

Early Years Evidence Pack

The recent Spending Review settlement demonstrates the commitment of the coalition Government to the early years. There is extensive evidence that investment in the early stages of children's lives makes sense - socially, morally and financially.

This slide pack summarises evidence on:

- Achievement at the Early Years Foundation Stage;
- factors that influence achievement; and
- the impact of Sure Start local programmes.

There is widespread agreement about the importance of the early years

- “We have found overwhelming evidence that children’s life chances are most heavily predicated on their development in the first five years of life. It is family background, parental education, good parenting and the opportunities for learning and development in those crucial years that together matter more to children than money, in determining whether their potential is realised in adult life”^[1].
- “Even greater priority must be given to ensuring expenditure early in the developmental life cycle (that is, on children below the age of 5) and that more is invested in interventions that have been proved to be effective” ^[2]
- “These early years are absolutely central to the developmental fate of a child, yet until recently they have received virtually no attention. A huge cultural shift must take place. Resources must be invested in the early years of children, concentrating on those most at risk, whose parents/carers are least able to provide what the child needs” ^[3]
- “The Sure Start programme as a whole is one of the most innovative and ambitious Government initiatives of the past two decades...in many areas it has successfully cut through the silos that so often bedevil public service delivery. Children’s Centres are a substantial investment with a sound rationale, and it is vital that this investment is allowed to bear fruit over the long term.” ^[4]

1 The Foundation Years: preventing poor children becoming poor adults , The report of the Independent Review on Poverty and Life Chances Frank Field December 2010

2 Fair Society, Healthy Lives: Strategic Review of Health Inequalities in England post 2010 Michael Marmot February 2010

3 Getting it right for children and young people Overcoming cultural barriers in the NHS so as to meet their needs A review by Professor Sir Ian Kennedy September 2010

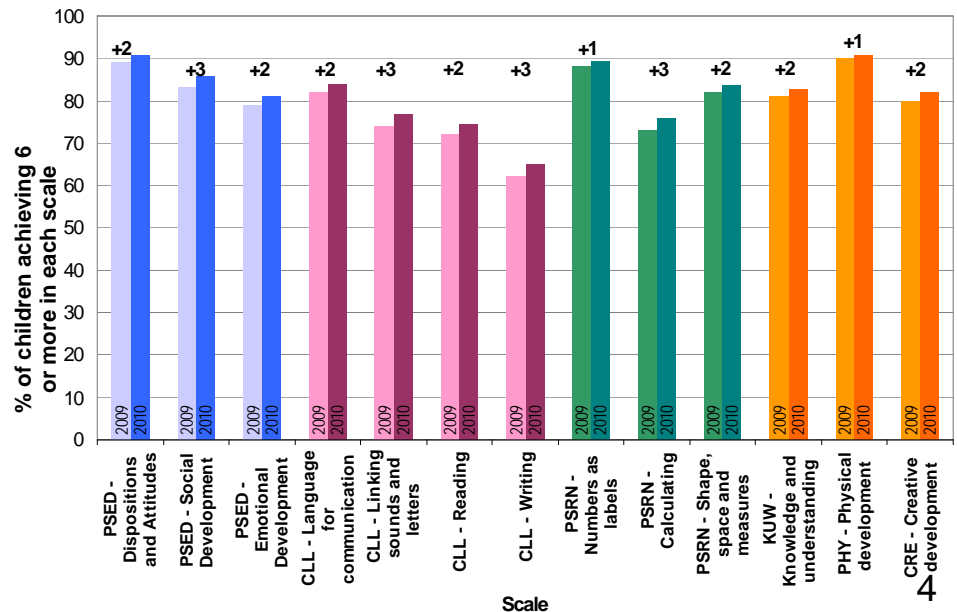
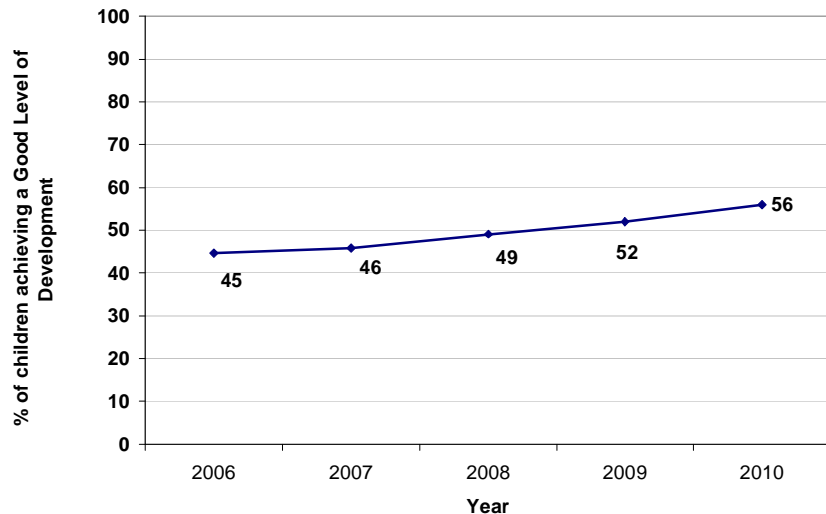
4 Select Committee for Children, Schools and Families report on children’s centres 2010

Achievement at the Early Years Foundation Stage is rising

- A good level of development is defined as a total points score of at least 78 points across the 13 scales in the Profile, with at least 6 or more points across all 7 of the scales in Personal Social and Emotional Development and Communication, Language and Literacy. In 2010 30,000 more children achieved a good level of development compared to 2009. This continues an upwards trajectory.
- Children's achievements at the Early Years Foundation Stage last: there is clear growth in performance at KS1 with every additional point achieved in the Foundation Stage Profile.

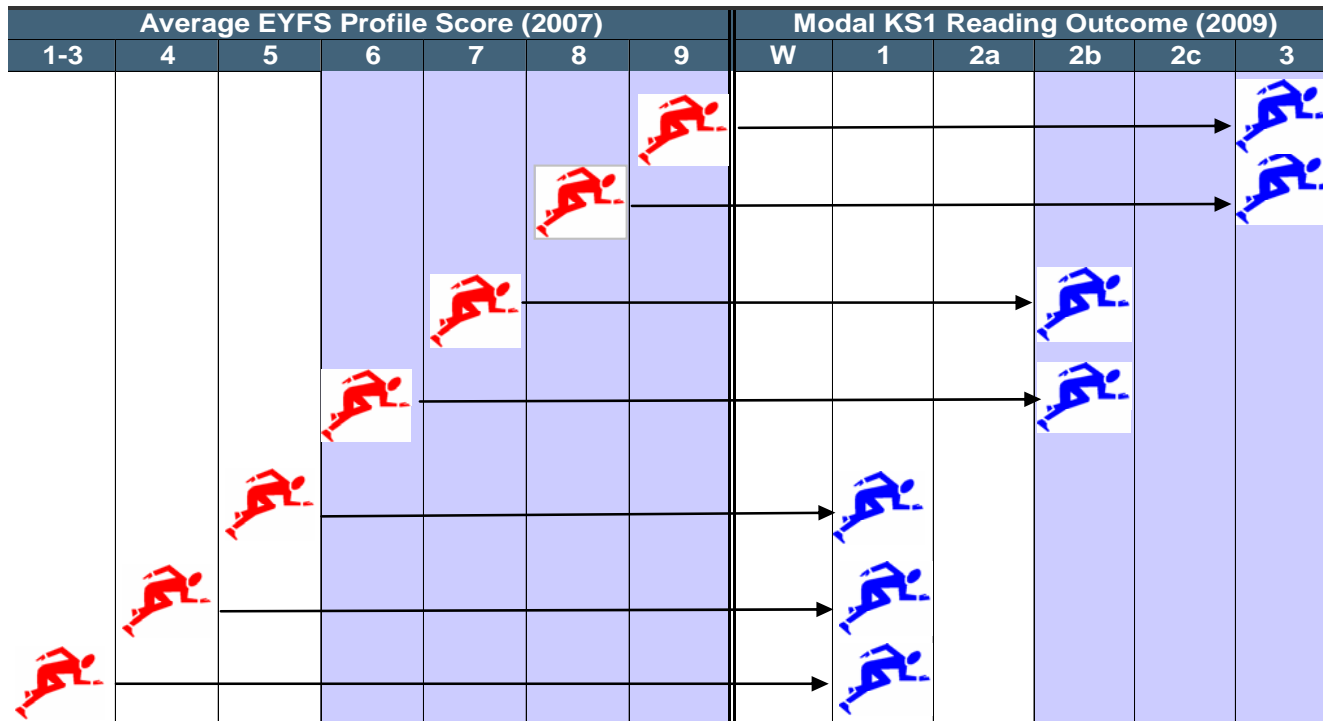
30,000 more children are achieving a good level of development

The assessment includes 13 scales: children's achievement has gone up in all scales.



Early investment is important because achievement at EYFS correlates to achievement at KS1

94% of children who achieve a good level of development at age 5 go on to achieve the expected levels for reading at Key Stage 1, and they are 5 times more likely to achieve the highest level. Pupils who start off in the bottom 20% of attainment at age 5 are six times more likely to be in the bottom 20% at Key Stage 1 compared to their peers



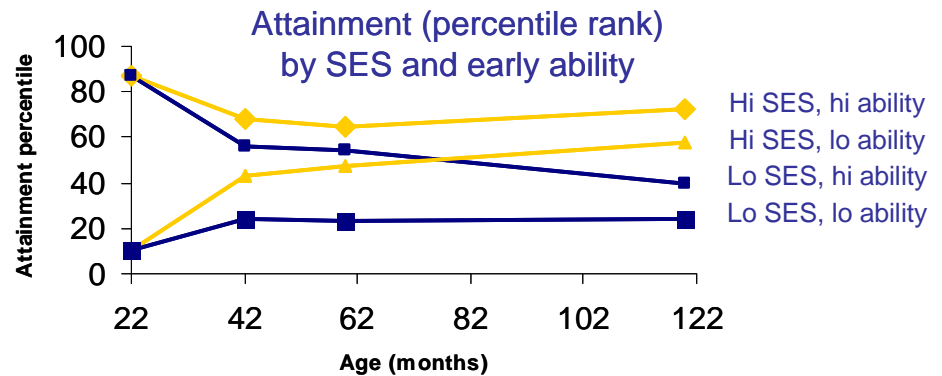
N.B. Correlation between EYFS Profile and KS1 outcomes varies across scales.

EYFS Profile  Key Stage 1 

Social class and affluence have a strong influence on attainment

Feinstein's work on the 1970s birth cohort showed the strong influence of social class on the achievement of children at age 5 [1]. Attainment amongst children from the higher socio economic group had overtaken that of the children from lower social economic group even where attainment at 22, 42 and 62 months was stronger amongst the more deprived group.

Social class is strongly associated with attainment. The 1970 birth cohort showed social class gaps well established by age 5.



The Millennium Cohort Study found that at the age of 5 children from the most advantaged groups were found to be over a year ahead in vocabulary, compared to those from disadvantaged backgrounds [2]. And a previous study found that by the age of 3, children from privileged families have heard 30 million more words than children from underprivileged backgrounds [3].

[1] Feinstein, L. (2003) 'Inequality in the Early Cognitive Development of British Children in the 1970 Cohort', *Economica* (70) 277, 73-97

[2] Hansen and Joshi, 'Millenium Cohort Study Second Survey: a User's Guide to Initial Findings', July 2007

[3] Hart and Risely, "The Early Catastrophe: the 30 Million Word Gap", *American Educator*, 27(1) pp. 4-9 2003

There is no single factor that determines attainment, but good quality early years provision is important

No one factor is the key to enhancing child cognitive and behavioural outcomes in the long term. It is the combination of experiences over time that matters:

- a good early years **home learning environment**;
- a **good quality** pre-school; and
- a more **effective primary school**.

A child who has all three of these experiences is more likely to show improved cognitive and social outcomes compared with children that have two, one or none of these experiences [1]

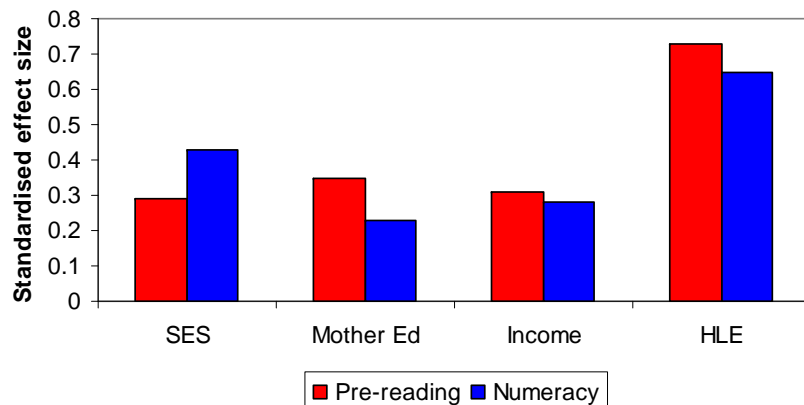
[1] EPPSE was previously called the Effective Provision of Pre-school Education (EPPE). The study first collected data on a nationally representative sample of 3000 children aged 3 and their parents/carers back in 1997.

The home-learning environment is key

- Despite the value of quality pre-school experience, background factors relating to the **child, family** and **early home learning environment** make a substantial and sometimes greater difference to children's cognitive and social behavioural development.
- For all children, the quality of the home learning environment is more important for intellectual and social development than parental occupation, education or income. **What parents do is more important than who parents are.**
 - Examples of a good Home Learning Environment include reading to a child, teaching songs and nursery rhymes, playing with letters & numbers, visiting the library, painting & drawing, emphasising the alphabet

The effect of early Home Learning Environment on age 5 outcomes has an effect over and above parental background factors such as socio-economic status, maternal education and family income. ¹

Effects sizes for SES, parents' education, income and early years HLE on Age 5 outcomes



Other studies have also shown the importance of parents involvement in their children's education and development.



Parental interest in their child's education has four times more influence on attainment by age 16 than socio-economic background ²

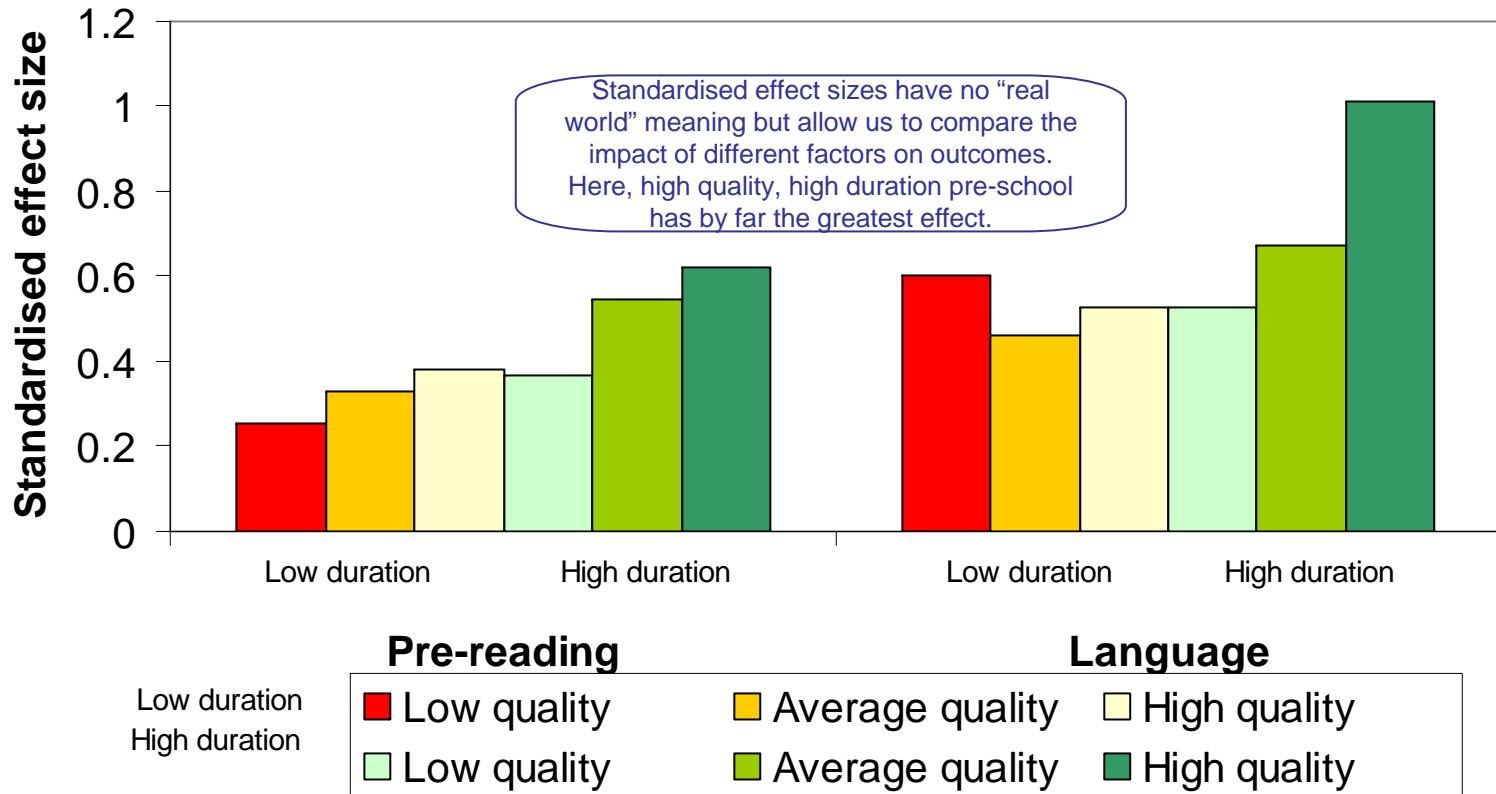


Parental involvement in their child's reading has been found to be the most important determinant of language and emergent literacy ³

The quality of pre-school provision is important

Pre-school shows a significant positive effect on early cognitive outcomes for **all** levels of quality and duration (in years) compared with none. Overall, having longer pre-school experience has greater benefit on literacy outcomes, whatever the quality, but differences in quality make more of a difference than longer time.

It is the combination of high quality and longer time in provision that has the clearest effect size. For outcomes at older ages the effect of longer time in pre-school washes out but the quality effect remains strong



Quality and effectiveness of pre-school provision make the critical difference

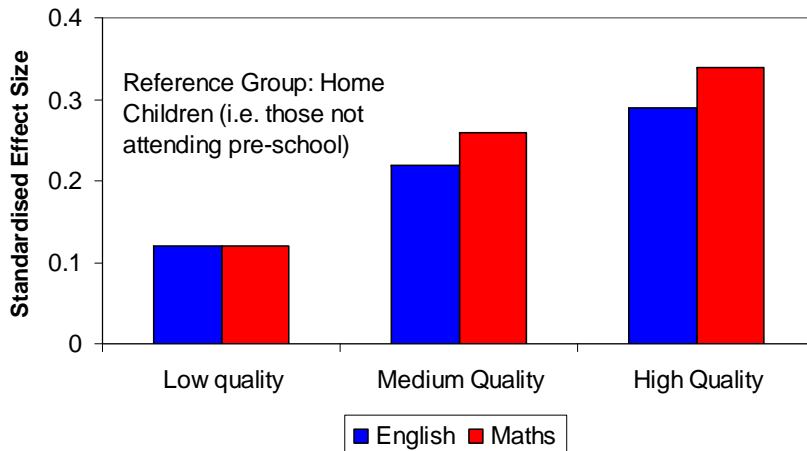
Evidence from the 2 year pilot of free childcare showed that there was no identifiable impact except where settings were high quality

Analysis of EYFSP data at Local Authority level showed a weak but significant positive correlation between Ofsted ratings and a Good Level of Development – i.e. that LAs with a better average Ofsted rating for early years settings had more children with good levels of development at the end of the EYFS.

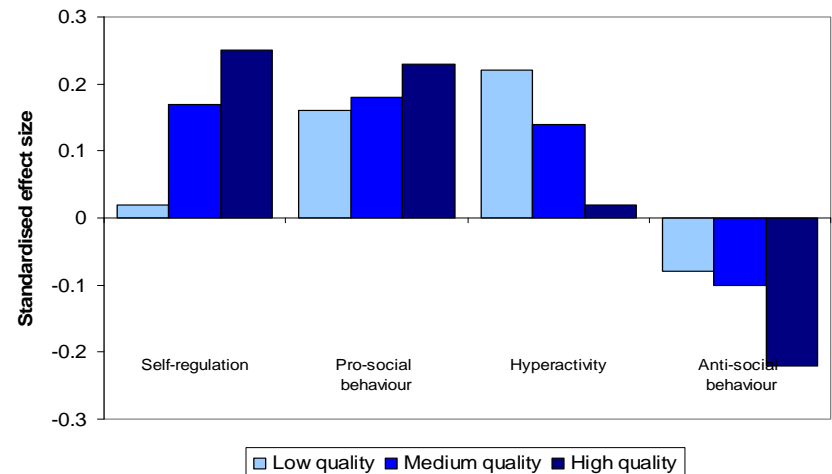
Pre-school has a positive net effect on English and Maths, not just on early outcomes, but still showing in English and maths test scores at **age 11**. This is greatest for high quality pre-school.

A similar picture is evident for social and behavioural outcomes – more effective provision leads to better outcomes, after controlling for child and home factors

Net Effect of Quality (ECERS-E) of Pre-school on English and Maths at Age 11



The impact of pre-school educational effectiveness on social and behavioural outcomes in year 6



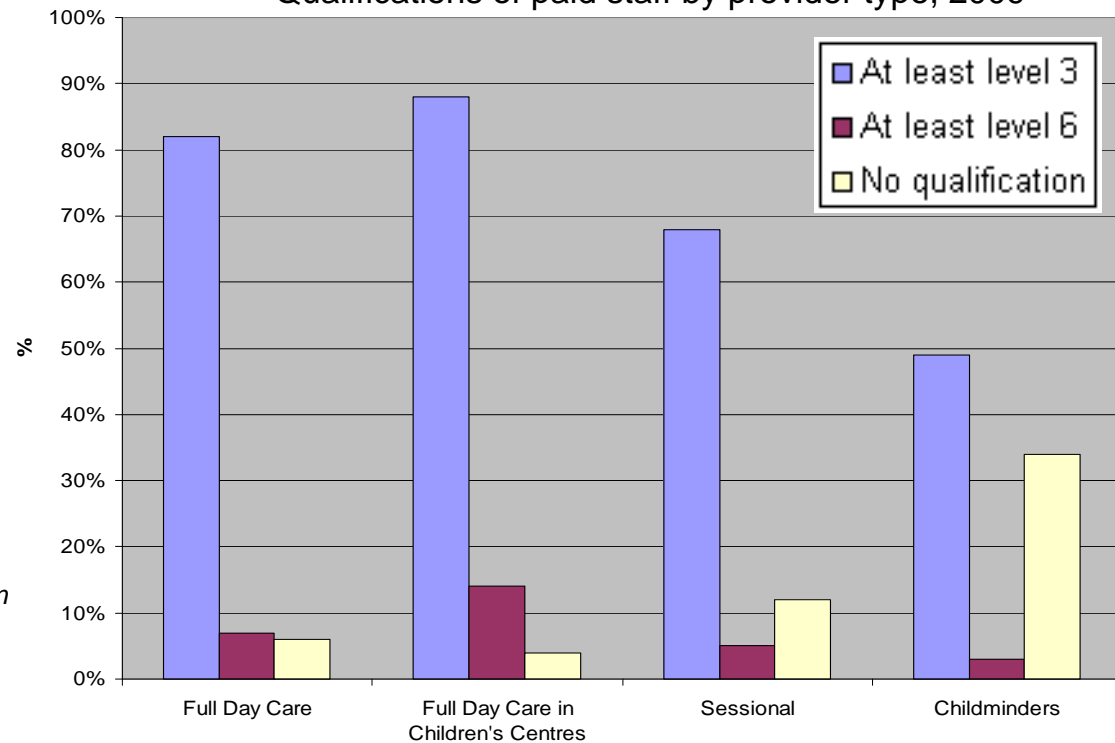
Early years workforce – qualifications are a driver of quality

Staff characteristics, especially qualifications and training are the key driver of high quality provision

- Having trained teachers working with children in pre-school settings (for a substantial proportion of time, and most importantly as the curriculum leader) had the greatest impact on quality, and was linked specifically with better outcomes in pre-reading and social development at age 5. (EPPE)
- It is both the average qualification levels and having a qualified teacher/manager that matters in ensuring good quality childcare provision. In fact, research indicates that the observed behaviour of other staff is positively influenced by the presence of a member of staff with Level 5 qualifications [1].

The qualifications of the childcare workforce vary by setting. There are more graduate level employees in Children's Centres than in other full day care settings, but staff in full day care settings are more likely to be qualified to level 3. Childminders are the least likely to hold relevant professional qualifications at these levels, with 49% being qualified to at least level 3.

Qualifications of paid staff by provider type, 2009



[1] Siraj-Blatchford et al, 2002 *Researching Effective Pedagogy in the Early Years*

Graph data from Dept for Education Early Years and Childcare Provider Survey 2009

The 2 year old pilot showed that it is only the highest quality settings that have a significant impact on development

- The evaluation report covered the initial stages of the pilot which provided free early years education to over 13,500 disadvantaged two year olds between 2006 and 2008. The pilot continues and, as an indication, cost £30m in 2009-10.
- Overall, **the pilot did not significantly improve pilot children's cognitive or social development**, their parent-child relationship or home learning environment relative to a matched comparison group.
- However, where children attended **higher quality settings, there was a positive impact** on language ability, and on their parent-child relationship.
- Parents *felt* that the setting had positively affected their ability to parent, their physical health and mental well being, and provided them with opportunities for self improvement.

Children's Centres – a variety of evidence supports the model

- The original Sure Start programme was based on evidence from longitudinal studies (John Bynner^[1], David Farrington^[2] and others) that effective early intervention can prevent costs to society later on.
- Evidence from community-based programmes ^[3] that are locally led can help to engage those families who might not otherwise seek help (leading to the requirement for services to be “non-stigmatising” and locally led, but based in the most deprived areas)
- Evidence from the research project, Effective Provision of Pre-school Education (EPPE ^[4]), showed that integrated early years settings were particularly beneficial to children's development.
- EPPE also shows that disadvantaged children who attended childcare settings with children from mixed social backgrounds made more progress than in settings serving mainly disadvantaged children

1 Bynner J, *Childhood Risks and Protective Factors in Social Exclusion*. London: Institute of Education 2001.

2 Farrington, D, *Explaining and Preventing Crime: The Globalization of Knowledge*. The American Society of Criminology 1999

3 Utting, D, *Suggestions for the UK: an overview of possible action*.

4 Sylva K, Melhuish E, Sammons P, et al. Effective Pre-school Provision. London: Institute of Education 2004, and Melhuish EC, Sylva K, Sammons P, et al. Preschool influences on mathematics achievement. *Science* 2008;32:1161-2.

There is good evidence of the impact of the early Sure Start Local Programmes

The National Evaluation of Sure Start impact study results published in November 2010 showed the following positive results for children and their families living in early Sure Start areas (ie with Sure Start Local Programmes, SSLPs) compared to children and families living in similar areas without such programmes [1]:

- Mothers living in SSLP areas reported greater life satisfaction.
- Mothers living in SSLP areas reported engaging in less harsh discipline and providing less chaotic home environment for their children.
- Mothers living in SSLP areas reported providing a more cognitively stimulating home learning environment for their children.
- Children in SSLP areas had lower Body Mass Indices and experience better physical health than their counterparts living elsewhere.

1 The impact of SSLPs on five year olds and their families , Melhulsh et al, (November 2010)

Parents are aware of and value Sure Start and early education services

A survey^[1] of parents and carers who were potential users of children's centres has indicated that:

- 78% of all respondents knew about their local centre;
- 74% were familiar with the term 'children's centre';
- 92% of respondents who used their local Sure Start Children's Centre were satisfied with the service they received; and
- satisfaction levels for individual services such as childcare and nursery education, health and family and parenting services were also very high.

The evaluation^[2] of the two year old pilot found that:

- 44% of parents thought that it had helped improve their child's speech and / or English language.
- They felt they had gained a **better understanding of their children as individuals** and also of different child development stages.
- Some believed that their **parenting skills and their relationships with their children had improved** since their child had started attending the pilot setting.
- The ability to provide a **more stimulating learning environment at home** was also attributed to the experience of using the pilot setting.

1 Taylor Nelson Sofres 2009

2 Early Education Pilot for two year old children: Evaluation *National Centre for Social Research 2009*