

Professional and union organisations within ECEC

In the previous section, we mentioned the role of professional collaboration in relation to extended professionalism. It is our firm belief that extended professional awareness involves professional collaboration with a broad range of stakeholders, including parents, multi-disciplinary teams, inspectors, funding bodies, and government ministries. In addition to networking with other professionals, extended professionalism involves a wider contextual awareness of ECEC and, as discussed, campaigning and advocating for the sector. A number of organisations, including those listed in alphabetical order here, provide useful information for practitioners as well as opportunities for these qualities and activities to flourish.

Early Education (British Association for Early Childhood Education)

The leading independent national charity for early years practitioners and parents, campaigning for the right of all children to the highest quality education. Founded in 1923, it provides a national voice on matters that relate to effective early childhood education and care of young children from birth to eight. It supports the professional development of practitioners through publications, training, conferences, seminars and access to a national and regional branch network.

Daycare Trust

Established in 1986, the Daycare Trust is a national childcare charity that campaigns for quality, accessible, affordable childcare for all. It advises parents, carers, providers, employers, trade unions and policymakers on childcare issues. The Family and Childcare Trust was formed from the merger of the Daycare Trust and Family Parenting Institute in 2013.

National Day Nurseries Association

This charity is the voice of the UK nursery sector. It has a strong focus upon quality and sustainability and, has successfully influenced policy relating to business costs, qualifications, proposed changes to rations and better investment in early years. The NDNA provides a range of accredited training, holds local branch meetings and national conferences.

National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT)

A long-established TUC-affiliated union for teachers.

National Union of Teachers (NUT)

The largest TUC-affiliated union for teachers and related education professionals.

Pre-School Learning Alliance

The largest and most representative early years membership organisation in England. As a registered educational charity, the alliance supports member settings to deliver care and learning to over 800,000 families every year. It offers information and advice, produces specialist publications, offers acclaimed training schemes and campaigns to influence early years policy and practice.

Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years (PACEY)

Formed in 1977, PACEY is a charity dedicated to supporting everyone working in childcare and early years to provide high-quality care and early learning for children and families. It provides training, practical help and expert advice to practitioners and represent the views and experiences of practitioners, championing their vital role in helping prepare children for a bright future.

The Association of Professionals in Education and Children's Trusts (Aspect)

A TUC-affiliated professional organisation. Membership includes staff in maintained and non-maintained settings. The organisation has a specific section for Early Years Professionals.

UNISON

The largest union for those other than teachers working in education in the UK. UNISON is TUC affiliated.

See reflectiveteaching.co.uk for links to other useful organisations.

It is considered that pre-service preparation programmes for early years teachers can play an important role in enabling teachers to develop advocacy capacity. Liebovich and Adler (2009) therefore suggest, that pre-service programmes should include courses on advocacy to a knowledge base on advocacy for parents, families and children and to develop competency in inter-personal, cross-cultural communication.