THE EARLY YEARS
FORMAL EDUCATION TOO
SOON?

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This Presentation

• Frame my research question.
• Give some background context.
• Detail my methodology.
• Give an understanding of my analysis.
• Report my findings.
• Look at the present.
• Look forward.
Research question

‘What is the current discursive landscape surrounding Early Years Professionals in respect of performativity and New Managerialism’

Why?.....
Why this research?

- Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) delivered by University since 2006.
- Coalition Government elected May 2010 – changes planned…….
Background Context

• Professionalisation agenda and childcare markets developed under Labour.
• Change in Government – May 2010.
• New agenda developing – Sarah Teather review of qualifications - 2012.
• Minimal media representation of developing agenda.
• Move from idea of holistic professional (Early Years Professional) to Teachers (with QTS) leading Early Years practice.
Methodology

- Structured literature search.
- Qualitative – documents (based on current policy) used as a data source.
- Analysis of primary and secondary data sources.
- Discourse analysis on documents based on work of Foucault (2002).
- Graham’s (2011) framework on discourses - describe, recognise and classify.
- Consideration of discursive formations (Mills 2003).
Document key words

- **New Managerialism** - ‘parental choice’, ‘market and/or competition’ and ‘value for money’.
- **Performativity** - ‘performativity’, ‘technical skills’, ‘measureable outcomes’ and ‘school readiness’.
- **Dates** – May 2010 to December 2012.

- Policy documents selected due to rapid changes in Early Years – wanted to understand dominant discourses.
Data using search parameters

- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage: (DfE 2012).
- ‘The marketisation of early years education and childcare in England’ (Lloyd 2012).
Data Analysis

• Graham’s (2011) - describe, recognise and classify.
• Mind-maps of key themes of documents.
• Critical Analysis Summaries (Waller and Wray 2011).

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<tr>
<td>Introducing the text (50 – 100 words)</td>
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<tr>
<td>A) Why am I reading this? (reporting the context 100 – 200 words)</td>
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<td>B) What are the author(s) trying to do in writing this?</td>
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<td>C) What are the author(s) saying that’s relevant to what I want to find out? (evaluating the content 100 – 200 words)</td>
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<td>D) How convincing is what the authors are saying? (drawing my conclusions 100-150 words)</td>
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<td>E) In conclusion, what use can I make of this?</td>
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Findings

• **New Managerialism** – The expansion of the childcare market is viewed positively (Lloyd 2012, Nutbrown 2012, Ofsted 2012).
  - neo-liberal view of parent choice market expansion governed by Ofsted.
  - counter discourse market based on parent purchasing power (Lloyd 2012).

  - EYFS (DfE 2012) children measured as part of EYFSP on entering KS1.
  - Ofsted (2012) ratings based on pre-set criteria.
Findings - continued

  - Quality based on Ofsted ratings and QTS leading practice (Ofsted 2012).
  - Tension between private for profit settings and quality (Lloyd 2012).
  - Pedagogy more formal linked to school readiness (DfE 2012).
  - Holistic EYPs or QTS leading practice (Hadfield et al 2012, Nutbrown 2012).

  - Graduate leaders key to improved outcomes (Allen 2011, Ofsted 2012).
  - QTS vs. EYPs (Hadfield et al 2012, Nutbrown 2012).
  - NVQ3 statutory managers qualification (DfE 2012).
Currently.....

• Qualifications review – Early Years Teachers and Early Years Educators.
• Greater power to Ofsted.
• More schools encouraged to open up nurseries.
• Tighter definitions of school readiness and expectations of children at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE 2012).
Discursive formations still strong!


‘Ofsted chief calls for review of early years assessment’ http://www.nurseryworld.co.uk/article/1187290/ofsted-chief-calls-review-early-years-assessment (21/06/2013)

‘Play being 'pushed aside' in nurseries’ http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-23033496 (24/06/2013)
Future Research…. 

There has been further wider comment on policy changes.

Future Research to include:-
• Wider media representations;
• The voice of the academic writing on the subject;
• Practitioner voices.
Bibliography