

Inspiring early childhood

Annual Review 2020



The Froebel Trust funds
practice development and
research into education
and learning in the early
years of childhood from
birth to eight years.

Our charity’s work is based on the principles of Friedrich Froebel (1782 – 1852), the inventor of kindergartens and a pioneer of early childhood education and care. Froebel’s work and writing changed the way we think about and value early childhood.

Froebel’s ideas were considered radical in the 1800s but they have had a significant influence on early years educational practice around the world, including in the UK.

We believe that Froebel’s focus on the importance of play, learning through nature, practical hands-on learning and nurturing a child’s connection to their community is more relevant now than ever.

In this review...

Moving forward in uncertain times	2
The story of the Froebel Trust	4
Froebel’s principles	6
Play	8
Learning through nature	12
Families and communities	16
Our grants and funding programmes	23
Our training courses and resources	28
How we work	32

For much of 2020 many of us have led a more solitary and disconnected existence. The Covid-19 pandemic has created gulfs within families, friendship groups and communities.

Moving forward in uncertain times

Babies and young children have been no less exposed to this upheaval than other people. The impact of the health emergency on the world's economy is yet to be realised but the immediate effects on early childhood services are already very worrying.

In England one third of all private or voluntary early years provision is on the brink of collapse within a sector that was already struggling financially as a result of years of under-funding. As we emerge with nervousness and uncertainty from various 'lockdown' situations, debates continue about the most appropriate ways to work with young children and their families in the 'new normal'. How are educators and teachers best supported and supervised in their modified working environments? How do we ensure that professional development and research into early childhood continues in spite of pressured schedules and dwindling funding?

In true Froebelian tradition, we have begun to observe, listen to and document people's experiences and memories of lockdowns and returns to educational settings – especially the experiences of our youngest citizens whose views are often overlooked. This new project demonstrates more than ever how Froebelian principles are relevant in the 21st Century:

- understanding that deep learning relies on strong relationships
- championing children's play because it helps them to see how they connect with nature and the world around them and allows them to express their feelings and develop their ideas
- acknowledging that each child brings unique riches to their learning efforts and encounters.

In 2019-20, the Froebel Trust has continued to support research and practice development that promotes high quality teaching and learning in the early years based on Froebel's principles. This annual review provides examples of the projects, courses, events and resources we have supported and delivered.

Our relationships have never been more important and we remain deeply indebted to our trustees, associates and volunteers whose expertise and commitment have consistently supported, inspired and guided us throughout this challenging period. Their devotion empowers us to meet our charity's objectives and has enabled our partners to fulfil their goals, improving and enriching the educational experiences of educators, young children and their families.

Sacha Powell
Chief Executive Officer
Froebel Trust



“

In true Froebelian tradition, we have begun to observe, listen to and document people's experiences and memories of lockdowns and returns to educational settings.

”

Sacha Powell

The story of the Froebel Trust

2020 marks 180 years since Friedrich Froebel invented the term 'kindergarten'. His legacy continues to inspire a new generation of early childhood educators.



▲ Miss Hope Wallace, Challoner Street School, London, 1903 – 1904

2020

The Froebel Trust is the only grant making charity in England which specialises in funding early childhood research, promoting early education and developing Froebelian practice.



2011

The Froebel Trust is founded as a registered charity in England, emerging from The Incorporated Froebel Educational Institute, the beginnings of which had been established back in 1892. In 2013 The National Froebel Foundation closes and becomes part of the new Froebel Trust.

1977

The Froebel Archive for Childhood Studies (originally called the Early Childhood Collection) is established and offers a unique historical record of the Froebel movement in the UK. The Froebel Archive is now part of the Archives and Special Collections held in the University of Roehampton library.

1975

Froebel College federates with three other local colleges to become Roehampton Institute of Higher Education, and since 2004 has been an integral part of the University of Roehampton, which now holds the Froebel campus on a long lease from the Froebel Trust. The University of Roehampton continues to offer the Froebel Certificate in Early Childhood course and a postgraduate early childhood studies programme.



◀ Boating on the lake, Froebel Educational Institute 1936 – 1939

1940

Child Life, the Froebel Society journal which began in 1891, is re-named the **National Froebel Foundation Bulletin**. This later became known as the **Froebel Journal** and the final issue was published in 1974.

1938

The Froebel Society and National Froebel Union join together to form The National Froebel Foundation.



▲ Queen Mary's visit to The Froebel Education Institute 1923



▲ Michaelis Free Kindergarten, Notting Hill, late 1890s

1861

Pedagogics of the Kindergarten: Ideas Concerning the Play and Playthings of the Child is published in Germany. The book is a collection of fifteen essays by Froebel on the education of young children.

1837

Froebel opened the 'Institute for the fostering of little children' in Thuringia, Germany which he renamed Kindergarten in 1840. Kindergarten was a new word created by Froebel to express his vision for early childhood education.

1892

The Froebel Educational Institute, an English teacher training college, opens in Colet Gardens, West Kensington, London. It is later known as the Froebel College and moves to Roehampton, London in 1922.



▲ The Froebel Society teaching certificate 1876 – 1898

1887

The National Froebel Union is created to set qualifications and standards for a new Froebel Teacher's Certificate.

1874

The Froebel Society for the Promotion of the Kindergarten System is founded in England.

1852

Froebel dies and the word kindergarten is included in the Oxford English Dictionary for the first time.

1851

The first kindergarten is opened by Bertha and Johannes Ronge in London and their influential book **A Practical Guide to the English Kinder Garten (Children's Garden)** is published in 1854. Most of the first kindergartens were opened in London. Manchester was also an important centre with the first kindergarten opening in the city in 1857.

1826

Froebel's book **The Education of Man** is published. He argues that "the spontaneous play of the child discloses the future inner life of the man" and that "play at this stage is not trivial; it is highly serious and of deep significance".

How to access The Froebel Archive

Based in the University of Roehampton's library, the archive houses a collection of rare books, photographs and artefacts linked to Friedrich Froebel's educational legacy and early childhood education. The archive welcomes visitors from around the world.

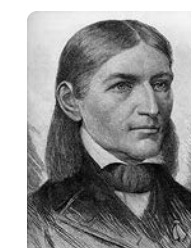
w: roehampton.ac.uk/colleges/froebel-college/froebel-archive

e: archives@roehampton.ac.uk

t: 020 8392 3323

1782

Friedrich Wilhelm August Froebel is born in Thuringia, now a state in central Germany.



All images reproduced with permission from The Froebel Archive for Childhood Studies

Froebel's Principles



Active learning

We value active learning, with an emphasis on giving young children first hand and meaningful experiences.

We believe that outdoor education is just as important as learning indoors. We support learning through nature.



Play

Play is of central importance in developing and learning.

Froebel wrote about how play gives a child "joy, freedom, contentment, inner and outer rest, peace with the world."

Relationships matter

We value, support and respect the relationship of every child with parents, carers, family and their wider community. Relationships are of central importance in a child's life.



Autonomous learners

We believe that children learn best when they are enabled to make decisions and choices, to make mistakes, to experiment and are respected and valued for their efforts. Children need to feel appreciated and learn to value their own achievements.



Skilled educators

We value highly educated and trained early childhood educators who engage in principled and reflective practice.

Froebelian educators facilitate and guide, rather than instruct. They observe children carefully, notice and respond to children's interests, see each child as an individual and understand the importance of what Froebel described as "beginning where the learner is".



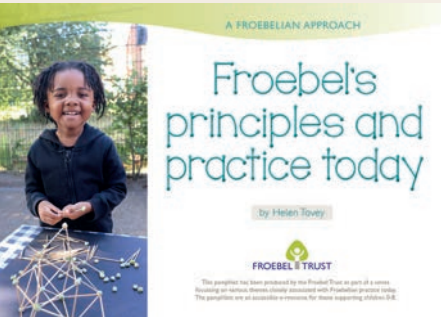
A broad curriculum

We value a broad curriculum which educates the whole child and allows them to become imaginative problem solvers who are deeply engaged in their learning.

Learning can not be compartmentalised into subjects. Young children learn in an interconnected way bringing humanities, arts and science together. Froebelians try to give children a sense of the unity that is in all things.

Find out more

To find out more have a look at our Froebel Trust pamphlet **Froebel's principles and practice today** written by Helen Tovey and published in April 2020. Available for free on our website.



Play

Learning and experimenting through play is the heart of the best Froebelian practice. Froebel wrote about ‘Occupations’ – educational activities which enable children to be creative, to communicate, develop physical and problem-solving skills and develop an understanding of the world.

Early education should begin with where the learner is, rather than where the adult thinks a child ought to be.



Connect – A nursery community approach to play

Hope Cottage is the oldest maintained nursery school in Edinburgh. The nursery serves an inner city area with a diverse community.

In 2019 the Froebel Trust awarded the nursery a £3,210 Froebel Trust Practitioner Support Grant to launch a new, weekly family group at the nursery.

The group will provide time for parent and carer learning, giving them plenty of open ended play experiences with their children both indoors and out in nature. The group will also introduce parents and carers to interactive songs inspired by Froebel’s book “Mother Songs”.

The Froebel Trust was delighted to support the V&A Museum of Childhood when it invited experts representing Froebel, Montessori and Steiner educational approaches to work with their education team. Professor Tina Bruce CBE, member of the Executive Committee of the International Froebel Society and an associate of the Froebel Trust spoke about Froebel’s approach to early childhood and play at a collaborative workshop during the V&A’s ‘Future Museums: Play and Design’ conference held in November 2019. You can watch this workshop on our website.



“The game at this age is not just playing, it is the highest level of child development; it is very serious and has deep meaning. Cultivate and nourish it. Protect and look after it.”

Froebel





◀ The Bed, A Little Angel Theatre production.
Photo: Ellie Kurtz

Let's Play – Creative play for adults with babies and toddlers

Little Angel Theatre is a puppet theatre for children in London which works with schools and communities to inspire creativity using puppetry.

In 2019 the Froebel Trust awarded the theatre with a £7,508 Innovation Grant to set up 'Let's Play', a project supporting parents and carers to use objects and the imagination to play creatively with babies and children aged between 6 months and 3 years.

The theatre set up a creative stay and play session, connected to their show based on an adaptation of Sylvia Plath's The Bed Book. The project sets out to explore creative inventiveness and to give parents and carers the confidence to play creatively with the children they look after.

The final project report will be published in 2021.

// **Childhood is a time for, well, childhood! It's not a preparation for school or adulthood. Children need to go at their own pace, with time to explore, manipulate, discover, practise newly acquired skills and repeat what they are doing. This helps their growth and learning, especially if adults look for what a child can do – instead of what they can't do – and celebrate how children do things as well as what they achieve. This is the core of Froebel theory and practice.**

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The Power of Play, Dr Stella Louis and Dr Sacha Powell, March 2020. The full article is available on the Froebel Trust website.

//

Getting it right in the EYFS is about children's right to being and belonging as well as becoming. Children in any form of early years provision should be nurtured, enabled to play, explore and discover themselves and the world around them.

//

Getting it Right in the Early Years
– Pascal, Bertram and Rouse, 2019



▲ The Wellcome Collection's Play Well exhibition

2019/2020 policy and curriculum developments in England

In 2019, a response to the Department for Education's consultation on changes to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum for England was submitted by the Froebel Trust. We were anxious that any change to government policy respected and valued early years educators, ensuring that they are well qualified and supported with sufficient funding for initial education and opportunities for ongoing development. We wanted to ensure that teaching and learning policies recognise early education as a complex process, acknowledging every child's interests, capabilities and heritage. A process which cannot be simplified or recorded with tick-box outcome measures.

Along with many other early childhood organisations, we were disappointed to see that many of the concerns we had raised had not resulted in modifications to the revised EYFS or Early Learning Goals.

We continue to work with a coalition of national Early Years membership organisations to inform and support policy and curriculum developments, including non-statutory guidance. We were pleased to join the coalition's steering group and provide funding for a timely review of evidence entitled, 'Getting it Right in the Early Years' (Pascal, Bertram and Rouse, 2019) and to take part in discussions organised by the Cabinet Office about effective early intervention strategies.

The Wellcome Collection's Play Well exhibition

The Wellcome Collection's Play Well exhibition in London (October 2019 – March 2020) examined the shifting attitudes to the educational value of play over the past two centuries.

The exhibition included a large section devoted to Froebel with examples of the first sets of wooden blocks, known as 'Gifts', which were developed by Froebel specifically for young children to explore, create and play with. These Gifts are still used as part of Froebelian practice today. The display also featured pricker artwork that was created by Froebel himself and loaned to the Wellcome Collection by the Froebel Trust Archive.

Outdoor play and learning through nature extends children’s learning and supports their development.

Learning through nature

The Froebel Trust funds and supports a wide range of outdoor projects which encourage and develop young children’s connection with their local, natural environment. The relationship between children and nature is at the heart of Froebel’s philosophy and practice.

//
To learn a thing in life and through doing is much more developing, cultivating and strengthening than to learn it merely through the verbal communication of ideas.



Froebel



The Froebel Trust awarded Scotswood Natural Community Garden in Newcastle-upon-Tyne with an Innovation Grant of £28,809 to run a two year project supporting young children in their local area. The Scotswood Garden team used funding to establish the Breeze Forest School with Froebelian principles at its core.

The project centres on child led exploration of nature and play; outdoor activities designed to develop creativity and support learning and development. Forest school sessions include fire lighting, den making, tree climbing, using tools for whittling and making wooden objects, arts and crafts and nature-based games.

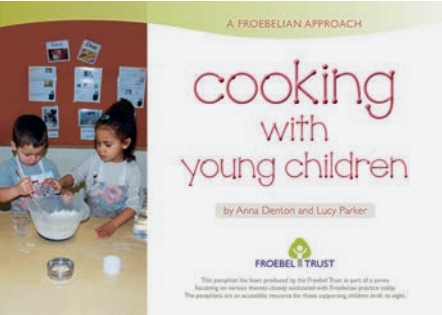
Newcastle University will publish an evaluation of the project.



A Family Garden

In a suburb of Paisley in Scotland, Ferguslie Early Learning and Childcare Centre were awarded a Froebel Trust Practitioner Support Grant of £5,000 in 2019 to develop a family garden involving the local community. They set out to give children at their centre the opportunity to learn all aspects of horticulture from sowing, caring and harvesting produce. The children have learnt to cook the produce they had grown, create their own recipe cards and take part in family cooking groups.

To find out more about ways you can develop cookery in an education setting have a look at one of our recent Froebel Trust pamphlets ‘Cooking with young children’. Available for free on our website.



Two green slanted bars followed by the text: **Different ways of talking about babies outdoors need to be developed, ways which recognise the potential of the outdoors in terms of sensory stimulation, sleeping and movement. Knowledgeable adults (both practitioners and parents) are needed to support these experiences and to develop and extend the environment being offered.**



Nicola Kemp and Jo Josephidou



Latest research

Supported with a Froebel Trust PhD student bursary, Tansy Watts will complete her research report, **An Exploration of the Influence of Young Children on Adults within Natural Environments** later this year. Her full report will be available on our website.

Luke Addison, a PhD student at the University of Edinburgh, has also been awarded a Froebel Trust bursary to examine what sustainability can look like in the early years and explore young children’s experiences of nature and the environment. His final research report, **Bringing Children’s Voices to the fore of Education for Sustainability in the Early Years**, will be published in Spring 2022.

Where are the babies?

A major research project funded by the Froebel Trust has focused on babies’ access to the outdoors while they are being cared for in nurseries or early education and care settings. The research is being led by Nicola Kemp at Canterbury Christ Church University and Jo Josephidou at the Open University and recognises that despite increasing public concern about young children’s connection and relationship with the natural world, there is a lack of research into babies’ access to the outdoors.

The research will audit environments and explore practices in Kent, an area which includes some of the highest levels of socio-economic deprivation in the South East of England.

A first interim project report was published in July 2019, **A life “in and with nature?” An exploration of outdoor provision in baby rooms**. This was followed up in February 2020 with a second report, **Where are the babies? Engaging Under 2s with the Outdoors**. These are both available on our website.

A final research report titled **Where are the babies? Outdoor Provision for Under 2s** will be published in 2022. It will share good practice in supporting babies’ and toddlers’ engagement with the outdoor environment.

The experiences we have as young children shape the rest of our lives.

Families and communities

// Parents should not fear because they do not know how to teach their children – let them imitate the child’s example... become children with the child, learners with the learner.

// Froebel

Froebel recognised that emotionally secure, close relationships with parents, carers, children, teachers and others in their community were crucial to a young child’s learning.

The 2019 Froebel Trust annual lecture was titled **No Matter the question, the answer is relationships**. Our guest speaker John Carnochan, former Detective Chief Superintendent and founder of the Violence Reduction Unit in Strathclyde, shared his experiences of policing in Scotland, the role of relationships in modern society and his gradual realisation that it was the experiences we have from birth and in our early years which have the most profound impact on our ability to lead successful, fulfilling and happy adult lives. His lecture is available to watch on our website.

The Froebel Trust’s aim is to evidence how a Froebelian approach is adaptable and relevant in all early years settings in different cultural and socio-political contexts. We do this by funding, sharing and learning from the best Froebelian research and practice from around the world.

In October 2019 we published Lynn McNair’s Froebel Trust funded research **Telling Life Stories: Developing a Froebelian Approach to Documenting Children’s Experiences in the Early Years**. The research was based around practice, the local community and families and experience at a Froebelian nursery in Edinburgh (Cowgate Under 5’s Centre).

You can download a copy of the final report on our website.



What it means to say goodbye

The Froebel Trust awarded Veronica Read, University of Roehampton, a student bursary to research the experiences of young children and their parents/carers at nursery ‘drop off’ – the daily transition between the family home and childcare settings.

The experience of saying goodbye can be felt in the early weeks by some children and their carers as intense, acute, short lived episodes of daily distress. This study is following a group of nine children who are two years old, their parents, and key staff during their first month at three nursery schools. The research will focus on the lived experiences of young children and adults shaped by the networks of relationships which bind them together through the farewell process.

The final research report will be published in 2021.

Mini Muddy Fingers – Community gardening project

NECA Community Garden is an oasis in the middle of a housing estate in South Tyneside. With a Froebel Trust Innovation Grant of £10,370 awarded in 2019 this small charity launched a new ‘stay and play’ outdoor group for local parents/carers and their babies and young children up to the age of 5.

Project leaders wanted the group to explore how play and connection with nature can support a child’s growing relationships with others. Mini Muddy Fingers encourages parents/carers and their children to learn together through outdoor play and adventure.

A summary report about the project will be published in 2021.

Kate Razzall, a Froebel Trust Travelling Tutor, mentored the volunteers involved with developing the NECA Community Garden outdoor play group. You can find an article on our website written by Kate all about her work with the community group and their first experiences of Froebelian practice.



“
I feel enthused and motivated about the simple changes I can make to improve my practice and the learning environment.
”

Froebel Trust Short Course participant

Froebel Trust Short Courses

Froebel Trust Short Courses offer a practical and relevant introduction to Froebelian ideas and early years practice. The courses are made up of five elements:

- Introduction to the principles and practices of the Froebelian approach to Early Childhood Education
- The Gifts (and modern wooden blocks) and the Occupations
- The importance of engaging with nature and outdoor learning
- Play and the symbolic life of the child (representation and the expressive arts)
- Lullabies and family songs, finger plays, action songs, movement games – firm foundations for later literacy.

Our courses are taught by experienced trainers, known as The Travelling Tutors, who are endorsed and supported by The Froebel Trust. The team offer a range of specialisms – including nature and outdoor learning, observing and understanding children’s play, early years music – all from a Froebelian perspective. The team is led by Dr Stella Louis.

In June 2020, a Froebel Trust ‘Let’s talk about race’ online training session was attended by the travelling tutors and the Chair of the Froebel Trust Education Committee. This important webinar explored a number of issues relating to race in society. It examined and challenged educators’ pedagogical practice and values reflected in practice, through having conversations about stereotypes, unconscious bias and myths about people, culture and communities.

In response to the Black Lives Matter movement, we are reviewing the content of all Short Course Elements and Dr Stella Louis is developing a new Element: ‘Equality, Inclusion and Diversity from a Froebelian moral lens’.

Froebel was concerned with the role educators played in supporting individuality and social responsibility. He believed this was deeply important as it had a bearing upon the development of children’s earliest character.

Our new training course is broadly split into two parts. The first part covers the basis about discussing race. The aim here is to help educators feel comfortable and confident in doing so. The second half explores how we can be an ally and the practical steps that we can take. The course will focus on understanding and respecting children’s cultural differences, individuality and well-being; drawing on key Froebelian principles of self-discipline, self, others and community.

If you are interested in taking part in a Froebel Trust short course, please visit our website for more details.

“
I will observe more specifically what my key children can do, not what they can’t do, and support them to be where they need to be.
”

Froebel Trust Short Course participant

“
The training will help me support parents to enhance their children’s learning.
”

Froebel Trust Short Course participant

The play-café project: What would Froebelian play cafés look like?

This international project (Scotland and Greece) led by Dr Kristina Konstantoni is investigating the opportunities children have to play in community and business play spaces.

The project will explore the potential of Froebelian principles for new environments – such as play cafés – which could provide opportunities for high quality learning and education in informal settings. The project leaders will work with children, families and educators to co-design and explore what Froebelian play cafés could look like and how they could support children’s expressive and creative play.

This project aims to increase understanding of children’s experiences of new and emerging play spaces. Commissioned in 2019, the final project findings will be published in 2022.

▼ Photo: Kurt Cleary



Latest research

Childhood and play
'in-between': Young Iraqi
and Syrian child refugees'
play following armed conflict
and forced displacement
to the northern suburbs of
Beirut, Lebanon

Sandra El Gemayel was awarded a bursary in 2015 to complete her PhD involving a ground-breaking piece of research looking at the effect of war and displacement on the play of young Iraqi and Syrian child refugees living in Lebanon.

Sandra's research focuses on the experiences of four families with young children living in Lebanon and examines how their experiences of war and displacement affect children's ways of playing. The study encapsulates the Froebelian principle of children's right to play and the importance of play in early education.

Sandra's final research report with recommendations about how play opportunities for refugee children and young victims of war can be improved is published on our website.



▲ Drawing by Kefa, 5 year old Iraqi boy. 'This is me, my brother and father on a boat, and this is my mother in the kitchen, cooking.'

▼ Photo: Sandra El Gemayel



Froebelian Play and
Aboriginal Knowledges

A research project exploring Froebelian principles in Indigenous early years settings in Australia is being led by Libby Lee-Hammond, Libby Jackson-Barrett and Sandra Hesterman at Murdoch University, Australia.

The project will provide evidence of ways that pedagogical practice that follows Froebelian principles can be developed and supported in Indigenous early years settings.

The research team are investigating intergenerational pedagogical approaches that have the potential to transform early years' education in Indigenous contexts.

As part of the project the research team are developing six modules for teacher and pre-service teacher professional development. The modules interpret Froebel's work in the Australian context and are based on the training conducted by Dr Stella Louis, Froebel Trust Travelling Tutor, in 2019.

The first of these modules will feature three video presentations on Froebelian Principles of Education, Indigenous Perspectives on Education and Playing in Nature and Country. The module includes embedded learning tasks, an online learning workbook, professional readings and a discussion board known as a "Yarning Circle" to share ideas and engage teachers in professional discussions.



▲ Dr Stella Louis, Froebel Trust Travelling Tutor, providing training at Murdoch University in 2019 as part of the Froebelian Play and Aboriginal Knowledges project. Photo: Libby Lee-Hammond



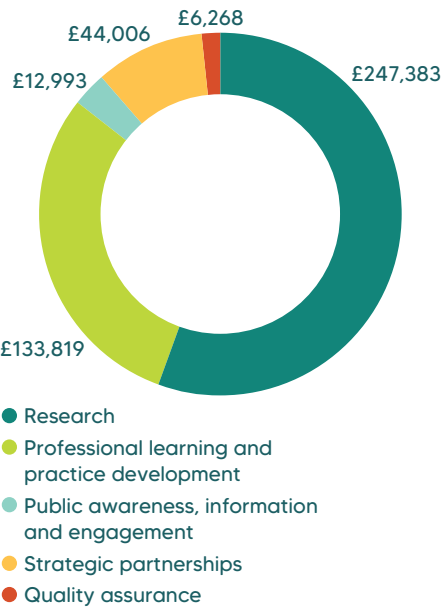
Early childhood research and access to high quality early years education is vital for the wellbeing of future generations.

Our grants and funding programmes



Our funding programmes and grants schemes support Froebelian education, early childhood research and high quality practice in early education in the UK and around the world. We believe that the latest research evidence and information should be free and easy for all to access. To help us ensure that the projects we fund are both relevant and useful we commissioned a study in 2019 from University College London about impactful research. The final report found that collaboration is a key ingredient to making research relevant and useful to early years educators and researchers. This report is available on our website.

The Froebel Trust awarded a quarter of a million pounds for research in 2019 - 2020. We are the only grant maker in England whose funding for research is devoted exclusively to early childhood education and care.



Open Call Research Grants

Last year the Froebel Trust received 41 applications from researchers in 19 different countries. Research grants awarded ranged from £5,000 to £49,000. Research funded included:

- **Slow knowledge and the unhurried child: time for slow pedagogies in Early Childhood Education** – Researcher: Alison Clark, University of South-Eastern Norway
- **Froebelian Principles in the 21st Century: Play environments and play opportunities for young children experiencing stress** – Researcher: Mathias Urban, Dublin City University Early Childhood Research Centre with the Froebel Department at Maynooth University
- **Froebel meets Ofsted: what makes an ‘outstanding’ nursery?** – Researcher: Susana Castro-Kemp, University of Roehampton
- **Froebelian Endeavours, New Education and the ‘Researched’ Child from the 1900s to the 1960s** – Researcher: Larry Prochner, University of Alberta with Kristen Nawrotzki and Helen May

“ Sometimes there is a gulf between those engaged in infant and toddler research and scholarship and those involved in the education and care of babies and toddlers. We’ve got to work a lot harder as researchers to make sure that our work is accessible and translatable, useable and useful – and also is close to practice, addressing the issues that those working with young children are dealing with and interested in... ”

Sacha Powell, Chief Executive, Froebel Trust, speaking during the Manchester Metropolitan University Birth to Three Matters Seminar, February 2020

PhD Bursaries

The Froebel Trust supports the next generation of Froebelian researchers with bursaries available for those interested in advanced study in Froebelian early childhood education and care. The Froebel Trust is currently supporting nine PhD students with bursaries to complete doctorates in early childhood at University of Cambridge, University of Roehampton, Institute of Education (University College London), Canterbury Christ Church University and University of Edinburgh.

The Froebel Trust invested over £130,000 in 2019 – 20 supporting educators through project grants, events and activities designed to share the Froebelian practice with those who work with young children.

Practitioner Support Grants

We offer grants to qualified Froebelian educators to support them in their ongoing work, to give them the opportunity to develop their practice and to help them share their expertise with others. In 2019 – 2020 we awarded four Practitioner Support Grants ranging from £3,210 to £5,000.

Innovation Grants

This funding programme offered charities and organisations which work with young children and their families the opportunity to gain a first understanding of Froebelian principles. Our innovation grants helped these groups develop the skills to nurture free play and creativity in their projects with young children.



Wester Coates Nursery School

Wester Coates Nursery School is an inner city kindergarten in Edinburgh. The nursery applied for a Froebel Trust Practitioner Support Grant and were awarded £4,861 to develop the use of woodwork as a Froebelian Occupation in their nursery.

“ As an extension to our Froebelian approach the introduction of woodwork has been amazing! It was the funding from the Froebel Trust that set us on our woodwork way – allowing staff to take specific and quality training, the purchase of a workbench, appropriate tools and an initial stock of balsa wood... We see ourselves still near the beginning of a journey – one which we consider will enable problem-solving skills, mathematical experiences, independence and creativity to soar. ”

Alison J Hawkins, Wester Coates Nursery

Scholarships and Bursaries

In 2019 we awarded a total of £52,000 to subsidise the studies of undergraduate and postgraduate students taking a Froebelian certificate or MA course at the University of Roehampton, or the MSc in Early Childhood Practice and Froebel at the University of Edinburgh.

Find out how to apply for a grant or Froebel Trust funding at www.froebel.org.uk

Strategic Partner Grants

We provide grants to a range of organisations and universities which support the next generation of Froebelian researchers and early years teachers. Our strategic partners are experts in Froebelian education and provide subsidised Froebelian courses and educator training. Our strategic partners share our aim to bring academic research and real world practice closer together:



//
I feel Froebel’s principles are infused in my personal pedagogy and in the way I work and want to work with children. Thank you for the fantastic opportunity.

//
**University of Edinburgh
MSc student**

Welcome to a new Froebel Trust Strategic Partner: University of the Western Cape, South Africa

The Froebel Trust Strategic Partner Grant will support Professor Carole Bloch and her team to develop a Froebelian-inspired early childhood setting on their university campus. The centre will mentor and train early childhood teachers and faculty members and develop a collaborative action research project exploring holistic early childhood literacy.

The team aim to share their new understanding of Froebelian practice and principles with other organisations, universities, teachers and students in South Africa and beyond.



► Photo: T&I Bruce



Every young child needs inspirational, well trained teachers and educators.

Our training courses and resources

// I have gained a greater understanding of Froebel’s philosophy and pedagogy. It has strengthened my principles in sustaining a child-centred and holistic approach to learning and development through play in a relaxed environment.

//
Froebel Trust Short Course participant

Over 350 educators attended a Froebel Trust funded short course in England in 2019 - 2020.

Our aim is to share expertise, create useful and relevant resources and inspire those who work with and support young children. We share our webinars, publications and resources widely and without charge.

The Froebel Trust also offers a unique, highly respected series of short courses. These are delivered by our network of endorsed Froebelian Travelling Tutors (led by Dr Stella Louis) in nursery schools and early years settings all over the UK.

There are five elements to the short course series with a sixth in development and we offer means tested subsidies for those working with children and families in the UK who are interested in learning more about Froebelian practice and principles.

Froebel Trust pamphlets

We also publish a popular series of Froebel Trust pamphlets for teachers and early childhood educators. Each pamphlet is packed with practical information, guidance, activities and ideas for use in all early years settings. New titles are added to the series throughout the year and are available to download for free from our website.

Each year we host a broad range of webinars and events and publish guides and research designed to support early childhood professionals in all aspects of their work with children and families.



How to use digital documentation to capture the magic and wonder of young children’s learning

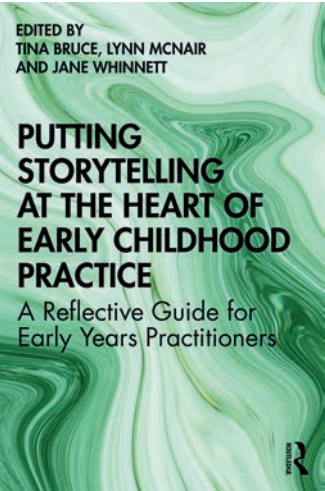
In 2019 we published a practical guide for educators on digital documentation. Created by Professor Rosie Flewitt (MMU) and Dr Kate Cowan (UCL), the guide encourages educators on digital documentation. Created by Professor Rosie Flewitt and Dr Kate Cowan from the Helen Hamlyn Centre for Pedagogy, Institute of Education UCL, the guide encourages educators and early years settings to consider using digital documentation systems in ways that celebrate young children’s play, excitement and inventiveness. It looks at how Froebelian principles of the ‘uniqueness of every child’s capacity and potential’ and the ‘holistic nature of development’ can be placed at the heart of current early years assessment practices.

You can download a free copy of the guide on our website.

The Listening-2 project: an innovative method of listening with 2-year olds

During a webinar in June 2020 Christina Macrae and Maggie McLure from Manchester Metropolitan University discussed their Froebel Trust funded research, exploring Froebel’s idea of ‘unfoldment’ in two-year olds using slow motion video. They shared how they worked with young children, their families and their teachers and explored the findings of their compelling research. This free webinar is available on our website and the final research report will be published in 2021.

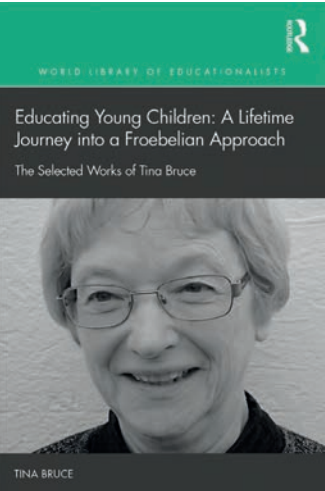
The Froebel Trust awarded a grant in 2019/20 to Dr Susana Castro Kemp, University of Roehampton, to deliver a series of workshops based on her research on Froebelian approaches to Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). More details of the project and information for educators and professionals can be found at www.educationhealthandcare.com



Books

A new book published by Routledge this year, **Putting Storytelling at the Heart of Early Childhood Practice** (Edited by Tina Bruce, Lynn McNair, Jane Whinnett), is a practical guide for early childhood educators. Based on Froebelian practice it looks at how to encourage literacy, communication and wellbeing in a supportive and creative early years environment.

The book was created by the Edinburgh Froebel Network, recipients of a Froebel Trust Strategic Partner Grant.



Webinars

The Froebel Trust hosted a special webinar for the Froebel Network in April 2020 to celebrate Tina Bruce’s book, **Educating Young Children: A Lifetime Journey into a Froebelian Approach**. The book brings together her hugely influential writings from her accomplished 40-year international career in education centred on the Froebelian tradition. Sections of the book address key Froebelian themes such as literacy, play, inclusion and creativity.

It is an inspiring read for anyone interested in the development and current state of early years education in the UK and internationally.

You can watch the webinar on our website.

Looking ahead

What’s happening at the Froebel Trust in 2021 and beyond?

The launch of an International Froebelian Leaders Network.

A new series of research highlights on key issues surrounding early childhood and early education.

We’ll be supporting the International Froebel Society’s Biennial Conference in 2021 which will be hosted by the Edinburgh Froebel Network.

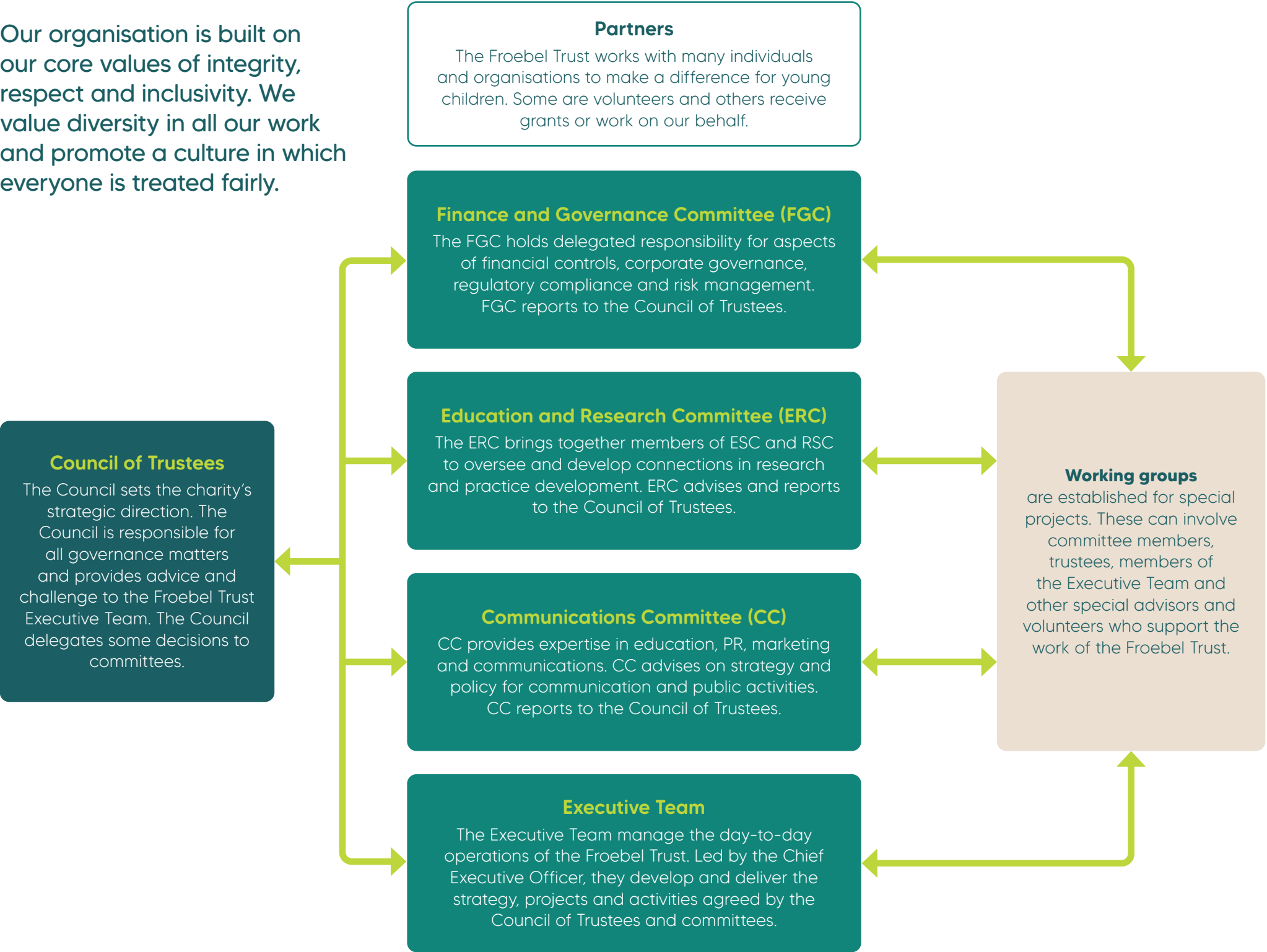
More free resources for parents and carers with young children.

A new series of webinars, training courses and events for anyone interested in learning more about Froebelian practice, early childhood research and education.

The next Froebel Trust Research and Practice Conference will be held online in March 2021.

How we work

Our organisation is built on our core values of integrity, respect and inclusivity. We value diversity in all our work and promote a culture in which everyone is treated fairly.



We rely on trustees and committee members to share their expertise and support the work of the Froebel Trust on a voluntary basis. We publish our annual accounts detailing our charity's income, spending and impact. These can be found on the Charity Commission for England and Wales website: www.charitycommission.gov.uk

Education Sub-Committee (ESC)

Trustees and volunteers provide expertise in practice development in Froebelian education and learning. ESC advises on strategic priorities and makes recommendations to ERC and the Council of Trustees.

Research Sub-Committee (RSC)

Trustees and volunteers provide expertise in varied research topics and methods. RSC advises on strategic priorities and makes recommendations to ERC and the Council of Trustees.

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