A productive system of early years professional development

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Word count: 5230

Abstract

This paper uses the concept of the productive system to identify some of the tensions between the stages of professional development of early years practitioners and the relationships between the various actors within the system of professional formation in England. In the context of the recommendations of the Nutbrown review a series of challenges facing early years professionalism and the design and delivery of continuous professional development are discussed. These include issues that relate to the predominance of external influence on the nature of early years professional knowledge, the significance of the early years setting in supporting practitioner learning and influences on workplace learning processes. Some strategies for strengthening practitioner influence over the productive system are briefly outlined, which relate specifically to how practitioners engage with the challenge of how CPD is organised and located as part of an early years professional identity.

Key words: professionalism, cpd, workforce, Nutbrown, productive systems

Introduction

The period of New Labour government (1997-2010) saw radical change to the initial and continuing professional development opportunities for those working in early years and the wider children and young people's workforce in England. These changes can be seen as part of the transformation of the public services enacted during the New Labour era, providing greater structure to the workforce so that early years childcare and education could better support economic and social objectives (Stedward 2003; Moss 2006). Comparative data indicates that the programme of investment and reform delivered some benefits (OECD 2006), with England making considerable progress since 1999 to close the gap with other national systems, in terms of overall outcomes for children and standards of workforce development.. For many practitioners working with young children the scale of the reform was welcome. It can be argued that the reforms resulted in greater practitioner awareness of the value of professional development, and its connection with professionalism (Miller 2008). Professional development opportunities multiplied, including at higher education level (Edmond et al. 2007). The combination of the availability of flexible delivery through the sector-endorsed two year Foundation Degrees in early years and a workforce largely under qualified at higher education level, resulted in a situation in which Foundation Degrees in 'Education' subjects formed the largest group of all Foundation Degrees available in England (HEFCE 2008; Edmond et al. 2007).Demand for initial and continuing professional development was increased further by the ambition for a degree-qualified professional in every early years setting, a commitment which the Conservative and Liberal Democrat coalition government elected in 2010 has adjusted but retained (DfE/DoH 2011), and the introduction of Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) (CWDC 2006).The early years sector endorsed foundation degree (EYSEFD), set up in 2003, required applicants to have two years' work experience in education and childcare, and this enabled the development of curriculum-models that incorporated extensive work-based learning and provided opportunities to recognise existing knowledge, an approach that appears to have been viewed very positively by practitioners (Snape et al. 2007). Despite concerns around the depth and criticality engendered by new courses and frameworks, relating to wider criticisms of foundation degrees (Ainley 2004), and questions around how the courses will promote professional status (Edmond et al. 2007), it can be argued that the outcomes of the New Labour reforms resulted in a 'higherness' and 'professionality' that previously had been less accessible to practitioners working with young children. It can also be argued that this

progress with professional development has nevertheless not changed wider public perceptions of early years work (TACTYC 2011a). Furthermore, in contrast to the majority of other OECD countries, professional development in England is noticeably characterised by the limited extent of employer involvement, and a reliance on formal training courses, with minimal use of onsite mentoring, blended and online learning (OECD 2012). This might suggest that the reforms have managed to ensure higher levels of qualification achievement, but did not deliver a framework that encourages employers and practitioners to take responsibility for CPD in the context of ongoing practice improvement.

The increased focus on professional development has had other impacts. In addition to recognising some of the skills and knowledge developed by those with many years of experience, at a local level there have been opportunities for groups of practitioners to engage with some of the key issues relating to working with young children. Structures such as the Common Induction Standards and the Common Core of skills and knowledge (CWDC 2007, 2008) aimed to identify and explore gaps in core knowledge, and to build a degree of shared understanding amongst practitioners (DCSF 2008; CWDC/PRI 2008). This can be seen as part of wider reform that involved all those working with young children. The notion of the 'team around the child' and the prominence given to inter-professional working in early years workforce development suggested that early years practitioners were an important part of the jigsaw of professionals responsible for the wellbeing of all children and for identifying children in need, including those in need of protection (DCSF 2008).

These reforms can be seen as leading to an 'associate professionalism' or 'semi-professionalism' (Edmond and Price 2009), which was affected by the limited control that children and young people's practitioners have over the body of knowledge which defines their practice, and the speed of the introduction of workforce reform. The experience of early years professionals remains significantly different from the autonomy and prestige traditionally enjoyed by the higher status professions (Evetts 2005). It also differs from the more established 'welfare professions' of teaching and social work, which are similarly influenced by changes in government policy, but have greater resources and status. Early years professionalism can be seen as imposed 'from above' by the government and its agencies, through '*domination of forces external to the occupational group*' (Evetts 2011, 407). It can also be seen to share aspects of the '*organisational professionalism*' (Evetts 2005, 4) that characterises the public service or welfare professions more generally, including

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a shift towards managerialism and a sense that discourses of professionalism are used as mechanisms of control (Fournier 1999; Osgood 2006, 2010). The perception of control can be extended to the central role of government and agencies in specifying the content of programmes of initial professional development, induction standards and processes of continuing professional development and career progression, shaping notions of competence (Fournier 1999). This could also entail using the appeal of the notion of professionalism to motivate and attempt control over practitioners who have suffered from a longstanding lack of recognition for their work (Burgess-Macey and Rose 1997; McGillivray 2008; Osgood 2010)

The arrival of the coalition government heralded a change of direction with the abolition of the Department for Children Schools and Families, the recreation of a Department for Education, and the review of some of the agencies and bodies which had been instrumental in the implementation of the Every Child Matters reforms of the New Labour government. As part of this process a series of reviews were commissioned, including the Nutbrown Review of early education and childcare qualifications, which published its final report, Foundations for Quality in June 2012. The policies of the coalition pose a series of challenges for early years education and care in England, most significantly the requirement to sustain quality of provision while suffering considerable reductions in funding, along with changes to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and a greater emphasis on preparing children for school (Smith 2012), to the possible detriment of more holistic aspects of early years work. The workforce remains poorly paid considering the importance attributed to early years work by government, and the consequences of the coalition policy agenda may compromise the capacity of early years settings, and undermine the motivation of individual practitioners, to engage fully in professional development activity.

In this article the notion of the productive system is used (Wilkinson 2002; Felstead et al. 2009) to illustrate how the structure and stages of early years professional development articulate to influence the form and structure of early years professionalism. With reference to the approach of the New Labour government and, in particular, the proposals put forward in the Nutbrown Review, the mode of professionalism is seen as subject to tensions at the boundaries of 'regions' of professional knowledge (Bernstein 2000; Beck and Young 2005), and ongoing dependence on both government and more dominant 'welfare professions' for its validation. Moreover, the proposals suggested by Nutbrown, however well-intentioned, may

suffer from an over-reliance on early years settings to provide the expansive learning environments (Fuller and Unwin 2004) needed to ensure continuous professional development activities are accessible and have impact on practice for children and families. The considerable diversity of early years settings may also influence change here, as processes that could embed relatively smoothly in well-resourced and still relatively homogenous professional domains (i.e. teaching in compulsory education or nursing) may be more problematic if the ambition of the reform is to include all early years practitioners.

It is argued that the structuring of professional development would need to alter in the longer term for early years practitioners to gain influence over the productive system and the body of professional knowledge in the early years. By taking responsibility for processes of knowledge recontextualisation in the workplace (Evans et al. 2010), and committing to greater ownership of the design and delivery of CPD, practitioners can participate more fully in the productive system and ongoing reform. A partial subsumption within the norms of the teaching profession may take place, with potential advantages for professional standing (Nutbrown 2012, 57), but this may be to the detriment of practice diversity and result in increasing dislocation between 'official' and 'practitioner conceptions of a 'successful child' (Alexander 2010). These factors impact on the development of shared professional standards and ethos, and discretion and autonomy as professionals, and by implication, the capacity to work effectively in inter-professional arrangements.

The notion of the productive system and its application to professional development

A productive system can be described as '*where the forces of production combine in production*' (Wilkinson 2002, 2) and was originally devised as a intuitionalist approach to the analysis of economic systems that took account of the '*social system in which production is organised*', '*the structure of ownership and control*' and the '*social political and economic framework within which the processes of production operate*' (Wilkinson 2002, 2). The productive system incorporates the organisational environment and the framework in which it is located (the structure) , and the processes or activities that result in 'the product' (the stages). The great strength of the notion is the integration of macro and meso level analysis to interpret how '*mutual interests*' and '*relative power*' (2002, 2) influence the formation of a '*relatively successful productive system*' (Wilkinson 2002, 6), that is characterised by mutual co-operation and '*social and political structures conducive to effective production*' (2002, 7).

Felstead et al. (2009), in their discussion of the Working as Learning Framework, emphasise the importance of the articulation of the structure and stages of production in influencing the outcomes of productive processes. Particularly important here is to note the capacity for mutual interests and relative power to alter at different stages in the productive system, as different combinations of interests, assumptions and notions of 'appropriateness' (March and Olsen 1984; Di Maggio and Powell 1991) pertinent to particular inter-organisational relationships affect the outcome of each stage.

The productive system notion lends itself well to analysis of processes of professional development, which sit within wider structures that are influenced by the relative power of different professional groups, organisations and government. The stages of professional development vary by profession, but often comprise periods of initial professional development, the validation of a period of initial professional experience or induction, and processes of continuing professional development that sometimes entail progression within organisations and in terms of professional status. At each stage a different constellation of organisational, economic and socio-political interests have influence on the form and character of the period of professional formation, with the professional themselves often having increasing influence as the stages proceed. The 'product' in the case of such a productive system can be understood as a 'relatively successful professional', with the capability to undertake the activities required of her or him by the relevant professional body and society at large. The productive system notion also offers an opportunity to address macro and meso contexts of professional formation and to identify how these may influence the functioning of the profession and its relationships with other professions, clients and employing organisations.

Structure of production in the development of Early Years Practitioners

During the latter part of the New Labour period the structure of production of early years professional development involved a distribution of power in a network involving the Department of Children's Schools and Families (DCSF), the Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) and the wider Children's Workforce Network (CWN). In tandem with the implementation of Every Child Matters (HMG 2004) and the associated workforce reform programme (DCSF 2008) these bodies increasingly stipulated the character of early years professional development and thus influenced the design and content of the

new forms of educational provision that developed to meet new legislative and policy requirements. This was undertaken with some regard to local circumstances and with some slight flexibility for interpretation and implementation of policy at the local authority level. The arrival of the coalition government in May 2010 resulted in the re-organisation of the structure reflected in the diagram below, which now includes the Department for Education and the two relevant executive agencies, the Teaching Agency and the National College. Relationships between higher education, independent providers, early years settings, and professional networks persist, but the wider influences, as shown on the right hand side of the diagram, have changed. These changes have altered the influence of those bodies which mediated between central government and early years settings. The local authorities are now charged with a more 'strategic' role in commissioning and planning (DfE /DoH 2011, 71) and the CWDC is now defunct, with responsibilities transferred to the Teaching Agency. The lines between organisational types indicate relationships, which may be imbued with differing levels of relative power and mutual interests depending on the activity or process at hand (see stages in next section). Of course, relationships between the parties do not always exist in every instance. For example, in some local areas relationships between higher education and independent training providers may be strong, whereas in others they may be non-existent.

(Figure 1)

The stages of early years practitioner professional formation

The Nutbrown review recommends an overhaul of professional development for early years practitioners (Nutbrown 2012, 50-4) and a new set of consistent role descriptions which will promote a 'progression structure' (p.47) and a clearer sense of an 'early years career'. The diagram below attempts to translate these objectives into what this might mean in terms of professional development activities and recognition, taking account of the commitment in the Nutbrown review to introduce a six month induction period for new starters (p.7). The stages A to E are not necessarily sequential, and the majority of practitioners are likely to remain for long periods of time in stages C or D. Some stages may run concurrently, for example practitioners may be developing their professional capabilities and gaining qualifications (Developing as practitioner) while taking on more responsibility in the setting. There may be increasing policy ambitions for more practitioners to progress to stages D or E, which may

involve QTS (pp. 61-2), but could also involve leading or managing without full graduate status. It is important to stress here that the stages A-E are not intended to correspond to notions of qualification level, but rather to the development of professional experience and capability. The early years setting is the key site of continuing professional development, encompassing stages B – E for all practitioners.

(Figure 2)

The articulation of the structure and stages of production

The productive system of early years professional development is subject to the changing policy direction of governments, and this may affect the relationships both between the organisations involved with professional development and their co-operative activities, and relations between these organisations and government bodies and agencies. However, the influence of the Department of Education and the Teaching Agency will not necessarily predominate in all the stages outlined above, with other actors exercising greater or lesser levels of influence in different circumstances. For example it could be argued that the specific context of the early years setting will have particular impact on professional formation throughout at least stages B,C and D, with higher education institutions and providers of CPD also having particular influence at stages A and C-D. At stage E, the Nutbrown review envisages a role for professionals with Qualified Teacher Status, which suggests that the teaching profession itself, with its specific norms, values and structures will have impact on this stage of development, in addition to higher education and teacher training partnerships. This may limit the influence of the early years setting for those professionals who reach this stage. The level of flexibility and discretion over the organisation and character of CPD may vary depending on the 'career route', with risks that CPD will be used to standardise professional conduct (Fournier 1999) if government influence remains strong in all parts of the system. There is the risk to CPD quality and consistency, despite Nutbrown's ambition (Nutbrown 2012, 52), if settings and local networks do not feel they have real influence over the relationship between CPD, practice and work organisation in the setting.

At various stages in the productive system we can denote opportunities for mutual interests to exist, and potentially strengthen, irrespective of whatever reforms are introduced. In particular the networks that exist between higher education institutions, independent

providers, early years settings and local and national professional networks have mutual interests in the ongoing professional development of practitioners, and this could result in the types of diverse professional development activities that Nutbrown alludes to (Nutbrown 2012, 53-4) occurring at stages A, C and D in particular. The involvement of those with a range of perspectives and backgrounds at a local level can have considerable value, although changes in the role of local authorities introduced by the coalition government (DfE/DoH 2011) may mean that any local networks need to be led by practitioners, settings or higher education institutions. Of course, this mutuality and culture of co-operation is by no means guaranteed, and the early years sector has a diversity of organisation that can make inclusivity of all practitioners more challenging than the implementation of professional development networks in school teaching for example. Nutbrown recognises the diversity of provision in early years, including childminders and Montessori and Steiner organisations (Nutbrown 2012, 31, 53, 26-7) and this could be an ongoing source of strength for early years practice, providing practitioners have the time and resources to develop and engage with both the network structure and the development opportunities it provides.

Following Nutbrown's recommendations, induction (Stage B in our productive system) will be characterised by the specific dynamics of the employing setting, and potentially a mentor sourced from a setting judged at a higher standard (p. 51). It may be possible for strong local networks, including higher education institutions, settings and independent providers, to influence the productive system here by ensuring a high standard of induction experience and a '*gradual transition to full, rounded participation*' (Fuller et al. 2007, 745) for new starters. This could involve opportunities to visit other local settings, and to engage with a local CPD network.

Regionalisation and professional reform

Wilkinson identifies the potential for evolution in productive systems in the form of dynamic interaction and alterations in the productive and power relationships '*within and between productive systems*' (2002, 6). In the context of the professional formation of early years practitioners the level of interaction between the productive domains of the teaching and early years professions can be seen to increase if the Nutbrown recommendations are implemented. In particular the focus on placing Qualified Teacher Status at the capstone of practitioner career development (Nutbrown 2012, 45-7), and the concomitant involvement of

Initial Teacher Education providers (p. 59), will impact on the 'regions' of knowledge (Bernstein 2000, 55; Beck and Young 2005) associated with early years practice and teacher education. In effect the degrading and eventual redundancy of Early Years Professional Status (Nutbrown 2012, 8) will amount to putting a glass ceiling on the notion of an early years professional, through which individuals will only be able to pass if they adopt the practices, norms and values of a dominant and more powerful professional group, that of teaching. The region of teacher education is therefore expanded, invited to assume a parenting role to the truncated domain of early years practice, with the likely result that the knowledge base and priorities of the teaching profession have ever greater influence over the early years region. The boundaries of the professional knowledge regions of 'early years' and 'teaching' will further weaken, further reducing demarcation of early years professional identities (Bernstein 2000; Beck and Young 2005).

This analysis does not suggest that the outcome for children and their families will necessarily be negative. Nutbrown outlines the research evidence which supports greater involvement of those from a teaching background in early childhood education and care (Nutbrown 2012, 7, 57-61). The effect, however, may be to reduce the broader focus on holistic development of the child and to distance early years work further from the pedagogic role more common in some other European countries (Moss 2006), along with a risk that the diversity of provision is undermined through a sense that mainstream educational curricula and norms are dominant. This articulates with the coalition government reforms to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), '*the slimmed down curriculum*' and the commitment to preparing young children for school (DfE/DoH 2011), a change of emphasis unlikely to be universally welcomed by the early years workforce (TACTYC 2011b). The impact on early years professionalism may outlast the longevity of government policy priorities There may be ongoing disruption, at least in the short term, as the move towards a more unified career structure takes root.

There are wider affects here on the notions of professionalism in the early years. Although there can be no illusions that early years professionals share the characteristics of the 'established' professions of medicine and law, the effect of the ongoing reforms to early years professionalism is likely to move early years practice even further from the development of autonomy and control over their own body of knowledge (Friedson 2001; Beck and Young 2005). Similarly, early years professionals have limited opportunities to

define and agree their own values or '*implement a code of ethics through which individual professionals could be held to account by the profession itself*' (Beck and Young 2005, 188). Governments and their agencies have tended to assume this role, as is evident in the Common Induction Standards (CWDC 2007) and the Common Core of Skills and Knowledge, which are said to express a '*set of common values for practitioners*' (CWDC 2008, 2). That said, the values themselves are often implicit and vague (Powell 2010), quite different from the code of ethics that might characterise a more established professional group.

There are also issues around enabling practitioners to take responsibility for both quality of service and professional development which effect many public service professions subject to strong external performance management and accountability. If Ofsted inspections are to be the prime motivator for CPD occurrence, and managers and owners 'expected' to take responsibility (Nutbrown 2012, 52), this may mitigate against the formation of practitioner-led networks of CPD, who may be crowded out by imposed CPD mechanisms designed to fit the requirements of Ofsted and the realities of setting organisation. Furthermore, the increasingly dominant mode of professionalism influencing the early years 'region', that of teaching, has had its own well documented struggles over professional identity (Locke et al. 2005; Beck 2008), which are associated with a 'genericism' that assumes the '*inevitable obsolescence of accumulated knowledge*' (Beck and Young 2005, 191) and leaves the profession weaker in the face of external influences.

The impact of the setting on professional development

The Nutbrown review recognises the crucial importance of the workplace as the key site of professional formation, while also acknowledging the importance of time to study (Nutbrown 2012, .22) away from the workplace and outside of the immediate context of work. There are also recommendations about practitioners progressing to leadership having experience of a range of settings (p.21), with the new Level 3 qualification to include '*at least three different and appropriate settings*' (p.23). For the majority of practitioners, the early years setting in which they work will be the context in which they engage in most of their learning and development, applying and recontextualising the content introduced through the planned '*freely available online modules*' (p. 52) , the '*visits to other settings, experiences which challenge thinking*' and conference attendance (p.53). Nutbrown outlines an '*expectation that leaders, managers, and owners of early years setting prioritise CPD and the professional growth of their workforce*' and welcomes the inclusion of evidence of staff CPD in the new

Ofsted framework (p.52), but this may set up a scenario in which CPD becomes treated merely as meeting a target rather than genuinely driving practice improvements and supporting individual development. Fuller and Unwin's (2004) concept of expansive and restrictive learning environments highlights the importance of '*planned time off the job, including for knowledge-based courses and reflection*', '*recognition of, and support for employees as learners*', '*opportunities to extend identity through boundary crossing*' and the role of managers as '*facilitators of workforce and individual development*' (Fuller et al. 2007, 745) for effective learning at work. All of these necessitate a form of management and a structured approach to work organisation that are unlikely to be evident in all early years settings, where cultures and practices may not always support learning effectively. For the ambition of Nutbrown's recommendations to be realised the 'expansiveness' of setting environments also needs to be prioritised, and this may entail initiatives targeted at managers and owners as much as qualification reform and developing the consistency of CPD.

A variation in the extent to which learning is enabled by the learning environment is inevitable across practice settings, and this will impact substantially on the '*consistency and commonality of CPD across all settings*' that Nutbrown wishes to ensure (Nutbrown 2012, 52). The suggestion is that online professional development is '*offered independently of.. setting, and regardless of the quality of the setting*' (p.53), but that may leave practitioners in poor quality settings frustrated and demotivated if they are not supported to develop strategies to make practical improvements. This may be compounded if the online CPD offer is seen as fragmented, with limited coherence between the modules offered. There may be a role here for a discussion board or the development of a moderated network of interactivity between practitioners linked to the online content that enables the co-creation of practical improvement strategies, which may also involve persuading and influencing those in authority to do things differently. This could support the development of a virtual) learning community that could also support local networks of CPD, and potentially the creation of new knowledge through the collective examination and solving of practice and setting problems (Engestrom 2001). In addition, as Nutbrown emphasises, there will be a need for a 'blended approach' (Nutbrown 2012, 53), which again suggests that practitioners will need to come together in local networks to maximise their collective development and continue to improve practice. The Teaching Centre and Teaching Schools approaches are suggested as worthy of further investigation (p.54), but there may be a risk that the government moves towards more prescriptive solutions in attempts to drive 'improvement'.

Workplace and learner recontextualisation

The tension between the influence of central agencies and bodies over professional formation and CPD (Nutbrown 2012, 53) and the importance of the setting and local networks of practice for effective realisation of CPD objectives, may challenge the processes of knowledge 'recontextualisation' (Evans et al.2010) needed for core knowledge to be used effectively to improve workplace practice. Setting owners and managers, practitioners and local CPD networks will have the responsibility of ensuring the recontextualisation in workplace settings of the knowledge introduced through initial formation and online CPD modules. Evans et al. (2010, 247) outline the importance of using '*the workplace as the 'test-bench' for curriculum knowledge'*, emphasising that this needs a '*stretching but supportive environment*' and learners (i.e. practitioners) who take responsibility for '*observing, inquiring and acting'*. Furthermore, the process of 'learner recontextualisation', where individuals combine and interrelate knowledge gained though a programme with their workplace learning can be seen as a vital part of the '*development of a vocational and/or professional identity*', involving '*understanding and articulating the reasons for the constitution of their chosen occupation'*(Evans et al. 2010, 247). Indeed the notion of practitioners forming '*chains of recontextualisation as they seek to understand and evolve practice*' (Evans et al. 2010, 246) may be a useful way of thinking through how early years practitioners can gain greater control over their continuing professional development and ongoing formation. This can be achieved by working together to make connections across workplaces and settings, between the vertical and horizontal aspects of knowledge, and with higher education institutions and independent providers, to support innovation and improvement within workplaces for the benefit of children, families and early years practice.

Concluding remarks

The productive system of early years professional development is characterised by the dominance of the policies of governments and aspects of the organisational professionalism that affects other 'public service' professions. In the case of early years practitioners, the move towards greater influence from the teaching profession and the eventual redundancy of Early Years Professional Status, as suggested in Nutbrown, would provide even greater

distance between the realities of early years practice and classical professional norms of autonomy, discretion and societal status. However, the recommendations outlined in respect of CPD and the development of a more stable and consistent career structure (Nutbrown 2012, 47-8, 52-4) may provide some opportunities. It can be argued that a commitment to improve CPD would be, in itself, an opportunity for practitioners to take greater control in the productive system of their own formation. Early years practitioners, working in collaboration with higher education institutions and independent training providers, can seek to strengthen the local, and virtual, networks through which Continuing Professional Development activities are designed and delivered. These can be used to challenge, and expose, any tensions that continue to arise in policy-driven and practitioner conceptions of the 'successful child' (Alexander 2010), thus ensuring that the form and content of CPD continue to meet the needs of practitioner development, and thereby support the well-being and development of the children they work with. There is also likely to be a role here for bodies representing early years practitioners at a local and national level. In tandem with these processes, practitioners can actively pursue the formation of 'chains of recontextualisation' (Evans et al. 2010) that will help them develop their professional identity and improve workplace practice. This will help practitioners to progressively gain greater influence in the articulation between structure and stages in the productive system, and thereby contribute to and influence the ongoing reform of their practice and profession. This influence could extend into the specifications that will be needed for QTS in the early years, including through engagement with the higher education institutions who have been involved in the growth of programmes for early years practitioners.

The actions of government and associated agencies are also vitally important for the productive system. In order to ensure that Continuing Professional Development reforms and ambitions are realised, the role of the setting in ensuring a challenging but supportive learning environment and system of work organisation needs to be more widely recognised and addressed. The diversity of early years settings may mean that it is difficult to transfer models directly from more homogenous contexts in a linear fashion, meaning that a range of approaches may be needed. Again, the initiative could come from networks of practitioners, setting standards and persuading owners and managers of the value of all dimensions of an 'expansive' learning environment (Fuller et al. 2007), but government also has a role in setting out these expectations.

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