully explore this an additional layer of analysis was required which drew on the multiframe model of Bolman and Deal (2013). Bolman and Deal (2013), as discussed in the literature review, suggest that we use multiple frames to help us understand organisational structures and practices, for example leadership. They are concerned with how '*multiframe*' (p.18) thinking applies to organisations. However, given that multiframe thinking is a way of understanding leadership and improvement strategies (Bolman and Deal 2013), it resonates with the role of the EYP, as a leader and change agent. The guidelines for a narrative thematic analysis were followed in that sequences of data were selected to preserve the story, Riessman (2008) suggests that long sequences should be used, which I did and the sequences were linked by text. The sequences to be included were identified using the four frames of Bolman and Deal, structural, human resource, political and symbolic (see appendix 15).

To summarise the analysis of the data, the first layer of analysis, the monologues, are crafted narratives of the participants' stories before theory was brought to bear on them. They underpin the second and third layers of analysis but can stand alone as a holistic account of the participants' experiences and perspectives as they worked towards EYPS. The second layer of analysis presents selected sequences of data for each participant which illustrate the identified themes. The sequences of data are linked by text and the intent is to preserve the story. The analysis is followed, in the same chapter,6, by a critical discussion which interrogates the data to, as Daiute (2014) suggests identify common and diverse elements across the narratives. Chapter 6 partially explains how social and cultural factors shape the participants' experiences and also explains the effect of professionalisation on the participants and their practice. Chapter 7 sets out the third layer of analysis, the multiframe analysis, and includes a critical discussion which once again indentifies

common and diverse elements across the individual narratives in the chapter. The second and third layer of analysis offer different critical perspectives on the data but together they offer a comprehensive explanation of how social and cultural experiences shape the participants' experiences of professionalisation, and the effect of professionalisation on the participants. The final chapter,9, brings together the key findings from the second and third layer of analysis and summarises them in relation to the objectives of the study.

The following section considers Guba and Lincoln's (2005) authenticity criteria which they suggest should inform rigorous enquiry. The discussion then moves onto consider issues of validity and reliability in relation to narrative enquiry and this study.

4.9 Authenticity criteria

Rather than thinking about this study only with reference to validity and reliability, it has been helpful to me to consider Guba and Lincoln's (2005) writing on authenticity criteria. The criteria are fairness, ontological authenticity, educative authenticity and tactical authenticity, which Guba and Lincoln (2005) describe as the hallmarks of trustworthy and rigorous constructivist enquiry. Fairness is described as a quality of balance, a deliberate attempt to prevent marginalisation and ensure that all voices have a chance to be represented. Whilst I have made a genuine attempt to ensure the participants are not marginalised and are treated fairly, I cannot say the same for the people they have included in their stories, such as the management teams spoken about by Karen and Debbie. Therefore, in an attempt to redress this imbalance, I acknowledge that not all voices are represented equally; it is simply not possible to do so in this study. Guba and Lincoln (2005) describe ontological and educative authenticities as a raised level of awareness in the research participants. They also extend this description to include those who surround the participants and the people they come into contact with for some organisational purpose. It is not possible to ensure that the participants in this study achieve full ontological or educative awareness of the findings of this study. However, on completion of this thesis I do intend to disseminate the findings to students, participants and colleagues through my teaching and writing. In addition I will send the participants a copy of the final thesis and suggest that we meet as a group to discuss their thoughts and feelings about the research process and the findings. Guba and Lincoln (2005) describe tactical authenticity as the ability of the study to prompt action by the participants and the involvement of the researcher in training participants in social action. Whilst this description of tactical authenticity resembles forms of critical theorist action research, predicated on emancipatory action and social change (Guba and Lincoln 2005), I have a less ambitious interpretation which includes the participants recognising their

own worth and feeling valued. This includes being paid more and achieving the aspirations that they voiced during this study, for example getting a new job or becoming a teacher. As the researcher, my contribution to supporting participants to engage in social action will include dissemination of the study to the participants, academics and students, and I will continue to advocate on behalf of EYPs and EYTs, wherever possible, for equality, and to be recognised as professionals in the sector and in society.

4.10 Validity

This study focuses on a small number of participants. This can lead to debate about the external validity or generalisability which can be understood as the '*applicability of the data to other like cases*' (Brewer 2000 p.46). Riessman (2008) acknowledges that a small scale study can be overvalued but reminds us they can be a valuable route to accumulating knowledge. Furthermore, she argues that a small number of participants can help uncover social practices that are taken for granted and can produce depth rather than breadth of insight. Riessman (2008) also suggests that summarising or generalising may not be desirable but that the beauty of narrative studies is that they reveal the many sided, complex and sometimes conflicting stories of the participants. In addition Denzin and Lincoln (2005) argue that no individual is ever just an individual; they are always an instance of more general social experiences and social processes.

External validity is inextricably linked to validity which as a concept is problematic since, as Denzin (1997) points out, there are multiple realities structured by multiple truths; therefore, validity in a narrative paradigm might be seen in relation to a text's '*verisimilitude'*(p13), its ability to map the real. Bruner (1991) suggests narrative constructions can only ever achieve 'verisimilitude', that is a version of reality, and their acceptability is governed by convention and necessity. Riessman (2008) suggests that, in narrative research, there are two levels of validity, the story told by the participant and the validity of the analysis, or the story told by the researcher. She reminds us that there can be problems in establishing validity as '*Life stories are not static; memories and meanings of experiences change as time passes'* (p.198). It is not possible to say how the participants will view my narrative representations later, particularly as their lives move on. Also, they have not had the opportunity to read my analysis, which they may not agree with, but I do not believe that this renders the work invalid; rather, as Riessman (2008) states, it brings another perspective, a different interpretation, and a kind of triangulation, as explained below.

Triangulation is a common technique to check validity which can include gathering data from several sources (Silverman 2010). However, triangulation might also be understood as viewing data in

different ways (Silverman 2010) to bring alternative perspectives. In this study the focus was on collecting rich data from a small, limited number of participants. Therefore, in order to bring alternative perspectives to the data it has been subjected to three layers of analysis including the monologues and two layers of thematic narrative analysis. For Brewer (2000), validity is established through rigorous practice and he stresses that the complexities of data must be shown, to avoid the suggestion that there is a simple fit between the social world being studied and the ethnographic representation. Brewer's words are equally applicable to a narrative representation and the application of theory and the use of the multiframe model, as used in this study, have drawn out the complexities of the data. Narratives do not establish the truth of an event and this is not the intent, rather the researcher constructs an interpretive account, which is trustworthy, open to interrogation and persuasive (Riessman 2008). The narratives presented in this study followed by the layers of thematic analysis are open to interrogation and their validity can be judged by the reader. The following section considers the concept of reliability in qualitative research.

4.11 Reliability

King and Horrocks (2010) argue that reliability in qualitative studies cannot rely on consistent or repeated measurements sought in quantitative studies and it can be difficult to disentangle it from validity as discussed earlier. Perhaps, therefore, some of the measures taken to support validity might also support reliability; for example, as Silverman (2010) and Riessman (2008) insist, the audience must be shown the procedures used, so they can judge if a method is reliable. The intention of this chapter is to show the procedures used and offer a level of transparency so that judgments can be made by the audience. Silverman (2010) also suggests that pre-testing the questions is a logical way of testing the reliability of the methods of data collection. The pilot study afforded me an opportunity to practice and test my approach to interview questions and technique, and also to ponder on my relationship with the participants. My pre-existing relationship with two of the participants brought significant advantage to the process as we had an established level of intimacy and reciprocity. This is important in minimizing status differentials and ensuring the participants are not viewed as objects (Oakley 1981). Nevertheless, a pre-existing relationship does not preclude the participants from feeling co-erced into the research, as they may feel pressurised not to let me, the researcher, down. This is less likely to be the case for the participants at the college as I have not been involved in teaching or assessing them. Although it did take slightly longer to build the same level of trust and intimacy with these participants, the quality and quantity of the data I collected suggests that a good level of intimacy, trust and reciprocity was built; this might be because I have a relaxed and friendly interview style. Whilst this open style can be an advantage, I

did notice in the pilot study that I had a tendency to talk too much, with the intention of encouraging the participants but also potentially leading the discussion of their experiences.

Although I made a conscious effort throughout the main study interviews to avoid talking too much, using non verbal cues instead to signal encouragement and build rapport, thinking about talk has led me to consider voice and the relationship between the participants' and the researcher's voice. Chase (2005) identifies three narrative strategies to understand the relationship between the participants' and the researcher's voice. The first strategy, Authoritative, privileges the researcher and it is likely to reinforce hierarchical power differences between the researcher and the participant. Although, the Authoritative approach might be questioned, as it objectifies the participant, it can be a legitimate approach because the participant has a different interest in the story from the researcher. The second strategy, Supportive, privileges the participant's voice but can be criticised for romanticising the participant's voice as authentic. The final strategy, Interactive, displays the intersubjectivity between the researcher's and participants' voices. As the researcher, I have moved between the typologies; for example, the monologues privilege the participants' voices (supportive), yet I have selected what to include (authoritative); and the monologues are the result of interviews which display the intersubjectivity between the participants and researcher (interactive). It is possible to see examples of moving between the typologies in the interview for example I ask Lauren, '*so would it be fair to say you are ambitious?*' here I was authoritative suggesting to Lauren that she was ambitious. Lauren replied that she wanted '*career enhancement'*, an example of intersubjectivity between Lauren and I and an example of the interactive typology (see appendix 9).Positivist notions of reliability which rely on consistent or repeated measurements (Silverman 2010) are at odds with this type of qualitative study and considerations of voice further cloud the issue. It is possible for me to say, borrowing the words from Guba and Lincoln (2005), that I have created '*re-presentations that are only and always shadows of the actual people, events and places: that identities are fluid rather than fixed'* (p.212).

4.12Ethics and reflexivity

As part of doctoral study the researcher has gained ethical consent from the institution and Thomson and Walker (2010) point out that this consent generally adheres to three principles; informed consent, confidentiality and doing no harm. Williams (2010) cautions the researcher that ethical consent from the university does not help them anticipate the ethical challenges that might arise, and that ethical research ought to be an ongoing reflexive process. Williams (2010) argues that the reflexive awareness of the researcher lays at the core of an ontological not methodological

approach to ethics, and as such foregrounds the character of the researcher. Reflexivity, as referred to by Williams (2010), is the '*internal dialogue through and in which we go about formulating a thought, questioning ourselves, clarifying beliefs and inclinations'* (p. 259). In this chapter I have already laid bare some of my internal dialogue on truth, power and voice and below I set out the internal debate of my enactment of the basic ethical principles underpinning institutional consent.

4.12.1 Informed consent

King and Horrocks (2010) explain that participants should give their knowing consent to take part in the research and I tried to ensure that this study's participants had the information needed to help them make the decision (appendix 16), and that they signed a consent form before the first interview (appendix 17). However, at the start of this type of fluid, qualitative study built around semi-structured interviews, it is not possible to provide all the information in advance for example exactly how long the interview might take, or the questions that will be asked. At the time of data collection I was still working through my ideas for analysing and interpreting the data and it was not possible to fully inform the participants of my approach; therefore, they cannot ever fully know what they have consented to. Nevertheless, I did check before each round of interviews that they were happy to continue participating in the study, as Silverman (2010) reminds us that consent has to be a process not a one off event. However, it may have been difficult for the participants to say 'no' as they were sat in front of me, digital voice recorder switched on and ready to go. This is because of the hierarchical power seen to reside with the researcher and also because they are caring individuals and would not want to jeopardise the research study. The participants were given two opportunities to provide feedback on the data, this went some way towards ensuring 'verisimilitude' of the data and that the participants perceived it to be a fair representation of their experiences.

4.12.2 Confidentiality and anonymity

From the outset I have stored the data securely, treated it with respect and it is anonymised. However, Williams (2010) writes about the fragility of anonymity and describes how the researcher can lose control of confidentiality and anonymity. This can occur because the participants talk to each other and discuss their participation in the study. This was a strong possibility in this study where the participants were drawn from a small group which met regularly as part of the EYPS programme. Whilst the participants probably had more important things to discuss, there is a risk that this could have happened. Also, because the number of practitioners on the programme was very small, it is entirely possible that others in the group realised who was taking part, so anonymity could have been compromised. I do not know what the risk is to the participants of this possible

compromise to their anonymity, and I am not sure that I could prevent it from happening. The participants have agency over who they discuss their participation with and I am not the sole guardian of anonymity.

4.12.3 Claim to do no harm

From the outset the intention was to do no harm to the participants and I operated within an ethic of care which foregrounded sensitivity and the dignity of the participant (Christian 2005). The interviews took place in locations favoured by the participants, I listened attentively during the interviews, careful not to interrupt and have crafted the monologues using the participants words. However, as Williams (2010) drawing on Josselson (1996) cautions the research process is intrusive and language can never contain a whole person, so the very act of trying to write down and sum up a participant's life might be seen as a violation. I believe there is a need to understand the experiences of the practitioner as they become a professional and to try and tease out the consequences for the sector, and this is my justification for the intrusion. There are also selfish reasons for undertaking this study; I want the status that having a doctorate will bring and the potential for other job opportunities. I have also been seduced by the idea of the interviews having a therapeutic role. As Debbie explained, '*it's good to talk*'.

4.13 Chapter Summary

This chapter is an account of the methodological approach and the methods used to collect and interpret the data in this study which, explored the experiences and perspectives of practitioners who worked in ECEC as they undertook a programme of study to become an EYP. It explains that I have chosen a qualitative approach and, as a post positivist, a realist, I believe that there is a reality but it is imperfectly apprehendable, value laden and subjective (Guba and Lincoln 2005). Semi-structured interviews were used to gather the data and were the first step in storying the participants' stories (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007). Furthermore, I have set out my position, not as a feminist researcher but certainly as an advocate for better pay, conditions and for higher status for those working in ECEC who are predominantly female. In addition, as Brewer (2000) demands of the researcher, I have identified the topic, laid out my approach to the analysis and interpretation of the data and discussed strengths and weaknesses of my approach, and explored reflexively the ethical dilemmas I have faced. In this way the reader should have the information they need to judge the validity of the study.

The following chapter presents the monologues the first layer of analysis; these are an important precursor to the secondary and tertiary analysis. They offer a full, rich account of the participants' experiences and privilege their stories before they are deconstructed, and theory is brought to bear on the data. Chapters 6 and 7 then set out the second and third layers of analysis which interrogate the data, in light of key theory identified in the literature review, to explain the participants' experiences and perspectives of professionalisation. The implications of the findings from the multiframe analysis in Chapter 7 are further explored in Chapter 8 and their significance for ECEC are explained.

Chapter 5 : The monologues

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the individual and unique stories of the participants in their own words. A detailed account of how these stories were produced, as monologues, can be found in Chapter 4 but in summary the interview questions were eliminated and the data was arranged into coherent narratives. The monologues privilege the voice of the participants and also afford the reader the opportunity to interpret and impose their own meaning on the data. Each monologue is preceded by a short profile of the participant and Debbie's pen portrait and monologue open the chapter.

5.2 Debbie

5.2.1 Pen portrait

Debbie was born in 1987 and when she was just a child both her parents died. She was then cared for by her grandparents and her aunt and uncle. Debbie always thought that she would be a teacher but *'messed up'* in sixth form and she explained this was because she was working thirty seven hours a week in a restaurant. She then moved on to a job in a private day nursery and found that she progressed really quickly in terms of her professional development from an apprenticeship and on to the part time foundation degree at a college of FE. At the start of this study Debbie was employed as a Nursery Officer in a children's centre which had recently become part of a school. Her responsibilities included leading a small staff team providing full day care for children from birth to five years of age.

Whilst Debbie was on the course she was also busy organising her wedding, training for running a marathon and for her black belt in Karate. The first time we met was at the FE College, Debbie was a little late and as I did not know her I was worried that she was not going to come. However Debbie often had to work late and on this occasion she had managed to leave work early only to get home and find she had a power cut. I include these details to illustrate how busy Debbie was yet she still turned up for the interview and took part in the study. Debbie did describe herself as being 'driven' and admits that eventually she will 'go for QTS', though she wants to stay working in early years.

5.2.2 Monologue

Oh it felt good yeah, she was really lovely the assessor lady, it just seemed to flow really well. I had been nervous but, once she arrived, it was alright in the end. Everything was last minute but once I'd handed my work in I just focused on it. I just did a normal activity. I thought it was just relaxed. It was definitely worthwhile. I've got a status, well if I pass, and a degree, the first one out of my mum's side to ever get a degree. At work it's still me doing the job; the assessor highlighted that I was doing my job, the deputy manager's job and the children's centre teachers job, and she's a children's centre teacher. In private terms, I am the deputy manager but, in council terms, a nursery officer. My manager is fighting for me to be paid as a deputy children's centre manager and she said 'I'm really proud of you'. I'm still me, everybody already saw me as their leader so they couldn't treat me any differently, but they keep asking me if I've got it yet and they do look at me 'yeah Debbie has got more knowledge'. No one in school has said anything. It's a shame I can't just wave it and say, 'look I've got the status', but you can't, can you? If everything goes to plan then this will be one of the best years of my entire life, planning my wedding, getting married, get my degree, this is special to me.

I've got through the process. I do feel that you just get a pass or fail which is a bit annoying but I know what I put into it. It's hard, really hard with the workload I'm juggling and I bring a lot of work home from work with planning, phonics and the data. I do everything the nursery teacher does but I'm supposed to be with the children thirty four hours, but sometimes when I'm with the kids my heads everywhere else and that's upsetting. Then, with an impending Ofsted due, all the paperwork has to be up to date and I'm engaged now which is a big part of my life and I'm trying to juggle that. You've caught me on a bad day, too much to do, too little time. I'm on track in my head but not on paper; everything I'm doing for work links in to it (EYPS), all I need to do is to track it, to remember that, and put it to the front of my mind. Since the last time I saw you a lot has gone on. It all came to a head, since that day when she didn't want me to go to uni. My manager is really supportive now, she wasn't unsupportive, it came from that little blow out. On that day I needed to go to uni, my manager wanted annual leave and there is not enough staff. She blamed it on the head so I e-mailed the head and put it out there 'what's the deal with this?'Anyway we had a bit of a discussion and they said they're only thinking about me, I don't see the logic of it, I understand that they don't want to get supply because it eats out your budget. And you don't want to let the children down which puts pressure on as well. The children are only two and three so they do know me, and they don't want me not to be there, which is nice, and in their defence I did say to them that if we are short staffed that I won't go to uni. I've only been twice since September. As soon as I was brave enough

to put it out there, EYPS helps with that, she came down and said, 'No we really want to support you with that'. I'm not getting more time off but I'm more than happy to put annual leave in to go to college. It's annual leave today, then I'm not tied in, not contracted in. If I was to find a job at the end of EYP I have none of that guilt on my shoulders, well not as much, as if someone does support you loads out of their own pocket, you may not be able to leave straight away.

They don't understand what the qualification is about. I had my performance management and I was praised loads, I'm her right hand woman, her wing man but every time I mentioned EYPS it was skirted around; they don't see the link between EYPS and my work. Everything I do has massively improved, which is in part put down to my studies but they don't see the connection. In school if it's not got a Q in front of it then....and sometimes when I've mentioned EYPS to the Foundation Stage Leader it's brushed off because they're thinking, 'What does she want?' And my manager is level 3 so I think she thinks I don't want to talk too much about that. It's just you don't feel you are getting much recognition but you've got to be happy and do it for yourself. I feel like I am a professional in my work. I have always thought early years was important, but once I was out of private day and such stereotypes and went to school I felt more of a professional. I have always behaved in a certain way, so if I go into my room and make a change I don't do it for EYP, I do it as my job and it is worth it to see happy faces and get comments from the parents. This has been one of the hardest years, physically, I've ever had but it's a good thing, a sense of pride, so when I'm called just support staff.... I've got something to back it up with now. I do get listened to but then on another day, there is a huge divide. I know what's right, but when the Foundation Stage Leader, who is a teacher, says something I know is not right, not wrong, but the wrong messages, I don't interrupt. The next day my manager tells her, but then it's really frustrating because even my manager says she'll get the Foundation Stage Leader to come and assess one of my children. I've baselined her and worked with her for four weeks. She's selective mutism and she's started talking, it's brilliant, she's brilliant but my manager thinks she'll get someone in to double check, and the Foundation Stage Leader will know best, she's a teacher. It's hard. When I get this degree, maybe they will start to listen. the Head Teacher comes down and says, 'Can I speak to…' (my manager) and I say, 'Can I help?' and it's something I do and she doesn't realise. It's frustrating to be honest at times. Unless I can sit in the head teacher's office and say I can be used as a teacher, can I now? Is it official then, EYPS being equivalent to EYTS? I want to get through to my head teacher what I'm doing; I don't want to sound big headed but it is frustrating. QTS and EYPS are equally qualified. in theory. Nobody really knows, with all the cutbacks, all the changes. It's a shame you no longer have to have one in every setting. In my manager's eyes I am dong the children's centre teachers' job, I do so much family outreach and

we've got so many CAFs. She said it would make sense for me to be paid as the CC teacher for those days. If it doesn't happen at work even though I'm happy, it's secure and I have a really good relationship with my manager, I would have to look somewhere else.

I feel like I'm professional in my work. Even if I had QTS, I'd still want to work in early years. People, because they don't understand it, say, 'Go do QTS'. My friend, she's a teacher, says, 'Why didn't you do it with me?' I say, 'You know why, I messed up in sixth form'. I always thought I'd be a teacher, I remember me and my best friend, aged about ten, walking home from school talking about being teachers, and she is now. I've always known that I wanted to work with young children; it's probably due to my life experiences. I had a troubled upbringing, well I lost my parents when I was six, and my grandparents took me under their wing and I stayed with my aunty and uncle at the weekends. Knowing I had that family there for me, I just wanted to make sure the littlies had that. Working with vulnerable children is a good step for me. I didn't plan on doing it this way but in sixth form I was working thirty seven hours in a restaurant and I was never going to stop working, I messed up. I got a job, started working in a nursery and went and did an apprenticeship. I progressed quickly in my role. Then onto my fd (foundation degree), that was useful I could earn and learn. I knew I wasn't going to stop, I liked it, I much prefer to have done it this way. I very much work better by myself and I have all that experience and saved up for a mortgage, a house, who knows I might not have got through uni. For people outside the setting the degree is important, it's going up in the world, a step up. My first thought about EYPS was it's a higher qualification, but because of the changes, even if I did do QTS, I'd still want to work in early years.

Since I last spoke to you I've got married, had a honeymoon but before that I'd met a lady on a course who was speaking to me about opening a brand new nursery. I jokingly asked if she had recruited a deputy yet, she hadn't. Basically I missed the application deadline, much too busy to think about writing it, I e-mailed her and apologised. Got married, had a honeymoon, and on my return one of my colleagues told me she had phoned. I decided that to get so many chances and to be wanted by someone it must be right. I got the job as Deputy Manager. It was really hard to leave my last job, it was hard telling my manager, but I knew it was the right thing to do for me. EYPS was not seen as anything in the school setting. As my manager was qualified to level 3, she had little knowledge of the meaning of the qualification. I felt I was underappreciated for all I did.

I was so happy to be starting at a nursery from day dot; my new manager is also an EYP so she knows its worth and really wanted an EYP as a deputy. I am really enjoying the job. The first few weeks were difficult but I am now extremely positive. I input lots of new ideas, I'm leading on learning and

development, Rebecca trusts what I'm saying as she knows I've had the experience and been studying. The other day at work I was trying to remember everything I did at my last job, activities, things I'd put in place, and I ended up going through my EYPS work, and I came up with loads of things to input. EYPS has made a significant impact on me gaining my new role. I recall the assessor saying to me that I was doing three people's jobs. I think that prompted my brain to start thinking about a new job. I've grown so much in confidence over the past four years studying at HE and I've discussed with Rebecca the possibility of doing my honours next year. I decided on honeymoon that I wanted to do my honours, I was already missing studying.

5.3 Emma

5.3.1 Pen portrait

Emma

Emma is married with four children and is part owner of a small private day nursery, which is currently based in the village cricket club. Her business partner is a sleeping partner and Emma has full responsibility for the day to day running of the setting. Emma had enrolled on a teacher training programme some years ago and was firmly committed to more formal teaching in Key Stage 2. Then in her first year she found she was pregnant and, after waiting almost ten years for a child, decided to leave the course, imagining she would return later. She never did; having a child completely changed Emma's life and her perception of working in early years. Emma then decided to work as a full time childminder, something of a practical decision, as she pointed out, '*Imagine how much it would cost for childcare for four children'.* It was through her work as a childminder that she met her business partner and decided to buy the nursery.

Prior to the birth of her children Emma had worked for ten years as a scientist, at one time testing the explosives required for seat belts and then testing milk products. Emma referred to herself as 'OCD' as a way of describing how organised she had to be to run the lab. As Emma explained both her interest in science and her organisational skills have played a part in her career in early years.

5.3.2 Monologue

I never wanted to work with little ones. When I worked in a lab I used to say to my husband, 'If kids could do this they would like science' and he used to say, 'Well go back to college and teach then'. If it wasn't for him I'd still be playing with my test tubes. Then, just as I started my first year teacher

training, key Stage 2 though, I got pregnant. I'd tried for a long time and it hadn't happened. Then, of course, just as I started, it did. Anyway, I left. University they said I could return in four years and I'd never ever considered early years until my daughter went to nursery. I was still thinking about being a teacher and that was all about children sitting down and doing work. My daughter was a project; I force fed her reading and I didn't play with her. I regret that now. Nursery was a revelation to me. I'd assumed they were fed and watered but one day they sent a letter home asking us to make up a natural box. Me being me, I thought what are they doing with that and they went through it all with me. They were very good. I was difficult, the mother from hell. I'd asked to see their first aid certificate and CRBs and I used to turn up at odd times. I struggled with her attaching to her key person; she used to cry when I picked her up, but they were so patient with me. I was amazed when I saw what they were doing in the nursery. So I became a full time childminder, then this business became available, it's a fifteen place day nursery. I went into business with a friend, she's also a childminder, and we had nearly enough children between us to fill it.

I'd said a couple of years ago I was going to do EYPS but it got put off. Then I got an apprentice and I said I would mentor her. She'd phoned and said she really wanted to do it and they don't get paid much, but she accepted. When she first started, she talked over the children and now they are enthralled by her. She is doing brilliantly without a doubt and I have some practitioners who still haven't got that. I thought, if I did EYP, I can help all members of staff. They've been working in early years for years and years, much longer than me. They should be showing me but I didn't feel they could. The staff have no idea what EYP is. When I told them they just said, 'Why are you doing that as well?' Two of the parents know about it because they are teachers and they said, 'Why didn't you do teaching?' and I said, 'it's effectively the same'. Sometimes I do regret it because there isn't the enthusiasm in school for science so I do it now with the littlies.

The status, no, it's not relevant but it's enabling me to focus on quality, not Ofsted 'outstanding' but about what is going on with the children. If I'm going to be a role model, I need to be able to do it myself. From watching the apprentice, I should be able to do that with all the staff. I want it to be about developing all the staff. In some ways I didn't think I had the right. To be fair, they have much more experience than me, but I didn't think that would be appropriate. If I'm meant to be leading staff I didn't want to be 'Oh read through it, you'll be alright.' I'm not bluffing anymore. Well not bluffing. I've always been good at 'Yabber, yabber, yabber' to Ofsted but I need to be able to do it now. I tried to be manager and friend. I wasn't leading, I was coaching not even coaching. I was either doing it myself or thought I was modelling and expecting them to follow and they didn't. As an example, when I used to do an observation on staff, they didn't bat an eyelid because I just skirted

round the issues. Now they say, 'Oh I haven't prepared anything. ' I'm leading; it has created a role that wasn't there but needed to be there, it's clarified my role and the deputy is managing more. I was trying too hard to be everyone's friend but I was also very controlling. I used to go through their daily diaries every night and we had an hour a week when I double checked the folders. We've moved away from how to do the assessment folder to how can I deal with this? Less task focused and managerial, more supervision.

For the progress review my bit was very useful, not the interview, I'm afraid. That didn't help me at all. The interviewer was very black and white and said I had to be either confident or unconfident, so if I said I wanted to look into something, she marked that as unconfident. The biggest difference is sustained shared thinking. When I started DRO1, I thought it was just having a chat. I started looking into it and realised it's so much more than that. I talked to the staff about it and it's made a massive difference. That was a massive thing that took off with everyone, although some staff are so absorbed with one or two children that there can be a fight going on next to them and they've missed it. The staff are behaving differently too without a doubt. They've gone right away from, 'Can you just look over,' to, 'How do you think I could deal with...?' They see me as a role model but take notice rather than just a role model who will do it. We have meetings with an agenda now and they say, 'Are you getting your boss head on now?' It's like with the Health Visitor; I instigated the meeting with her and I set up the agenda and we had minutes. It's given me the confidence to say, 'I'm not a babysitter.' I'm professionalising my relationships which I regret not doing before.

At the moment, EYPS is the easiest bit and I keep thinking I ought to be more concerned about this, but it's more helpful than a hindrance with everything else going on. The school in the village is starting a competing nursery. She will be charging twenty pounds a head for full day care. I can't compete with that. We mostly had NEF children but the parents got a letter from her saying we notice you are not in the school and it's really hard to argue with a Head Teacher who is saying look transitions will be easier, siblings are here, it will be easier. She's undercut us dramatically and told parents they won't get a place in the school, and as much as you tell parents that's not the case it becomes your word against a head teacher. We lost seven children and the Local Authority's answer, just take all the funded two year olds. I got asked if I could provide a minibus to the next village because parents haven't got the facilities, but I just can't do it. The two year olds I have, the parents need so much support. I've put on parenting classes because the parents asked about potty training and fussy eaters. They turned up at first but then just dribs and drabs. What can you do? It's not the children's fault but they are putting so much on the nurseries everyone is stretched. Even the Health Visitor when she came about the two year old checks said, 'Because we're so backlogged you do the

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check, then let me know and I can decide how long I need to meet with them for.' But it's not fair, I don't want it to come back on my staff, we're not Social Workers. It's a bit of a slog at the moment but I sat with the staff and explained how it all works and they even said, 'Look those three months you made a loss.' I explained that things could change dramatically, I'll carry on until September and I've always paid for their training, but if they need to look for somewhere else I wouldn't blame them. The LA whipped everything away. It's the hot potato scenario, and they've just dropped us now, unless we take all the problem two year olds. It's not the child's fault but the parents need so much help it's disheartening; the cuts are biting. Schools dominate and smaller settings get the dregs; we are expected to mop up the rest.

I can see in a bigger setting that the EYP might be able to do this. Outside bodies will look at the EYP and say, 'Why aren't you stepping up and why haven't you done this?' They could potentially do all the appraisals and that might justify a graduate wage, whereas I could never do that. I struggle enough when I'm not in and I have to bump up someone else's wage. I know they are on rubbish wages but I've always been open about what's coming in. EYPS validated what I already did and I definitely had to reflect but the process though! I possibly gave the impression that I was doing fine so I only saw my mentor for about fifteen minutes and she said, 'Oh you're fine' and then was left alone. I don't need checking up on but an e-mail would have been nice and those bloody standards they drove me mad. I had them on the wall in the office and thought that goes with that and that with that, but I took my folder and it seemed a bit thin, I saw these bulging folders. I tried to get hold of my mentor and she was off, I can't remember where she was. Then with the childminder; she wasn't doing much with heuristic play so I introduced it, but I couldn't tell her what to do as she was very experienced. She was really nice but wanted to do things her way so she wouldn't let me take any pictures. She wrote a piece and signed it but I'm not sure she will keep it up now I've left. Anyway, when the assessor came, that was the extent of my file and I said, 'When you've finished with it, I can put it on the shelf and never look at it again.' She said, 'No you must show it to Ofsted.' She was an Ofsted inspector and it turned out to be enough. She didn't ask me very much really, just about the planning and to see some other forms; she just wanted to know I had them. I will be putting it on my SEF for Ofsted but I won't be putting up posters in the village, like the school that got a good Ofsted, 'We are now a good school.' It's funny really. I will put it on the website. If parents see the word 'teacher', that will make a difference; I have no problem saying it's the same. It's parents, they are the key, the ones who read the Ofsted report. If they look for settings with an EYP and Ofsted say the setting has an EYP, that will make a difference.

I was glad I did it; it validated what I was doing. I'm reasonably sure that what I was doing I was supposed to be doing, but you don't have anyone telling you that anymore. We get no support from the LA and it's not until Ofsted come along, and they don't even do that, they just check that you are meeting the legal requirements. Along with talking to other practitioners, it made a big change, like with the planning. I wanted it to be organic but actually it was retrospective. I'd found I was doing all the planning. It wasn't reflective of what the children wanted to do, it was topics I'd chosen. Now it's far more child led. Because they might do something at the weekend and then everything goes to pot. Now I know, if you asked the children, they would know what they were doing. It was good for the reflective process. I can't remember which one it was now, but I looked at one of the policies and thought that just isn't relevant anymore. Now, unfortunately, my thoughts aren't the most positive. I started EYPS thinking it would empower me to be more confident within my practice and to start with it had. Now I feel that the whole thing has been a waste of time. The qualification doesn't really amount to anything. Initially, I did feel validated by being an Early Years Professional, now I see it as just a thing I have done. I'm disappointed, grossly disappointed by the fact that EYPS isn't equivalent to an Early Years Teacher. I would have waited a year to complete EYT instead. Now I don't think I'll bother continuing in higher education, whereas during my EYP I was considering progressing to complete an MA.

5.4 Karen

5.4.1 Pen portrait

Karen

Karen is a woman in her fifties and qualified in 1985 as a Nursery Nurse (NNEB). She has always worked in early years and cannot remember wanting to do anything else. Karen has four children and is a single parent, and when her children were young she continued to work in a local playgroup. Five years ago, Karen decided that the time was right to enrol on the foundation degree at university which is when we met. After successfully completing her foundation degree Karen enrolled on the Undergraduate Practitioner Pathway for EYPS. This pathway was designed for experienced practitioners to be able to study part time and work towards EYPS. Just before she began on this pathway, Karen agreed to be one of my participants in this study. We had established a tutor/tutee relationship while she was studying on the foundation degree and I knew a little bit about her personal and professional life. Karen had started at the small private day nursery about a year before she began EYPS and remained employed there for the duration of the course; however, she left this setting just before achieving EYPS.

5.4.2 Monologue

I never wanted to do anything else, ever since I left nursery. I used to take my dolls and teddies outside and line them up. There's seven years between me and my sister Deborah and we spent a lot of time together. I think I was practising then. There was a lot of upset when I had to leave nursery and my mum said all I ever wanted to do was get back there. I think that's what it's about. I was happy at nursery. I don't remember being happy but when I look at the photo I know I was. I remember the smell of cabbage and holding Deborah's hand. You want the same for the children you look after, just positive vibes. There weren't the same opportunities then to go to university, but getting the NNEB was something to be proud of. That's what Mrs McMahon the tutor used to say, 'Be proud of your qualification.' And it was hard to get in; you went to college, there were only 40 places. All through school, my options were geared towards getting a place; I did childcare, human biology and history. You had to do one or the other, history or geography, and I hated geography. It's not like that now; anyone can get a level 3 and no one knows what EYPs is. That might be a good thing about EYTS; at least everyone knows or thinks they know what a teacher does. If I say to my

sister now, 'I'm doing EYPS,' she says, 'What's that?' I say, 'A professional who works with young children.' She says, 'Oh well, good luck with that then.' It's not her thing.

Even at work they misunderstand what it is or they don't want to acknowledge it, at least the deputy and manager. You see they are at the front of the building and they don't come in to the rooms so they don't know what we do. That's why they don't understand about the status. Some of my colleagues do. They'll come and ask my advice, they know about EYPS and so unofficially I'm sort of leading practice. One of my colleagues has an English degree and she's inspired now to do EYTS, that makes it worthwhile, but not the managers. Apparently one of them said, 'She'd better not get paid more than me when she gets EYPS.' I don't know why she thinks that. I'm very fair with them, I've never asked for more money, I don't want to be in an office, I don't want their jobs. They are not old, but they stopped at level 3. They don't want to be with the children, maybe they are threatened, I don't know what it is. They do listen though. They asked me what I thought about the baby room, so I told them they needed to access the top bit to be able to move round more, and have some jigsaws and puzzles on the table tops. The other Monday when I was here at Uni, they went and made the changes. They didn't take any pictures so there's no record of it for my file. I'll have to ask them to write a statement now, saying it was my idea, but they had listened to what I said, they just couldn't acknowledge it.

It's my choice to do EYPS, for me. If I'm going to be working until I'm 70, I don't want to be changing nappies. If I had a pound for every nappy I've changed, that's for the young ones. I don't want to be in the office but I do want a title and that status. I think the title is important for self esteem and how people view you. The NNEB and then getting the job at Butlins in the baby room was good for my confidence. I didn't have much confidence at school. I remember a teacher saying, 'Well let's face it, she's never going to be as clever as Deborah.' She used to recite times tables going up the stairs. That put me off. Then I had psoriasis so the bullying that went with that knocked my confidence. My eldest is twenty one and youngest is fourteen so I've spent most of my time bringing up children, as a single parent, and I put them first. I always worked with children, part time in a pre-school when they were little, that's about 28 years. It's time for me. I need to make a better standard of living for myself, be able to have a holiday once in a while, and because of my arthritis I can't get down on the floor like I used to. This status should help me move up, open some doors for me. Ideally there would be an office manager and then a manager in the rooms. That would be good, ideal for me. But I'm not going to get that here; they've now decided that the deputy is going to come out of the office to oversee practice, doing the job of the EYP. She is level 3, has only done training with the LA where they talk at you, not like this, and has been there fifteen years. I think to

be a reflective practitioner you have to have worked somewhere else or at least visited other settings. I think it's quite dangerous actually to go onto this degree. You notice things a lot more, and, when you can't put the changes into practice because they won't let you out of your room, you hit a brick wall, and so you think, 'Oh my god, I've got to get out of here.' That's why I've applied for another job. It is a Deputy Manager's role but not in an office, leading practice. I'd be supernumerary. I never asked about the money but they know about EYPS and want someone in that role. I will leave for the status I want. When I got my foundation degree I took in my certificate so they could take a copy. I said, 'Do you want to frame it and put it on the wall?' They said, 'No.' I was sort of joking but they do have certificates on the wall, first aid and food hygiene. That piece of paper is important, well to me. When I said to my mum and dad, 'Are you coming to my graduation?' they couldn't come and my dad said, 'it's just a piece of paper isn't it?' It wasn't meant to hurt like it did.

Status does matter. We have a board on the wall at work with the manager and deputy manager at the top. There's no qualifications on there and I'm the most qualified person there, then underneath we are all just nursery nurses, the little people. The other day she (the manager) was preparing the agenda for a meeting and she had written items the committee would like to discuss, items the managers would like to discuss and items the people would like to discuss. That's us the little people. I'm confident now to be ambitious. I put my career on hold for a lot of years and now I want to get on. When one of the staff got her level 2, I thought it should go in the newsletter but they said, 'No'. If they had done they could have done that with me. I think the parents would like to know. It would be nice to be acknowledged. Some of the parents do know. They are really supportive; we get a lot of parents who are students at the university so when they see me coming they ask what I'm doing. The children know, they get their handbags and role play getting on the bus to go to uni. One of the staff has her daughter at the setting and she role plays, 'I'm going to get my NVQ. What are you going to do at uni?' So uni is not an alien word which is not a bad thing.

It's hard to judge if you've made a difference with the children because you're at it all the time, but with the staff, I have more leadership there. I've spoken to the room leaders, 'Is there something that niggles you, let me know.' I'm not telling them what to do but I am telling them what I am doing, trying to raise awareness. It is difficult to get into the other rooms but I'm chiselling away at management, 'Let me out'. I don't think they know what the status is, what an EYP should be doing. I talked to her (the manager) about 'More Great Childcare' and she was excited about me being an EYT and having more children. I told her that I wasn't going to get more eyes; I've already got them in the back of my head. You have the two year olds in the water and it's all over the floor and before

you turn round it's over the head of the person next to them. I said, 'No.' I think EYTS, oh my goodness that is really going to put the pressure on; parents will want you to teach them to read and write when they are meant to be playing. I'd hoped they'd go towards the Swedish model; it doesn't get formal until they are seven. They are just going to be put off education.

At least now I've finished the degree I can breathe. I used to think, 'Am I clever enough to get a degree?' and I tell myself off when I see someone else on another pathway with a drama degree and no childcare experience. 'Then I think, 'If she can get her EYPS.' Then I think, 'What are they looking for, it's all a bit foggy, what are they going to observe?' I need to get back on track, to get organised. But the transition forms have just arrived and I've got sixteen key children, so I've got all their files to do and the transition files. When I'm in the room, there are two staff and fifteen children so there's no chance at all to do files, unless it's quiet on a morning. I should be able to do it, I should be able to put evidence together that reflects my level of work, a professional level of work. It should be straightforward but then I think, 'Is this what they want? What do they want?' Anyway, I've got no life now until the twentieth of July.

I feel better now that it's all over (the setting visit) but shall I tell you how they sabotaged my visit? I sound like I'm moaning all the time. You wonder if you're paranoid, and I turned into a diva at the end. That's not like me. People tell me I'm very tolerant but they weren't giving me opportunities to go in the room and you have to do something in the baby room. So I did my assignments but they were rushed. Then you think, 'They're not up to scratch,' and I was disappointed, cross with myself for not becoming a diva sooner but you don't want to rock the boat. So, for my observation of practice, we'd been doing about Jack and the Bean Stalk. One of the children had been to see it. I brought in my Jack and the Bean Stalk puppets and we'd planted beans, you know in cotton wool, and watched them grow. Then, when they got too big, we'd planted them out in the garden. So, on the Friday before I left, I asked the manager to get some grapefruits to put around the bottom of the beans to stop the slugs from eating them. I told her they were part of my observation of practice. On the Monday I wasn't in, it was submission day, and then when I went in on the Tuesday they'd all been pulled up. She'd told the handyman to pull them up because they were looking untidy. That was ten days before my observation. You feel like you've had your legs knocked out from under you. It's not just that they were part of my observation of practice but the children were waiting for them. I went into the office and asked, 'Have the bin men been? ' She asked why and I said, 'I thought I might try and rescue the beans,' and she just put her head down, she wouldn't even look at me, she knew they were for my observation. I'm assured by the committee that it was an accident but my point is, why doesn't the nursery manager know what's growing in the garden, why

doesn't she know what the children are doing? And she hasn't even spoken to me about it. If I had done that, I'd have been all over and I couldn't have done enough to make up for it. One of the committee did get some more plants but they looked a bit, you know, as plants do when they've been moved, they need time to settle in. She did try though.

That's just one of the little things that happened, well it was a big thing really, and when all these things keep happening you just wonder why. I'd made a slide show of the children's photos to put on a DVD and play them on the laptop. The committee members really liked the idea so they bought a TV for the wall. So I had this DVD, set it to music and put all the captions on. I did it in my lunch hour and it took me two weeks. The TV sat under her desk for three to four weeks; she hid it so the cleaner wouldn't pinch it. So for my setting visit I had to resort to one of those little silver ones that sit on a table. My observation of practice was on the Thursday and the following Monday the TV was put on the wall. She definitely knew because I'd shown her some of it and she said, 'If we put that up, you've got to keep doing it,' and now I don't feel like making 'em any more. Then you feel you're being paranoid. Then they offered me this EYP role. Before my visit, they told me that they'd interviewed someone for the baby room but they were more suitable for the pre-school room (where Karen is normally based), which I thought was a bit strange, but I thought if I want to get in the baby room I'd better agree. They had me over a barrel really. It wasn't a promotion; they just wanted cover really. Then when the woman didn't come, I said, 'I presume that's not happening now.' They didn't say anything but then I found my job advertised on the Local Authority website and they've found someone to take over my job. I told them, 'How can you give me a job without a job description? And I don't want it,' but they've just carried on. The manager said, 'You're just going to be covering,' but the committee member said, 'We don't see it like that.' She just tells the committee what they want to hear. They think we get our rotas four weeks in advance; sometimes we get it on Sunday for the next week.

If I do this EYP role, I'm still on the same level of wages, still on the same level as the room seniors. I wonder if they are expecting me to leave. They're thinking, 'How can we get rid of her?' But they can't just give your job away and say, 'See you later,' surely. My sister works in HR and she says its constructive dismissal and it's a very strong case but I don't want to do that. People say keep a record but it's like you're dwelling on it and I just want to get on with it. It's really sad when your parents appreciate you but not your managers. I asked them to do witness statements for my file but they didn't. One of the parents did and I had tears in my eyes when I read it; she acknowledged all the changes I had made. I just hope it's enough really. The girls I work with were really, really supportive but it was really stressful. It's been a long hard slog. Not the work content, that's easy if

you can get into the room and make the changes. On the day of the setting visit I was meant to be supernumerary and the manager decided not to come in and the deputy manager was late. So everything wasn't set up how I'd like it to have been because the children started coming in and I had to be in there. I wanted to greet the assessor but she met her then just came in and said 'There's a visitor waiting for you.' Oh my god, I just felt like I was floating up there and I don't know what the assessor saw of me. I thought I just need to get this over and done with now. I knew the staff were on my side but they could have worked with me instead of against me, tripping me up on the way. It's about lack of knowledge really; they're level 3 trying to hold on to what you've got, knowing that you haven't moved up. Then the other day the deputy said to me, 'I'm thinking of doing my EYP because anything I need I'll just come and ask you.' They don't know what it's about; I said, 'I can't do your degree for you.' She's not even a level 4; I might have had a bit more respect for her if she had done her level 4.They never asked how I got on with my visit, nothing. I've got no qualifications there. I just hope that if I get away from that situation I might get my confidence back.

I am applying for jobs, even in a hotel reception. I got offered a job but I turned it down because they wanted me to start straight away and defer my setting visit, and I thought how would I know if it would be better. I rang about a job yesterday and told her I'd just gone through the assessment process but I didn't know the outcome, and she said, 'Oh we're looking for a level 3.' So I said, 'Am I over qualified?' and she said, 'Well you'll be looking for a higher wage and we can't afford it' and I said, 'Well, where I am now, I'm not on a higher wage. I just want to be in a place where my qualifications are acknowledged.' That's why I've done this, for me, not for them, and I told this lady that just because I'm an EYP doesn't mean I know everything. We're supposed to learn from each other, that's the whole point to share knowledge. There's no EYP jobs; they are not sought after. They want a manager who has EYP with management experience; they want it all. I think the government have got to realise that they have all these people with qualifications and managers who are level 3 fighting against us, so where are we all going to go? It's just not your normal backstreet nursery. They are fighting to hold on. They can't tell those managers to get qualified because they are already there; there's no room for us. Having the degree, in some ways it does help and someone else from the setting is doing EYP. She's really nervous because she's seen what I went through but she works part time and will do a placement. She's already got an English degree, so that's a good outcome. I have helped put some things in place, heuristic play. We used to have problems with the toddlers biting and that's much better now and the room leader tells me 'You've done loads Karen.' I can't see it. In my work, it's made my life harder and I have to think what it can

do for me in the future. It's about feeling valued that's worth a lot to me. Perhaps if I pass, I'll be like, 'Oh wow' and I will get my confidence back.

If I had known the problems that I would face by updating my knowledge, I would probably never have even started my foundation degree. Though studying towards a degree and EYPS has given me a great sense of achievement and self gratification, I am grateful for the opportunity to achieve something I never thought possible. I like to think that EYPS played a part in me being offered my new job. I'm a Senior Nursery Nurse, on the staff photo board, part of the management team. The only difference that my qualification has made is when we are short staffed at work they take advantage of my status by giving me a 1:13 ratio, and I'm on minimum wage. EYPS is not really acknowledged by fellow practitioners, maybe because they don't understand it. I am hoping that it will in time.

5.5 Lauren

5.5.1 Pen portrait

Lauren

Lauren is twenty one years old and has one older sister who is a solicitor and a younger sister of fifteen who is still at school, and who wants to be a chef. Lauren is engaged and has a group of close friends who have known each other since pre-school. At the first interview she included photographs of her sisters, friends and fiancé as the people who support her and described her family as 'very close'. As Lauren was growing up, her mum worked as a childminder and Lauren talked about being surrounded by children and 'loving it'.

Lauren works in a private pre-school which is owned by her aunt, she has been at the pre-school since leaving school after her A levels. When Lauren was younger her aunt and her daughter, Lauren's cousin lived with Lauren and her family for a time, and Lauren has a close relationship with her aunt. Lauren completed her NVQ level 3 at the pre-school and her job title is Pre-School Assistant. Although she has only worked at one setting, Lauren has undertaken a placement at Karen's setting to gain experience in the baby room. At her own setting Lauren has responsibility for fourteen key children aged between three and five years, and, although she describes herself as ambitious, she cannot imagine herself working as a manager in the office. After completing her level 3 Lauren enrolled on the foundation degree at the university, where we met, and then decided to progress onto EYPS. After EYPS, Lauren is keen to complete the BA (Hons) Early Years so that she can

work in a school as a Reception teacher.

5.5.2 Monologue

I can't remember, well nothing specific, that I wanted to do at school. You know when they ask you, 'What do you want to be?' One day I wanted to be a vet, the next a hairdresser but I always loved children. I was always surrounded by children, having younger siblings, and mum was a childminder. I used to babysit and was interested in children. But at school you were channelled into sixth form and it was all about A levels and going to university. I chose my options, nothing to do with what I do now, Psychology, Textiles..can't remember.. oh and Biology. In Year 10 I went into a school for my work experience and I loved it and wanted to be a Reception teacher, but I was no good at exams and it was all about university. I didn't get the grades. NVQ would have been better for me but we didn't get any advice. I think my aunty has been really important. She gave me that chance, she took a chance, gave me a job in the pre-school after my A levels when I thought what will I do now? After A levels, I was downhearted but the foundation degree turned that round a bit and to be honest I think I'm better off than those doing full time uni. I'll have five years experience and the grades. I did want to move out and live with friends but this has so worked out best for me.

EYPS is the next step up. I want to move on and up. I'm in a private family pre-school and I will have to move on. EYPS will move me on. That's what I need, more of a challenge. I've been there since leaving school and, as they have an EYP, there's not so much I can bring to the table. I'm lucky to have support in my setting; they are really pushing me. The EYP has already highlighted about seven things on her job description for me to do, and I'm leading all the planning meetings now. I've heard from some of the others how they struggle to get time off to attend EYPS days. I'm lucky the pre-school leader is an EYP. Level 3s have not really heard of it or understand it. Some people come into childcare as a last resort and it's not a passion. Some people are not in the right job position; they have the title 'manager' because they have been there longest, but they are not doing what's on the badge. Things are stricter now you have to have English and Maths and EYTS or EYPS to be in with the children, that means they get the direct benefit, but managers need skills and training. Managers do not have to be hands on but they need training. EYT is really good because it's an incentive to work for it. It's the right to be here, and it will bring a lot more people into early years rather than just primary and secondary. The EYT will know about play and can implement it better than some of the others and because of their leadership they will be able to get it across to staff, so that it won't be too formal. It's definitely a good thing.

I think when you are young you are not seen as professional at work; you're just there with the kids. Some people walk in and see you as a student or a volunteer, whereas you've been there five years and I'm quite experienced for my age. So when you get this status people will think, she's got the degree and done the work. It gives you a lot more self worth and confidence. I think a lot of people look at you and think you've not done very well at school so you've gone into childcare, just there to babysit. Whereas, actually, I've done all this work and we're not just here to look after the children but to educate them. I hated school. My first day at primary, the childminder said they had to peel me off her. I want to give children a nicer experience than I had. Teachers never liked me. I was a day dreamer, I was bullied and secondary school was worse. With the bullying and everything, I'm interested in that. Even from three years old, children have friendship groups. Working with three to five year olds, you get to see the impact you have on them; you can see how much they change. Through this, I grow as a person. Before the parents wouldn't come to me but now I do one to one with a child and his mum always comes over and asks for advice. A lot of the parents have been asking me how I've been doing at university. It's all about confidence. I've never liked conflict but now I'm able to talk to them, the staff, rather than make it a big deal. It's a confidence thing. Because you are working towards something, you put all your effort and hard work into it so you kind of deserve... you have value, what you do is valued.

The process gives you more self worth; it's definitely boosted my confidence. At work, they know me but in the other setting they don't know me. It just comes across as me being like that. It's easier to be like that, seen as more of a professional. Whereas in my setting, I've been there since sixth form and they've known me as a student, from going through the fd up to now. If I start trying to delegate where they know you, they look at you as if you don't normally do that. In placement, you are really going in as a student and you have to ask permission to do stuff. In your own setting, they know what you are doing and they understand the process. In placement, you have to say, 'Is it alright if I do this?' You have to be a leader but don't want to come across as taking over. When the other EYP was doing it, some of the staff said, 'We didn't know that you were so self centred, saying 'I' did this about everything,' but now they know it's not so self- absorbed. You have to lead staff, it builds your confidence, and you have to negotiate and talk to higher management, ask them and explain things. You have to explain to staff in the room so I think it helps them understand why you are doing it. It's all about leadership. If you are going to be an early years professional, you have to lead and this is one of the big parts of doing it. It's been hard, not in terms of, you know, you are doing it every day but it's a lot of paperwork, so it's testing your organisational skills. It's been time consuming, definitely, with working at the same time and, if I was to do it again, I wouldn't have left the

documentary evidence folder to the last minute. My mum's been there as I've been sat at the computer, bringing tea, endless amounts of tea. The manager and room leader have done it themselves and they've been there to support me, to know that they've done it and you can see their leadership skills, they've mentored me. It's definitely been helpful having them there as opposed to someone like Karen who's not had anyone there who knows the process; it's been more of a challenge to get anyone to understand why she's doing things.

The setting visit, I think it went well. I was rather nervous but not as daunting as I thought. She came and observed my activity and she commented on how good it was, which was good. They really enjoyed it so I was quite glad. I went down for the interview and she only had three questions. Obviously because I'd not been in a baby room until this year, she had a few questions about the babies. It's a bit nerve-wracking being put on the spot but I could answer them all and I'd tried to cover everything three times in the evidence folder and then cover them again on the tour. I'm relieved it's all over but I felt positive. It's definitely been worth it. I'm in limbo but I understand the process and I've done everything I can so that's okay.

Fingers crossed I've passed. I'm hoping to stay at my setting until I've done the Honours degree but unfortunately our hours have been cut at work. So, when we go back in September, we'll be down five hours. Our contracts were changed last year to be flexible but they may have to let a member of staff go, and at the moment it's between me and her. So, if I've got my EYP, hopefully, then it gives me a bit more security. It's not good but I'm hoping that once I get my status it'll give me an advantage. There's no hope of a graduate salary, it's very hard, so we'll see. I don't want to go into managing a setting; I've done this to be in the room with the children. I've always wanted to go into Reception; there's more security in a school than a private or charity run business. So once I've got my EYP status and honours, obviously going into a school you're going up against people who have done a four year university course, but I've always thought that, if I'm going up against them, I've got five years experience, whereas they've got placement. I know that's experience but it's not the same, whereas you've been there, working with parents, you've been doing learning journeys for five years and you know the EYFS. I hope it will give me an advantage. Well, if not, it will level me out. You probably will have to argue your point because a lot of people won't recognise it, but the status adds to it and the more people who do it, the more recognised it will become. EYT will really add to it. People will become more aware of it, hopefully.

5.6 Chapter summary

This chapter has set out each of the participants' stories, using their words, in the form of a monologue. The plot for each monologue is the participants' experiences and perspectives of becoming a professional, and although each is unique they do illuminate some characteristics of professionalisation in ECEC. Chapter 6 and Chapter 7 bring theory to bear on the data to explore the characteristics of professionalisation and the individual participants' experiences of, and perspectives on becoming a professional

Chapter 6: Thematic narrative analysis and findings

6.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the extent to which social and cultural experiences shaped the participants' experiences of professionalisation and what effect professionalisation had on their practice. It approaches this through a thematic narrative analysis of selected sequences of data. The themes which frame the analysis emerged from the literature review and include, gender, class, care, performativity, professional recognition and the professional mandate. The chosen themes encapsulate key debates concerning professionalisation of ECEC in the PVI sector. Excerpts from the narratives of Karen, Lauren, Debbie and Emma are discussed with reference to relevant theory; the discussion of class and gender draws on the work of Bourdieu (1992) and Skeggs (1997), particularly the model of class based on '*capital*' (Skeggs 1997 p.8); the work of Ball (2008) is applied to the data for the discussion of performativity; and the work of Whitty (2008) informs the discussion of the professional mandate and professional recognition.

The following section considers to what extent gender, class and care shaped the participants' experiences of professionalisation. Gender, class and care are interlinked as they inform the production of women's subjectivities (Skeggs 1997) and are a key theme in the literature.

6.2 Gender, class and care

For each of the participants their journey to becoming an EYP began before they enrolled on the programme. In the participants' explanations of why they chose to work in ECEC, it appears that their experience of how they themselves were cared for or their experience of how others, including their own children, were cared for influenced their decision to work in ECEC. When Karen was asked why she wanted to work in ECEC she explained, '*I never wanted to do anything else, ever since I left nursery*'. At the first interview, Karen talked about a photograph she had brought with her. It showed Karen and her sister, dressed identically, in the clothes they wore for nursery. Karen said:

> *I don't remember being happy but when I look at the photo I know I was, I remember the smell of cabbage and holding Deborah's hand. You want the same for the children you look after, just positive vibes.*

Debbie also explained that she had strong personal reasons for wanting to work with young children, rooted in the experiences she had of being cared for by her grandparents, and aunt and uncle after her parents died.

I've always known that I wanted to work with young children; it's probably due to my life experiences. I had a troubled upbringing, well I lost my parents when I was six, and my grandparents took me under their wing and I stayed with my aunty and uncle at the weekends. Knowing I had that family there for me, I just wanted to make sure the littlies had that. Working with vulnerable children is a good step for me.

For Emma it was her daughter's experience at nursery which led her into ECEC. Emma explained:

I'd never ever considered early years until my daughter went to nursery. My daughter was a project. I force fed her reading and I didn't play with her. I regret that now. Nursery was a revelation to me, I'd assumed they were fed and watered but one day they sent a letter home asking us to make up a natural box. Me being me, I thought what are they doing with that and they went through it all with me. They were very good ....I struggled with her attaching to her Key Person, she used to cry when I picked her up, but they were so patient with me. I was amazed when I saw what they were doing in the nursery.

Skeggs (1997) describes these experiences as concrete, caring practices and she suggests that firstly, the practices of caring become inseparable from the personal disposition of the women who work in ECEC, and that secondly, the caring subject is constructed by the '*conflation of caring for with caring about*' (p.57). Therefore, you cannot do caring without being caring (Skeggs 1997). Caring about and for young children is important to all of these participants and, whilst it can be argued that caring is fundamental to the human condition (Heidegger 1962), the institutionalised care of children remains overwhelmingly women's work. Osgood (2005, 2009) argues it is mainly working class women's work and that these working class women are a means to enable middle class women to go out and do the real work.

During the interviews I did not ask the participants questions to specifically elicit information about their social class. However, some relevant information which might be indicative of their class did emerge during the interviews, for example Karen and Debbie were the first people in their families to get a degree and Lauren was not, and Emma was privately educated in a boarding school. Karen was a single mum for many years and worked to support herself and her children. In addition Debbie said that she worked almost full time while studying for her A levels and Lauren felt that she had been steered towards A levels when a vocational course would have been more appropriate for her, as Lauren explained.

At school you were channelled into sixth form and it was all about A levels and going to university. I chose my options, nothing to do with what I do now, Psychology, Textiles… can't remember.. oh and Biology... but I was no good at exams and it was all about university. I didn't get the grades, NVQ would have been better for me

Based on this limited information from the participants' narratives I have tentatively assigned a social class to each of the participants; Karen and Debbie might be considered working class and Emma and Lauren as middle class. Roberts-Holmes (2013) suggests that EYPS is problematic because it is '*discursively constructed at the intersection of gender and class and predominantly located within the private sector'* (p.348). Therefore, it is important to include class as an analytical construct in this study.

This study draws on the definition of class provided by Jenkins (2002) who cites Bourdieu (1977, 1992) to suggest that class describes categories of people who occupy a social position within the political field of power and the economic field; this is because of the collective recognition of their identity as part of a social group or occupational identity. The participants in this study share a collective occupational identity as part of the ECEC workforce and as EYPs. The ECEC workforce, as explored in chapter 3, is described as powerless by Osgood (2005, 2009) and Roberts-Holmes (2013) argues that EYPs have limited control over the conditions of their professionalism. Furthermore, Moss (2014 p.352) describes the ECEC workforce as '*scandalously low paid'.* All of the participants were aware that their work in ECEC had low economic value: Karen said, ' *I need to make a better standard of living for myself, be able to have a holiday once in a while*' and Lauren, Debbie and Karen also described their work as low status. These three participants hoped that gaining EYPS would raise the value and status of their work, as Lauren explained;

So when you get this status people will think, she's got a degree and done the work, it gives you a lot more self-worth and confidence

Emma also alluded to her lack of status when she compared herself to the head teacher of a local school, she said

The school in the village is starting a competing nursery, charging twenty pounds a day for full day care. I can't compete with that. We mostly had NEF children but the parents got a letter from the head saying we notice you are not in school and it's really hard to argue with a head teacher who is saying look transitions will be easier, siblings are here, it will be easier.

> *She told parents they won't get a place in the school and as much as you tell them that's not*
>
> *the case, it becomes your word against a head teacher.*

Therefore, although I am unable to unequivocally assign an individual class to each participant, I argue that their experiences of becoming a professional are shaped by the social position they occupy as part of the ECEC workforce, which has limited power and low economic value, and this forms part of their collective, occupational identity.

In the late seventies many working class women would not have gone to university. Murray (2011) points out that despite a second wave of feminism occurring in the late sixties and early seventies, politicisation of women created barely a ripple in the lives of working class women in the north of England until the nineteen eighties. Murray (2011) further argues that only upper class women could expect much beyond undertaking childcare and looking after the home until the nineteen eighties. Therefore, it may be argued that class limited Karen's opportunity to go to university in the nineteen seventies, as she explained, '*There weren't the same opportunities then to go to university*'. This limited her career choice to ECEC, in the same way that class limited the choices of the women in Skegg's (1997) study. It could also be argued that social class had some influence on Debbie's decision to work in ECEC, as she failed her A levels due to working almost full time while studying. Therefore, Debbie was unable at that time to become a teacher, and working in ECEC offered her an achievable alternative. As Debbie said:

> *I didn't plan on doing it this way but in sixth form I was working thirty seven hours in a*
>
> *restaurant and I was never going to stop working, I messed up.*

For Lauren and Emma, their individual social class appears to be less significant to their decision to work in ECEC, than it was for Karen and Debbie, although as part of their occupational identity it was relevant to their experience of becoming an EYP.

Class and gender are interlinked and are relevant because they determine access to economic and cultural resources, and they inform the production of women's subjectivities (Skeggs 1997). The previous paragraph considered how class may have influenced the participants' decisions to work in ECEC. The discussion will now consider gender and its place in determining the participants' choice to work in ECEC. Bourdieu (1977) suggests that sexual identity is the major element in social identity, and is laid down in a person's earliest upbringing. The child constructs its image of the division of work between the sexes where maternal and paternal duties are constituted, and domestic duties, including childcare, are assigned to the mother. Furthermore, mothers are constituted as kinder,

more caring and fathers as more powerful. Bourdieu (1977) describes habitus as the law laid down in a person's earliest upbringing through the internalisation of repeated everyday practices and dispositions. Lauren discussed her early memories and said, '*I was always surrounded by children*' and Debbie wanted to recreate the care she had experienced from her grandparents after her mum and dad died. She said '*Knowing I had that family there for me, I just wanted to make sure the littlies had that*'. Bourdieu (1977) suggests that the individual then carries with them at all times, their present and past position in the social structure, in short, '*knowing one's place*' (p.82). Therefore, as women their identity is constructed as caring and childcare is seen as natural, an extension of their maternal duties.

Debbie and Lauren had planned to go to university when they left school to train as teachers. They were unsuccessful as they did not get the required 'A' level grades. Their academic failure is significant because it forced them to use the resources available. Lauren described herself as '*downhearted*' after failing her 'A' levels and recognised that she was lucky that her aunt was in a position, as the owner of a setting, to offer her a job. She said:

> *I think my aunty has been really important. She gave me that chance, she took a chance, gave me a job in the pre-school after my A levels when I thought what will I do now?*

It might not be too surprising that Lauren decided to accept her aunt's offer as she acknowledged in her story that:

> *I always loved children. I was always surrounded by children, having younger siblings and mum was a childminder, I used to babysit and was interested in children.*

 Caring is a cultural resource, a form of cultural capital that, as women, they had access to; it was something they were able to do, and do well (Skeggs 1997). After Lauren's and Debbie's self-perceived failure at school, working in ECEC may have given gave them a feeling of safety and a chance to be successful. They had both wanted to be teachers and working in ECEC may have been perceived as a satisfactory alternative at the time. Skeggs (1997) suggests that a caring identity is based not only on the fulfilment of the needs of others but also on the fulfilment of a practitioner's desire to feel valuable. This desire to feel valuable is understandable in the light of earlier academic and professional disappointment. Although, it is likely that Lauren's and Debbie's need to feel valued was fulfilled in their early careers, this feeling of satisfaction does appear to have dissipated with time, so that they both looked to EYPS to add value to their role as practitioners. Debbie described having a degree and EYPS as, ' *It's going up in the world, a step up*' and Lauren said of EYPS:

Because you are working towards something, you put all your effort and hard work into it so you kind of deserve... you have value, what you do is valued.

Much has been written about the low pay and low status of the ECEC workforce (Roberts-Holmes 2013, Osgood 2005, 2009, Nutbrown 2012), and perhaps the cumulative effect of working in a sector with low pay and low status gradually eroded the feeling of being valued for Lauren, Debbie and Karen.

Colley (2006) and Taggart (2011) argue that caring can leave practitioners open to exploitation. In ECEC the low levels of pay and working conditions are the highly visible measures of financial exploitation. Debbie, Lauren and Karen hoped that becoming an EYP would eventually lead to better pay and working conditions and, unlike the participants in Colley's (2006) study, they did not accept that low pay showed how much they cared. Whilst the participants' ambitions for more money and job security were modest, they were aware that becoming an EYP might afford them access to greater economic capital, and this was important to them. Lauren said:

There's no hope of a graduate salary here... I've always wanted to go into Reception, there's more security in a school... so once I've got my EYP status and honours.

Debbie also acknowledged that she would probably go onto '*do QTS*' although she would *'still want to work in early years'.*

Taggart (2011) suggests that caring for young children requires the mobilisation of qualities such as passion and a commitment to intimacy and authenticity. The mobilisation of such qualities is described as a form of '*emotional labour'* (Taggart 2011p.89). Caring for young children is characterised by emotional intensity, which can be fulfilling, but which also commonly arouses feelings of guilt, and therefore practitioners can be vulnerable to emotional exploitation (Taggart 2011). In the narratives of Debbie and Emma there are examples of emotional exploitation. Although money for supply cover was made available to the setting to allow Debbie to attend university, it was often difficult for her to get out of the setting. One day she confronted her manager and the Head of the school, which Debbie described as '*a little blow out'*. Debbie described what happened next:

As soon as I was brave enough to put it out there, EYPS helps with that, she came down and said no we really want to support you with that and they said they're only thinking about me.

Debbie did not understand how the management team's decision to prevent her attending university equated to them '*thinking about me*'; however, Debbie did explain that she understood that her absence might be a financial cost to the setting and also suggested that it could compromise the care of the children. She said:

> *I don't see the logic of it. I understand that they don't want to get supply as it eats out your budget. And you don't want to let the children down which puts pressure on as well. The children are only two and three so they do know me.*

Debbie felt that she did not want to let down the children in her care and it seems that her management team were willing to exploit, perhaps not deliberately, these feelings. Working towards EYPS also changed how Emma dealt with external professional colleagues, specifically the Health Visitor. Health Visitors are expected to carry out developmental assessments on two year olds who have a government funded place in a setting (DfE 2014 EYFS); however, at the time of this research, there were not enough Health Visitors to undertake these checks. Emma explained that the Health Visitor told her, '*because we're so backlogged, you do the check, then let me know and I can decide how long I need to meet with them for'.* She felt that this was unacceptable; neither Emma nor her staff were trained or paid to carry out the assessments. Emma decided that she had to resist this potential exploitation and explained:

> *But it's not fair I don't want it to come back on my staff, we're not Social Workers..... I instigated the meeting with her (the Health Visitor) and I set up the agenda and we had minutes. It's given me the confidence to say I'm not a babysitter; I'm professionalising my relationships.*

Working towards EYPS appears to have helped both Debbie and Emma gain confidence and feel empowered to challenge this emotional exploitation.

Taggart (2011) points out that ECEC relies upon a daily supply of good will and emotional labour, drawn from a personal ethic of care, which is easily exploited. He calls for the personal ethic of care to become a political ethic of care, where care is no longer individualised and marginalised, but has a socio-political dimension. This, Taggart (2011) suggests, would disrupt the alignment between care, domesticity and gender. It could be argued that the introduction of EYPS and the corresponding professional standards was an attempt to move away from a personal ethic of care, as evidenced by the narratives of Lauren and Emma, who were keen to be viewed as more than babysitters, towards a political ethic of care. However, as Colley (2006) points out, practitioners imbibe a professional

ideal of selfless service as part of training and Taggart (2011) suggests that, even in a competence based version of professionalism such as EYPS, the ethic of care is *'highly prized within the informal discourse of practitioner professionalism' (p.87)*. This was seen in Debbie's narrative when she discussed making improvements to practice, not for EYPS, but for the children and their families

She said:

> *I have always behaved in a certain way, so if I go into my room and make a change I don't do it for EYP, I do it as my job and it is worth it to see happy faces and get comments from the parents.*

It was also seen in Lauren's narrative when she said:

> *Working with three to five year olds, you get to see the impact you have on them, you can see how much they change. Through this I grow as a person.*

In this quote Lauren sees her own personal growth as inextricably linked to the developmental progress of the children she works with. It is immensely satisfying to her and illustrates that any discernible shift towards a political ethic of care would require a significant cultural shift within the sector.

There is evidence in all the participants' narratives that they were aware that they were financially exploited and, in Karen's, Emma's and Debbie's narratives ,that at times they felt emotionally exploited as practitioners within the PVI sector. Seemingly they had accepted this before undertaking EYPS. Osgood (2005, 2009) describes the workforce as powerless and Jenkins (2002) uses Bourdieu's (1992) idea of symbolic violence to explain this powerlessness. Symbolic violence is *'the imposition of systems of symbolism and meaning i.e culture, upon groups or classes in such a way that they are experienced as legitimate'* (Jenkins 2002 p.104). Jenkins (2002) explains that, through this imposition, power relations are misrecognised and perceived as legitimate; this in turn permits successful imposition and systematic reproduction. The financial and emotional exploitation which can result from the exercise of symbolic violence might be argued as serving and supporting the current government's policy to increase the amount of free childcare. Emma, as the owner and manager of the setting, was keenly aware of the potentially negative financial and emotional implications of increasing provision in line with government policy. Emma explained:

The two year olds I have, the parents need so much support. I've put on parenting classes because the parents asked about potty training and fussy eaters. They turned up at first but then just dribs and drabs. What can you do? It's not the children's fault but they are putting so much on nurseries everyone is stretched. Schools dominate and smaller settings get the dregs; we are expected to mop up the rest.

The Conservative Government plan to increase the amount of free childcare for three and four year olds from fifteen to thirty hours per week for working parents and this will be equivalent to a subsidy of five thousand pounds per year to parents earning up to one hundred and fifty thousand pounds per year (McMahon 2015). The current funding provided by the government to pay for childcare, which is free to parents, is inadequate; therefore, both the government and to some extent the PVI sector are heavily reliant on continuing to pay low salaries in order to subsidise this policy (McMahon 2015). Emma willingly acknowledged that her staff were on *'rubbish wages'* and there was no way she could afford to pay herself or any member of her team a graduate salary. She said, '*I struggle enough when I'm not in and I have to bump up someone else's wage'.* However, there are signs that the workforce more generally, is becoming less willing to settle for low pay. After gaining EYPS Karen and Debbie moved to slightly better paid jobs, still in the PVI sector, and Lauren moved into school and is training to be a teacher. In the past year, some 5% have left the PVI sector, and there is speculation that, if the economy improves, more will be tempted to leave as they can expect better pay in other sectors. This could have serious consequences for the government's plans to increase the amount of free childcare (Teach Early Years 2015).

6.3 Agency and choosing to become a professional

Society is unequally divided on gendered lines and domestic duties and childcare remains primarily the domain of women (Wright 2011). As a result, working in ECEC has low monetary value and has acquired a supportive, rather than true economic status (Wright 2011). In addition practitioners in ECEC are described as powerless, brought about by the '*internalisation of male hegemony that leads women to devalue their worth*'(Weiler 1988 p.193). Certainly all of the participants in this study spoke at some point about their work being undervalued and both Lauren and Karen hoped that achieving EYPS would improve their self worth. As Karen explained, '*I do want a title and that status; I think the title is important for self esteem and how people view you'*. It could be argued that the lack of self worth and the sense of powerlessness of Lauren, Debbie and Karen led them to work in ECEC and explains why they have experienced economic exploitation, and were vulnerable to emotional exploitation. However, Emma's story provided some evidence to counter the view that

women work in ECEC because they are powerless and lack agency. Emma, undoubtedly had access to greater economic capital than the other participants which allowed her to own a small private setting, and she chose to work there as the manager. Her decision to leave a career in science to work in ECEC was influenced by her family.

Wright (2011) explains that the women in her study found it immensely satisfying to be able to work in ECEC, in large part because they could balance the different aspects of their lives. She suggests that the female practitioners in her study made choices from a range of options, or capability set, which best met their personal and professional needs. Karen and Emma also appeared to have made choices which met their needs; they had chosen co-realisable possibilities which allowed them to keep work and family life in balance. Working in ECEC fitted with Karen's personal life as a single parent; it allowed her to work and bring up her children. As Karen said

> *My eldest is twenty one and youngest is fourteen so I've spent most of my time bringing up children, as a single parent, and I put them first. I always worked with children, part time in a pre-school when they were little, that's about 28 years.*

Wright (2011) also developed a framework, Integrated Lives Theory, to suggest that, for female practitioners in ECEC, the reciprocal relationships between work, family, education and community bring high levels of satisfaction. Nevertheless, the capability set available to some female practitioners, including Karen, did appear to have been limited by gender and caring responsibilities. Karen did seem to be aware that her choices had been limited and viewed EYPS as a positive choice, something for her rather than her family. She said 'It*'s my choice to do EYPS, for me*'. Many women are drawn to working in ECEC when they have children, partly as a result of needing to find childcare (Osgood 2004). This is often the case for childminders, which echoes Emma's story; she became a childminder once she had four children. Wright (2011) also suggests that many women work in pre-schools when their children are young and this resonates with Karen's story; she worked part time in a pre-school when her children were young. These women are exercising agency, albeit limited by traditional, familial caring responsibilities. Nevertheless, the women often view it as a positive choice (Wright 2011).

All of the participants in this study appear to have exercised agency when they chose to become an EYP. Lauren, Debbie and Karen were ambitious, in that they sought higher status and greater economic rewards, and they hoped for better job prospects. Lauren explained, *'EYPS is the next step up. I want to move on and up... EYPS will move me on'.* They were fully aware that EYPS and a degree increased their access to capital as Debbie pointed out, '*For people outside the setting the degree is*

important, it's going up in the world'. EYPS appears to have enhanced and extended the capability set available to these participants, thus increasing the choices available to them.

6.4 Performativity and the experience of becoming a professional

As the discussion in the previous section of the chapter suggests all of the participants chose to become an EYP. Even though the participants had made this choice some of them experienced anxiety and doubt about their practice as they worked towards EYPS as illustrated in Debbie's narrative. Debbie expressed contradictory feelings about the experience of working towards EYPS as she talked about her almost overwhelming struggle to manage the competing demands of her workload, EYPS and her personal life. She described the tension she experienced between meeting the needs of the children, external performance targets of Ofsted and EYPS and trying to have a personal life:

> It*'s hard, really hard with the workload I'm juggling and I bring a lot of work home from work, with planning, phonics and the data; I do everything the nursery teacher does but I'm supposed to be with the children thirty four hours, but sometimes when I'm with the kids my heads everywhere else and that's upsetting. Then with an impending Ofsted due, all the paperwork has to be up to date, and I'm engaged now which is a big part of my life and I'm trying to juggle that. You've caught me on a bad day, too much to do, too little time. I'm on track in my head but not on paper; everything I'm doing for work links in to it (EYPS), all I need to do is to track it, to remember that, and put it to the front of my mind.*

Ball (2008) describes performativity as leading to '*ontological insecurity*' (p.54), whereby professionals lose sight of what is important in what they do, and call into question the meaning in what they do. Performativity can deflect attention away from the personal, social and emotional activities which underpin the relationships between children and practitioners and have no immediate performative value (Ball 2008), as evidenced in the previous quote from Debbie's narrative. Osgood (2010) argues that it is these activities, such as sharing an intimate moment as a child sits on your knee and touches your hair or tells you why they feel sad, which lie at the heart of the caring relationships which bring satisfaction, and are the '*cornerstone to practitioners understanding of themselves*' (p.193). Towards the end of the EYPS programme, it appeared that Karen had experienced some ontological insecurity and had internalised external performance management targets, and that this internalisation had led her to doubt her ability to show a professional level of work. As Karen worked towards EYPS, she offered the following description of

her struggle to meet the significant demands of the performance management targets at work and the standards for EYPS:

> *I need to get back on track to get organised. But the transition forms have just arrived and I've got sixteen key children, so I've got all their files to do and the transition files. When I'm in the room there are two staff and fifteen children so there's no chance at all to do files, unless it's quiet on a morning. I should be able to do it, I should be able to put evidence together that reflects my level of work, a professional level of work. It should be straightforward but then I think, is this what they want? What do they want? Anyway I've got no life now until the twentieth of July.*

Ball (2008) suggests that individuals can be left feeling inadequate and experience burnout by the demands of performativity. Whilst Karen did experience feelings of inadequacy, her narrative also suggests that, at the same time, she valued EYPS. Karen appeared to experience very mixed feelings about the process of becoming an EYP. She said;

> *Though studying towards a degree and EYPS has given me a great sense of achievement and self gratification, I am grateful for the opportunity to achieve something I never thought possible. The only difference that my qualification has made is when we are short staffed at work they, take advantage of my status by giving me a 1:13 ratio, and I'm on minimum wage. EYPS is not really acknowledged by fellow practitioners, maybe because they don't understand it, I am hoping that it will in time.*

Osgood (2010) suggests that performativity might not be resisted but it can be subverted and this is possible through continuing to care and building relationships with children. Emma's narrative seems to suggest that working towards EYPS had indeed strengthened her focus on the children and by doing this had reduced her focus on meeting the performance management targets of Ofsted, as she explained

> *The status, no, it's not relevant but it's enabling me to focus on quality, not Ofsted 'outstanding' but about what is going on with the children. If I'm going to be a role model, I need to be able to do it myself.*

Although EYPS was important to Debbie, her work was much more than complying with performance management targets; she privileged what she perceived to be the needs of the

children and parents in the setting. Debbie found great satisfaction in caring for children and all of the participants in this study wanted to continue working with children. As Skeggs (1997) and Wright (2011) point out, caring for children brings high levels of satisfaction and this means that a commitment to working in ECEC is likely to persist. Working towards EYPS did not appear to deflect attention away from the social and emotional activities, which lie at the heart of the practitioner's identity, for the participants in this study.

Whilst the demands of performativity associated with becoming an EYP caused different levels of anxiety in all of the participants at some point, Lauren, Debbie and Karen welcomed the improved status that state regulation implies. This resonates with the work of Oberheumer (2005) who found that the participants in her study into professionalisation of the ECEC workforce in Germany also welcomed the implied status that state regulation brought. Debbie and Lauren hoped the status might change how others viewed them and explained that it was important to have a degree. Perhaps achieving the degree held special significance for Lauren and Debbie because it signified to themselves, and others, that they had overcome their earlier academic failures. Having a degree can make economic and cultural resources, aspects of capital (Bourdieu 1992), more accessible, therefore, conferring on the holder of the degree more of the properties of capital, for example, the ability to earn more money. For Debbie and Lauren, the degree had the potential to strengthen the value of their existing assets, their femininity and ability to care, thus increasing their access to economic and cultural capital (Bourdieu 1992). Debbie and Lauren intended to use their degrees to achieve a more recognisable professional status, QTS. It is likely, therefore, that both Debbie and Lauren will in the future move out of the PVI sector to work as teachers in primary schools, and as Hohmann (2014) points out, there are fears in Germany that the more highly educated professionals in the ECEC workforce will choose to work outside the sector.

Emma had welcomed EYPS initially. She explained that it 'validated' her practice. However she felt this validation was undermined by the introduction of EYTS. For Emma the introduction of EYTS made EYPS and becoming an EYP meaningless. At the end of the EYPS process she described her feelings of disappointment, particularly with the replacement of EYPS with EYTS:

> *I started EYPS thinking it would empower me to be more confident within my practice and, to start with, it had. Now I feel that the whole thing has been a waste of time. The qualification doesn't really amount to anything. Initially I did feel validated by being an Early Years Professional, now I see it as just a thing I have done. Grossly disappointed by the fact*

that EYPS isn't equivalent to an Early Years Teacher. I would have waited a year to complete
EYT instead.

It is likely that many EYPs experienced feelings of disappointment when EYPS was replaced by EYTS. As Nutbrown (2013 p.7) suggests, the introduction of EYTS is likely to,

Replace one form of inequality with another. Yet again those who work with young children
are offered a lesser status (and we should realistically anticipate, poorer pay and conditions
than those who work with older children) but a title that makes them appear to have the
same role and status.

6.5 Professional recognition and the professional mandate

As the discussion of Emma's narrative in the previous section of the chapter suggests, the replacement of EYPS with EYTS may have temporally undermined the value of professionalisation in the PVI sector. This study also suggests that recognition of professional status was variable across the settings. Payler and Locke (2013) might offer some explanation for this variability of recognition as they found in their research that there was limited understanding of the status, and that some in the sector felt it would undermine the vocational nature of their work. Whitty (2008) describes the professional mandate, as discussed in the literature review, as a pact between the individual professional, society and stakeholders which ratifies the actions of the professional. He suggests that increasingly the professional mandate is endorsed through state regulation, and this was certainly the case for EYPS. The following section considers the strength of the pact between some of the significant stakeholders referred to in this study, including other practitioners, parents and Ofsted.

The experiences of Emma, Karen and Debbie suggest EYPS was not understood by the practitioners or managers in their settings. Emma explained that '*the staff have no idea what EYPS is*' and Debbie described feeling *'underappreciated'* by the head teacher in her setting. She explained that the head teacher would consult the reception teacher about practice in day care, where Debbie worked, even though the reception teacher spent very little time in day care. Debbie was frustrated that the head teacher had little understanding of what Debbie did and did not recognise Debbie's professional knowledge and expertise. As Debbie explained:

In school, if it's not got a Q in front of it, then....and sometimes when I've mentioned EYPS to
the Foundation Stage Leader it's brushed off because they're thinking what does she want?
And my manager is level 3 so I think she thinks I don't want to talk too much about that. It's

just you don't feel you are getting much recognition but you've got to be happy and do it for yourself.

Karen's experience of becoming an EYP was marred by the actions of her management team, particularly just before and during her final EYPS assessment which took place in the setting. Below is one example of the distressing impact of this experience from Karen's narrative:

On the day of the setting visit I was meant to be supernumerary and the manager decided not to come in and the deputy manager was late. So everything wasn't set up how I'd like it to have been because the children started coming in, and I had to be in there, with the children. I wanted to greet the assessor but she met her, then just came in and said, 'there's a visitor waiting for you'. Oh my God, I just felt like I was floating up there and I don't know what the assessor saw of me.

Karen described the actions of the management team at the final assessment as deliberate sabotage; although she also explained that throughout the EYPS programme the management team had never really subscribed to EYPS. Karen said,

Even at work they misunderstand what it is (EYPS) or they don't want to acknowledge it, at least the Deputy and manager don't.

However, Karen and Debbie went on to secure new jobs where EYPS was recognised and valued and both expressed their belief that EYPS had been important in this, for example Debbie said ' *EYPS has made a significant impact on me gaining my new role'*. Lauren's experience was different to that of Karen and Debbie because her aunt, the owner and manager of the setting, was an EYP and actively supported Lauren's professional aspirations.

The pact which conveys a professional mandate includes multiple stakeholders and, in ECEC, parents are significant stakeholders. Mathers (2012) found that parents using ECEC services placed much less emphasis on staff qualifications than on the quality of their children's interactions with practitioners. Karen and Emma found that some individual parents were keen to know more about what they were studying at university. At Karen's setting many parents were students and would often ask Karen about her studies and she felt that they would be interested in EYPS. She said,

I think the parents would like to know, it would be nice to be acknowledged. Some of the parents do know and they are really supportive; we get a lot of parents who are students at the university so when they see me coming they ask what I'm doing.

Emma had discussed EYPS with some of her parents she said:

> *Two of the parents know about it because they are teachers and they said 'Why didn't you do*
> *teaching?' and I said, 'It's effectively the same'. Sometimes I do regret it because there isn't*
> *the enthusiasm in school for science so I do it now with the littlies.*

Although the parents referred to by Emma were aware of EYPS they wondered why Emma had not become a teacher, and Emma explained that EYPs was the same but she did appear to have some regrets that she had not become a teacher. As EYTS becomes more established, perhaps, parents will start to expect settings to employ an EYT and parents have proven to be a powerful lobbying group. The Prime Minister has been influenced by campaigns on Mumsnet and, when parents joined their voices with those in opposition to the increase in child to adult ratios proposed in More Great Childcare, this proposal was dropped (Pugh 2014). Parents and those who make up the workforce in the ECEC sector are significant stakeholders in the pact which makes up the professional mandate.

Ofsted is also an increasingly important stakeholder in the professional mandate, as ECEC is drawn into the policy context which intensifies surveillance of and accountability in the sector (Roberts-Holmes 2014). Ofsted is a high profile organisation which has considerable power over the ECEC sector and holds sway with parents and the government. It has challenged the view that the ECEC sector is predominantly about childcare and not education, suggesting that practitioners working in the sector are more willing to see themselves as teachers and that they are not just there to provide childcare (Ofsted 2015). Emma and Lauren were keen that EYPS would lead to a change in how their work was perceived, by society, from babysitter to educator, and Debbie hoped that the head teacher might eventually view her, as an EYP, as equal to those with QTS. Ofsted (2015), in its annual report on ECEC, states that it will, '*describe the work the professionals do in these providers as early education'* (p.7). Therefore, the professional mandate is endorsed by Ofsted when linked to educating young children. However, Ofsted also seems to send a mixed message about what it expects from the workforce in terms of professional abilities and qualifications. The report recognises the importance of good qualifications but suggests that '*qualifications are only an indicator of ability'* (p.11) and that good teaching is less dependent on qualifications than on the leadership within the setting.

Whilst the shift in emphasis from childcare to education in the Ofsted report may go some way towards raising the status of the work in ECEC, without an insistence on higher levels of qualification, working in ECEC will continue to be an attractive option for girls with low levels of academic qualifications. This may threaten professionalisation in the sector and is likely to perpetuate the

gendered and classed nature of the workforce. It is too early to know how EYTS will fit with the professional mandate in the ECEC sector.

6.6 Chapter summary

This chapter has discussed the participants' narratives in light of key contemporary debates concerning professionalisation in ECEC in order to explain their experiences of becoming a professional. The findings from this discussion are summarised below.

The first finding suggested by the analysis of the participants' narratives is that as women, and in some cases working class women, they had restricted access to capital and this was significant in their choice to work in ECEC. This finding confirms the work of Skeggs (1997) but unlike the women in Skeggs' (1997) study, these participants aspired to wider access to capital which they perceived the degree and EYPS would bring. Most of the participants looked to the professional status as a way to improve their job and career prospects.

The second finding which emerged appears to contradict Ball's (2008) assertion that performativity can undermine the practitioners personal and emotional commitment to caring for children and lead to '*ontological insecurity*' (p.54). All of the participants remained committed to working with young children. There is some evidence that two of the participants did experience some '*ontological insecurity*' (Ball 2008 p.54); however it does appear to have been transitory. The participants experienced anxiety as they worked towards the final EYPS assessment but most welcomed the state regulation that compliance with the standards for the status conferred, as did the participants in Oberheumer's (2005) study.

The third finding suggested by the analysis of the narratives is that professional recognition for EYPS was variable amongst the significant stakeholders in the sector and that the professional mandate in ECEC, the pact between individual professionals, stakeholders, and the state, is fragile and inconsistent. The significant stakeholders - in this case, the workforce, parents and Ofsted - were not uniformly convinced by the need for higher levels of qualification, although it is too early to tell if EYTS will be received in the same way as EYPS.

Finally the fourth finding which emerged is that working towards EYPS seemed to be a worthwhile experience for three of the participants and all of the participants suggested that it had led to improvements in their practice, and the practice of others in the setting. However, the participants' experiences and feelings as they worked towards EYPS were sometimes contradictory; they described the experience as worthwhile and empowering whilst simultaneously experiencing

frustration and anxiety. EYPS and having a degree was immensely important to most of the participants. For some, the introduction of EYTS led to feelings of disappointment and resentment, somewhat negating any positive feelings towards EYPS.

This chapter has explained how social and cultural factors including, gender, class, performativity and professional recognition have shaped the participants' experiences of professionalisation. The next chapter continues the thematic narrative analysis of the data drawing extensively on the work of Bolman and Deal (2013) and other ECEC leadership literature to explain how organisational structures and practices shaped the participants' experiences of becoming a professional.

Chapter 7: Multiframe analysis and findings

7.1 Introduction

This chapter considers extracts of the participants' narratives through the four frames, structural, human resource, political and symbolic, of Bolman and Deal's (2013) multiframe model. This model is used by Bolman and Deal to analyse individual organisations, including business and educational organisations. Its application to the data offers multiple perspectives on the effect of organisational structures and practices on the participants' experiences of professionalisation, and more broadly across ECEC in the PVI sector. To ensure that the application of the multiframe model is contextualised to ECEC, the interview data is also interrogated with reference to ECEC leadership literature. The chapter draws particularly on the work of Siraj and Hallet (2014) who focus on caring and effective leadership which is collegial, relational, reflective, nurturing and caring. The chapter also draws on the work of Hallet (2014) who considers the challenges of leadership for learning within an ethic of care. Bolman and Deal (2013) also posit that their framework can be used to improve leadership practice and reframe change in organisations, and this resonates with the role of the EYP as a change agent and leader of practice (CWDC 2008). The stories in this study demonstrate that even small organisations, such as the majority of PVI settings, are complex environments which challenge our attempts at sense-making; therefore, in this chapter I draw on the Bolman and Deal (2013) model as a way of making sense of how the organisational structures and practices of small PVI settings affected the experiences and perspectives of the participants as they worked towards becoming an EYP.

The intent, therefore, of this chapter is to interpret excerpts from the narratives through the four frames as Bolman and Deal (2013) suggest that multiframe thinking can help the leader '*develop a diagnosis of what they are up against and move forward*' (p.18). As in the previous chapter, I have followed Riessman's (2008) approach to thematic narrative analysis and have interrogated selected segments of the participants' narratives which illustrate how organisational structures and practices, in their settings, affected their experiences as they worked towards EYPS.

7.2 The structural frame

Karen's account suggests that her setting had well established organisational structures with clearly defined roles and lines of authority. The structural form was displayed on the wall for all to see and the lines of authority were explicit. Karen stated,

> *We have a board on the wall at work with the manager and deputy manager at the top. There's no qualifications on there and I'm the most qualified person there; then underneath we are all just nursery nurses, the little people.*

The level of qualifications, particularly of the management team members, was an issue for Karen as she struggled to endorse their authority. Here she discussed the deputy manager, '*She's not even a level 4, I might have had a bit more respect for her if she had done her level 4'.*

In Debbie's setting there also appeared to be an established, hierarchical, organisational structure and from Debbie's perspective this meant that there was no place for an EYP she said

> *Every time I mentioned EYPS, it was skirted around and sometimes when I've mentioned EYPS to the Foundation Stage Leader it's brushed off because they're thinking, what does she want?*

Debbie then interpreted this behaviour as the management team '*not really knowing what to do with her'.* Debbie explained further:

> *EYPS was not seen as anything in the school setting and as my manager was qualified to level 3 she had little knowledge of the meaning of the qualification. I felt I was underappreciated for all I did........ It's just you don't feel you are getting much recognition but you've got to be happy and do it for yourself.*

Bolman and Deal (2013) suggest that one of the central assumptions underpinning the structural frame is that, if formal roles and responsibilities are suitably allocated, people's performance will be maximised. Furthermore, they argue that the organisational structure provides a blueprint of expectations of how the internal workforce and external colleagues should behave and communicate. It seems that the introduction of EYPS, particularly in Karen's and Debbie's settings, had disrupted the structural blueprint in the settings, thus changing and challenging the expectations of the staff teams, and crucially challenging the lines of authority. Whilst it has been the expectation that teachers and leaders in English schools hold a degree level qualification, in the PVI sector, this has not been the case. Therefore, participant accounts suggest that the introduction of EYPS, at degree level, disrupted the existing structural frame in the participants' settings and led to uncertainty around job roles for Karen and Debbie, and their management teams. It appears that, in the settings where Karen and Debbie worked, a formal chain of command was in place which meant there was a designated 'boss' with formal authority. Siraj and Hallet (2014) identify an evolving understanding of leadership in ECEC whereby leadership is a communal concept where all

can be a leader and engage in leadership. This emerging understanding of leadership did not appear to be present in Karen's and Debbie's settings where strong associations of leadership with management and a position of authority persisted. Bolman and Deal (2013) suggest that this type of vertical structure can work effectively when authority is both endorsed by subordinates and authorised by superiors. Karen and Debbie were more qualified than their managers, making it hard for them to fully endorse the authority of the managers and this seems to have contributed to some of the conflict they experienced in their settings. In addition, Bolman and Deal (2013) point out that it is typical for professionals to know more about their work than their supervisors and those professionals typically expect autonomy, and to report to professional colleagues. This is potentially problematic in the PVI sector where just one fifth of the workforce is qualified to level 4 or above and the proportion of graduate level managers is around 58% (NDNA 2015). Therefore, as the experience of Karen and Debbie suggests, the introduction of a professional who is more highly qualified than the existing manager of the setting could lead to political tensions and conflict. The professional may expect a level of autonomy which the manager is unwilling to allow and, in turn, the professional may struggle to endorse the manager's authority.

Emma, as the owner and manager of a setting, was able to offer a unique perspective on her political skills as a leader, and as a manager, before she began working towards EYPS. She said,

> *I tried to be manager and friend. I wasn't leading, I was coaching, not even coaching. I was either doing it myself or thought I was modelling and expecting them to follow and they didn't... I was trying too hard to be everyone's friend but I was also very controlling.*

Emma also explained that at times she '*struggled*' with the many '*hats*' she had to wear. She noted, '*We have less hands at the moment so I'm playing with the kids one minute, leader, manager, doing EYPS, so finding a balance takes longer*'

As the quote from Emma's narrative suggests as the owner of a small setting, she had to be flexible, stepping in at short notice to ensure statutory adult-to-child ratios were maintained within the setting. Furthermore at times she appeared to struggled with the competing demands of leading and managing the setting. Siraj-Blatchford and Manni (2007) highlight as important the ability of effective leaders in ECEC to be able to strike a balance between leading and managing. This can be problematic because, as Hallet (2014) points out, leadership and management are tied together in ECEC, and frequently used interchangeably. Hallet (2014) and Aubrey (2012) suggest that in small settings managerial and administrative tasks can take time away from leading pedagogy and practice. Whilst the structural frame emphasises the importance of the division of labour and

allocation of roles, Bolman and Deal (2013) acknowledge that, in small organisations, flexibility is required. This flexibility is not at odds with the structural frame and is common in small and/or turbulent organisations (Bolman and Deal 2013). Emma's setting was small and had undergone a period of turbulence caused by changes to ECEC policy, including the introduction of EYPS. Nevertheless, Emma suggested that EYPS had helped clarify roles in her setting and she explained that she had moved away from an inflexible, vertical organisational structure to a more horizontal approach to coordination in the organisation, devolving some of her management tasks to the deputy manager. Hallet (2014) argues that tensions arise in an organisation when the distinct roles and responsibilities of leadership and management are not understood. Emma acknowledged that *'EYPS has created a role that wasn't there but needed to be there. It's clarified my role and the deputy is managing more'.* Whilst Emma could see some distinction between her role as a leader and manager, ultimately she retained authority, and her story suggests that her leadership role remained interlinked with her authority as owner and manager of the setting.

Emma's story suggested that it was necessary for her to retain authority in order to try and protect her employees from some of the negative consequences of external policy changes, for example, when she refused to do the assessments which government policy indicates should be carried out by the Health Visitor. Bolman and Deal (2013) assert that small organisations can be susceptible to unwanted outside influences and that organisational structure is essential in insulating the setting and the workforce from external pressures. Although Emma was successful in insulating her employees from some outside influences, she was unable to protect them from the financial loss the setting incurred when a nearby school opened a nursery. Emma explained,

> *The school in the village is starting a competing nursery. She will be charging twenty pounds a head for full day care, I can't compete with that. We mostly had NEF children but the parents got a letter from her saying we notice you are not in the school and it's really hard to argue with a Head Teacher who is saying look transitions will be easier, siblings are here, it will be easier. She's undercut us dramatically and told parents they won't get a place in the school, and, as much as you tell parents that's not the case, it becomes your word against a head teacher. We lost seven children.*

Emma described how she was very open with her staff so that they understood the impact that the loss of seven children had on the setting. She said, *'I sat with the staff and explained how it all works and they even said look those three months you made a loss'.* Although Emma had authority in her setting, it was not enough to persuade the parents to leave their children in the setting. During this

period, Emma struggled to keep the setting open. She commented, '*I'll carry on until September and I've always paid for their training, but if they need to look for somewhere else I wouldn't blame them'.*

Emma explained that she was willing to forgo a salary herself to continue to pay her staff and this symbolised her understanding of her employees' relatively poor pay and conditions. She acknowledged, '*I know they are on rubbish wages'.* At this time, Emma could have agreed to offer more places to 'vulnerable' two year olds, funded by the government which would have brought more money into the setting. Emma explained why she chose not to:

> *I just can't do it. The two year olds I have, the parents need so much support. I've put on parenting classes, they turn up at first then just dribs and drabs. It's not the child's fault but the parents need so much help. They are putting so much on nurseries everyone is stretched.*

Emma was not prepared to compromise the quality of care offered in her setting and to place an unfair burden on her staff. Even though money was tight, Emma seemed determined to try and use EYPS as an opportunity to improve the quality of her setting and to benefit the staff she was responsible for employing. From these examples Emma seems to be demonstrating '*caring leadership'* (Siraj and Hallet 2014 p.20,) her ethic of care extends beyond the children to her workforce. Emma appeared to be demonstrating behaviours and qualities, such as being nurturing, democratic and assertive, in her leadership style which are associated with '*maternal feminism'* (Siraj and Hallet 2014 p.19).

Within the structural frame Bolman and Deal (2013) suggest that organisations should use both vertical '*top down'* and horizontal '*decentralised, lateral*' (p.57) forms of coordination when designing an organisational structure. Although the optimal blend of vertical and horizontal approaches depends on the unique circumstances of the organisation, the structure must change in response to changing circumstances. It did appear that Emma was able to exercise caring leadership (Siraj and Hallet 2014) and through the process of reflection adapt the organisational structure in her setting as circumstances changed. Working towards EYPS supported her reflective, flexible and caring approach. In contrast, Karen's and Debbie's narratives suggest that, in their organisations, managers were keen to maintain the vertical organisational structure and this approach to coordination prevailed, and was unable to accommodate the EYP role.

Although Lauren did not hold a position of authority in her setting, her aunt, the owner and manager, did and she was able to ensure that Lauren was able to make changes necessary to

achieve EYPS. From the perspective of the structural frame the vertical organisational structure in Lauren's setting seemed to support her progress towards EYPS. Lauren's aunt, because of her authority in the setting, was able to devolve some of her responsibilities for leading practice to Lauren, and Lauren did not appear to face any overt resistance from other staff in the setting. Lauren explained,

> *I'm lucky to have support in my setting, they are really pushing me. The EYP has already highlighted about seven things on her job description for me to do, and I'm leading all the planning meetings now. I've heard from some of the others how they struggle to get time off to attend EYPS days. I'm lucky the pre-school leader is an EYP.*

Nevertheless, Lauren's perception was that, in spite of her aunt's authority and an established organisational structure in the setting, her age was a disadvantage as she developed her role as a leader and EYP.

> *I think when you are young you are not seen as professional at work, you're just there with the kids. Some people walk in and see you as a student or a volunteer whereas you've been there five years and I'm quite experienced for my age.*

 Viewing Lauren's experience through the human resource frame, which sees organisations as made up of individuals with needs, feelings, prejudices, skills and limitations can offer further insight into Lauren's experiences as she took on a leadership role in the setting (Bolman and Deal 2013)

7.3 The human resource frame

The human resource frame explores the relationship between people and their organisation and illuminates that people require benefits that extend '*beyond money*' (Bolman and Deal 2013 p.120) from their work. Lauren seemed to require professional recognition from her peers which she felt was lacking because of her relatively young age. She also looked to EYPS to improve her '*self worth*' and for career advancement, Emma sought '*validation'* for her practice, while Karen sought an increase in her '*self esteem'* in addition to earning more money, and Debbie hoped EYPS would provide her with a *'step up'* on the career ladder. Bolman and Deal (2013) suggest that high performing companies do a better job of understanding and responding to the needs of both employees and customers. Karen's and Debbie's narratives suggested that it can be difficult for some managers of PVI settings to understand and respond to the needs of their employees, particularly those with higher career aspirations. Karen wanted her qualifications to be acknowledged and her work to be seen as valuable. Karen explained that the deputy manager had

said, '*She'd (Karen) better not get paid more than me when she gets EYPS*'. As Karen had not discussed an increase in her salary and did not want a management role in the setting, she was puzzled by the management team's behaviour, although she did offer an explanation:

> *I don't know why she thinks that. I'm very fair with them, I've never asked for more money, I don't want to be in an office, I don't want their jobs..... Maybe they are threatened.*

Emma's narrative offered some insight into why Karen's manager behaved in this way, as she explained that, before undertaking EYPS, she lacked skill and understanding in leading and motivating her staff. As Aubrey (2011) points out, leaders in ECEC often take up leadership roles without training and Murray and McDowall Clark (2012) argue that, until the introduction of EYPS, training in leadership was mainly directed towards developing individuals in organisational lead roles. Therefore, as Bolman and Deal (2013) argue managerial skills and understanding can be in '*short supply*' (p.157) in ensuring a good fit between the employees and the organisation.

All of the participants identified that a lack of training and qualifications was an issue for some managers in PVI settings and that this meant that they were unable to align the needs of the organisation with those of the individual EYP. Bolman and Deal (2013) also point out that some managers do not see the advantages in investing in people as they fear losing control and indulging workers. Individuals in an organisation, including managers, can fear the economic, practical and social elements of change, as Siraj and Hallet (2014) point out change can heighten uncertainty. Bolman and Deal (2013) suggest that, when managers feel vulnerable, they revert to self protection. This reversion to self protection is suggested most vividly in Karen's story when she described how the management team sabotaged her setting visit, with considerable negative consequences for Karen's health and well being. Siraj and Hallet (2014) explain that when change is devoid of consultation and support it will, in the long run, inevitably fail and Karen's and, to some extent, Debbie's narratives suggest that there was a lack of support by the management teams for the introduction of EYPS. Bolman and Deal (2013) point out that a lack of attention to the human resource frame can leave employees depressed, de-motivated and vulnerable to exploitation. Exploitation has been discussed in Chapter 6 in relation to the stories of Karen, Debbie and Emma.

The participants in this study were motivated by a number of factors in their pursuit of EYPS, and for three of them this included the potential to earn more money as Karen said '*I'd like to be able to go on holiday once in a while*'. How much someone is paid can send a powerful message about the worth of an individual and their work, and Emma summarised her understanding of her employees' relatively poor pay and conditions when she acknowledged '*I know they are on rubbish wages*' .

Bolman and Deal (2013) acknowledge that wages are an important incentive for workers. However, Bolman and Deal (2013) also point out that employees are motivated by factors such as achievement, recognition for work well done; respect and esteem and these factors converge with those found in the participants' narratives. Lauren was very clear that she wanted to stay working with children. Lauren explained '*I don't want to go into managing a setting; I've done this to be in the room with the children'.* Similarly Karen and Debbie wanted to remain working with children, Karen said '*I don't want to be in an office'* and Debbie said '*I'll always want to be with the littlies'.* The participants seemed to be motivated by becoming a pedagogical leader rather than aspiring to organisational leadership. Siraj and Hallet (2014) argue that pedagogical leadership is activated by '*passion*' (p.113) where passion is a strong emotional enthusiasm, a deep and sound commitment for working with young children (Hallet 2014). For Lauren, Debbie and Karen their aspirations to be a pedagogical leader and to acquire greater status, self esteem and financial reward could not be reconciled with their settings' needs. Their needs were at odds with the PVI sector generally which is still characterised by low status and poor pay and conditions (Nutbrown 2012).

Furthermore, Hallet (2014) identifies that effective pedagogical leaders need opportunities to engage in reflective dialogue and to be part of a learning centred community in which adults learn together. Lauren recognised that she had worked in such an environment when she said;

> *The manager and room leaders have done it themselves... to know that they have done it and you can see their leadership skills. They've been there to support me, they've mentored me. It's definitely been helpful having them there as opposed to someone like Karen who's not had anyone there who knows the process; it's been more of a challenge to get anyone to understand why she's doing things.*

Lauren also appeared to recognise that Karen had not worked in a learning centred community. Debbie and Karen did not get their needs met in the settings where they worked as they undertook EYPS and so they found other jobs. Lauren's aunt and manager was an EYP and she did understand and try to meet Lauren's immediate needs to achieve EYPS. Although, Lauren was very grateful for the support she had received from her aunt, she realised that, for career progression and professional recognition, she would have to leave the setting. Emma, as the owner and manager, had adapted her management style to align her needs with those of the organisation as she worked towards EYPS. Emma, unlike the other participants, could not easily look for alternative employment and, at times, Emma's needs as an EYP were outweighed by the more pressing need to keep the setting solvent during a period of rapid policy change for the PVI sector. As Bolman and

Deal (2013) point out, the needs of an organisation and those of the employees change in response to external economic and political circumstances, and individuals, including managers, find it hard to keep up. Aligning the changing needs of employees with those of the organisation can be challenging, and Bolman and Deal (2013) suggest that a successful human resource strategy is often a long term project undergirded by effective management practices.

7.4 The political frame

The structural frame likens the organisation to a factory and the human resource frame views the organisation as a family. Viewed through the political frame, organisations are described as '*arenas hosting ongoing contests of individual and group interests*' (Bolman and Deal 2013 p.188). Bolman and Deal (2013) explain that coalitions form because members need each other and, in the political frame, the issue is how competing groups articulate preferences, and exercise power to get what they want. Power in an organisation is the capacity to make things happen and there is often a tight linkage between power and dependency (Bolman and Deal 2013) as illustrated in the following segment from Karen's narrative. In Karen's setting the manager and deputy manager had worked together for many years and, from Karen's perspective, and politically, they seemed to be united in protecting their interests. Karen's perception was that they had physically separated themselves from the day to day work with the children, as she explained, '*You see they are at the front of the building and they don't come in to the rooms*'. Karen had tried for many months to be released from the pre-school room to get experience in the baby room which she needed to meet the EYPS standards. However, the management team only agreed to this if Karen changed roles, and was willing to provide cover in the setting wherever needed. Karen described how this made her feel: '*They had me over a barrel really, but I thought if I want to get in the baby room I'd better agree, it wasn't a promotion they just wanted cover*'.

Debbie also experienced some political tensions in her setting which culminated in what Debbie described as '*a little blow out*'. After this Debbie's manager and the head teacher of the school said that they wanted to support her working towards EYPS. Hallet (2014) advocates practitioners engaging in reflective conversations about professional practice to allow roles and practice to develop. It appears that in Karen's and Debbie's settings there were very limited opportunities for reflective conversations which included the management team. Both Debbie's and Karen's stories suggest that they were dependent on their management teams to achieve EYPS; therefore, the management teams had leverage over Karen and Debbie. The management teams controlled the allocation of resources, in Karen's case these being the staff rota and access to the baby room, and,

in Debbie's case, the leave arrangements and arrangements for temporary cover. This gave them power over Debbie and Karen, which Bolman and Deal (2013) describe as a key resource in an organisation. Bolman and Deal (2013) argue that most important decisions involve allocating scarce resources, deciding who gets what. They also suggest that competing for scarce resources puts conflict at the centre of the day to day dynamics of an organisation, and makes power the most important asset.

Bolman and Deal (2013) argue that society is not a cohesive unit and neither are organisations. However, managers are often tasked with setting goals which employees can unite together to achieve. The political view of goals suggests that they are often unclear, inconsistent and may be in conflict. Although Siraj-Blatchford and Manni (2007) state that the primary purpose of any setting is to improve the educational, social and health outcomes for children, in the PVI sector there are a multiplicity of goals, for example, making a profit, meeting the needs of working parents, meeting the needs of children and providing high quality care and education. There can be tension between providing high quality ECEC and making a profit (Pugh 2014) and between meeting the needs of parents and meeting the needs of children (Pugh 2014). The narratives provided multiple examples of the tension between competing goals, in terms of goals for ECEC and goals for practitioners working towards EYPS. Emma and Lauren described in their narratives the tension between their working towards EYPS and financial viability for their setting. As Lauren explained

> I'm hoping to stay at my setting until I've done the Honours degree but unfortunately our hours have been cut at work. So, when we go back in September we'll be down five hours. Our contracts were changed last year to be flexible but they may have to let a member of staff go, and at the moment it's between me and her.

Debbie described the tension between providing consistent care for the two year olds in her setting and taking time out of the setting to attend EYPS days at the university. Debbie said

> You don't want to let the children down which puts pressure on as well. The children are only two and three so they do know me, and they don't want me not to be there which is nice.

For Debbie, Lauren and Emma, it was possible to strike a balance between competing goals in ECEC and working towards EYPS. Lauren, for example, agreed to work fewer hours to help the setting remain financially viable and Emma decided to forgo her salary. From Karen's perspective, she and the management team in the setting had very different ideas about practice, for example Karen suggested that her manager considered the outdoor activities planned for the final assessment as

messy. The organisation seemed to lack a unifying goal concerning quality practice and this led to conflict. Siraj and Hallet (2014) argue that vision is a critical feature of effective leadership found in successful organisations. Vision refers to a clear pathway of direction for a setting and it must be a collective vision that is owned by all the stakeholders (Siraj and Hallet 2014). In Karen's setting she did not share the same vision as the management team, which led to conflict. Siraj and Hallet (2014) state that vision is predicated on reflective practice and it must be clearly articulated and most importantly connected to the issues of pedagogy. Without a clear vision, Siraj and Hallet (2014) point out that individuals within an organisation will often be working towards different and conflicting agendas, which seemed to be a feature of practice in Karen's and Debbie's settings. Emma shared and consulted with her staff team to help a clear vision of practice emerge, for example with practice to promote sustained shared thinking. Whilst Bolman and Deal (2013) point out that conflict within organisations is inevitable, they suggest that what matters is how it is managed. They further suggest that competing stakeholders fight for their own interests and, from bargaining and negotiating goals, decisions can emerge. In line with this claim, Karen and Debbie did have to bargain and negotiate with their management teams in order to bring about changes in their settings in order to achieve their goal of becoming an EYP. Furthermore, Bolman and Deal (2013) point out that out of power struggles leaders develop political skills including negotiation, agenda setting and alliance building. Lauren explained her experience of using her political skills of negotiation and alliance building in her placement setting

> *You have to lead staff, it builds your confidence, and you have to negotiate and talk to higher management, ask them and explain things. You have to explain to staff in the room so I think it helps them understand why you are doing it. You have to be a leader but you don't want to come across as taking over.*

Emma explained setting an agenda for her meeting with the health visitor and Karen spoke of building alliances with other colleagues and parents in her setting. Debbie also had to negotiate with her management team in order to fulfil the requirements of EYPS. Rodd (2013) states that *'successful leadership in the early childhood field is a matter of communication more than anything else'* (p.63) and Siraj and Hallet (2014) argue that a leader who is capable of communicating clearly is likely to command a greater capacity to influence rather than manipulate others. This is important in a sector where practitioners are vulnerable to exploitation. Similarly communication is central to reflective dialogue and articulating a vision and it underpins caring, effective leadership (Siraj and Hallet 2014). Hallet (2014) states that the process of reflection provides agency for leadership, and Siraj-Blatchford and Manni 2007 argue that effective leaders are reflective in their own practice and

encourage reflection in their staff. Reflection is a central thread of leadership and working towards EYPS necessitated the participants developing their reflective skills. Emma remarked '*I definitely had to reflect*' and Karen pointed out some of the negative consequences of reflecting on practice as part of becoming an EYP. She said,

> *It's quite dangerous actually to go onto this degree. You notice things a lot more, and, when you can't put the changes into practice because they won't let you out of your room, you hit a brick wall, and so you think oh my God I've got to get out of here.*

However, Debbie and Lauren were able to reflect on some of the positive changes working towards EYPS had had on their practice. Lauren stated ' *Now, I'm able to talk to them, the staff, rather than make it a big deal*' and when Debbie moved into her new job she reflected on what she had done as part of becoming an EYP. She said,

> *The other day at work I was trying to remember everything I did at my last job, activities, things I'd put in place, and I ended up going through my EYPS work, and I came up with loads of things to input.*

Therefore, the exercise of power need not be negative; it can support leaders in developing political and reflective skills, and it can be exercised positively by managers and leaders to support an individual, as Lauren experienced. From the start of the EYP process, Lauren's aunt, despite considerable financial constraints, released Lauren to attend taught sessions at the university and also to carry out a placement in another setting. It does appear that the warm and loving relationship which existed between Lauren and her aunt was enough to overcome the likelihood of conflict arising out of difference, and the competition of individual self interest. Although the type of familial coalition formed by Lauren and her aunt may not be replicated in other settings, Bolman and Deal (2013) point out that, within the political frame, coalitions can be positive.

Although the political frame is focused on power, Bolman and Deal (2013) state that it is incorrect to assume that power only comes from the top down; rather, it exists at every level of an organisation. Debbie's narrative highlighted that she exercised power despite her relatively low position in the hierarchy of the organisation when she decided to take annual leave to attend university as, from her perspective, this would allow her to exercise the ultimate power of eventually leaving the setting '*guilt free*'. From the perspective of the political frame Debbie, as an experienced and well-qualified member of staff, was a scarce resource and this was her source of power, and, as Bolman and Deal (2013) explain, power in an organisation can come from the control of scarce resources. Bolman and

Deal (2013) also argue that it is possible to exercise coercive power in an organisation where coercive power rests on the ability to constrain, interfere or block an action and can be associated with threats. Karen's story offered a possible example of the exercise of coercive power when she discovered that her job had been advertised, forcing her to accept another role in the setting in order to complete her training for EYPS. However, there are other forms of leverage and in ECEC it is possible that the welfare of children can be used as leverage to block, interfere or constrain action. Debbie explained in her narrative that, by attending university, it was intimated that she would be letting down the children in her care. Debbie was not suggesting that her manager was deliberately using the children as a means to exert power, more that a tacit mutual understanding existed in the setting that the welfare of the children was a priority. It could be argued that her manager was exercising power correctly as the primary purpose of the setting was to meet the needs of the children, and there was a legal requirement for the manager to ensure that there was enough staff to provide a safe service. However, when Debbie decided to take annual leave to attend university, staffing ceased to be an issue and the conflict appeared to subside.

Although, Karen's and to some extent Debbie's stories appear to exemplify the potentially destructive aspects of politics, consulting the political frame can serve to remind us that there may also be positive politics in leadership which is built on a firm moral footing (Bolman and Deal 2013). The highest level of moral judgment rests on the general principle of *'the greatest good for the greatest number'* (Bolman and Deal 2013 p.220). Emma seemed determined to try and use EYPS as an opportunity to improve the quality of her setting and to benefit the staff she was responsible for employing. Even when resources were scarce and Emma's setting was beset by a number of problems, including the loss of several children to a rival school, threatening the financial viability of the setting, Emma tried to exercise what Bolman and Deal (2013) describe as moral leadership. She was willing to forgo a salary herself to continue to pay her staff, and she also tried to protect her staff from external pressures as discussed previously. Emma's leadership practice resonates with caring leadership practice as advocated by Siraj and Hallet (2014). They call for leadership in ECEC which advocates caring as a social principle and I would argue that this should be extended to caring for staff. Bolman and Deal (2013) write that a leader should take a moral stance, be accountable and be prepared to engage in dialogue about ethical choices. Emma appeared to be prepared to take a moral stance on behalf of the children and the staff in her setting. As the owner and manager, Emma had the authority to make these decisions, other EYPs may not.

Murray and McDowall Clark (2012) argue that a different concept of leadership is needed for ECEC, one which encourages practitioner involvement and engagement. Their model of leadership from

within seeks to empower and release personal agency, whereby power is for a purpose rather than power over individuals. This model recognises that leadership can come from anywhere within the setting; however, the data suggests that there is still some way to go for this model of leadership to be supported in some settings in the PVI sector.

7.5 The symbolic frame

The symbolic frame abandons the notion that organisations are rational worlds, as assumed in the other frames. Bolman and Deal (2013) argue that the symbolic frame focuses on how humans make sense of the chaotic and ambiguous world in which they live. They draw upon the work of Zott and Huy (2007) to suggest that a symbol is something that stands for or suggests something else and that symbolism can be conveyed through objects and actions. A symbol conveys socially constructed meanings beyond its intrinsic or obvious functional use; that is, as Bolman and Deal (2013) argue, the symbolic dimension of an object or action evokes meaning in people, based on a shared understanding. For example, the positioning of the management team offices, in Karen's setting, away from the rooms where the children are educated and cared for, could be seen to symbolise the delineation between caring and management tasks, and as a symbol of the management team's status. In Karen's story, the position of the office, in combination with some of the management team's other actions, had a powerful symbolic meaning. To Karen the message conveyed was that she and the other practitioners were '*the little people*', when compared to the management team.

Bolman and Deal (2013) suggest that symbols take many forms, including myths, vision, heroes, heroines, and ritual. The following section considers the data specifically in light of the symbolic forms, myths, vision and values, heroes and heroines and rituals.

7.5.1 Myths, vision and values

Bolman and Deal (2013) state that myths often originate in the launching of an enterprise and can be understood as the stories behind the story; that is they explain, express and maintain cohesion and solidarity between stakeholders. However, the findings suggest that significant stakeholders, for example the management teams in Karen's and Debbie's settings, and the parents and practitioners from Emma's setting, were not united in support of EYPS. Osgood (2009) argues that the ECEC workforce was constructed in contradictory ways by the New Labour Government prior to the introduction of EYPS. This contradiction in the construction of the workforce, when viewed through the symbolic frame, means that there was a lack of a compelling and cohesive story to underpin the

launch of EYPS, which left some significant stakeholders unconvinced of the need to professionalise ECEC.

Although there is some debate as to whether the sector was in crisis before the launch of EYPS, as discussed in Chapter 3, in their stories Karen, Debbie and Lauren each expressed concern about the quality of qualifications and training in the sector for most practitioners and many managers. In order to meet the standards for EYPS, Lauren had to undertake a placement working with babies aged between 0-18 months which she did at Karen's setting, and, whilst Karen struggled to get time in the baby room, Lauren did not. Lauren acknowledged that Karen had not had the same opportunities and provided some of her thoughts on the management team at the setting.

> *Some people are not in the right job position. They have the title 'manager' because they have been there longest, but they are not doing what's on the badge.*

 The participants' concerns resonate with a long running story about the variability and quality of qualifications in the ECEC sector, as highlighted by Nutbrown (2012) and Tickell (2011). In a continuation of this story, it seems that the introduction of EYPS failed to dispel recurrent concerns about the quality and variability of qualifications in the sector, and, as a result, EYPS never achieved parity with QTS. Murray and McDowall Clark (2012) suggest that the introduction of EYTS has placed graduate leadership and specific professional roles once more in flux. Bolman and Deal (2013) suggest that myths offer a narrative which anchors the present in the past. EYPS has been discursively constructed by the government as belonging in the PVI sector with its long association with childcare (Roberts-Holmes 2013), thus firmly maintaining cohesion between EYPS and the traditional and gendered concepts of the ECEC workforce. Furthermore, Murray and McDowall Clark (2012) point out that locating leadership in a politically designated role, EYPS and EYTS, risks reinforcing the dependency culture created when leadership is seen as residing only in nominated individuals.

Perhaps, in an attempt to re-establish the myth of parity between professionals working in ECEC in the PVI sector and teachers working in schools, the Coalition Government replaced EYPS with EYTS (DfE2013). However, the participants were not convinced by this government constructed myth that EYPS or EYTS would have parity with QTS. Both Lauren and Debbie seemed resigned to the anticipated disparity between EYPS and EYTS and had plans to apply for a QTS course. Perhaps, Lauren and Debbie had simply never believed that EYPS was going to be the same as QTS, in terms of status, pay and conditions of employment, and possibly, because they were in the early stages of their career, the prospect of undertaking further study was less daunting than for the others.

However, Emma had chosen to undertake EYPS rather than return to teacher training and she seemed to feel betrayed by the government's change in policy. She had eschewed the established status of being a qualified teacher for EYPS, believing that it would bring professional recognition for her and her work in ECEC, only to find that EYPS had been replaced by EYTS. Emma described her feelings about the introduction of EYTS

> *The qualification (EYPS) doesn't really amount to anything. Initially, I did feel validated by being an Early Years Professional, now I just see it as a thing I have done. I'm disappointed, grossly disappointed by the fact that EYPS isn't equivalent to an Early Years Teacher.*

Karen viewed the introduction of EYTS with concern for what it might mean for the children and suggested that the introduction of teachers into ECEC might interfere with children learning through play.

Bolman and Deal (2013) suggest myths undergird values and that values reflect a core ideology that shapes people. Siraj and Hallet (2014) suggest that there is a unique emotional drive in ECEC often described as '*passion'* (p.53) for working with young children. This passion is a core ideology and a key driver in ECEC leaders' practice (Hallet 2014). In turn vision turns a core ideology into an image of the future. All of the participants appeared to have a strong core ideology which meant they were committed to continuing their work with young children. The vision of Lauren and Debbie for the future included further study to gain QTS; Emma's disappointment at the introduction of EYTS meant that further study was out of the question; and Karen wanted a new job with better pay, and held to her belief that children should be allowed to learn through play.

7.5.2 Heroes and heroines

Bolman and Deal (2013) describe heroes and heroines in organisations as human models who influence, positively, decisions and actions. They do not have to be at the top of an organisation but Bolman and Deal (2013) suggest that they are leaders who model the values they hope to instil. Therefore, Bolman and Deal's description of a heroine resonates with the role of the EYP as identified by Roberts-Holmes who argues (2013 p.341), '*The central role of an EYP is to lead practice in the workplace with the aim of inspiring other early year's practitioners around them; they are envisaged as change agents'*. However, inspiring others and bringing about change was a challenge for some of the participants. For example, Lauren felt that her young age made it difficult for her to lead in her setting, and Emma was not convinced she had made a lasting change in the childminder's setting where she carried out a placement, she explained

Then with the childminder; she wasn't doing much with heuristic play so I introduced it, but I couldn't tell her what to do as she was very experienced. She was really nice but wanted to do things her way so she wouldn't let me take any pictures. She wrote a piece and signed it but I'm not sure she will keep it up now I've left.

Nevertheless, Emma suggested that she had had a positive influence on some colleagues within her setting, she commented '*the staff are behaving differently too, without a doubt, they see me as a role model but take notice rather than just a role model who will do'*. Karen, explained how she had influenced a colleague to go on and do EYPS,

Someone else from the setting is doing EYPS, she's nervous but she's seen me do it, so that's a good outcome. That's the whole point to share knowledge; we're supposed to learn from each other.

Both Emma and Karen found this a very rewarding aspect of working towards EYPS. Siraj and Hallet (2014) state a central element in many definitions of leadership is that there is a process of influence and they highlight the importance of motivation and influencing behaviour in leadership practice. Both Karen and Emma appeared to positively influence the behaviour of others in their settings and encouraged personal and professional confidence. Siraj and Hallet (2014) argue that it is essential for effective leaders to inspire others on their leadership journey to take on leadership roles in other organisations. It is possible that both Emma and Karen have inspired their colleagues on their leadership journey.

New Labour policy imbued EYPs with a message of hope and to some extent heroine-like status as they were positioned as central to the success of many interweaving and ambitious political agendas, particularly reducing the negative impact of poverty on children and families. However, EYPs were not always understood or well received in the sector, as Karen's and Debbie's narratives appear to illustrate, and their heroine-like status was not acknowledged within their settings. Despite having a positive influence on the leadership journey of one colleague Karen explained that the management team seemed keen to get rid of her once she had EYPS. She said

I found my job advertised on the Local Authority website...I wonder if they are expecting me to leave. They're thinking how can we get rid of her? But they can't just give your job away and say see you later, surely?

7.5.3 Rituals

Rituals are symbolic acts, routines that normally have a '*statable purpose*' (Bolman and Deal 2013 p.256). There are several rituals which CWDC established as part of the assessment process for EYPS, such as the progress review and the final setting visit (CWDC 2010). According to Bolman and Deal (2013), such rituals of initiation induct newcomers into communal membership, grant access and affirm membership. These rituals are the price the newcomer must pay for admission (Bolman and Deal 2013). The assessments are rites of passage which test the participants' abilities as an EYP. Bolman and Deal (2013) argue that such rituals and rites of passage bond a group and add value to the enterprise. For Debbie the final assessment was important symbolically as it validated her work. She noted,

> *I had a sense of pride when the assessor, and she was a children's centre teacher, highlighted that I was doing my job, the deputy manager's job and the children's centre teachers job.*

As Debbie worked in a children's centre, the opinion of the assessor, a children's centre teacher, mattered to Debbie. She recognised the complexity of Debbie's role and likened it to that of a children's centre teacher.

For Lauren, the final setting visit also had symbolic value. She described it as '*nerve wracking*' but was delighted when the assessor evaluated her activity as good, '*she commented on how good it was, and that was good*'. Lauren also said about the final assessment,

> *Fingers crossed I've passed. I'm hoping to stay in my setting until I've done the Honours degree, but I've always wanted to go into reception. Obviously going into a school you're going up against people who have done a four year university course... but I hope it will give me an advantage, well if not it will level me out.*

Certainly both Lauren's and Debbie's stories suggest that they perceived the assessment visit as valuable and, for them, the fact that it was challenging made it worthwhile and an important part of becoming an EYP. Bolman and Deal (2013) explain that rituals as rites of passage often involve some element of trial and this marks the importance of the event. Whilst Emma saw some value in the process of becoming an EYP, for her the positive value of the ritual of the final assessment was undermined by her experience of performativity, that is, the need to comply with external performance management targets. Emma had already experienced some disillusionment with the process of working towards EYPS and putting together her portfolio for the final assessment, as she explained:

EYPS validated what I already did and I definitely had to reflect but the process though! I possibly gave the impression that I was doing fine so I only saw my mentor for about fifteen minutes and she said, 'Oh you're fine' and then was left alone. I don't need checking up on but an e-mail would have been nice and those bloody standards they drove me mad. I had them on the wall in the office and thought that goes with that and that with that, but I took my folder and it seemed a bit thin, I saw these bulging folders.

Emma then went on to rather dismiss her final folder. She said, '*Anyway when the assessor came that was the extent of my file and I said when you've finished with it I can put it on the shelf and never look at it again'*.

For Karen, the final assessment appeared to be a trial and she believed it was sabotaged by the management team in her setting. Karen, in her account of the management team's actions, described a series of incidents which she felt were deliberate acts of sabotage before her EYPS assessment setting visit, pulling up plants, not setting up the TV, arriving late on the day of the visit and eventually advertising her job, even though she was still employed at the setting. On a personal level, the negative consequences for Karen of her efforts to gain graduate professional status were considerable. By the time of her final assessment, Karen had lost much of her hair and she described herself as *'feeling paranoid... and you feel like you've had your legs knocked out from under you'.* It's not surprising that Karen said, after the final assessment, *'I feel better now that it's all over'*. Symbolically it seems that Karen and the management team did not share the same vision of having an EYP in the setting and Karen expressed her disappointment with the management team when she said, '*they could have worked with me instead of against me, tripping me up on the way'*.

Bolman and Deal (2013) point out that sometimes rituals lead to clashes between the parties involved because the ritual can be an opportunity for one party to remind the other who is in charge. Siraj and Hallet (2014) acknowledge that managers who are hierarchical or directive in nature may thwart the emergence of a more participative model of leadership. They also argue that the current '*climate of unprecedented accountability'* (Siraj and Hallet 2014 p.94) may inhibit managers and leaders from empowering colleagues to act in leaderful ways. As Siraj and Hallet (2014) point out, according to government mandates and external expectations ultimate responsibility lies with the leader and this is not always conducive to a shared model of leadership, and the relinquishing of authority.

Bolman and Deal (2013) state that rituals have other important properties; they can *'simultaneously serve as a solid footing and springboard'* (p.256) and this resonates with the hopes of the participants in this study. Emma wanted validation from EYPS for her practice, a solid footing, and Karen, Lauren and Debbie viewed EYPS as a springboard to career advancement. For both Debbie and Lauren career advancement appeared to mean that they would ultimately leave the PVI sector and work towards achieving QTS. Bolman and Deal (2013) point out that rituals can create communal bonds and the communal bond of being an EYP appeared to be significant in enabling Lauren to achieve EYPS and, for Debbie, in securing a new job. Lauren explained that, as her aunt was an EYP, she was able to support Lauren, and Debbie felt that because her new boss was an EYP, she understood its worth. Debbie explained *'my new manager is an EYP so she knows its worth and she really wanted an EYP as a deputy'*

7.6 Summary of the findings

The four frame analysis of the narratives has provided multiple perspectives on the experiences of the participants and, as Bolman and Deal (2013) suggest, each perspective contains a kernel of truth but oversimplifies a '*knottier'* (p27) reality. This summary assembles these multiple perspectives to produce a coordinated overview of how organisational structures and practices shaped the participants' experiences of becoming an EYP. It assimilates the multiple perspectives to establish key findings from across the structural, human resource, political and symbolic frames.

The first finding, one that emerged from examining conflict in the participants' narratives from multiple perspectives was that the EYP, as a graduate professional, challenged the traditional organisational structures in the four PVI settings. Viewed through the structural frame this was found to be particularly problematic in the settings where the EYP was more qualified than the manager and where the vertical lines of authority appeared to be inflexible; this led to conflict between those working towards EYPS and the management team. Where the organisational structure is hierarchical and the leadership style directive, managers may thwart the emergence of more collaborative approaches to leadership. The political frame also explains that conflict, as in two of the four narratives, might occur because managers feel that their authority is threatened, and therefore they revert to self protection. However, viewing the participants' narratives through the human resource frame suggests that conflict may arise, not just because managers feel their authority is threatened, but because managers lack training and skills to match the needs of the organisation with those of the individual. Therefore, by examining conflict in the narratives through

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the human resource, political and structural frames the first finding emerged and it offers insight into how the manager of a PVI setting might react to the introduction of a graduate professional.

The second finding to emerge from the multiframe analysis was that the four participants, as effective leaders, developed their skills of reflection and political skills, including negotiation, building alliances and agenda setting. Through the political frame, Bolman and Deal (2013) argue that power struggles, as reflected in two of the narratives, can support effective leaders in identifying useful political skills. Viewed through the human resource frame, the development of these reflective and political skills was essential to the success of the participants as change agents, as the skills underpin the exchange of information, building relationships, promoting participation and developing commitment to the change. Three of the participants in this study were unable to rely on a formal position of authority to bring about change; therefore viewed through the structural frame they had to find other ways to initiate change, and in the process they developed essential political skills.

The third finding to emerge from the participants' narratives was that effective leadership as an EYP was built on moral leadership which supported and protected the workforce. Bolman and Deal (2013) argue that viewed through the structural frame the moral leader's responsibility is to build influence rather than control, and the participants' narratives suggest that they were leading and bringing about change through influence. From the perspective of the human resource frame moral leadership is focused on caring. Caring for young children has great significance for the participants but, as moral leaders, caring extends to concern for the needs of the workforce, which starts with listening and understanding. Bolman and Deal (2013 p.401) also describe caring as the '*ethical glue*' which holds an organisation together and this relates to the view of moral leadership from the symbolic frame. The consequences of organisations not paying attention to the cultural glue, as identified in the symbolic frame are discussed below as part of the fourth finding. Turning to the political frame, moral leadership focuses on power and how it might be used to support or protect the workforce, as suggested in two of the participants' narratives, or to block and constrain as reported by the other participants. The contrasting accounts from the participants highlight the complex interplay between moral leadership and the extent to which it relies on a position of authority; this has not been fully resolved in this study. However, moral leadership is an important dimension of the participants' narratives and viewed through multiple perspectives it is possible to explain moral leadership as built upon influence, caring and the ethical exercise of power.

The fourth finding which emerged from the multiframe analysis of the participants' narratives was that effective leaders identify the symbolic forms which bind individuals to the organisation, and endeavour to match the motivational needs of the employee to the needs of the organisation. When symbolic forms are neglected or can be interpreted as reinforcing differences in status between the management team, and the practitioners (page 132), individuals can become alienated from the organisation. Both the symbolic frame and the human resource frame are concerned with recognising what binds an individual to an organisation. The participants in this study were bound to their organisations by their strong commitment and passion for caring for children, and becoming a professional. When organisations are unable or unwilling to pay attention to what binds the individual to the organisation, as appeared to be the case in three of the participants narratives, then the symbolic and human resource frames suggest that the individuals will seek employment elsewhere, and this was confirmed in the participants' narratives. Not paying attention to the symbolic frame and the motivational needs of the individual could have serious negative consequences for the organisation and stakeholders, as the loss of experienced and qualified practitioners has the potential to be costly for the PVI setting both financially, and in terms of quality of provision.

In summary the findings from this multiframe analysis are:

- The EYP as a graduate professional challenged the traditional organisational structures in the four PVI settings. This was particularly problematic in the settings where the professional was more qualified than the manager and where the vertical lines of authority appeared to be inflexible.
- The four participants, as effective leaders, developed skills of reflection and political skills of negotiation, agenda setting and building alliances to bring about change.
- The effective leadership of the four participants was built on moral leadership which supported and protected the workforce.
- The four participants, as effective leaders, identified the symbolic forms which bind individuals to the organisation and endeavoured to match the motivational needs of the employee to the needs of the organisation.

The following chapter draws on the findings from this multiframe analysis and explores their implications for practice leadership in ECEC in the PVI sector in England.

Chapter 8: Implications for leadership practice in early childhood education and care

8.1 Introduction

This chapter draws on the findings from the multiframe analysis in Chapter 7 and considers how they might inform and extend the field of leadership practice in ECEC. It sets out the barriers to change in an organisation and then presents a new integrated model of leadership synthesising the Kubler-Ross (1989) Change Curve Model with the Bolman and Deal (2013) four frames model. This new model has been developed to specifically support the practice leader in ECEC as they endeavour to bring about change in the setting. The following section explains the necessity for a new integrated model of leadership which represents the unique features of ECEC in the PVI sector.

8.2 Features of the private voluntary and independent sector.

The Bolman and Deal (2013) framework has been an effective analytical tool offering multiple perspectives to explain how organisational structures and practices, in particular leadership practices, affected the participants' experiences of professionalisation. In order to contribute further knowledge to the field of leadership in ECEC in the PVI sector, it is necessary to consider the implications that these findings have for practice leadership. Although Bolman and Deal (2013) argue that the framework can be useful in reframing leadership, its direct application to practice leadership in ECEC in the PVI sector in England has some limitations. This is because Bolman and Deal (2013) draw most of their examples from large, often multinational companies and in one case from a large high school in America. These examples cannot represent the unique and significant features which affect practice leadership in ECEC in the PVI sector in England. The unique features highlighted in this chapter were identified from the findings of this study and appeared significant in the participants' narratives, and some of which confirm findings from the ECEC leadership literature, and some which challenge or extend this literature. Firstly, as one of the key findings from the multiframe analysis identifies as a unique feature the practice leader may be more highly qualified than the manager of the setting and, therefore, may challenge the traditional organisational hierarchy of the organisation and undermine existing lines of authority. Secondly, as a unique feature, many PVI settings are small, standalone businesses and, as suggested in Emma's and Lauren's narratives, they can be adversely affected by a small loss of income. As Pugh (2014) points out, small, standalone settings are disproportionately disadvantaged, when compared to the larger chains of private day nurseries, by the government's underfunding of nursery education. Thirdly, Emma also drew attention in her narrative to the significant negative affect that changes to government policy can have on small PVI settings, a further unique factor. Changes to government

policy can stretch the already scarce resources in a small setting. Finally the workforce in the PVI sector is overwhelmingly female and, as was suggested by the findings in this study and the work of Hallet and Roberts-Holmes (2010), passion for caring for young children is at the heart of their practice and their professional identity, a further unique characteristic of the sector. The findings suggest that the institutionalised caring of young children can leave practitioners open to financial and emotional exploitation. With this in mind, it is important that, as the findings from the multiframe analysis indicate, the practice leader acts as a moral leader who supports and protects the workforce rather than contributing further to their exploitation. Therefore, this chapter is an opportunity to explain the implications of the findings from this study for practice leadership by continuing to draw on the work of Bolman and Deal (2013) but, crucially, to contextualise it to ECEC in the PVI sector, drawing on the findings from this study. This is an opportunity to reframe leadership practice to represent the unique features of the PVI sector.

The findings which emerged from the multiframe analysis add to an understanding of leadership in ECEC and specifically the role of the leader as a change agent. This is important because, as the participants in this study suggest, some existing leaders and managers lack the training and skills to lead effectively. Furthermore, as a result of this study, I would also argue that the participants were ill prepared for their role as leaders and change agents. This matters because, as Roberts-Holmes (2014) suggests, ECEC is increasingly framed by the emphasis upon the '*raising standards policy context*' (p.1) and effective leadership of practice is imperative within this context. Therefore, in this chapter it is my intent to draw on the findings, set out below, to develop a model which supports the practice leader in ECEC.

The findings are:

- The EYP as a graduate professional challenged the traditional organisational structures in the four PVI settings. This was particularly problematic in the settings where the professional was more qualified than the manager and where the vertical lines of authority appeared to be inflexible.
- The four participants, as effective leaders, developed skills of reflection and political skills of negotiation, agenda setting and building alliances to bring about change.
- The effective leadership of the four participants was built on moral leadership which supported and protected the workforce.

- The four participants, as effective leaders, identified the symbolic forms which bind individuals to the organisation and endeavoured to match the motivational needs of the employee to the needs of the organisation.

The practice leader in ECEC must exert influence to bring about change and from the outset the practice leader needs to understand the barriers to bringing about change in an organisation.

8.3 Barriers to change and practice leadership

Bolman and Deal (2013) argue that bringing about change in an organisation is at the heart of practice leadership, where leadership is understood as relational, contextual and distinct from power and position. They also suggest that change agents fail because they do not understand their circumstances well enough and are unable to anticipate the consequences of a proposed change. Additionally, Siraj and Hallet (2014) state that to lead change it is important to understand the process of change, and the role the leaders plays in orchestrating change. Bolman and Deal (2013) claim that multiframe thinking can assist the leader and change agent in understanding the organisation, the individuals and groups that work in the organisation.

I am proposing that the multiframe approach, when interpreted in relation to the findings of this study, is a pertinent tool for leaders and change agents in ECEC. In addition, ideas from each frame can help the practice leader, like those in this study, identify the barriers to change which occur in their setting and highlight some of the essential strategies to use to overcome these barriers. The table presented below is adapted from the work of Bolman and Deal (2013) to outline the barriers to change and the essential strategies the practice leader can use. It has been adapted in the light of the findings from this study to highlight points of particular relevance to ECEC and is contextualised with examples from the participants' narratives.

Table 2 The Multiframe Model of Barriers to Change with Essential Strategies.

Table 2: The Multiframe Model of Barriers to Change with Essential Strategies

FRAME	BARRIERS TO CHANGE	STUDY FINDINGS	ESSENTIAL STRATEGIES	EXAMPLES FROM NARRATIVES
Human resource	Staff feelings of anxiety, uncertainty and incompetence Being needy .	Effective leaders developed political skills of negotiation, agenda setting and building alliances to bring about change.	Training to develop new skills Participation and involvement of staff Psychological support for staff	Emma trained her staff Karen asked her colleagues for ideas and feedback Lauren was mentored by her manager
Structural	Loss of direction, clarity and stability for staff Confusion and chaos in the setting	Graduate professional challenged the traditional organisational structures in the setting.	Communication between the leader and all colleagues Realigning and renegotiating formal patterns and policies in the setting	Debbie confronted the management team Emma devolved some of her management tasks
Political	Disempowerment for staff Conflict between winners and losers	Effective leaders developed political skills of negotiation, agenda setting and building alliances to bring about change. Effective leadership was built on moral leadership which supported and protected the workforce.	Developing arenas where issues can be renegotiated and new coalitions formed	Lauren negotiated and discussed changes with staff in placement Karen built alliances with parents Emma protected her staff from the adverse effects of changes to policy through agenda setting and negotiation
Symbolic	Loss of meaning and purpose for staff	Effective leaders identified the symbolic forms which bind	Creating transition rituals for staff	Symbolic forms can be interpreted negatively as suggested in Karen's narrative or motivational

| | Staff clinging to the past | individuals to the organisation and endeavour to match the motivational needs of the employee to the needs of the organisation | Mourning the past

Celebrating the future with all stakeholders | needs neglected; as a result individuals may leave the setting.

Positive examples included;

Emma discussed telling parents about EYPS in a newsletter or on a notice board-this could be a transition ritual or a way to celebrate success.

Debbie shared her ideas for practice in her new setting and felt respected and valued by her employer. |

Bolman and Deal's (2013) multiframe model, supported by the findings of this study, suggests that the practice leader in the setting can minimise such difficulties through anticipation of the issues and then implementation of the essential strategies as summarised above. The following section further exemplifies the issues faced by practice leaders with examples from the data.

8.4 The four frames: essential strategies

8.4.1 Human resource

When viewed through the human resource frame the participants' narratives suggest that individuals in an organisation, including managers, as reported by Karen and Debbie, can fear practical, social and economic elements of change. Government policy is a powerful and, since 1997, a frequent lever for change in the PVI sector. Small settings, managing scarce resources, are more vulnerable than large organisations to the possible adverse effects of changes brought about through government policy, as suggested in Emma's narrative. Relevant to such contexts Siraj and Hallet (2014) acknowledge that the challenge for the practice leader in ECEC is to lead the process of change in a participatory way. Even when change is experienced as for the good, people do not like to feel voiceless and, if they are asked to do something they do not understand, they can feel incompetent and powerless (Bolman and Deal 2013). Therefore, the first key strategy is that the practice leader of an ECEC setting takes time to hear people's ideas and concerns and to make sure that all concerned have the knowledge and expertise to carry out their responsibilities. For example, Lauren referred to being mentored by her aunt as important to her in developing her expertise, while Emma also identified mentoring as something she used to support and develop the expertise of the staff in her setting. Mentoring has the potential to be particularly effective in a small PVI setting where it can be implemented quickly as the practice leader is likely to be familiar with the staff and their responsibilities, thus reducing the amount of time when individuals feel incompetent and powerless. Bolman and Deal (2013) state that it is important that colleagues feel supported and comfortable with the changes proposed and that they understand the rationale for new initiatives; if this does not happen, they will push to return to the status quo. Similarly, Siraj and Hallet (2014) acknowledge that members of an organisation want transparency in change processes where leaders explain the reasons for change. Therefore, a second strategy, which can be employed by the practice leader in ECEC and demonstrated by Emma, is to take time to explain new initiatives to the staff in the setting, as, for example, when Emma provided training on sustained shared thinking.

8.4.2 Structural frame

One of the key findings from the multiframe analysis of the narratives suggests that the introduction of the graduate professional into the setting challenged the traditional organisational structures and this was particularly problematic where the graduate was more highly qualified than the manager. Therefore, this is likely to be challenging for any new practice leader as their introduction into an ECEC setting might be perceived as undermining existing structural arrangements in the setting. Bolman and Deal's (2013) structural frame indicates that the success of a new initiative cannot be ensured unless existing roles and responsibilities are structurally aligned with the initiative. In the short term, the practice leader may not be in a position to change the structural arrangements in the setting, but they may be able to rework them informally. This strategy was employed by Lauren who highlighted the need to build relationships with the other staff in her placement setting. She explained, *'you want to be a leader but don't want to come across as taking over'.* As Bolman and Deal (2013) suggest, to informally realign structures requires effective communication to build alliances and coalitions. Similarly, Rodd (2013) agrees that communication is a fundamental aspect of effective leadership in ECEC. In the PVI sector, if the manager continues to feel undermined by the practice leader it may be necessary for the practice leader to build alliances and coalitions outside the setting as suggested in Karen's narrative. Karen turned to parents for support and in ECEC in the PVI sector parents are important stakeholders and can be powerful allies for the practice leader.

However, in seeking to build alliances and coalitions, the practice leader should proceed cautiously to avoid undermining and alienating individuals, and they need to be open to the possibility of horizontal violence (Hard and Jonsdottir 2013). Hard and Jonsdottir (2013) explain that horizontal violence can include humiliation, exclusion and a lack of opportunity, as reported by Karen and to some extent Debbie in their narratives. As Siraj and Hallet (2014) point out that there will inevitably be some resistance to change so the leader must be confident in handling conflict management and be sensitive in handling people involved in the change. Over time, the practice leader may be able to negotiate more formal changes to the structural arrangements; this will depend on their ability to build relationships with their colleagues in the setting and their ability to influence those with authority such as the management team.

8.4.3 Political frame

From the perspective of Bolman and Deal's (2013) political frame, it is important for the practice leader to recognise that change invariably generates conflict. Bolman and Deal (2013) explain that

conflict arises because some members of the organisation may oppose, some sit on the fence and some support the change; this can lead to clashes. This was evident in the stories of the participants. For example, Debbie explained that a clash with her management team, which she described as *'a little blow out,'* led to a positive outcome for her. Whilst '*a little blow out'* can be helpful, sometimes clashes smoulder under the surface and Bolman and Deal (2013) suggest that coercive power, rather than legitimate authority, determines who wins. In this scenario, the would-be change agent often loses. Bolman and Deal (2013) recommend that the best way to manage conflict in organisations is through negotiation and Hallet (2014) supports this argument asserting that professional dialogue underpinned by the values of ECEC, and a vision to improve and shape practice can reduce conflict. Looking at ECEC settings specifically, the practice leader might do this by establishing regular meetings or forums to talk, listen and negotiate. Siraj and Hallet (2014) agree, arguing that in this way employees feel consulted and have an opportunity to have their questions answered. Emma implemented this strategy whilst on the EYPS pathway; she said, 'w*e have meetings with an agenda now'* and, when the setting was threatened with closure, Emma talked openly to the staff and they then had a better understanding of the challenges faced by Emma in trying to keep the setting open. However, the practice leader must remember that issues are unlikely to be resolved instantly; they are often ongoing and, as the organisation is dynamic, issues will change. If clashes do erupt the practice leader must be able to confront the conflict and to do this they may need support from established coalitions, and from the management team. Sometimes, as Bolman and Deal (2013) point out, action may need to be taken by leaders, such as giving a formal warning or even firing an employee. The practice leader may not have the authority or desire to be part of such an action as it seems contrary to an ethos of care in ECEC. As a last resort, the practice leader may leave the setting in order to find a setting where they can bring about change, as when Karen, Debbie and Lauren having achieved EYPS, moved onto new jobs.

8.4.4 Symbolic frame

Viewing the participants' narratives through the symbolic frame led to the key finding that effective leaders identify the symbolic forms which bind an individual to the organisation and endeavour to match the motivational needs of the individual to the needs of the organisation. This matters in the PVI sector because, as the participants' narratives suggest, when this frame is neglected or, as Karen suggests, interpreted to represent differences in status between those with authority and those caring for the children, individuals will look for a job in another setting where their needs are more closely aligned to those of the organisation. When an experienced, qualified individual leaves the setting it can adversely affect the quality and consistency of care and recruiting a suitable

replacement can be costly. Bolman and Deal (2013) point out that systems, policies, routines, rituals and even how a setting is laid out can all take on symbolic value, and changes to these can result in people feeling a sense of loss. Regular meetings, informal and formal, can provide space to talk and even griping can be part of the ritual (Bolman and Deal 2013); however, the practice leader also needs to encourage letting go of the old ways and this can be done by celebrating success. There are practical steps identified in the findings that the practice leader in ECEC can take to celebrate success. One strategy, suggested by Karen, was to display qualifications on the wall and Emma considered telling parents about staff achievements in a news letter.

Bolman and Deal (2013) describe the effective leader as becoming part of the '*symbolic glue'* (p.427). They can do this by becoming the *'human model'* (Bolman and Deal 2013 p. 253) who influences positively colleagues in the setting as both Emma and Karen identified in their narratives. Siraj and Hallet (2014) point out that the attitude a change leader adopts influences how others view the change process, therefore it is important for the practice leader to be a positive role model. Hallet (2014) argues that the leader should draw on their passion and enthusiasm to keep staff motivated and committed to change. Similarly, Bolman and Deal (2013) state that the effective leader inspires deep confidence in '*what we care about and what we deeply believe in'* (p.396). As supported by the participants' narratives in this study, many women work in ECEC because they have a deep emotional commitment, '*passion'* (Hallet p.18), for ECEC and care deeply for and about young children. Therefore, the practice leader in ECEC has a unique opportunity to unify the workforce in the setting behind this shared value. The findings suggest that the practice leader can do this through moral leadership whereby they support and protect the workforce rather than exploit their ethic of care. Emma provided examples of protecting the workforce in her account and Lauren described the support she received from the manager in her setting. Emma's position as the owner and manager of the setting allowed her the authority to ensure her employees were not exploited; however, not all practice leaders will be in a position of authority like Emma, therefore, moral leadership might be exemplified by Karen who overcame considerable challenges to achieve EYPS, and in the process inspired one colleague to apply to become an EYT. Hallet (2014) argues that passion underpins a leadership style which is nurturing, caring, inclusive and influencing rather than authoritarian; however, this study suggests that it can be difficult to disentangle moral leadership, in the PVI sector, from authority.

A multiframe approach offers a chance to get beyond stereotypical and oversimplified views of leadership, and this is important in ECEC where, as this study suggests, nuanced and sensitive leadership is required to reflect the unique features of ECEC in the PVI sector.

8.5 A new model for practice leaders

A key finding of this study is that the practice leader needs reflective skills and to develop political skills of negotiation, agenda setting and alliance building. These skills support the practice leader in developing relationships which are central to the success of the essential strategies necessary in the PVI sector, as outlined above. Furthermore, Bolman and Deal (2013) suggest that change agents fail if they neglect the relational and emotional aspects of leadership. Developing reflective skills and political skills and employing the essential strategies will ensure the relational and emotional aspects of leadership remain at the forefront.

However, as suggested by the findings in this study and supported in the research of Hadfield et al. (2012), individuals in a setting are the biggest barrier to implementing improvement strategies. The practice leader can only bring about change in their setting if the people are prepared to change and can deal with their own emotional response to change. Siraj and Hallet (2014) argue that to lead change the leader must understand the process of change. Therefore, here I propose a model which will help the practice leader understand the reactions of the individuals in the setting as changes are introduced and the political skills and actions they can employ. Bolman and Deal (2013) draw on Kotter's model of change which views change as a dynamic process and explains how the process moves through time. They combine Kotter's model with their four frame model to illustrate actions the change agent might use at each stage of change. I have drawn on this idea of combining models but substituted the Change Curve Model attributed to Kubler-Ross (1989) for Kotter's model of change. The Change Curve Model (1989) was initially developed to explain the stages of grief in terminal patients and, possibly because of my recent bereavement, I have been drawn to use it. However, Chapman (2013) also notes that, during times of change in organisations, individuals will often react in the same way as people experiencing grief. The Change Curve Model (Kubler-Ross 1989) encapsulates effectively the stages of change in a model which is readily applicable and accessible to the practice leader in ECEC. Kotter's model, as described by Bolman and Deal (2013), is more complicated as it features eight stages and has less relevance to the practice leader in ECEC. For example, stage five in Kotter's model is to remove obstacles and empower people to move forward and the strategy associated with this stage is '*public hanging of opponents*' (p.390). The sentiment expressed in this strategy is at odds with practice leadership in ECEC which should be moral leadership which supports and protects the workforce. Therefore, the Change Curve Model of Kubler-Ross (1989) is a simpler but effective alternative to Kotter's model and can be contextualised to support the practice leader in ECEC. The following section explains each stage of the Change

Curve Model (Kubler-Ross 1989). It draws on examples from the narratives to illustrate each stage and then identifies the corresponding actions of the practice leader from the findings of this study.

 The first stage in the Change Curve Model is denial and this refers to individuals feeling that everything was fine as it was, without understanding why it has to change (Kubler-Ross 1989). Kubler-Ross (1989) argues that in stage one individuals react with denial which is a buffer, giving the individual time to collect themselves, usually as a temporary defence. Karen's story suggests that the management team in her setting struggled to understand why an EYP was needed in the setting and why the organisation needed to change. Even by the end of Karen's training, they had not accepted the need for an EYP in the setting. In Emma's narrative she also explained that her colleagues initially found it difficult to understand why she wanted to be an EYP and there was a period of denial; however, Emma's employees appeared, with time, to embrace the changes she introduced. The study's findings arising from the stories of Debbie, Lauren and Emma suggest that the practice leader must use their skills of negotiation at this stage. Lauren described how she had to discuss and negotiate with the staff in her placement in order to bring about change, and Emma created time in meetings for reflective dialogue. The practice leader should also attend to the organisational structure, identify whose authority they might be challenging and seek to build structures, such as alliances, to overcome resistance. At the first stage, the practice leader can begin to attend to the symbolic frame, possibly creating a vision for the organisation built on a shared passion for ECEC and an ethic of care. The moral leader should try to inspire confidence and belief in the change. Both Emma's and Karen's stories highlight that failure to do so might mean that individuals never accept the change, for example as Emma suggests happened in her placement with the childminder.

 Kubler-Ross (1989) identifies the second stage of her model as anger and, in organisational terms, this might be recognised when individuals become anxious and angry and their performance in an organisation dips. This might lead to a period of conflict in the setting as demonstrated in Karen's and Debbie's narratives. Debbie appears to have been able to move the management team in her setting onto the next stage by confronting them but Karen's account suggests that she was unsuccessful in moving the management team beyond the first and second stage; however, other colleagues in her setting did not share the management team's opposition to EYPS. Karen had solicited input from her colleagues; she asked them to let her know if there was anything about practice which '*niggled them*' and she said '*I'm not telling them what to do but I am telling them what I am doing*'. The actions employed by Karen were communication, negotiation and encouraging her colleagues to share with her their reflections on practice. Karen gathered feedback from colleagues. She was a positive role model, a moral leader for some colleagues, inspiring one to

go on and train for EYTS, and importantly she was able to support them through the stages of change. Emma, it seems, was able to avoid conflict in her setting and support her colleagues through the stages of change by altering the organisational structures in the setting. Emma reflected on her role as a manager and as a result devolved some of her management responsibilities in order to lead practice.

The next stage of the Kubler-Ross (1989) model, bargaining, can be understood in organisational terms as the stage when individuals accept that change is inevitable; they try to work out what their role will be and begin to work with the changes. Debbie's account suggests that her line manager did move into this phase and changed her behaviour to support Debbie and she ultimately expressed her pride in Debbie's work. Lauren's narrative suggests that the manager was at this stage when Lauren began the programme as she quickly and readily devolved some of her leadership tasks to Lauren. Emma also noted a change in the behaviour of her staff as they began to accept sustained shared thinking which Emma had introduced into the setting. Emma provided training for her workforce and used her reflective and political skills to continue to involve her colleagues through negotiation and agenda setting.

 Each person reacts individually to change and not all people will go through every phase. Also, some may never accept the change. Emma thought that the childminder she worked with on placement was unlikely to retain the changes she had made to her practice, specifically the introduction of heuristic play. This suggests that the childminder remained at the first phase, denial. The multiframe analysis shows that power can be exercised at all levels, and the childminder appeared to be exercising her power by not adopting heuristic play. Of course it is not possible to say exactly why the childminder might ultimately reject the changes, but, looking to the model, perhaps Emma could have involved her more in the changes or considered how to share and celebrate the success of the changes she had made.

The final phase, acceptance (Kubler-Ross 1989), refers to a time when the individuals have fully accepted the change and it becomes a reality. In Emma's story she was able to devolve some of her duties and align the operational structure to the new culture, and so she appeared to have been successful in moving the workforce into the final phase. The practice leader must draw on their full range of political skills to achieve this stage and pay close attention to the symbolic frame, communicating progress and celebrating success. The practice leader must continue to reflect on practice and provision and encourage collaborative reflective processes. Total acceptance of a

change might require a realignment of the organisational structure; this was never achieved in Karen's or Debbie's setting.

The Change Curve Model (Kubler-Ross 1989) is an effective, yet simple, way to help people understand their own and others' reactions to significant change or upheaval in their lives. By combining the Change Curve Model with the four frame model, the practice leader is provided with multiple perspectives on how individuals react to change. Furthermore, by drawing on the findings from the multiframe analysis, Chapter 7, the model outlined below is contextualised for the practice leader in ECEC. Table 3 shows the combined Change Curve, Four Frame Model of Leadership.

Table 3: The Change Curve Four Frame Model of Leadership

Change Curve Model: stages of change	Structural frame	Human resource frame	Political frame	Symbolic frame
Denial	Identify what the existing structures are. Reflect and Identify what changes may be needed.	Communicate little and often. Engage in reflective dialogue Allow time to adapt. Avoid overwhelming individuals.	Network with colleagues and stakeholders. Build coalitions	Tell a compelling story to colleagues and stakeholders. Co-create a vision. Communicate this vision to colleagues and stakeholders
Anger	Create structures to support the process. Identify who does what and when.	Hold meetings with colleagues and stakeholders, encourage collaborative reflections and gather feedback.	Build alliances with colleagues and stakeholders. Diffuse opposition, and confront conflict	Be a visible leader. Continue to communicate the vision to colleagues and stakeholders. Continue to reflect on practice and provision.
Bargaining	Alter structures that do not support change. Plan for short term successes	Provide training for colleagues. Hold meetings and get feedback. Engage in collaborative reflection. Build involvement with colleagues and stakeholders.	Empower individuals. Continue to build alliances with colleagues and stakeholders.	Communicate progress and celebrate success. Create new symbols and rituals which colleagues can share.

| Acceptance | Align the operational structure to the new culture | Continue to build broad involvement.

Communicate and get feedback from colleagues and stakeholders. | | Communicate progress, celebrate success.

Share stories of the journey and continue to develop the new culture, continue to reflect. |

The model proposed in the above table is a relational model of practice leadership underpinned by the process of reflection at each stage. The practice leader must reflect on their practice and on provision and engage in reflective dialogue through empowering all the individuals in the setting to reflect on practice. It acknowledges that the practice leader is heavily reliant on the relationships they build with colleagues and stakeholders. The actions included in the model have been developed from the findings identified in the multiframe analysis in Chapter 7.They suggest that the practice leader can exert influence to bring about change by using their skills of reflection and their political skills, of alliance building, communication and negotiation. The findings also suggest that the practice leader should be a moral leader who exerts a positive influence on colleagues and pays attention to the symbolic glue, which binds individuals to the organisation. The proposed Change Curve Four Frame Model of Leadership offers the practice leader an approach which recognises that change can produce uncertainty and confusion in people and identifies actions the practice leader can use to help individuals overcome these feelings, and move towards embracing new ways of doing things.

8.6 Chapter summary

This chapter draws out the implications of the findings, from the multiframe analysis, by using them in combination with the four frame model of Bolman and Deal (2013) to contextualise practice leadership for ECEC in order to reflect the unique features of the PVI sector. The practice leader is likely to face a number of barriers to implementing change in a setting and this chapter has drawn on the four frame model of Bolman and Deal (2013) to exemplify the barriers to change, and the essential strategies they might employ to overcome the barriers. The essential strategies were drawn from the findings and illustrated with examples from the participants' narratives to contextualise the model, in Table 2, to the role of the practice leader in ECEC. As suggested by the participants' narratives, in a small PVI setting, the individuals who work there can be the biggest barrier to change, This understanding led to the development of a new combined model, bringing together the Change Curve Model (Kubler-Ross 1989) and the four frame model of Bolman and Deal (2013). The proposed new model, The Change Curve Four Frame Model of Leadership, supports the practice leader in identifying and anticipating the individuals' reactions to change and outlines actions they can employ at each stage of change. The actions identified in the model draw upon the findings from the multiframe analysis in Chapter 7 to support the practice leader who exercises leadership through influence rather than authority and it acknowledges that, in an ECEC setting, bringing about change is heavily reliant on the individuals who work in the setting. Therefore, this

model aligns with the notion of a practice leader as a change agent who privileges the emotional and relational aspects of their role.

The next and final chapter is the conclusion and presents a summary of the key findings and their implications for practice leadership in ECEC in the PVI sector. It sets out some of the limitations of the study and highlights potential areas for future research.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

9.1Introduction

This chapter explains how the aims and objectives of this study have been addressed. It also presents a summary of the key findings and their implications, particularly for leadership in ECEC in the PVI sector. Following this the chapter considers some of the strengths and limitations of the study and identifies potential areas for further study.

9.2 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences and perspectives of practitioners in ECEC as they undertake a programme of study to achieve Early Years Professional Status and the research set out to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent do social and cultural experiences shape the way the practitioners in ECEC experience professionalisation?

2. What effect does professionalisation have on practitioners leading practice and on how they view themselves and their practice?

These objectives were addressed through an exploratory study where a narrative approach was taken to the collection, interpretation and presentation of the data. The data has been interrogated through three layers of analysis. The first layer of analysis, Chapter 5 synthesised the participants' stories, co-constructed through semi-structured interviews, into individual written monologues. The monologues represent the experiences and perspectives of the participants and they preserve their stories. They were written to be accessible and open to interpretation by the reader as they present the data before theory is brought to bear. The monologues do not offer an explanation of the practitioners' experiences or perspectives; therefore, to fully address the objectives of the study, the data was subjected to two layers of thematic narrative analysis. The initial layer of thematic narrative analysis, Chapter 6, addressed the objectives through an interrogation of the data, in light of key debates relating to professionalisation in ECEC, including gender, class, performativity, professional recognition and the professional mandate. Although this layer of analysis explains how social and cultural factors shaped the practitioners' experiences of becoming a professional and adds to our understanding of professionalisation, it did not consider the effect of organisational structures and practices on the participants' experiences and perspectives. As this was an exploratory study, it was not possible to anticipate fully where the data might lead but, as the study progressed, the data necessitated further analysis to explore and explain the EYP's role as a leader and change agent. The four frame model of Bolman and Deal (2013) was used for this analysis,

Chapter 7, as it can illuminate organisational structures and practices and be used to reframe leadership, as in Chapter 8. The monologues preserve the holistic nature of the participants' stories and they provide an overview of the participants' experiences and perspectives. Each subsequent layer of thematic narrative analysis contributes to addressing the objectives. The following section brings together the key findings from Chapter 6 and Chapter 7 to outline this study's contribution to knowledge.

9.3 The study's contribution to knowledge

This study provides rich nuanced insights into the ECEC workforce in England whose experiences and perspectives are currently underrepresented in the literature and it adds to our understanding of leadership in ECEC in the PVI sector. Furthermore, in considering the implications of the findings, this thesis offers a new model, The Change Curve Four Frame Model of Leadership, which the practice leader in ECEC can use to develop an approach to bringing about change in their setting. The first objective of the study was to explain to what extent social and cultural experiences shape the way the practitioners in ECEC experience professionalisation. The study firstly considered if sexual identity and class were significant in shaping the participants' experiences and perspectives of becoming a professional. The findings indicate that sexual identity and class were instrumental in the participants choosing to work in ECEC and in their experience of becoming a professional. This confirms Skeggs' (1997) much earlier research finding that women often work in ECEC because they have restricted access to cultural and economic capital and therefore trade on the capital they have access to, which is the ability to care. The findings in this study also suggest that fifteen years later the participants, like the women in Skeggs study, also traded on their ability to care. In addition, Skeggs (1997) argues that concrete caring practices and maternal duties were instrumental in a woman's choice to work in ECEC, and this study further confirms these findings. However, a new finding of this study is that, unlike the women in Skeggs' research, the participants were not satisfied with the limited access that caring gave them to cultural and economic capital. They remained committed to working with young children but they aspired to wider access to cultural and economic capital than working as a practitioner in ECEC allowed. The findings further suggest that having a degree, rather than a professional status, was perceived to be the key to wider access to cultural and economic capital. This finding reflects the wider availability of degree level study which came about as a result of the New Labour Government's policy initiative to widen access to HE.

Secondly, the study considered the effect of performativity on the experiences of the participants. Ball (2008) suggests that performativity can lead professionals to lose sight of what is important to

them in their practice which he describes as *'ontological insecurity'* (p.54). The key finding is that the participants' compliance with external performance measures to achieve professional status resulted, at worst, in temporary *'ontological insecurity'* (Ball 2008 p.54). Although, three participants did experience some ontological insecurity, it seemed to be transitory and difficult to disentangle from the other anxieties and challenges they experienced in their professional and personal lives.

Thirdly, In addition to considering the effects of performativity, the study also explored the effect of professional recognition on the participants' experiences. Whitty (2008) writing about professional recognition in teaching argues that it increasingly relies on the professional mandate, which is the bargain struck between society, stakeholders and the state. The key finding here is that recognition and endorsement of EYPS was variable amongst the significant stakeholders in the sector. Some of the significant stakeholders, for example parents, were unfamiliar with the status and some in the workforce knew little about the purpose and role of the EYP. Others in the workforce seemed reluctant to endorse the EYP. This reluctance to endorse the EYP might be explained by a further key finding that the EYP role challenged the traditional organisational structures in the four PVI settings, and was particularly problematic in settings where the professional was more qualified than the manager, and where the vertical lines of authority appeared to be inflexible. Where this was the case the EYP faced resistance and struggled to endorse the authority of the manager. In two settings, destructive power struggles had a significant negative impact on the participants' experiences of professionalisation.

The second objective was to understand and explain what effect professionalisation has on the practice of practitioners in ECEC and how this affects their view of themselves. Firstly, this study adds to understanding of why practitioners in ECEC look to state regulation to improve their status, and how the status affects both their practice and their views of themselves. The findings confirm Oberheumer's (2005) finding that practitioners in Germany welcomed the increased status that state regulation brought them for their work. Similarly, this study found that EYPS provided three of the participants with limited, but significant, validation for their work. Working in a sector characterised by low status and low economic value appears, over time, to have had an effect on the participants. They seemed to have internalised these characteristics and had been left with feelings of low self worth, and low self esteem. This study also confirms the findings of Hadfield et al. (2012) who report that EYPS improved the levels of confidence of the participants in their research and that this impacted positively on their ability to lead practice. Similarly, when considering the effects of professionalisation on practice in this study, all four participants believed that working towards EYPS had led to improvements in both their own practice and the practice of others in the setting. In

addition a significant new finding of this study was that, as effective leaders the four participants developed skills of reflection and political skills. Exercising these skills', including negotiation, agenda setting and building alliances, was a powerful and influential tool in bringing about change. Further consideration of the effect of professionalisation on the participants practice found that effective leadership can be moral leadership which supports and protects the workforce. Although it was also suggested in this study that it can be difficult to disentangle moral leadership from authority, the participants continued to be role models demonstrating the values of ECEC during challenging times.

 A further new finding of this study was that the four participants, as effective leaders, identified the symbolic forms which bind individuals to an organisation and endeavoured to match the motivational needs of the employees to the needs of the organisation. Once three of the participants had achieved EYPS they looked for other career opportunities in ECEC, including outside the PVI sector. A likely explanation for them moving on comes from this finding as the managers in their settings appeared to pay little attention to the cultural glue which binds individuals to organisations, for example rituals celebrating success, and they also appeared to have little understanding of the factors which motivated the participants. This is significant because if the PVI sector is unable to retain experienced and highly qualified practitioners there could be an adverse effect on the quality of provision and, therefore, on children's development and learning. Thus potentially undermining this government's policy to provide good quality ECEC to help children succeed at school and in their later years, which the government suggests can contribute to creating a society where opportunities are equal regardless of background (DfE 2015b).

 In light of the findings from this study and from gaining a deeper understanding of leadership in ECEC in the PVI sector I have developed a new model of leadership. This model, the Change Curve Four Frame Model of Leadership, is a further contribution to knowledge, with implications for theory and practice in the emerging field of leadership in ECEC as explained below.

9.4 Implications for theory and practice.

During the period of the study and currently ECEC, in England, has been an important focus of policy for successive governments. Additionally, in discussions of effectiveness in ECEC in England, Ofsted (2015) emphasises the importance of leadership. Roberts-Holmes (2014) also suggests that leadership in ECEC will be paramount within the raising standards policy context. However, within the PVI sector it is not clear in policy who might be assuming this leadership role; it could be one of the existing EYPs, one of the more recently introduced EYTs or a graduate level EYE. Therefore, in this study, to aid clarity, the term practice leader is used, a term used in the work of Hadfield et al.

(2012). The practice leader describes a leader who focuses on aspects of practice they can influence regardless of their position in the leadership structure (Hadfield et al. 2012). This is important because the findings from this study suggest that the practice leader might be employed in a setting where they are more highly qualified than the manager, and without a formal position of authority or power. Furthermore, as found in this study and confirming the findings of Hadfield et al. (2012), the biggest barrier to bringing about change were individuals in the setting. In light of this and to draw out the implications of the key findings, as outlined above, I propose a new model the Change Curve Four Frame Model of Leadership. This model synthesises the Change Curve Model (Kubler-Ross 1989), which explains peoples' reactions to change, with the multi-frame model of Bolman and Deal (2013), which can be used to reframe leadership practice. The new model is contextualised to represent the unique features of ECEC in the PVI sector by drawing on the findings from this study. This integrated model is to enable the practice leader to anticipate how individuals in an organisation might react to change and then identify appropriate actions which can be employed to move the individual towards accepting the change. Bolman and Deal (2013) suggest that training for leadership and management is often poor or nonexistent in many organisations. The model presented in this thesis, developed from the findings, could be used to improve the training of new leaders, EYTs and EYEs, and potentially existing leaders and managers. The implications of this study are important for those who are interested in re-thinking and re-shaping leadership in ECEC, and for those who are considering becoming practice leaders in ECEC.

9.5 Contradictory professionalism

In chapter 1, I drew attention to some of the contradictory discourses in ECEC. For example Osgood (2006) argues that working in ECEC can be viewed as oppressive to women, whilst Wright (2011) argues that it is plausible, from a historical perspective, that working in ECEC might be an emancipative step for women, and the findings lend some support to this suggestion. The findings suggest that, as a result of gaining EYPS, three of the participants had gained improved, albeit limited, access to cultural and economic capital. However, to be able to take full advantage of their improved access to capital, two of the participants planned to leave the PVI sector and work towards QTS in a school. This suggests that professionalisation may continue to advance women's emancipation, affording them access to jobs outside the PVI sector, with higher status and better pay and conditions. This can be viewed as a positive and progressive step for women, whilst simultaneously being a regressive step for the PVI sector, as it stands to lose experienced and highly qualified practitioners.

Across the participants' narratives there are seemingly contradictory perspectives on professionalism as illustrated by two contrasting viewpoints on the introduction of EYTS. One participant viewed EYTS as strengthening professionalism in the PVI sector and felt that EYTS would improve the status of EYPS. However, another participant viewed the introduction of EYTS with dismay and felt that it completely undermined EYPS, rendering it worthless. The narratives also suggest that the significant stakeholders, particularly the management teams in the settings, had very different views on professionalism. In one setting the management team appeared to be strongly opposed to the introduction of EYPS and offered little support to the participant, whilst in another setting the management team welcomed EYPS and fully supported the participant as she worked towards EYPS. Perhaps such contradictory perspectives on professionalism are to be expected because, as Osgood (2009) points out, the ECEC work force itself has been constructed by policy discourse in contradictory ways and that policy discourse affects the professional identity of those working in ECEC. When EYPS was introduced, Osgood (2009) describes a sector which was simultaneously tasked with meeting the complex needs of the most disadvantaged children and becoming the means by which women could participate in the paid labour market. However, she argues that, at the same time, the New Labour Government repeatedly claimed that ECEC practitioners presided over poor quality care and that the whole service needed reform.

Whilst significant stakeholders in the PVI sector are unwilling to fully endorse professionalism, it will remain contradictory. This is reinforced by the continuing disparity in status, pay and conditions between professionals working in the PVI sector and the maintained sector. Currently there are worries that the requirement for level 3 practitioners to have a maths GCSE is leading to a recruitment crisis in the PVI sector, thus jeopardising the government's plans to increase the number of hours of free childcare (Jackson 2016). If the government reverse this requirement it could be argued that in the PVI sector staff are expected to be professionals but they are not expected to have the same qualifications as other professionals, and should not expect parity in terms of status, pay and conditions. Therefore, professionalism in ECEC in the PVI sector remains contradictory.

9.6 Strengths and limitations of the study

The study has a number of strengths and limitations some of which are inter-related. The findings of this study, while significant, were limited by aspects of the methodological approach. Firstly, the small sample size was a limitation as four participants could not reflect the characteristics of the diverse population working in ECEC. For example, the sample did not include any men or an employee from an independent setting and it only included one manager. Nevertheless, the sample

did include participants employed in a range of settings representative of the PVI sector with varying lengths of time spent working in ECEC, from five years to twenty eight years. Brewer (2000) argues that studies which are small in scale can lead to debates about generalisability, where generalisability can be understood as the '*applicability of the data to other like cases*' (p.46). However, Riessman (2008) suggests that small scale studies with rich, detailed data can develop a field. By interviewing the four participants four times over a fifteen month period it was possible to collect rich and detailed data, and therefore, to develop the field of leadership in ECEC in the PVI sector. In narrative enquiry the story is co-constructed through interaction with the researcher and through narrative shaping by the researcher; therefore, as Denscombe (2002) points out, social reality is created and is subjective. However, the study has endeavoured to ensure validity by making the methodological approach transparent and the data has been analysed multiple times as a means of methodological triangulation. The findings are valid in the context of this study; however, where I believe some wider claims might be made, my thinking has been grounded in theory and explained fully.

A narrative approach to this study was chosen because at the pilot phase it emerged that the practitioners undertaking EYPS had fascinating stories to tell about their experiences. As Connelly and Clandinin (2006) point out, narrative enquiry is the study of experience as story. In addition, a narrative approach to collecting and presenting the data was an opportunity to privilege the voice of the participants and it was important to me, as a woman, to give these women this, albeit limited, platform. As women who work in ECEC, they are often undervalued, marginalised and described as powerless; therefore, it was important that this study valued their contribution and did not reinforce differences in power and status. It is inevitable that the researcher retains power, particularly in how the data is analysed, and the findings disseminated; nevertheless, I made every attempt in my approach to the collection, interpretation and presentation of the data to keep the participants' stories intact in order to redress the power imbalance. In short, the narrative approach supported an ethical approach to data collection, interpretation and presentation.

Reflecting back I can see that, as a novice researcher, I did make some mistakes. For example, I had not considered that some of the participants might not want to, or be able to, bring in photographs to the first interview. I had assumed that the use of photographs would be an icebreaker and a way of establishing rapport; this was not the case for one of the participants. This was insensitive and could have jeopardised our relationship. I also struggled at times to hold back my personal opinions so they did not intrude on the interview. This was particularly difficult when I felt that the participants were being treated unfairly at work and following the significant policy change, when

EYTS replaced EYPS. It can be difficult to adopt a conversational approach to the interviews, as suggested by Oakley (1989), whilst holding in check strongly held opinions and feelings. One of the participants talked about her struggle to get time out of the setting to attend University even though money for supply cover was available to the setting. I did not express my opinion about the unfairness of this during the interview but, in the second interview, I did ask if she was still struggling to be released from work. She explained that, as a result of the first interview, she had '*started thinking about it and decided it wasn't right'* and so she had confronted her manager. It seems that the interview itself had been a catalyst for that participant to take action.

There are a number of conspicuous inequalities between professionals working in ECEC in the PVI sector and professionals in the maintained sector, for example in levels of pay, conditions of work, and levels of professional recognition and status. This thesis does not pretend to be a call to action; its influence on such inequalities may be minimal. However, it does add to the body of work, including the work of Moss (2014) and Osgood (2006, 2010) which draws attention to and raises awareness of such inequalities in the hope that one day they will be addressed. Additionally, the knowledge and understanding gained from this thesis can, make a practical contribution to my own teaching as a University Lecturer, and it has wider implications for all who support the education and training of practice leaders in ECEC.

9.7 Areas of future enquiry

As EYPS, the focus of this thesis, has been replaced by EYTS as a policy initiative of the Coalition Government, further research is now needed to understand the perspectives and experiences of the EYT as they undertake their duties in the PVI sector. EYT is awarded to graduates who are leading education and care and who have been judged to have met the standards in practice from birth to the end of the EYFS (NCTL 2013). It would be interesting to discover if they face the same challenges as the EYP when trying to lead practice or if their new status as teachers, although without QTS, will make a difference to their experiences.

A second area of research could explore the perspectives and experiences of the managers of PVI settings. One of the limitations of this study, as reported above, was that it included only one participant who managed a setting and yet the findings suggest that the manager's actions and attitudes in the other three settings had a significant and sometimes negative impact on the participants' experiences of becoming a professional. Also, the findings from this study suggest that some managers felt undermined by the introduction of a more highly qualified professional leading practice in the setting and this is an area for further exploration. In addition, viewing the managers'

perspectives and experiences through the multi-frame model of Bolman and Deal (2013) would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the complex interaction of the practice leader with organisational structures and practices. The findings from this study suggest that the role of the manager, in a PVI setting which employs a graduate professional to lead practice, is complex and under researched.

Moss (2014) critiques the government-funded research, which has influenced the development of ECEC services since 1997, for being large scale, quantitative and positivistic and, therefore, lacking in relevance to practice in many PVI settings. He goes on to suggest that this was at the expense of critical case studies which would foster understanding, reflection and improvement to practice in small settings. Therefore, I would like to take the Change Curve Four Frame Model proposed in this study into settings and work in partnership with practice leaders to evaluate and refine the model, potentially to develop a toolkit for practice leaders, and to provide a range of critical case studies to develop practice leadership.

9.8 Chapter summary

This study has contributed to knowledge of professionalisation in ECEC in the PVI sector in England. Professionalisation can empower individual practitioners and improve their access to cultural and economic capital. However, it has not, as yet, led to greater parity in pay, conditions of work and status between professionals across the wider ECEC workforce. This thesis has also contributed to knowledge of leadership in ECEC in the PVI sector. Most significantly, this thesis has married theory with practical strategies to propose an integrated model of leadership which will support the practice leader to bring about changes to practice. This model supports leadership which relies on influence rather than a position of authority, and is relational and contextual. Although professionalisation of the sector is incomplete and not fully endorsed by the significant stakeholders, the requirement for effective practice leaders is embedded in the policy context for continuous improvement and raising standards in ECEC. Therefore, the model proposed can support the high profile role of the practice leader within this policy context.

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Appendix 1

The Standards for Early Years Professional Status (CWDC 2010)

Candidates for Early Years Professional Status should demonstrate through their practice

Knowledge and Understanding

S1 The principles and content of the Early Years Foundation Stage and how to put them into practice.

S2 The individual and diverse ways in which children develop and learn from birth to the end of the foundation stage and thereafter.

S3 How children's well-being, development, learning and behaviour can be affected by a range of influences and transitions from inside and outside the setting.

S4 The main provisions of the national and local statutory and non-statutory frameworks within which children's services work and their implications for early years settings.

S5 The current legal requirements, national policies and guidance on health and safety, safeguarding and promoting the well-being of children and their implications for early years settings.

S6 The contribution that other professionals within the setting and beyond can make to children's physical and emotional well-being, development and learning.

Effective Practice

S7 Have high expectations of all children and a commitment to ensuring that they can achieve their full potential.

S8 Establish and sustain a safe, welcoming, purposeful, stimulating and encouraging environment where children feel confident and secure and are able to develop and learn.

S9 Provide balanced and flexible daily and weekly routines that meet children's needs and enable them to develop and learn.

S10 Use close, informed observation and other strategies to monitor children's activity, development and progress systematically and carefully, and use this information to inform, plan and improve practice and provision.

S11 Plan and provide safe and appropriate child-led and adult initiated experiences, activities and play opportunities in indoor, outdoor and in out-of-setting contexts, which enable children to develop and learn.

S12 Select, prepare and use a range of resources suitable for children's ages, interests and abilities, taking account of diversity and promoting equality and inclusion.

S13 Make effective personalised provision for the children they work with.

S14 Respond appropriately to children, informed by how children develop and learn and a clear understanding of possible next steps in their development and learning.

S15 Support the development of children's language and communication skills.

S16 Engage in sustained shared thinking with children.

S17 Promote positive behaviour, self-control and independence through using effective behaviour management strategies and developing children's social, emotional and behavioural skills.

S18 Promote children's rights, equality, inclusion and anti-discriminatory practice in all aspects of their practice.

S19 Establish a safe environment and employ practices that promote children's health, safety and physical, mental and emotional well-being.

S20 Recognise when a child is in danger or at risk of harm and know how to act to protect them.

S21 Assess, record and report on progress in children's development and learning and use this as a basis for differentiating provision.

S22 Give constructive and sensitive feedback to help children understand what they have achieved and think about what they need to do next and, when appropriate, encourage children to think about, evaluate and improve on their own performance.

S23 Identify and support children whose progress, development or well-being is affected by changes or difficulties in their personal circumstances and know when to refer them to colleagues for specialist support.

S24 Be accountable for the delivery of high quality provision.

Relationships with children

S25 Establish fair, respectful, trusting, supportive and constructive relationships with children.

S26 Communicate sensitively and effectively with children from birth to the end of the foundation stage.

S27 Listen to children, pay attention to what they say and value and respect their views.

S28 Demonstrate the positive values, attitudes and behaviour they expect from children.

Communicating and working in partnership with families and carers

S29 Recognise and respect the influential and enduring contribution that families and parents/carers can make to children's development, well-being and learning.

S30 Establish fair, respectful, trusting and constructive relationships with families and parents/carers, and communicate sensitively and effectively with them.

S31 Work in partnership with families and parents/carers, at home and in the setting, to nurture children, to help them develop and to improve outcomes for them.

S32 Provide formal and informal opportunities through which information about children's well-being, development and learning can be shared between the setting and families and parents/carers.

Teamwork and collaboration

S33 Establish and sustain a culture of collaborative and cooperative working between colleagues.

S34 Ensure that colleagues working with them understand their role and are involved appropriately in helping children to meet planned objectives.

S35 Influence and shape the policies and practices of the setting and share in collective responsibility for their implementation.

S36 Contribute to the work of a multi-professional team and, where appropriate, coordinate and implement agreed programmes and interventions on a day-to-day basis.

Professional development

S37 Develop and use skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology to support their work with children and wider professional activities.

S38 Reflect on and evaluate the impact of practice, modifying approaches where necessary, and take responsibility for identifying and meeting their professional development needs.

S39 Take a creative and constructively critical approach towards innovation, and adapt practice if benefits and improvements are identified.

Appendix 2

Standards for the Award of Early Years Professional status (TA 2012)

Each of the eight EYP standards has a set of supporting statements. They are the minimum benchmarks a candidate has to demonstrate and evidence to achieve the status

Standard 1

An Early Years Professional must: support the healthy growth and development of children from birth to the age of five.

1.1 Know and understand how children learn and develop and how this can be affected by individual circumstances.
1.2 Support individual children through all areas of learning and development as outlined in the EYFS.
1.3 Encourage and support children's learning in ways that are appropriate to their development.
1.4 Support children through a range of transitions.
1.5 Know when a child is in need of support and when to refer to other relevant services.

Standard 2
An Early Years professional must: work directly with children and in partnership with their families to facilitate learning and support development.

2.1 Understand the important influence of parents/carers, engaging them effectively to support their child's wellbeing, learning and development.
2.2 Communicate effectively with children from birth to age five, listening and responding sensitively.
2.3 Promote positive social and emotional behaviour, attitudes and independence.
2.4 Know and understand the significance of attachment and how effectively to promote it.
2.5 Develop and sustain respectful relationships with children and their families.

Standard 3
An Early Years Professional must: safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

3.1 Know the legal requirements and guidance on health and safety, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and the implications for early years settings.
3.2 Establish and sustain a safe environment and employ practices that promote children's health and safety.
3.3 Know and understand child protection policies and procedures, recognise when a child is in danger or at risk of abuse, and know how to act to protect them.

Standard 4
An Early Years Professional must: set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge every child.

4.1 Establish and sustain a stimulating and inclusive environment where children feel confident and are able to learn and develop.

4.2 Engage in sustained shared thinking with children.

4.3 Give constructive feedback to help children evaluate their achievements and facilitate further learning.

4.4 Demonstrate the positive values, attitudes and behaviours expected from children.

Standard 5
An Early Years Professional must: make use of observation and assessment to meet the individual needs of every child.

5.1 Observe, assess, record and report on progress in children's development and learning, using this to plan next steps.

5.2 Engage effectively with parents/carers and wider professionals in the on-going assessment and appropriate provision for each child.

5.3 Differentiate provision to meet their individual needs of the child and provide opportunities to extend their learning and development.

Standard 6
An Early Years professional must: plan provision taking account of the individual needs of every child.

6.1 Provide balanced and flexible daily and weekly routines that meet children's needs and interests and enable them to learn and develop.

6.2 Plan and provide appropriate adult led and child initiated play and experiences that enable children to learn and develop.

6.3 Select , prepare and use a range of resources suitable for children's ages, interests and abilities, which value diversity and promote equality and inclusion.

Standard 7
An Early Years Professional must: fulfil wider professional responsibilities by promoting positive partnership working to support the child.

7.1 Understand the importance of and contribute to multi-agency team working.

7.2 Take a lead in establishing and sustaining a culture of cooperative working between colleagues and wider professionals.

7.3 Support colleagues to understand the part they play to enable every child to reach their full potential.

Standard 8
An Early Years professional must : lead practice and foster a culture of continuous improvement.

8.1 Model and implement effective practice, and support and mentor other practitioners.

8.2 Reflect on the effectiveness of provision, propose appropriate changes and influence, shape and support the implementation of policies and practices within the setting.

8.3 Take responsibility for improving practice through appropriate professional development for self and colleagues.

8.4 Promote equality of opportunity through championing children's rights and anti-discriminatory practice.

8.5 Understand the implications of relevant legislation, statutory frameworks including the EYFS, and policy for early years' settings, and apply in practice.

Appendix 3

Questions/ themes for pilot interview

Why/ how came to work in ECEC

Qualifications

Current job role and reasons for wanting to undertake EYPS

Who is supporting you?-at work, colleagues, management LA , family

How is EYPS going at the moment, do you for see any particular challenges

Notes after Pilot

Collect more biographical information at the start and information on their role

What will you do when you get EYPS?

Progress on EYPS- how is the process supporting you?

Support at work? Who knows about EYPS?

Appendix 4

Transcript of Pilot Interview

S Hi Lorna, so can you tell me how you started working in early years

L Where shall I begin-oh I can go back to when I started to work in an independent school in the nursery. Really it was because of my son, I started helping out and I just fitted in.

S So did you have any qualifications?

L. Yes, my NNEB, now that was a proper qualification, the gold standard. You learnt how to do everything, from changing nappies and you understood that a baby needs sleep. It was respected NNEB was everything. It was very useful when I had my son, really helped me be a parent. Then I found out I was pregnant and stopped work for a while. I was lucky my husband earnt enough in those days and it was acceptable for a mother to stay at home. Now it's all about women working, I know some need to but is it for the best? Anyway I'm getting off the point.

S. don't worry you were saying that you worked in an independent school.

L. Oh yes, I started when my son started not in the same class, but helping out then very quickly I was employed as a nursery nurse in the nursery. There were 3 of us, and eventually I was promoted to head of nursery and I ran it for about 10 years. We were pretty much left alone, by the head, you know trusted to get on and we were popular, we got children into the school. We built a reputation for quality.

S. So did you have much to do with the rest of the school.

L. erm, not a lot for 10 years but that changed when they decided to bring a teacher in to run the nursery. She knew nothing about early years, and we really had to support her, she relied on us but then the head wouldn't speak to us at all and we didn't really even talk to the parents. But they still came to me, she, the teacher was only bothered about her status in the school. Soon we were going to assembly, all the teachers wore gowns, and we used to joke that we should wear our dressing gowns. It changed, it moved from play to a formal system, with times for play. I did 15 years. I would have stayed but everything has changed now, I did love it, they were good times, I made a difference, now the nursery nurse is not valued.

S. Were you working there when you started the Fd.

L. No a friend had told me about a job with C working in the Sure Start centre and I went, got the job, and honestly I didn't think I would have a chance. I thought they would think I was too posh. They didn't they wanted someone who could lead, and they asked me to lead in the pre-school room. They were very keen for us to do qualifications and I saw the Fd, I lived nearer here and thought that was it. You interviewed me, remember? My son was old enough by then I needed something for me. My husband worked away, it was time for me. The Fd was great for me, suddenly I was reflecting on practice and they were so interested then at work. Good times, not like now, it's all changing, no money, not enough staff we will have to reapply for our jobs.

S What do you do now?

L. I am a Senior Practitioner in a Sure Start centre, I'm in charge of the pre-school room and I'm working on a couple of projects. Developing the role of the Senior Practitioner, do you remember I wrote about it in Professional Practice? And now the garden. You know in this type of job you are a jack of all trades, counsellor, parent support worker and special needs coordinator, cleaner. Last week I had to help prepare the lunches. I have been approached to do SENCo training, which I really want to do. Not sure what's happening with that at the moment.

S. So you are pretty busy, do you want to do EYPS, do they want you to do it?

L. I do and they did but it's harder now because everything is up in the air, we hope the centre will stay but we have no manager, you know you tried to come in, well that's why. I'm acting manager now but I'm part time so we have another Deputy, but it's too much. They asked me if I want to be manager but I don't want that responsibility. The EYP is about practice, that's what I want, to be with the children.

S. So they are not really supporting you?

L. They are but we are so short staffed. The LA want me to do it, they support us but in the setting day to day it's hard. I'm focusing on the new garden project, a community garden its wonderful and can be for EYPs but it takes so much time. We have children with really complex needs, and all that has to be done, and my son has exams so its full on, I just do not want to be full time. It's fraught to be honest with you.

S. What about the other staff are they interested in what you are doing.?

L. Yes, well just about everyone is studying for something but that's one of the problems. Everyone is wrapped up in their own studies, they should have a system because just about every day someone is away studying and we don't have cover ,so I have to cover. Quite simply we need more staff, they expect everyone to do 2 jobs, it's not sustainable.

S. L can you tell me why you are doing EYPS, well that's easy I want a degree and the LA are paying for EYPS. It's a great opportunity and I know from my days in school that without a degree you are nothing, you have no status, you can do a job for 15 years but they will replace you. It's about self respect, I can do it, you know for self esteem. For about 20 years I have put everyone first, I love them, but I know I can do this. I have been told that I am good at my job, but now a days is that enough? EYPs will validate that opinion, proof that I can do it.

S. How have you found EYPS so far?

L Well it's early days but from what J has told us I think it is about practice and the role I am doing. The problem will be having time to collect all the evidence. We started going through the standards, there are lots of them but they seem ok, I mean I'm not sure yet but it will make sense. I don't know enough to be worried yet.. but I am enjoying the modules, health and well being was great.

S. Oh yes the music resource, that was lovely. I'm going to show that to the external

L. Oh thank you, I really enjoyed that. That's what I want for the children, for practice to be like that when music can make a difference. If we get like the independent school I don't know what I will do. Who knows now, that's the thing about studying you start to think about what might happen.

Appendix 5

Interview guide 1

Hello, welcome, check they understand what the study is about, confirm consent

Can you tell me a bit about yourself, e.g name, where you work, current job role, how long have you been a practitioner, what about family?

Can you tell me how you came to be working in early years? Did you bring any photos with you/

Discuss photos and share my photos and how they link to my journey into early years.

Turning to EYPS- why do you want to do it?

> What are you expecting from it?

> How will it change your practice?

> What are your thoughts/feelings so far about the course?

Have you discussed EYPS with anyone-family, friends etc what do they think?

How supportive are your setting-manager, colleagues, parents etc?

Any other thoughts/feelings you want to share so far?

Next interview after progress review, if possible can you bring in DR01

Would you like to read my transcript of the interview?

Appendix 6

Interview guide 2

Check consent-what did they think about transcripts so far?

Follow up issues raised in previous interview

Debbie- was everything in your house sorted out, had a problem with electrics at last interview, management support particularly to attend Uni

Karen-any luck getting out of pre-school room, what happened about request for additional resources for baby room, did you discuss EYPs with committee

Lauren-have you arranged a baby placement, how will you fit this in with your job, any more news on your hours

Emma-have you sorted out a placement, how will you manage this, can you share some of your responsibilities

So just had progress review, how did it go? Did you bring DR01 was that useful?

What did you learn about your practice? Have you made any changes; did the progress review identify any areas you need to improve?

Does anyone at work ask you about what you are doing? Has anyone noticed any changes in your practice, have you?

Do you feel supported at work, at Uni ?

Do you anticipate any challenges?

What else is going on at work that might affect EYPS?

Next interview will be just after the assessment-I'll send transcript do get in touch if you have any feedback/comments etc.

Anything you want to add?

Appendix 7

Interview guide 3

Check consent-any comments on last interview?

So how are you, just had final assessment how was it? How did you feel? What did you do? What did the other staff do? What did the assessor say? Any problems/ issues/ challenges? What helped you get through it? Who supported you? What was the reaction at work? Was it worth it?

Well done on getting this far

Can we just catch up on a few things raised in last interview and see what's happened since

Debbie-management support, looking for a new job, balancing all the aspects of life, wedding, work, training etc

Lauren-hours at work and pay, placement how was that? Did you mange to evidence the changes you made? How did they treat you/react to you in placement was your age a barrier?

Karen-health, any better? Job situation-are you looking for a new job? Did you talk to the committee about your situation?

Emma-Financial situation, is there any help available? What happened at placement?

What did you think about EYTS? How will it affect you?

So what next-will you continue with Honours? Stay in the same job?

Have the setting any plans for you once you get EYPS-promotion/ pay rise etc

What's the biggest difference this process has made to you and your practice?

Appendix 8

Interview guide 4

Final catch up-check consent any comments on feedback from previous interview

So just been awarded EYPS it's official congratulations?

How do you feel?

What difference has it made to you?

What about your practice?

What has been the reaction at work?

Has EYTS made a difference?

Was it worthwhile? What was the best bit, worst bit?

What are you doing now? Did you get a new job, still looking what about Honours?

Is there anything else you want to let me know? Just thinking about the process support from Uni, preparation days etc

Thank you

Appendix 9

Transcript interview 1 Lauren

S. Hi Lauren, thank you very much for coming today, can I just check that you have read the information letter and signed the consent form.

L. Yes

S. Are you happy to go ahead?

L. yeah it's fine.

S. Can you just introduce yourself and tell me where you work, your job role so I can get a picture of what you do?

 L. I'm Lauren, and I work at a private pre-school, it's owned by my aunt. I'm a pre-school assistant working with 3-5 yr olds and I have 14-16 key children. Really I do a bit of everything, it's small so everyone has to do a bit of everything, clean, tidy, play out, whatever needs doing.

S. How long have you worked there?

L. Since leaving school, 4 years this will be 5

S. So how old are you?

L.21 but I worked there during holidays for two years, helping out.

S. So how was it you came to work in early years?

L. well really I wanted to go into teaching but I didn't get the A levels. I did psychology, textiles and I think biology I wasn't academic. But I did work experience in reception and I loved it, I connected quite well with the children.

S. So was it work experience that helped you decide?

L. Yeah properly decide I mean at primary school I didn't know what I wanted to do, you know I wanted to be a vet one day... hairdresser the next but mum had a childminder business and I had younger siblings so I was always surrounded by children.

S. Did your mum's business influence you or your family?

L. A bit but my sister is a solicitor and the younger one wants to be a chef, so you know it's just me. I was interested in children; I've just always loved children

S. what about at school did you get careers advice?

L. Some, I mean they ask what you want to do, I said a teacher so I did work experience, then that helped me know I just wanted to be a teacher. In year 9 I chose options, they were nothing to do with what I do now, but at school it was all about Uni. They encouraged me to stay on for A levels

but I was no good at exams. I might have been better at college doing a level 3, NVQ3 would have been better for me, but it was never an option we weren't advised. You get A levels you go to University.

S. Did you bring in any photos? Can you tell me about them and how they link to your work in early years?

L. Well that's me 1st day at primary, I did not like school my mum said they had to peel me off the childminder. I'd like to give children a nicer experience than I had, the teacher's never liked me said I was a day dreamer. I was bullied. Secondary school was worse, scary and big. Those are my friends I went to pre-school with them and I'm still with them now, they all went to University and I felt I was getting left behind (subjective typology)

S. do you still feel like that?

L. er, No, I mean I wanted to leave home, that's the only thing that's missing, you know going out drinking, but this has worked out better for me. I was downhearted when I didn't get the grades to go, but the Foundation degree has turned that round a bit. (next photo)That's me and Christina at pre-school, I loved that, that friendship group, you know I'm interested in that for the kids, who they exclude, who they play with, all that. It's so important to stop that bullying and everything, I loved pre-school and that is what it should be like for the kids. It made me happy and that's what it should be like for them. (next photo)And that's my aunty, she's been really important to me, she gave me a chance, took a chance on me gave me a job after my A levels when I didn't know.. What will I do? (next photo)And David my boyfriend, he's quite academic he went to Uni, so when I procrastinate he says 'no get on with it' (subjective typology)

S. So why EYPS? What are you hoping for?

L. Well I work in a family run pre-school and I've never worked anywhere else. It's the next step up, a degree is recognised. I've done my FD, got level3, level4 but I want to move on up. I'm lucky to have this job but I don't want to be there forever, it's only small, there's a limit..You know to what you can do how far you can go.

S. so would it be fair to say you are ambitious? (Authoritative typology)

L. Erm yeah, I want career enhancement, eventually I want to be a reception teacher, I mean still to work with the young ones. Working with 3-5 year olds you see the difference you make. I couldn't see myself in an office; I worked in a restaurant at the weekends but it's not for me. (interactive typology)

S. So are they supporting you in the setting?

L. Oh yeah I'm really lucky there. The staff at work know and the manager is an EYP so she's very proactive. They are really pushing me, they're behind me, and the EYP has already highlighted about 7 things on her job description for me to do. I'm leading all the planning meetings now. And if I need help I know where to go. It makes it a lot easier.

S. if you are working with 3-5 year olds will you need a placement?

L. Yeah that is one of the things I need to sort out, J said she can help; I'll just need to work out when I can go. It's a bit tricky at work because we haven't got as many children so we just had a meeting and we might need to reduce our hours. I need to see what happens with that but I can always go in the holidays and Karen said it might be alright for me to go to her setting, they have a baby room.

S. So are you quite friendly with Karen?

L. Yeah well you know we were on the Fd, I mean we didn't sit together then but now, it's only a small group so we all talk.

S. Oh that must be helpful?

L. Yeah you can check that you've understood it, you know , on the right track?

S. so how are you finding the course and EYPS?

L. well we've only had two EYP days so just done the standards and that, and we were all wondering what it's all about, it just seems like a lot of stuff all at once. But we know we've got to do our Uni work first really, that's the priority. J said get your assignment in then she will go through the next bit.

S. So are you managing the work at the moment?

L. Yeah for now, but it's still early, it should just be about our practice anyway. I can always ask the manager, she's done it so she knows what I have to do.

S. how do you think EYPS will change your practice?

L. Just more professional, people don't see you as professional; you just look after children. It will improve me its professional development.

S. well thank you very much is there anything else you want to add at the moment? Was that ok?

L. No it's fine

S. The next interview will probably be after the progress review, I'll email you, and is it ok to send you the transcript, you know for feedback, comments to see what you think?

L. Yeah that's fine.

Appendix 10

Transcript interview 2 Lauren

S. Hi Lauren, how are you?

L. Yeah good thanks

S. Just need to check that you are happy to continue with the research?

L. Yes I am.

S. Lauren-last time we met you had to sort out a baby placement how's that going?

Yeah it's fine I'm at Karen's setting, they have a baby room, I go on Tuesday afternoons.

S. So how is it different from your own job? What are you learning?

L. Oh really different, not just with the babies, that's a whole new thing. It's more at work they know me but in the other setting they don't know me, it just comes across as me being like that , I guess professional, it's easier to be like that, seen as more of a professional. Whereas in my setting, I've been there since sixth form and they've known me as a student, from going through the Fd up to now. If I start trying to delegate where they know you they look at you as if you don't normally do that. In placement you are really going in as student and you have to ask permission to do stuff. In your own setting they know what you are doing and they understand the process. In placement you have to say is it alright if I do this? You have to be a leader but don't want to come across as taking over. You have to lead staff, it builds your confidence, and you have to negotiate and talk to higher management, ask them and explain things. You have to explain to staff in the room so I think it helps them understand why you are doing it. It's all about leadership if you are going to be an early years professional, you have to lead and this is one of the big parts of doing it.

S How have you found the other staff in the placement?

L. Alright, the staff in the baby room are fine, I negotiate with them, you know talk to them. I know Karen has struggled with the managers, I don't see them, but I think that some people are not in the right job position, they have the title 'manager' because they have been there longest, but they are not doing what's on the badge, there's no passion. Things are stricter now you have to have English and Maths, to be in with the children, that means they get the direct benefit, but managers need skills and training. Managers do not have to be hands on but they need training.

S. You have just had your progress review, how did it go? Did you bring DR01 was that useful?

L. it's definitely boosted my confidence, she said I had included everything and just had to focus on birth to 18 months and I had already identified that they could do more outdoors. I'm going to do some training for the staff in the room. The forms were long though, repetitive, sorry I did mine online and didn't print it out.

S. What did you learn about your practice? Have you made any changes?

L. the big thing in my setting is I've never liked conflict but now I'm able to talk to them, the staff, rather than make it a big deal, it's a confidence thing. When the other EYP was doing it some of the staff said we didn't know that you were so self centred –saying 'I' did this about everything, but now they know it's not so self- absorbed, you have to say I to show that you have to lead staff.

S. Does anyone at work ask you about what you are doing? Has anyone noticed any changes in your practice?

L. The other day H pointed out how before the parents wouldn't come to me but now I do one to one with a child and his mum always comes over and asks for advice. A lot of the parents have been asking me how I've been doing at University. It's a small setting and my aunt is already an EYP so they know what you are doing and they understand the process.

S. what about you, what have you noticed in your practice?

L. well working with three to five year olds you get to see the impact you have on them, you can see how much they change and through this I grow as a person. You know you are doing something right. You reflect, I've said this but it's all about confidence.

S. Do you feel supported at work, at Uni ?

L. yes definitely J is lovely, and you know that the manager and room leader have done it. It's definitely been helpful having them there as opposed to someone like K who's not had anyone there who knows the process; it's been more of a challenge to get anyone to understand why she's doing things. They have mentored me.

S. Do you anticipate any challenges?

L. well you always worry, especially about time and what to put in the portfolio. It's all about everyday practice though, J keeps saying that it's just documenting it.

S. What else is going on at work that might affect EYPS, are there still issues with hours?

L. Yes, I've cut back but that's worked out because I go to placement and if we have to reapply for our jobs or other jobs because you are working towards something, you put all your effort and hard work into it so you kind of deserve..., you have value, what you do is valued. It should help.

S. Thanks, for that the next interview will be just after the assessment- Anything you want to add?

L. No, just that so far it's going well, it's hard but worthwhile.

Appendix 11

Transcript interview 3 Lauren

S. Hi Lauren , how are you happy to continue?

L. Yeah, I'm fine tired , relieved you know.

S. So just had the final assessment how was it?

L The setting visit, I think it went well; I was rather nervous but not as daunting as I thought. She came and observed my activity and she commented on how good it was, which was good, they really enjoyed it so I was quite glad.

S. What had you planned?

L. Oh we were following up on a story outside, the children built dens, they were great and it went well, everything just went to plan.

S. so what did the assessor ask you about?

L. When I went down for the interview she only had three questions, I mean I'd tried to cover everything three times in the evidence folder and then cover them again on the tour. But obviously because I'd not been in a baby room until this year, she had a few questions about the babies. It's a bit nerve-wracking being put on the spot but I could answer them all.

S. so how are you feeling now?

L . You know I'm relieved it's all over and fingers crossed I've passed, you are in limbo now but I understand the process and I've done everything I can so that's okay. I felt positive, good really.

S. Where there any challenges?

L. Not as much as for some, it made a difference because the manager and room leader have done it themselves and they've been there to support me, to know that they've done it and you can see their leadership skills, they've mentored me. That's made a difference but it was hard, not in terms of, you know, you are doing it every day but it's a lot of paperwork so it's testing your organisational skills. It's been time consuming, definitely, with working at the same time and if I was to do it again I wouldn't have left the documentary evidence folder to the last minute.

S. You just mentioned the support from your manager, who else has supported you?

L. Oh my mum, my mum's been there as I've been sat at the computer bringing tea, endless amounts of tea and my fiancé, he tells me to just get on with it.

S. so was it worth it, so far?

L. Definitely it's definitely worthwhile, well fingers crossed, I've got to pass yet.

S. Well done on getting this far, Can we just catch up on a few things raised in last interview and see what's happened since, I'm thinking particularly about your hours and your job.

L. when we go back in September we'll be down five hours. Our contracts were changed last year to be flexible but they may have to let a member of staff go, and at the moment it's between me and her. So if I've got my EYP, hopefully, then it gives me a bit more security. It's not good but I'm hoping that once I get my status it'll give me an advantage. There's no hope of a graduate salary, it's very hard so we'll see.

S. so what are you plans now?

L.I'm hoping to stay at my setting until I've done the Honours degree, we'll see, it's tricky it depends on the number of children, money you know. Then I've always wanted to go into Reception, there's more security in a school than a private or charity run business. So once I've got my EYP status and Honours, I'll apply to schools. Obviously going into a school you're going up against people who have done a four year University course, but I've always thought that if I'm going up against them, I've got five years experience, whereas they've got placement. I know that's experience but it's not the same whereas you've been there working with parents, you've been doing learning journeys for five years and you know EYFS. I hope EYPS will give me an advantage, well if not it will level me out. You probably will have to argue your point because a lot of people won't recognise it, but the status adds to it and the more people who do it the more recognised it will become. I'll have a degree and experience and the status so that should make a difference.

S. just talking about making a difference how do you think EYTS will affect you?

L. I think it's good, it will attract more people into the workforce, people will be more aware of it, it will be a career option, like teaching. It will be stricter you will have to have EYPS or EYTS and it's an incentive to work for it, it's the right to be here, and it will bring a lot more people into early years rather than just primary and secondary.

S. What effect do you think it will have on the children?

L. It's definitely a good thing, positive, because the EYT will know about play and can implement it better than some of the others and because of their leadership they will be able to get it across to staff, so that it won't be too formal.

S. Lauren, what would you want to say about the process so far, any thoughts and feelings

L. I think it is definitely worthwhile, hard but that's important. I think it gives you self worth, people will look at you and see that you have a degree and the status and are here, not just a babysitter but to educate the children. I probably said this but it gives you confidence.

Appendix 12

Transcript interview 4 Lauren

S. Hi Lauren, nice to see you for this final catch up, are you happy to carry on?

L. Yes,.

S. So just been awarded EYPS it's official congratulations? did you have any type of celebration at work or home?

L. Thanks it seems like a while since we did EYPS, we haven't celebrated yet, I mean they said well done and my aunt was happy but you know how it's been at work, tricky because our contracts had to be changed. Also they know that I will have to move on eventually.

S. So you have discussed that with them?

L. Yes, my aunt knows and she is pleased for me. It will be scary but I need that challenge, they already have an EYP so there's not much I can bring to the table. I don't want to manage a setting I haven't done all this to be away from the children. I want to be in a room with children, hopefully in a school.

S. So will you go onto do QTS

L. Yes that's the plan, and EYPS will help. I'm concentrating on my honours now and thinking of moving forward. Stepping up.

S. So what difference has EYPs made to you and your practice.

L. massive really, it's about leadership, and confidence. Being able to talk to the staff and you feel that you've done all this work so you deserve to be there and they think that, the staff see you as more professional.

S. So you still feel it was worthwhile, a positive experience?

L. yes definitely, it will help me move on and it's worked out the best for me, doing it this way.

S.Is there anything else you want to let me know? Just thinking about the process support from Uni, preparation days.

L. I thought about this, it might be worth just saying don't leave your portfolio till the last minute. J did say that but you get busy. I had good support at Uni and at work, that helped me and I know I was lucky. I'd recommend it, even the setting visit wasn't as daunting as I thought, and it was good when she said I was good. It gives you value, what you do is valued.

Appendix 13

Steps to writing the monologues-

Step 1 identify the plot and structure of the story

What's the story? Plot becoming a professional, where did it start how does it end, what happened on the way?

Why they began working in early years

Why they decided to do EYPS

What happened on the way- their experiences, changes to practice, any challenges, who supported them, how was the process

Significant incidents-progress review, what did they learn, assessment visit

Was it worth it? End result? How do they feel now?

Step 2 Transcribe interviews-Lauren (appendix 9-12)

Step 2 Listen to interview 4-5 times , make notes (hand written notes some examples below)

Irony - Start g her career not quite in vanguard but fairly new EYPS & already changed during Lauren's time on course *

(X2)

Photos. 1st day at primary - did not like school had to peel her off childminder. Enjoyed pre-school and reception but after that - I'd like to give children a nicer experience then I had. Teacher's never liked me. I was a day dreamer. I was bullied. Secondary school worse - went from small primary to massive 2rdry 10 forms - scary and bit big. Went to pre-school with a few of my friends and still with them now all friends at University. Felt getting left behind best friend Christina her mum ran pre-school and with mum. I worked there village pre-school. More on into EYPS but will miss. Got lost at Eureka picnic. School play - pied piper mum made my ears - never let me forget that. Christina & Lauren at pre-school - loved it remember it but different from now - milk + biscuits at break time - fruit now and birthday tin passed round. Playing babies stretching T-shirts over bumps. Sarah her friend Teacher. Emma animal management which a zoo. Sports day - many photos of school experience. Played a part in -
bullying and everything so interested in that so even from I get friendship groups. Interesting last year lot g girl groups + to see who they excluded it's inbuilt. V. close to her family - Sophie Emily Catherine all together. loved babies - surrounded.
Family & friends. Aunty - Margaret very important same g support in terms g EYPS.

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Lester x3

photos - stimulus - opportunity for participant to identify
what is important or significant. Breaks down
barriers. at start thought would be important &
they helped initially but much less significant
as goes on.

All clean all tidy all do a bit of everything.
Pre-school
nursery assistant. 'A' levels performance, psychology.
textiles, biology - can't remember. Never had
anything specific but always loved children
liked private pre-school - more grown up more
school environment liked formal structure (associated with
'private' class higher status'
family business don't want to be in it forever but
nice to be put out of my comfort a bit.
Career step. Young not seen as a professional at work
just seen as 'there with the kids. They are like
a bit older. EYP highlighted about 7 things on the
job description for me to do, I have to do all the
planning meetings now. They are behind me and
if I need any help know where to go. Already
got 2 EYPS so when I get EYRS won't be able to
stay it will move me on, more of a challenge more
of a deprived area, get that experience first and then
into a private school. Connect a well with children
so prefer to stay with them.
one day wanted to be a vet the next a hairdresser
but think with hers experience with younger siblings - big
family and mum a childminder so I was surrounded.
I was interested in children, chose my options nothing to
do with what I do now. Channelled into 6th form.
NVQs would have been better for me we weren't advised

My style - for fewer questons, more erav etc.

L. ~~fought into~~ convinced by discase her experiea & perpechie - legulmare positen & need to weed out those who net interested..

✓ (3rd)

2nd interview x4.

Macrlevel - More Great childcare ⟩ EYTS. Ideasaand rates ore.

→ Meso level - sustainebility issues (Emma + L). (X4)
✗ Important re Managers at Placement✗.

✗ 4 I wasn't shelyg - I like to be in the know some peorle shuch - out of the times. I would say so from post looky at other peorle came into childcare as a last resort, yes they can look after chudren - not a passion. You go to work to achieve something ✗ some peorle ac not in the right jcb posten - in a nle and they have ben there rongst. It's just a title 'the manager' but not doing what's on the badge. Now shucte here to have meats englin before it was the bare mininum. EYTS in with the chuldren get died rerefit but manages need to have thre skills and trainy. EYTS have leedship but hands managers do not have to be hondsan but need on. trainy. Thoughts on EYTS ✗ Relevant ✗.

(EYT -) Really good because incerive to work for it the right to be here - they know about play and can cruplement better then sure dhis and before of leadship will be able to get it access to skff so want be hes joinled. It will bring a lot more peorle into ealy yees rather then pinney & sendery

Lester x3

Photos - stimulus - opportunity for participant to identify what is important or significant. Breaks down barriers. at start thought would be important & they helped initially but much less significant as goes on.

All clean all tidy all do a bit of everything.
Pre-school
nursery assistant. 'A' levels performance, psychology. textiles, biology - can't remember. Never had anything specific but always loved children
liked private pre-school- more grown up more school environment liked formal structure (associated with 'private' class higher status'
family business don't want to be in it forever but nice to be put out of my comfort a bit.
Career step-. Young not seen as a professional at work just seen as 'there with the kids. they are lee a bit older. EYP highlighted about 7 things on the job description for me to do, I have to do all the planning meetings now. They are behind me and if I need any help know where to go. Already got 2EYPS so when I get EYRS won't be able to stay it will move me on, more of a challenge more of a deprived area, get that experience first and then into a private school. Connect a well with children so prefer to stay with them.
one day wanted to be a vet the next a hairdresser but think with my experience with younger siblings - big family and mum a childminder so I was surrounded. I was interested in children, chose my options nothing to do with what I do now. Cancelled onto 6th form.. NVQs would have been better for me we weren't advised

Step 3- Pulling the notes together

Beginning-School unhappy, bullied, day dreamer, wants better for children she cares for, friends important, A levels fail, work experience, home life, mum childminder, surrounded by children, sisters do not work with children, solicitor and chef, should have done NVQ

EYPS, value and status, but career aspirations, QTS ultimate goal, needs more from work, challenge step up, small setting opportunities limited, hours reduced, not seen as professional at work too young

Middle-Progress review- placement easier to be a leader, compared to Karen's experience comments on management, knew what to expect helps aunt EYP, aunt important already identified things to do, very supportive, easier than for some, learning to lead-don't want to come across as taking over, mum and fiancée supportive, more confident now, parents talking to her, approach her first.

Middle-Assessment visit, hard, anxious but went really well, good comments about activities, outdoors everyone supported, aunt really helped, degree important, and status, people see you as more professional, not just babysitter, will have to move on, like a job in school it should help, reception teacher, do honours then move, need a challenge a different type of setting, different children, always be grateful to aunt.

The end

Step 4-Building the monologue-the beginning, from the transcription keep aspects identified in the notes, remove interview questions

 well really I wanted to go into teaching but I didn't get the A levels. I did psychology, textiles and I think biology I wasn't academic. But I did work experience in reception and I loved it, I connected quite well with the children. Yeah properly decide I mean at primary school I didn't know what I wanted to do, you know I wanted to be a vet one day... hairdresser the next but mum had a childminder business and I had younger siblings so I was always surrounded by children. Some, I mean they ask what you want to do, I said a teacher so I did work experience, then that helped me know I just wanted to be a teacher. In year 9 I chose options, they were nothing to do with what I do now, but at school it was all about Uni. They encouraged me to stay on for A levels but I was no good at exams. I might have been better at college doing a level 3, NVQ3 would have been better for me, but it was never an option we weren't advised. You get A levels you go to University. Well that's me 1st day at primary, I did not like school, hated it, my mum said they had to peel me off the childminder. I'd like to give children a nicer experience than I had, the teacher's never liked me said I was a day dreamer. I was bullied. Secondary school was worse, scary and big. Those are my friends I went to pre-school with them and I'm still with them now, they all went to University and I felt I was getting left behind.

Well I work in a family run pre-school and I've never worked anywhere else. It's the next step up, a degree is recognised. I've done my FD, got level3, level4 but I want to move on up. I'm lucky to have this job but I don't want to be there forever, it's only small, there's a limit..You know to what you can do how far you can go. Erm yeah, I want career enhancement, eventually I want to be a

reception teacher, I mean still to work with the young ones. Working with 3-5 year olds you see the difference you make. I couldn't see myself in an office; I worked in a restaurant at the weekends but it's not for me. Just more professional, people don't see you as professional; you just look after children. It will improve me its professional development.

Refining the monologue

Step 5-Lauren start with early experiences and what happened at school work forwards to EYPS

Early experiences mum a childminder, loved children then placement experience at school wanted to be a reception teacher but failed exams. No choice at school all about University. Then Lauren's words to tell this part of her story

Step 6-Lauren's words-*one day I wanted to be a vet the next a hairdresser but I always loved children. I was always surrounded by children, having younger siblings and mum was a childminder, I used to babysit and was interested in children. In year ten I went into a school for my work experience and I loved it and wanted to be a Reception teacher, but I was no good at exams and it was all about University.*

But at school you were channelled into sixth form and it was all about A levels and going to University. I chose my options, nothing to do with what I do now, Psychology, Textiles..can't remember.. oh and Biology. I didn't get the grades, NVQ would have been better for me but we didn't get any advice.

Re write

Step 7-*I can't remember, well nothing specific, that I wanted to do at school. You know when they ask you 'what do you want to be?', one day I wanted to be a vet the next a hairdresser but I always loved children. I was always surrounded by children, having younger siblings and mum was a childminder, I used to babysit and was interested in children. But at school you were channelled into sixth form and it was all about A levels and going to University. I chose my options, nothing to do with what I do now, Psychology, Textiles..can't remember.. oh and Biology. In year ten I went into a school for my work experience and I loved it and wanted to be a Reception teacher, but I was no good at exams and it was all about University. I didn't get the grades, NVQ would have been better for me but we didn't get any advice.*

Continue with plot

So failed A levels how did she get into early years, mum a childminder but sister a solicitor other sister a chef, aunty important.

Photos

Lauren's words include in monologue- *I think my aunty has been really important. She gave me that chance, she took a chance, gave me a job in the pre-school after my A levels when I thought what will I do now?*

Lauren's experiences at school also very significant in decision to enter early years-bullying, friendships.

Lauren's words- *I did not like school, hated it, my mum said they had to peel me off the childminder. I'd like to give children a nicer experience than I had, the teacher's never liked me said I was a day dreamer. I was bullied. That's me and Christina at pre-school, I loved that, that friendship group, you know I'm interested in that for the kids, who they exclude, who they play with, all that. It's so important to stop that bullying and everything, I loved pre-school and that is what it should be like for the kids. It made me happy and that's what it should be like for them.*

In the monologue-*I hated school, my first day at primary the childminder said they had to peel me off her. I want to give children a nicer experience than I had. Teachers never liked me, I was a day dreamer, I was bullied and secondary school was worse. With the bullying and everything I'm interested in that, even from three years old children have friendship groups.*

Plot-what does she want from EYPS?

Lauren's words monologue- *It's the next step up, a degree is recognised. I've done my FD, got level3, level4 but I want to move on up. I'm lucky to have this job but I don't want to be there forever, it's only small, there's a limit..You know to what you can do how far you can go.*

Re visit interview later to see if relevant- follow up on support from aunt, placement is it different?

Appendix 14

Thematic narrative analysis- Lauren (Chapter 6)

Broad theme	interview
Early experiences (primary conditioning) Caring Gender Link to symbolic frame-Lauren committed to continuing to work with young children even if she moves onto QTS	*mum had a childminder business and I had younger siblings so I was always surrounded by children.* *I've just always loved children* *work experience in reception and I loved it,* *I did not like school, hated it, my mum said they had to peel me off the childminder.* *my sister is a solicitor and the younger one wants to be a chef, so you know it's just me. I was interested in children; I've just always loved children* *(do not assume working class)* *I don't want to manage a setting I haven't done all this to be away from the children. I want to be in a room with children, hopefully in a school.**(remains committed to care, and being hands on with children, no desire to be a manager)*
Why early years-early experiences, school etc	*I loved pre-school and that is what it should be like for the kids. It made me happy and that's what it should be like for them* *I'd like to give children a nicer experience than I had, the teacher's never liked me said I was a day dreamer.* *wanted to go into teaching but I didn't get the A levels* *(schooling)* *aunty, she's been really important to me, she gave me a chance, took a chance on me gave me a job after my A levels when I didn't know. What will I do?* *(For Lauren aunt very significant in her choice, influential role model for Lauren and mentor)*
Why EYPS Professional status Ambitious-more money etc Also some links to HR frame in Multiframe analysis, Lauren wants recognition, status and is motivated by moving towards QTS	*It's the next step up, a degree is recognised. I've done my FD, got level3, level4 but I want to move on up.* *I want career enhancement, eventually I want to be a reception teacher, I mean still to work with the young ones.* *if we have to reapply for our jobs or other jobs because you are working towards something, you put all your effort and hard work into it so*

	you kind of deserve..., you have value, what you do is valued. It should help. (job security, opportunities for a new job, improved access to capital) *I think it is definitely worthwhile, hard but that's important. I think it gives you self worth, people will look at you and see that you have a degree and the status and are here, not just a babysitter but to educate the children. I probably said this but it gives you confidence.*
Organisation/ support/ who knows Recognition EYPS Aunt, acted as a mentor and supported Lauren also fits with political frame in multiframe analysis.	*It's a bit tricky at work because we haven't got as many children so we just had a meeting and we might need to reduce our hours.* (tension at work-real world of PVI, Is EYPs sustainable, too big a cost?) *The staff at work know and the manager is an EYP so she's very proactive. They are really pushing me, they're behind me, and the EYP has already highlighted about 7 things on her job description for me to do. I'm leading all the planning meetings now.* *A lot of the parents have been asking me how I've been doing at University.* (parents interested) *Lauren unique in that her manager was an EYP* *It's a small setting and my aunt is already an EYP so they know what you are doing and they understand the process.* *Then I've always wanted to go into Reception, there's more security in a school than a private or charity run business. So once I've got my EYP status and Honours, I'll apply to schools.* (more recognition with QTS than EYPS)
Work load, performativity Links to symbolic frame as Lauren views the process as hard but that adds value , ritual in symbolic frame	*well we've only had two EYP days so just done the standards and that, and we were all wondering what it's all about, it just seems like a lot of stuff all at once.* *Hard but worthwhile* *I think it is definitely worthwhile, hard but that's* important.
EYPs, and effect on practice,	*Just more professional, people don't see you as professional; you just look after children. It will improve me its professional development.* (Lack of status, but no conflict with care at this stage) Lauren repeatedly points to improvement in

	confidence- *it's definitely boosted my confidence, You reflect, I've said this but it's all about confidence*
	well working with three to five year olds you get to see the impact you have on them, you can see how much they change and through this I grow as a person. You know you are doing something right.*(validates practice)*
	The other day H pointed out how before the parents wouldn't come to me but now I do one to one with a child and his mum always comes over and asks for advice (change to practice)
	It's more at work they know me but in the other setting they don't know me, it just comes across as me being like that , I guess professional, it's easier to be like that, seen as more of a professional. (*Lauren perceives herself as more professional at placement, seen by others at placement as more professional, disadvantage of being in family run pre-school not seen as professional?)*
EYTS	*I think it's good, it will attract more people into the workforce, people will be more aware of it, it will be a career option, like teaching. It will be stricter you will have to have EYPS or EYTS and it's an incentive to work for it, it's the right to be here, and it will bring a lot more people into early years rather than just primary and secondary. It's definitely a good thing, positive, because the EYT will know about play and can implement it better than some of the others and because of their leadership they will be able to get it across to staff, so that it won't be too formal.* *(very positive view of EYTS for the sector and children will enhance professional recognition)*

Appendix 15

Multiframe analysis-Lauren (Chapter 7)

Structural- Traditional aunt manager/owner/<mark>authority</mark> prepared to devolve tasks *I'm lucky to have support in my setting, they are really pushing me. The EYP has already highlighted about seven things on her job description for me to do, and I'm leading all the planning meetings now. I've heard from some of the others how they struggle to get time off to attend EYPS days. I'm lucky the pre-school leader is an EYP.* There are limited opportunities in the setting for Lauren even with EYPS, small setting,*they already have an EYP so there's not much I can bring to the table.*	Human resource- lack of conflict but age a disadvantage *I think when you are young you are not seen as professional at work,* Setting cannot meet motivational needs, *I'm in a private family pre-school and I will have to move on. EYPS will move me on, that's what I need more of a <mark>challenge</mark>.* <mark>Status</mark>- *So when you get this status people will think she's got the degree and done the work. It gives you a lot more self worth and confidence.* Wants QTS
Political Lauren developed skills, negotiation with management and staff *You have to lead staff, it builds your confidence, and you have to negotiate and talk to higher management* *You have to explain to staff in the room so I think it helps them understand why you are doing it. It's all about leadership* Support from aunt, moral leadership, support, mentoring and role models. *The manager and room leader have done it themselves and they've been there to support me, to know that they've done it and you can see their leadership skills, they've mentored me.* Compared herself to K *It's definitely been helpful having them there as opposed to someone like K who's not had anyone there who knows the process; it's been more of a challenge to get anyone to understand why she's doing things.*	Symbolic Commitment to working with children, *I always loved children*. Ritual assessment visit- *It's a bit nerve-wracking being put on the spot but I could answer them all and I'd tried to cover everything three times in the evidence folder and then cover them again on the tour. I'm relieved it's all over but I felt positive it's definitely been worth it. I'm in limbo but I understand the process and I've done everything I can so that's okay.* Ritual*,* element of trial- *I think it is definitely worthwhile, hard but that's important.*

Appendix 16

Information sheet for study:- From Early Years Practitioner to Early Years Professional

Dear ....

I am currently undertaking an Educational Doctorate (Ed D) at Sheffield Hallam University and my aim is to undertake a study which explores the perspectives and experiences of early year's practitioners, as they undertake a programme of study to achieve Early Years Professional Status. Therefore I am keen to recruit four or possibly five participants who are just about to embark on the Undergraduate Practitioner Pathway.

I hope that the study will provide insight into how personal and professional identities change during the programme and that critical understanding will be gained into how social and cultural experiences shape professionalization. Ultimately I hope that the study will shed light on how professionalization changes practice and might influence future policy and practice. It is hoped that participation will provide an opportunity for in depth reflection and analysis of your experience of professionalization, which ultimately will support you and others on the programme.

The study will last approximately fifteen months and it is anticipated that you would be interviewed four times during that time. Each interview will last approximately 60-90 minutes. It is hoped that the participants will bring in photographs to support the interviews and each interview will be recorded. I am interested in your individual stories, your experiences, emotions and perspectives which contribute to, and shape your journey to becoming an EYP. I am willing to interview you at work, home, university or college whichever is most convenient and comfortable for you. All the transcripts of the data collected will be anonymised and stored securely to protect confidentiality, but it is hoped that the final study will be disseminated via conferences and ultimately publication.

If you require any further information about the study or indeed would like to participate please contact me at s.mcmahon@hud.ac.uk. If you would like to raise any concerns you might have about this study you may contact my doctoral supervisor Dr Ros Garrick at r.m.garrick@shu.ac.uk.

If you consider that you have enough information and would like to take part in the study please sign the enclosed letter of consent.

Appendix 17

Consent form to follow information letter

After consideration of the information provided I.. (full name) consent to take part in the study **From Early Years Practitioner to Early Years Professional: A Narrative Enquiry.**

I also understand that I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without the need to explain.

Signed... date.....................................