

Roberto Federici – video transcript

I was working in a law firm. So I graduated in law, I did my legal practice course and I'd been working in a solicitors' firm for three years, and I really thought – 'where am I going in life?'

I wanted to be an early years teacher because I felt that I could make a big difference to children's lives. So I took the graduate-based employment route, which allowed me to work at the setting whilst attending university one day a week. This route enabled me to make that change. It was fully funded, and without that route available I don't think I would have been able to do it so easily.

I think that there were so many opportunities for me that primary or secondary teaching didn't really come into it – I thought, actually, I can make a big impact in early years.

I think it's essential that you do have proper training, so that you understand things like attachment theory and you understand about early childhood development. So that you actually know why you do the things you do. You're opening their minds. You're really making them think about the world in a different way – perhaps in a way that they didn't think beforehand.

I'm a group leader for a group called the Berries, and the Berries will start to come in and we'll go through the nursery. So we'll go to the art room, the classroom, the playroom and the gym, and essentially my role is to enhance their experience. So they've got lots of learning opportunities at the nursery, but my role is to add some value.

For someone thinking about becoming an early years teacher, I would just say go for it. On a daily basis you can inspire children – you get those reactions and you can see how much they really appreciate it and value it. It's probably the most rewarding thing I've ever done. I've recommended early years teacher training to so many people, because of how accessible it is to get on the course, in terms of the funding available, and also how rewarding the career is. It's quite difficult when you're already set in a career to make that leap of faith, but once I did it I just knew there was no going back really. It's just such a fantastic career.