Research on early years to inform Ofsted's proposed new EIF

Members of TACTYC agree with the following statement from Ofsted, and offer further suggestions of research to support policy making in the early years, underpinned by understanding of early years pedagogy in relation to the prime and specific areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. These are followed by references related to Inclusion, EAL/Bilingualism, Assessment, School Readiness/Self-Regulation and Cultural Capital. Working with parents is another significant dimension.

 "Early years educators need a wide range of specific knowledge, including on children's physical and mental development, communication, and learning and teaching in specific subjects and areas of development. To teach early mathematics effectively, educators need to know how children develop mathematical understanding and how to assess this development. They need to know how children develop language and literacy, and how to teach early phonics (Education Endowment Foundation, 2018b). The types of knowledge early years teachers need are therefore similar too, but also distinct from those of teachers in the later years of primary and beyond. Like other teachers, they require subject knowledge and pedagogical knowledge (though the latter of course here refers to early years pedagogy), but there is a greater stress on knowledge of learners, learning and child development, due to the rapid development of children at this age, and on communication. Teachers need to know how children develop and learn and have a clear understanding of possible next steps in their development and learning. A study in the USA found that quality of the classroom environment was lower in classrooms when teachers lacked formal training in early childhood education (Pianta et al, 2002).

"Knowledge of context, in particular suitable learning environments, has also been put forward as particularly important to this phase of education (Education Endowment Foundation, 2018b). There is some evidence that teachers who are confident in their subject knowledge are better at recognising learning opportunities in children's play (Anning & Edwards, 1999)." (*Ofsted p.11 inspection framework: overview of research January 2019, No. 180045*)

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