

# Clackmannan Curriculum Conference

**Unhurried approaches to  
support children to learn at  
their own pace and follow their  
own interests**

**29<sup>th</sup> September**

**Donna Green – Falkirk Early Years Pedagogue**

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## Today's session on slow pedagogy...

- Participants will gain an understanding of Falkirk Council's approaches to slow pedagogy through a Froebelian lens.
- Practitioners will develop an understanding of key theories and policies that underpin slow pedagogy and the Image of Child being paramount to children developing their own curriculum.



## Why Slow Pedagogy

Clark draws attention to what she calls **accelerated childhoods** (2021) and claims there is a need for “**transformative change**”, contending that “**listening has become counter-cultural in a system driven by measurement**” (Clark, 2020:134).

Rosa highlights that there are growing concerns regarding young children’s learning: “**...we will have to be a little faster, more efficient, more innovative, if we want to maintain our place in the world...**” (Rosa, 2016:407).

Clark (2021) Claims that the pressures to hurry children are focused on finance, not necessarily pedagogy or social concepts – “**Children are viewed as human capital or future human capital within a neoliberal world view**” (Clark, 2021:npn).

# Defining Slow Pedagogy in Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings

Green (2021) “Slow pedagogy may result in a culture of collaboration, agency and listening, which embraces all children having time to live and learn within holistic, unhurried nurturing places”.

Cowan (2021:npn) argues it is “...something you do *with* children, rather than *to* children and something that has time for wonder and uncertainty”.

While Bateman (2021:npn) adds: “It is less about linear time...more about full engagement in the flow of deep time”.

“... expectation that children will do certain things at certain times” (McNair, 2021:npn)



**+McNair “there is an expectation that children will do certain things at certain times” and argues that in early childhood “children need this time and space to pursue their own interests” (2021:npn).**

# Through the Scottish Context

Within our Scottish Government Practitioner Guidance, RtA (2020) spaces is a key factor which holistically interconnects and works alongside interactions and experiences. Additionally, it discusses each of the elements – space, experiences and interactions – as being part of the environment in terms of more than the physical space, for example, **“an unhurried environment allows me time to concentrate on whatever catches my attention without being rushed”** (Education Scotland, 2020:31).



Bruce (2021) explains, “what children can do (rather than what they cannot do) is the starting point in a child’s education” (Bruce, 2021:142). Additionally, Bruce asserts, **“begin where the learner is, not where you want them to be, or they ought to be”** (Bruce 2021:143). Furthermore, Bruce reiterates that **“the focus is on what children can do, and it is not about deficit”** (Bruce, 2021:144). When exploring this principle through the Scottish context, our practitioner guidance – Realising the Ambition, Being Me (RtA) (Education Scotland, 2020) – advocates **“starting with the child”** (Education Scotland, 2020:65). The national guidance discusses the “basic principles” to support “Responsive and Intentional planning through **child-centred pedagogy in practice”** (Education Scotland, 2020: 63). It also states that **“much of what we now take for granted in Early Learning and Childcare has its origins in Froebel’s ideas”** (Education Scotland, 2020:102).

The **“child expresses their internal motivations towards leading their own learning through their actions. This in turn helps them build theories about the world around them”** (Education Scotland, 2020:68).

Children should be respected as **“human beings, not human becoming's.”**  
(Qvortrup, 2009: 639)

Froebel advocated that children should be understood as **“essential members of humanity”** (Lilley, 1967:95).

Tovey states:

**“Time is not filled’ but freed from all unnecessary interruptions”**  
(2017: 42).

Additionally, the **Curriculum for Excellence (CfE)** (Scottish Government, 2010) states that **“children have a natural disposition to wonder, to be curious... staff have an essential role in extending and developing this...”**, promoting autonomy **“where the child is at the centre and leading the curriculum as opposed to the curriculum leading the child”** (Scottish Government, 2012:30).

*"Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously. This right applies at all times"* - UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 12



What does it mean to me? Interconnecting children's rights through Slow Pedagogy and Froebelian Principles



# The value of childhood in its own right

Childhood is not merely a preparation for the next stage in learning. Learning begins at birth and continues throughout life.

I have the **right** to make **Choices** in relation to **where, when** and **how** I spend my **Time** and who with throughout **My Day**. I have the **right** to access sensitive, nurturing knowledgeable adults who **Embrace Learning Together** and **Caring for Me**.

Past, Present and Future  
**Attuning to every child's here and now and not enabling systems such as the future to inform the present.**





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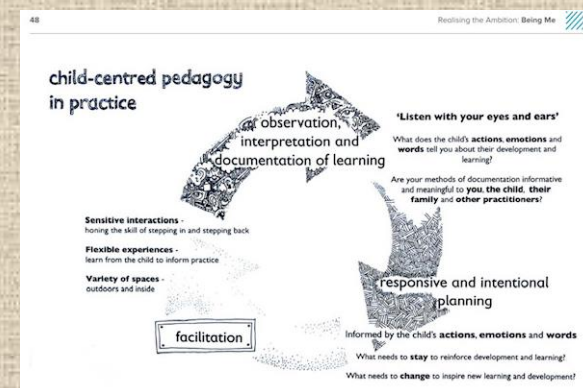
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# Realising the ambition: Being Me

National practice guidance  
for early years in Scotland





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First Picture  
Nursery  
Rhymes



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STARGAZE!

WIDE-MAN

# Falkirk Slow Pedagogy Study Film, funded through The Froebel Trust ...



[Froebel Trust | Slow pedagogy](#)

# Implementing Slow Pedagogy in Early Learning in Childcare



Slow Pedagogy Project Film QR code



Early Childhood Practitioners ultimate aim is to create a rich culture of collaboration, agency and listening, which embraces all children having time to live and learn within holistic, unhurried nurturing places.

Through using Froebelian Principles, professional reading along with webinars to increase knowledge and examine Froebel's concept of 'starting where the child is' (RtA, 2020: . 65 Families and community engagement are central throughout.



# Slow pedagogy is all about:

- valuing the present moment
- being attentive to children's pace, rhythm and interests
- enabling children to revisit their ideas and creations, places and stories
- creating opportunities for children to go deeper in their learning
- supporting time for observation, listening, reflection and documentation
- encouraging unhurried everyday routines with time for wonder and care.

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