

# **Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Childhood and Early Years Studies (Top-up)**

## **Module Descriptions**

### **Changing Childhoods**

You will engage in a critical analysis of the changing nature of "childhood and youth". You will explore contemporary "childhood and youth" in the context of global change, societal and technological, and will be supported to engage in critical reflection on the future "childhood", through analysis of emergent themes and issues based upon contemporary research.

### **Childhood and Early Years Studies Project**

Building on research understanding and skills developed throughout your programme and specifically in the "Researching Childhood and Early Years" module, this module will build on your knowledge, understanding and application of key ideas, perspectives and activities in social research relevant to childhood and early years. You will develop further knowledge and understanding about what and how things can be "known" (epistemology), ways of seeing the world (paradigms), approaches and traditions in research (methodology), collecting or generating data (methods), and analysing or interpreting findings (analysis).

In addition, you will develop a critical understanding of how to relate each of these elements into a coherent piece of research. You will also learn how to conduct research which will be subject to the ongoing ethical scrutiny and protocols of Northumbria University.

### **Global Perspectives of Childhood and Youth**

In this module, you will have the opportunity to investigate childhood and youth within a global context. The module will adopt a thematic approach to the exploration of issues such as health, poverty, war and work, offering a range of theoretical perspectives relevant to the global experiences of children and young people across countries and cultures.

You will also explore different research approaches commonly used with children and young people, and will therefore have the opportunity to explore how knowledge is created, debated and analysed. Your knowledge will be enhanced through the exploration of ethnographic studies of children and young people's experiences, as well

as analysing the impact of cultural difference, political and social on concepts of childhood and youth, whilst gaining a theoretical overview of key skills in data collection and analysis related to research with children and young people.

### **Leadership and Collaboration in Children's Services**

This module will involve you in thinking about leadership and management in the context of children's learning, well-being and safeguarding in community-based children's services\*.

The module has a particular focus on working with others who can contribute towards better outcomes for children and their families. It will help you to think about why community-based services for children and their families exist, what these services are required to do (with reference to current policy agendas), and how leaders can meet the challenges of working together to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families.

Generally, the module will help you think about the importance of self-awareness and reflection, skills for collaboration with others, and the practical implications of implementing policy on topics such as early learning, public health and safeguarding.

*\*The focus will generally be on "targeted" services (such as Children's Centres, Family Centres, outreach youth work or sexual health services), as opposed to universal (e.g. health visiting) or specialist (e.g. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services).*

### **Perspectives on Children's Literature**

This module will involve you in thinking about a range of modern children's authors and their work. You will develop an awareness of the ways in which children's literature can address challenging issues and themes, such as bullying, class, gender, intolerance, social justice, sexuality and violence. You will focus particularly on the ways in which childhood and/or youth are represented in children's literature.

The module will help you to think critically about the ways in which children and literacy can be viewed, and you will engage with recent research on this topic, in relation to child agency. The module focuses especially on emergent research about the value of recreational reading and reading for pleasure.

### **Play and the Early Years Curriculum**

In this module, you will learn about the importance of play and its place in the Early Years Curriculum. You will explore ideologies and practices, as well as contrasting theoretical perspectives and approaches. In addition, you will examine the place given to play within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) reflecting on its appropriateness for young children.

By doing so, you will be able to identify and reflect upon the different roles that the adult plays in supporting children's development and learning through play. You will also differentiate between interactions that are either supportive of or a hindrance to children's learning. You will learn about a variety of philosophical and cultural approaches from the United Kingdom and abroad, reflecting upon their contribution within the field of early years play in relation to the Early Years Curriculum.

The module will address themes such as the social and cultural context of early years play and provision, the history of play, the contested nature of play, definitions and types of play, leading play, risk and the outdoors and exploration of approaches from different ideologies.

### **Professional Practice and Career Development**

The aim of the module is to provide you with an opportunity to further develop your employability and understanding of contemporary ways of working by participating in employability activities. You will gain valuable insight into work settings, explore the roles and responsibilities of professionals, and consider some of the challenges and rewards of professional practice, linking to key concepts in Childhood and Early Years Studies.

You will reflect critically upon your experiences and consider how these have informed your career identity and contributed to the development of graduate attributes and employability skills.

Exploring entry routes and requirements of occupations through a range of sources (which may include direct contact with professionals) will further develop your research skills, as well as develop and utilise networks to help you enhance your employability. You will have the opportunity to undertake a mock interview in which you will be supported to reflect upon and verbally articulate your graduate skills attributes and values.

### **Researching Childhood and Early Years**

This module introduces you to key ideas, perspectives and activities in social research relevant to childhood and early years. You will develop knowledge and understanding about what and how things can be "known" (epistemology), ways of seeing the world (paradigms), approaches and traditions in research (methodology), collecting or generating data (methods), and analysing or interpreting findings (analysis).

You will learn about the key research methodological approaches and the methods used within them, going on to evaluate others' research work before developing your own questions, methodology and methods.

Finally, you will appreciate how to relate each of these elements into a coherent proposal for research and you will consider relevant ethical issues that apply to your research. This module feeds directly into the "Childhood and Early Years Studies Project" module.

### **Social and Emotional Wellbeing in Childhood**

This module will help you understand and analyse psychological, psychodynamic and sociological aspects of well-being in childhood. You will explore contrasting ideologies, approaches and theoretical perspectives in relation to the topic. There will be a particular focus on children's social and emotional well-being and on how authentic relationships can support and empower all round growth, learning and development in childhood.

Being interdisciplinary, the module offers you the opportunity to reflect on how professional and personal beliefs, values and attitudes influence how practitioners from different disciplines and cultures assess well-being in childhood, and how this may influence the nature of their working relationships with children and their families.

### **Young Children as Meaning Makers**

This module focuses on the young child as a maker and interpreter of meaning. You will consider the ways in which adults can support or hinder children's developing skills, and the extent to which cultural attitudes and government policy may impact children's freedom to express and communicate their feelings and ideas. It will immerse you in thinking about the development of young children as meaning makers and communicators.

You will be encouraged to explore theoretical approaches to early language and communication, and to evaluate critically, where appropriate, the effectiveness of approaches within current policy and practice to this important area of early child development. You will also become accomplished in applying your understanding of these perspectives through observations of children as communicators.

Through this experience, you will be able to critically analyse a variety of methodological approaches and theoretical stances within this discipline. The module will address themes such as attachment and the importance of early interaction, the environment, the role of the adult, multi-model observation techniques, observation as a research methodology and report writing for a professional and parent audience.

### **Young People in Society**

Throughout this module, you will investigate the cultural, political and social factors that have influenced, and continue to influence, the lives of children and young people in the

late 20th and early 21st centuries. This module will seek to explore the lives of young people through the consideration of a number of pertinent societal issues.

Firstly, you will critically analyse the proposition that there is a "discourse of difference" in British society when considering young people. You will be asked to consider the extent to which young people are considered as "other". To further develop this theme, the questions of how "youth" is conceptualised within society, and in what ways these concepts are considered negative or positive, will be examined. A detailed exploration of key cultural, economic, political and social factors will support the informed discussion of these questions.

The module will focus on the central issues of class, ethnicity, gender, inequality and sexual orientation in the context of youth cultures and subcultures.