

**A CRITICAL COMPANION TO**  
**EARLY**  
**CHILDHOOD**

EDITED BY

**MICHAEL REED & ROSIE WALKER**



companion  
website 



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**This book is dedicated to:**

Anna, for all she taught us

Nick Johnson 1947–2014: a true companion

Oliver and Christopher  
*Rosie Walker*

Ray and Barbara Reed, Tess, Juliette and Ellen  
*Michael Reed*

To my grandmother Margaret Bleach and parents Thomas and Frances Bleach  
*Josephine Bleach*

Michael and Jonathan – always my inspiration Sue Callan

To my wife Janet, our children Giles, Amy, Luke, Harry, and grandchildren Isabelle and Emily  
*Mike Gasper*

Robert, David, Adam, Emily and Norman  
*Catherine Lamond*

Beth and Imogen  
*Alison Nicholas*

My dad  
*Anna Popova*

My parents, Donal and Jo  
*Claire Richards*

To D, N, G and UKb  
*Michelle Rogers*

To Johsua and Jacob  
*Carla Solvason*

# Praise for the book

In this stimulating and provocative book Michael Reed and Rosie Walker have drawn together a diverse and international range of respected authors, each of whom has taken a critical approach to the contentious question of how you define and achieve quality early childhood services. It is a book designed to provoke and promote critical dialogue and discourse amongst practitioners and students through critical engagement with the position of the authors within the text, followed up with a set of Critical Learning Activities and carefully crafted follow up materials (supported with a very practical and extremely developmental website). Individually, each chapter provides an insight into reflective and dialogic practice, but collectively they stand as a model of critical thinking and professional praxis. As such this book should be required reading for all students engaged in early childhood studies, and all practitioner teams aiming to develop a learning community to support the development of excellence in their professional practice. I believe anyone who reads this book will be inspired and motivated to challenge and extend their thinking and professional practice, adopting the critical stance which lies at the heart of quality services for children and families.

**Professor Chris Pascal, Director of Centre for Research in Early Childhood (CREC)**

This book provides an interesting approach to a range of areas important to early years encouraging the reader to reflect on the issues with a critical awareness and consider different points of view. It provides a good grounding for those interested in early years. The book is strongly focused on quality in early years and what constitutes quality provision in terms of initiatives and policies and the role of the practitioner. As such, it touches on key areas for students and practitioners alike, encouraging critical thinking and an awareness of the historical journey and some of the debates about early years provision.

**Rita Winstone, Senior Lecturer and Programme Leader, Early Childhood Studies, Teesside University**

This book is aptly titled as it addresses the needs of those in the early stages of their professional journey in early childhood education and care. The group of respected contributors span the fields of education, health and social care introducing the reader

to key themes, terms and issues through 25 accessible and wide ranging chapters. Vignettes, case studies and learning activities bring theory to life and encourage a critical approach to study and practice.

**Linda Miller, Professor Emeritus of Early Years, The Open University**

An invaluable aid to students of early years education and care, this book offers comprehensive, contemporary examination of critical issues surrounding working with young children, families and other professionals.

The clear, user-friendly format and plentiful links to additional resources and learning activities, lead the reader to further explore and develop their own knowledge, making this a truly essential read!

**Katrina Ivey, Sector Endorsed Foundation Degree in Early Years, University of Worcester**

Within the current Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) climate, understanding, promoting and improving quality for children is a fundamental role of the practitioner. Using contributions from renowned sector experts, this book supports students to critically develop their personal, professional and ethical philosophy within the challenging ECEC environment.

**Gaynor Corrick, Early Years Teacher, Sutton Seedlings, Herefordshire**

Here is a treasure trove for the curious reader, inspiring a critical learning journey to challenge individuals and their early years practice. Each concise, relevant chapter, with Critical Learning Activities and Reflection Points, stimulates further exploration, guided conveniently by immediate further reading and references.

This unique privilege is due to the range of inter-professional expertise honestly shared by the range of national and international authors, including from Australia, United States and Wales. All are actively engaged in practice, research or lecturing, with a refreshing variety of expression. Current experiences in Early Education and Childcare are compared and contrasted through different 'lenses', including transparent autobiographies, exemplars of child/student voice and active research. Case studies link theory to practice, modelling the expectation of engagement with babies, young children, families, colleagues and other professionals. The Editors have ensured connections can be made between topics, helpful for ongoing study.

This 'Critical Companion' will support full-time undergraduates, experienced early years practitioners undertaking a Foundation Degree and BA 'top-up', plus all the 'reflective activists' that continually strive to improve care and learning opportunities with babies, young children and their families.

**Jessica Johnson**  
**Senior Lecturer Early Years, Kingston University**



# List of abbreviations

ACARA	The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority
ACECQA	Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority
ACT	Association for Children's Palliative Care
ADD	Attention Deficit Disorder
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder
ARACY	Australian Institute of Family Studies
CAF	Common Assessment Framework
CHAT	Cultural Historical and Activity Theory
CLA	Critical Learning Activity
CWDC	Children's Workforce Development Council
DAP	Developmentally appropriate practice
DEC	Division for Early Childhood
DEEWR	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
DfE	Department for Education
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
DH	Department of Health
ECE	Early Childhood Education
ECEC	Early Childhood Education and Care
ECERS	Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale
ELI	Early Learning Initiative
EPPE	Effective Provision on Pre-school Education
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage
EYLF	Early Years Learning Framework
MEEIFP	Monitoring and Evaluation of the Effective Implementation of the Foundation Phase
NAEYC	National Association for the Education of Young Children
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
NCCA	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
NCSL	National College for School Leadership
NICE	National Institute for Clinical Excellence
NPQICL	National Post-qualification in Integrated Centre Leadership

NQF	National Quality Framework
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education Children's Services and Skills
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessments
PITC	Program for Infant Toddler Caregivers
PSLA	Pre-School Learning Alliance
QIRS	Quality Improvement Rating Systems
RIE	Resources for Infant Educators
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disability Act
SENTW	Special Educational Needs Tribunal for Wales
SLD	Specific Learning Difficulties
SSTUWA	State School Teachers' Union of Western Australia
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

# About the editors

**Michael Reed** is a Senior Lecturer at the Centre for Early Childhood, within the Institute of Education at the University of Worcester. He teaches on undergraduate and postgraduate courses related to child development, practice-based research and leadership. He is a qualified teacher and holds advanced qualifications in Educational Inquiry, Educational Psychology and Special Education. He has been part of course development and writing teams at the Open University and is an experienced author. He has a particular interest in practice-based research carried out in collaboration with students and ways to explore the impact of training on practice. He has contributed chapters to a number of textbooks and co-edited books including *Reflective Practice in the Early Years* (2010), *Quality Improvement and Change in the Early Years* (2012) and *Work Based Research in the Early Years* (2012), all published by SAGE.

**Rosie Walker** co-ordinates a Foundation Degree with seven partner institutions. She is a Senior Lecturer at the Centre for Early Childhood, within the Institute of Education at the University of Worcester. She has supervised many research projects with Foundation Degree, BA and Top-up students as well as at Master's level. She has published book chapters and co-authored a textbook exploring practice-based research as well as journal articles. Professionally, she has managed two large children's centres and is a qualified Social Worker. She has worked in a variety of childcare settings including child protection teams. Rosie is also the author of *Success with your Early Years Research Project* (2014) with Carla Solvason, published by SAGE.

# About the contributors

**Karen Appleby** is a Principal Lecturer within the Centre for Early Childhood, which is part of the Institute of Education at the University of Worcester. She teaches across a variety of early childhood programmes and is a University Learning and Teaching Fellow and a member of the Institute of Education Management Team. Her current responsibilities include leadership for learning, teaching and student experience. Previously she has held the position of Partnership Co-ordinator for the Foundation degree in Early Years, Course Leader for the BA (Hons) Integrated Early Childhood Studies and HND in Early Childhood. She is an experienced author writing on the subject of reflective practice and takes a particular interest in the way reflective learning is positioned within undergraduate study.

**Robin Balbernie** is clinical director of PIP UK, a charity dedicated to help establish infant mental health teams across the country. Previously he was consultant child psychotherapist in Gloucestershire. He also worked with Children's Centres as clinical lead of the team providing an infant mental health service, known locally and nationally as 'Secure Start'. He was involved with the Intensive Baby Care Unit at Gloucester Royal Hospital and ran supervision groups for Health Visitors for over 25 years. His interest in working with adopted children led him to the field of infant mental health and early preventative intervention, and this became his speciality following a Winston Churchill Memorial Trust Travelling Fellowship to look at related projects in America. He is an advisor to the Association of Infant Mental Health and the WAVE Trust and was a member of the Young Minds' Policy and Strategy Advisory Group.

**Mary Benson McMullen** is Professor of Early Childhood Education at Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana (USA) where she has held appointments since 1993. Her recent scholarship focuses on well-being in caring systems, examining how elements throughout systems associated with physiological and psychological health and well-being directly impact young children and are supported and sustained by individuals, relationships, environments and policies. Her publications include works on practitioner beliefs and practices and the meaning of quality in differing contexts

and cultures. Among many other positions, for the past ten years she has served as Research in Review editor of *Young Children*, a journal of the National Association for the Education of Young Children in the US.

**Josephine Bleach** has been Director of the Early Learning Initiative at the National College of Ireland since 2008. Prior to this, Josephine worked variously as a primary school teacher and a Home School Community Liaison Co-ordinator in Darndale, Dublin. She was involved in the development and delivery of the Early Start Pre-School Intervention Programme, and subsequently worked as a facilitator with the School Development Planning Support Service (Primary) of the Department of Education and Skills. Over the course of her career, she has worked with a wide range of early years services, schools and other educational stakeholders, community groups, voluntary and statutory agencies along with different initiatives. She has facilitated, motivated and mentored others in designing systems and structures that improve the quality of the service provided to children and their families. She has published widely and her book *Parental Involvement in Primary Education* is available from Liffey Press.

**Frances Brett** is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Worcester, UK. Her particular areas of interest are play and the nature of the play space, and the role of the expressive arts in supporting the child's self-revelation.

**Erica Brown** has class teacher experience in the early years and she has worked as a Senior Teacher, Head of Department and Headteacher in Special Schools. In the University Sector she has held posts as Senior Lecturer, Principal Lecturer, Head of Special Education and as a Principal Research Fellow in Children's and Young Peoples' Palliative Care. Most recently her work at the University of Worcester has focused on supporting children and families who are experiencing loss and she is committed to helping people of all ages and from all walks of life to develop resilience to sustain them through adverse life events. Erica has a wide-ranging portfolio of published books, book chapters and refereed journal articles. In 2008 her book *Palliative Care for South Asians* was launched in the House of Lords and in 2012 she was made a Fellow of The Royal Society of Arts in recognition of her work with life-limited children, young people and their families.

**Sue Callan** is a fellow of the Higher Education Academy and is currently an Associate Lecturer and consultant with the Open University. From a professional heritage of community-based education and pre-school provision, Sue has worked in further and higher education for over 25 years, supporting students in undergraduate and postgraduate courses. She now specialises in distance teaching and learning. In addition to contributing to the design, writing and development of Foundation Degree programmes for a number of universities, she is an experienced author for SAGE, editing

and contributing to publications on reflective practice, work-based research, mentoring, play and management in the early years. She is currently part of a small-scale teaching and learning research project focusing on the role of feedback in promoting academic literacy.

**Derval Carey-Jenkins** is a Principal Lecturer and Course Leader for the Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) Early Years and Primary at the University of Worcester. She teaches across a range of subjects including the Master's Early Years Pedagogy and Management module, Special Educational Needs and Disability and Primary English. She is a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. She spent 23 years teaching in primary schools including three years as a Deputy and eight as a Headteacher. She has developed a keen research interest in values, leadership, change, the early years and primary curriculum, policy and practice. In 2010 she was the recipient of the prestigious University Council for the Education of Teachers scholarship, travelling to Finland to research the extent to which Finnish education and teacher training are underpinned by key societal values. She is currently studying for her doctorate, focusing on Women in Leadership in Higher Education.

**Victoria Cooper** is a Senior Lecturer for the Faculty of Education and Language Studies at The Open University. She currently chairs Children and Young People's Worlds: Developing Frameworks for Integrated Practice for postgraduate study and is extensively involved in the production of a range of modules spanning early years education, research methods, childhood and youth studies at postgraduate and undergraduate level. She has a background in early years teaching, research and professional development. Her research interests broadly fall into two areas: professional practice in education and identity development. Victoria has published on professional development in higher and early years education and children's developing identity.

**Aline Wendy Dunlop** is an Emeritus Professor at the University of Strathclyde in Scotland. Originally a pre-school and primary teacher, when she joined the University sector she built on the links between sectors she had developed as a Headteacher by studying the transition to school from early childhood settings in terms of policy and practice. This led to a 14 year longitudinal study of children's educational transitions from pre-school until school leaving. The study has informed her thinking on leadership, family engagement, children's agency and professional collaboration. Aline Wendy led a postgraduate diploma in which pairs of pre-school and primary teachers studied together over a two-year period during which they swapped sectors and then moved on to schools with their classes of pre-school children. She is currently part of an international research group looking at early childhood transitions in five countries. She was awarded an MBE in 2013.

**Alma Fleet** is an Associate Professor at the Institute of Early Childhood, Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia. She values particularly her work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander early childhood educators. Alma teaches, researches and

publishes in areas associated with educational change, the nature of teachers' work, and pedagogical documentation.

**Michael Gasper MA (Ed)** was a teacher for nine years and a Head for seventeen, between 1972 and 1998, with the majority of his experience in Early Years, in urban and rural settings. While a First School Head he promoted joint cross-curricular projects between First Schools in the same rural Middle School pyramid and as an Infant School Head developed interagency cooperation with Health, Community Mental Health and Social Services to establish early intervention with families 'at risk'. He joined the Centre for Research in Early Childhood (CREC) at the initial stages of the Early Excellence Centre (EEC) programme in 1998 and from 2000 he was coordinator of the EEC evaluation programme which CREC conducted for DfES.

Michael is currently an Early Years consultant and has worked over 9 years as a mentor, tutor and assessor on the NPQICL professional development programme for cohorts delivered by CREC, the universities of Lancaster, London (Institute of Education), Warwick, Wolverhampton, Worcester and SERCO; He is an assessor for Quality Assurance for the Effective and Baby Effective Early Learning (EEL and BEEL) programme and a tutor for the Accounting Early for Life Long Learning (AcE) programme and MA Leadership programmes run by CREC.

Michael contributed to *Early Years Policy: The Impact on Practice* by Zenna Kingdon and Jan Gourd and *The SAGE Handbook of Mentoring and Coaching* with Paul Watling. He is the author of *Multiagency Working in the Early Years: Challenges and Opportunities* published in January 2010 by SAGE.

**Karen Hanson** is the Head of the Centre for Early Childhood within the Institute of Education at the University of Worcester. The Centre provides an extensive range of undergraduate and postgraduate study routes, including Early Years Teacher. Staff at the Centre are active researchers and publish a range of textbooks and research papers. Karen has extensive professional experience which has included her role as a teacher, supporting parents and working in the wider community. She has experience of professional home-based early education as a registered childminder and worked for the Pre-school Play Association. This experience enabled her to see the significance of reflective practice in terms of meeting children's needs. Her Doctoral thesis and published research interests have encompassed the way reflective practice can be made visible to students as part of their academic and professional engagement with early education.

**Sandra Hesterman** is a highly committed educator who has taught extensively in early childhood and primary education prior to her appointment to Murdoch University in 2009. She is passionate about motivating students to learn in ways that have a sustained, substantial and positive influence on their future learning, and on

their own quest for excellence. In 2013, Sandra received the Murdoch University Vice Chancellor's Teaching Excellence Award for developing a distinctive pedagogy of multiliteracies that stimulates student engagement and encourages independence in learning through the provision of authentic tasks in authentic contexts. Sandra's recent research, grounded in postmodern theory, examines the cultural interface of early childhood education and childcare, in particular, the impact of standardised testing in the context of advocacy work and the Australian National Quality Framework.

**Dianne Jackson** trained as an Early Childhood Teacher and taught in a broad range of community, early childhood and school settings. Dianne then became a lecturer in the School of Education at the University of Western Sydney where she completed a First Class Honours degree in Social Science. For almost 11 years Dianne has held the position of CEO of Connect Child and Family Services, an NGO in outer western Sydney that delivers a broad range of early childhood focused programmes with families. Dianne has recently been appointed CEO of the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY), a national organisation focused on translating evidence into policy and practice. She is also the an EECERA country coordinator for Australia. Dianne holds an adjunct position at the University of Western Sydney where she completed her PhD in 2010 and her doctoral research won the 2010 European Early Childhood Research Association (EECERA) Best Practitioner Research Award. Dianne co-convenes an EECERA special interest research group with Pen Green in the UK and her organisation has recently opened an innovative parent and child meeting place, conceptually based on collaborative work she has done with her EECERA colleagues from the University of Ghent.

**Caroline Jones** is Course Director for the Sector-Endorsed Foundation Degree in Early Years (SEFDEY) at the University of Warwick. She started her career as a teacher in mainstream primary and special education, working across the Midlands area for 15 years. Caroline first joined the University of Warwick in 1994 as a part-time associate tutor on the undergraduate teacher-training programme (BA QTS). She taught on a variety of programmes and assumed responsibility for the Early Years Foundation Degree when it was introduced in 2001. She is a founder member of the National SEFDEY Network and Chair of the Midlands Region.

**Anna Kilderry** is a Senior Lecturer in Early Childhood Education at Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia. Previously, Anna has been a pre-school teacher, a lecturer and researcher in Australia and the UK, and managed the Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) at the University of Greenwich, London. It is through her involvement in teacher education that Anna has developed her research interests in early childhood curriculum, pedagogy and policy.

**Catherine Lamond** is a Senior Lecturer in Special Needs and Inclusion Studies within the School of Education at the University of Wolverhampton, teaching in the areas of



inclusion, reflective practice and specific learning difficulties. Before working in Higher Education, she taught in primary schools in England and Ireland, developing a particular interest in supporting children with special needs. Her current area of research is looked-after children with a focus on aspirations for care-leavers. Catherine has published articles on hopes for the future of young people in care who are excluded from mainstream education; developing self-efficacy in HE students from non-traditional backgrounds; and how innovative forms of assessment can be used to support diverse student groups. In May 2012 she was awarded the first Academic Vice-President Award for Excellence at the Students' Union Teaching Awards ceremony. Catherine is a Fellow of the HEA.

**Jackie Musgrave** joined the Centre for Early Childhood as a Senior Lecturer at the University of Worcester in April 2012. She started off her working life as a nurse and she trained as a Registered Sick Children's Nurse at Birmingham Children's Hospital and worked in a range of paediatric and adult settings in hospital and in the community. In 1996, she started to teach Early Childhood Care and Education in a College of Further Education. In 2003, she began teaching in higher education to students on the Early Years Foundation Degree in partnership with Oxford Brookes University, where she managed the programme for four years before joining UW. Jackie also taught as an associate lecturer at Warwick University. She graduated with a Master's Degree in Early Childhood Education in 2010. Jackie successfully completed her doctorate studies in 2014. Her doctoral research brings together her interest in child health and young children's care and education. Her thesis is an exploratory case study which researches how practitioners in daycare settings create inclusive environments for young children with chronic health conditions.

**Martin Needham** trained and worked as an early years teacher in Nottinghamshire, London and Pakistan. This was followed by four years as an Early Years Development Officer for a local authority working on a range of initiatives including Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships, and Children's Centres. During this time he worked regularly with one of the regional parent and child groups as part of the National Children's Bureau's Playing with Words project. He became a Senior Lecturer in Early Childhood Studies at the University of Wolverhampton in 2003 and a Principal Lecturer at Manchester Metropolitan University in 2014. Martin completed his PhD examining pedagogy and learning with children under the age of four at the Institute of Education, London University in 2011. Martin has two children with whom he attended parent and toddler groups. Martin is an experienced author and has published work on multi-agency working and applying theory to practice. Martin was the external examiner for the Peers Early Education Partnership (PEEP) which delivers practitioner training for those working with parents and children together from 2006–2010. Martin has also conducted research into leadership in early years settings.