

## **The Early Childhood Forum (ECF)**

brings together a unique cross-section of twenty three membership organisations focussed on the early years. We debate issues, celebrate differences and develop consensus.

Together, we champion all young children and their families, promote inclusion and challenge inequality, discrimination and prejudice.

Our discussions and publications reach a wide-ranging audience of professionals and policy-makers engaged in early childhood.

In 2014 ECF launched its Charter for Early Childhood:

[earlychildhoodforum.org/docs/ECF\\_Charter\\_2016.pdf](http://earlychildhoodforum.org/docs/ECF_Charter_2016.pdf)

The 12 point charter was reviewed in 2019 and remains the driving force for our work.

## **ECF - at the heart of Early Years from birth to 7 years**

**Inform**

**Advocate**

**Campaign**



**Early Childhood Forum**  
Working Together for Children

ECF is dedicating the new decade to championing our commitment to work towards universal high-quality integrated education, health and care whilst

strengthening the entitlement for young children to access play and daily outdoor experiences in all provision until age 7. Our reasons for this campaign:

88% of countries around the world start formal education at 6 or 7 and children do better and are happier. In only 12%, including Britain, the school starting age is 4 or 5, yet we have a strong tradition of high-quality provision for children up to the age of 7 supporting their holistic development.

Extending the EYFS to the age of 7 would benefit all children including summer born, boys SEND and children speaking several languages.

Research demonstrates the value of high-quality play-based provision for children up to the age of 6-7 as evident in countries such as Finland, Estonia and Switzerland. *(OECD, 2015)*

Giving children time to play and learn at their own pace supports their mental health and brain development and establishes strong foundations for academic learning. Testing young children causes stress and anxiety and impedes healthy learning and development.

Become a member of ECF and help us protect this unique stage of human development.

[earlychildhoodforum.org](http://earlychildhoodforum.org)