



Discussants

Dr Liz Chesworth, University of Sheffield and Professor Rachel Lofthouse, Leeds Beckett University

Rachel Lofthouse is Professor of Teacher Education in the Carnegie School of Education, Leeds Beckett University. She is Director of 'CollectivEd: The Centre for Mentoring, Coaching and Professional Learning'. She was formerly a secondary teacher and middle leader in the North East of England and a teacher educator and researcher at Newcastle University. Rachel's research relates to creating opportunities for teachers to experience success through professional learning, exploring how teachers learn and how they can be supported to put that learning into practice in the knowledge that their contribution makes a difference to children and young people, colleagues and communities.

Dr Liz Chesworth is a lecturer at the University of Sheffield where she directs the full-time MA in Early Childhood Education. Liz has worked in the field of early childhood education for 25 years, during which she has been involved in teaching and research in nurseries, family centres, primary schools and universities. She was the lead teacher in one of England's first children's centres, and contributed to the development of integrated early learning, care and family support services for young children and their parents throughout the city of Leeds. Liz's current research focuses upon young children's play cultures, curriculum-making and creative pedagogies. She is currently the Principal Investigator for a research project, funded by the Froebel Trust, which is exploring how curriculum in early childhood can draw upon children's everyday lives at home, including their engagement in digital worlds, as rich sources of knowledge and skills. The research findings highlight the importance of – and also the challenges for - developing an inclusive curriculum that connects young children's experiences at home and at (pre)school. Liz has recently been a research fellow in an international research project, Makerspaces in the Early Years: Enhancing Digital Literacy and Creativity (MakeEY) and was the Principal Investigator for the Makey In Libraries project (April - December, 2018).