

# News release

29 January 2009

## Early Years Care Set to Rocket

Sunderland is now home to 30 additional Early Years Professionals as a result of the City Council's drive to encourage more people working in early years to increase their level of training.

In order to ensure that every child living in the city receives the best start in life Sunderland City Council, together with support from the University of Sunderland, is working to build a more advanced childcare workforce which is well-trained, better supported and extremely motivated.



The early years of a child's life are extremely important in its development so it is vital that there is high-quality professional care available that can help the child reach its full potential and also offer appropriate support to parents.

In order to reach the Government's targets surrounding the Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) there will be at least one Early Years Professional working in each Children's Centre in Sunderland by 2010 and at least one in every full daycare setting by 2015.

To celebrate the graduation of Sunderland's newest Early Years Professionals and to offer the opportunity for future candidates to learn more about the course a special recognition evening took place. Throughout the evening there were talks by the university's early years academic staff which covered the pathways to EYPS and its benefits. Successful graduates also received their Early Years Professional Status certificates during an awards ceremony.

Councillor Pat Smith, Cabinet Member for Children's Services within Sunderland City Council, said: "This is excellent news for the city as we continue to work towards meeting the Government's Early Years Professional Status targets. It is extremely important that Sunderland is able to offer a professional and fully-trained childcare workforce. By employing graduates who have completed the EYPS is not only a huge pull for nurseries but it is also a significant step in ensuring that children reach their full-potential."

Margaret Parsons, Principle Lecturer for EYPS at the University of Sunderland, said: “The Early Years Professional Status team at the University of Sunderland are pleased to be working in partnership with Sunderland Children's Services to help achieve the Government's targets. All four training pathways are available in the Faculty of Education and Society and the team are always happy to talk to practitioners about which is best for them.”

Sunderland Children's Services work to help EYPS candidates through their training by providing support and funding to bring them up to entry level. After completing their training Early Year Professionals will be skilled practitioners with an up to date knowledge and understanding of early years practice. They will be qualified to work with children in early years settings or wider children's services and will take responsibility for leading and managing play, care and learning sessions.

Anyone interested in completing the Early Years Professional Status should contact the EYPS administrator at the University on 0191 515 2479 for information and advice.