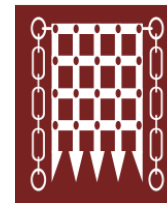


Policy Forum for Ireland & Policy Forum for Northern Ireland keynote seminar:

Next steps for young children's education on the island of Ireland

New date: Morning, Monday, 11th March 2024

Taking place online



Draft agenda subject to change

- 8.30 Registration
- 9.00 **Chair's opening remarks**
Kate Nicholl MLA, Spokesperson, Early Years and Childcare, Alliance Party; and Member, Northern Ireland Assembly Committee for Education
- 9.05 **Policy priorities for the young children's education sector in Northern Ireland**
Paul Brush, Director of Early Years, Children and Youth, Department of Education, NI
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.40 **Assessing the priorities for improving outcomes and attainment in early learning**
Dr Glenda Walsh, Head of Early Years Education and Assistant Director, Centre for Research in Educational Underachievement, Stranmillis University College
- 9.55 **Improving service provision - addressing barriers to access and affordability, improving outcomes, and options for developing outdoor learning and play**
Karen Clince, Chief Executive Officer, Tigers Childcare
Ruth Sedgewick, Head of NI Office, RCSLT
Aoife Hamilton, Consultant, Employers For Childcare
Dr Joan Whelan, Chairperson, Irish Forest School Association
- 10.20 Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.50 **Chair's closing remarks**
Kate Nicholl MLA, Spokesperson, Early Years and Childcare, Alliance Party; and Member, Northern Ireland Assembly Committee for Education
- 10.55 Break
- 11.05 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senator Mary Seery Kearney, Seanad Spokesperson, Children, Disability, Equality, Integration and Youth, Fine Gael
- 11.10 **Case study: Involving children in the process of curriculum review**
Dr Leah O'Toole, Associate Professor of Early Childhood Education, Maynooth University; and Principal Investigator, Aistear Consultation with Babies and Young Children, The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework (NCCA 2009)
Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.30 **Priorities for the young children's education workforce - opportunities for increasing workforce professionalisation, providing clear progression pathways, improving recruitment and retention, and addressing pay concerns**
Professor Geraldine Mooney Simmie, Professor of Education, University of Limerick
Pauline Walmsley, Chief Executive Officer, Early Years NI
Francis Loye, Director, Giggles Early Years
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.15 **An all-island approach - assessing benefits and how they could be achieved, tackling inequalities and educational underachievement, researching a strategic evidence base, and advocacy and implementation strategies**
Dr Emer Smyth, Research Professor, Social Research Division, Economic and Social Research Institute; and Adjunct Professor, Trinity College Dublin
Dr Siobhán Fitzpatrick, Regional Vice-Chair, Early Childhood Peace Consortium
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.55 **Chair's and Westminster Forum Projects closing remarks**
Senator Mary Seery Kearney, Seanad Spokesperson, Children, Disability, Equality, Integration and Youth, Fine Gael
Tiernan Phipps, Lead Researcher, Policy Forum for Ireland & Policy Forum for Northern Ireland