

**Melbourne 30/31<sup>st</sup> May 2008**

# Together we Grow KPV Conference

Giving all children a chance to  
achieve: Findings from studies  
EPPE and REPEY

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# Effective Provision of Pre-School Education E P P E (DfES funded)



1997-2003

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*An ESRC TLRP (Associate) project*

# Questions explored in the EPPE research

- What is the impact of pre-school on young children's intellectual and social/behavioural development?
- Does this impact last?
- Are there particular benefits for disadvantaged children?
- What are the characteristics of effective pre-schooling?

# Sample

- Six local authorities
- 141 Pre-school centres randomly selected within the authorities to include:
  - nursery classes
  - playgroups
  - private day nurseries
  - day care centres run by local authority
  - nursery schools
  - fully integrated centres
- Approx 2,800 children from 141 centres and 300+ 'home' children

# Plan of Study

Pre-school  
Provision  
(3+ yrs)

Reception  
(5 yrs)

Year 1  
(6 yrs)

Year 2  
(7 yrs)

25 nursery classes	590 children
34 playgroups	610 children
31 private day nurseries	520 children
20 nursery schools	520 children
24 local authority day care nurseries	430 children
7 integrated centres	190 children
home	310 children

<b>Baseline Assessment N= 3,000+</b>	<b>Exit Assessments N= 1500</b>	<b>Age 6 Assessments N = 3,000+</b>	<b>Age 7 Assessments N= 3,000+</b>
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# Sources of data

- Child assessment
- Family background
- Interviews with staff
- 'Quality' rating scales
- Case studies of effective settings



# Assessing quality learning environments through ECERS R and ECERS E



# Two Early Childhood Environment Rating Scales

## ECERS-R

- ❖ Based on observation – 7 sub-scales
  - ❖ Space and furnishings
  - ❖ Personal care routines
  - ❖ Language reasoning
  - ❖ Activities
  - ❖ Interaction
  - ❖ Programme structure
  - ❖ Parents and staff

Harms, Clifford & Cryer (1998)

## ECERS-E

- ❖ Based on observation – 4 sub-scales
    - ❖ Literacy
    - ❖ Mathematics
    - ❖ Science and environment
    - ❖ Diversity
- Sylva, Siraj-Blatchford & Taggart (2003)

## Example of the ECERS Rating Scale

Inadequate

Minimal

Good

Excellent

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

# An Example of ECERS-R Item Low scores

## 33. Interactions among children

**Inadequate 1**

- |  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| <b>1.1 Interaction among children (peers) not encouraged (Ex. talking with peers discouraged, few opportunities for children to choose own playmates).</b> | <b>- YES/NO</b> |
| <b>1.2 Little or no staff guidance for positive peer interaction.</b>  | <b>- YES/NO</b> |
| <b>1.3 Little or no positive peer interaction (Ex. teasing, bickering, fighting are common)</b>  | <b>-YES/NO</b>  |

Harms, Clifford & Cryer (1998)

# An Example of ECERS-R Item Low scores

## 33. Interactions among children

**Minimal**

**3**

- |   |                |
|---|----------------|
| <b>3.1 Peer interaction encouraged (Ex. children allowed to move freely so natural groupings and interactions can occur).</b> | <b>-YES/NO</b> |
| <b>3.2 Staff stop negative and hurtful peer interactions (Ex. stop name calling, fighting).</b>                               | <b>-YES/NO</b> |
| <b>3.3 Some positive peer interaction occurs</b>  | <b>-YES/NO</b> |

Harms, Clifford & Cryer (1998)

# An Example of ECERS-R Item Medium scores

## 33. Interactions among children

**Good**

**5**

**5.1 Staff model good social skills (Ex. are kind to others, listen empathize, cooperate). -YES/NO**

**5.2 Staff help children develop appropriate social behaviour with peers (Ex. help children talk through conflicts instead of fighting; encourage socially isolated children to find friends; help children understand feelings of others). -YES/NO**

Harms, Clifford & Cryer (1998)

# An Example of ECERS-R Item High scores

## 33. Interactions among children

**Excellent**

**7**

- 7.1 Peer interactions usually positive (Ex. older children often cooperate and share; children generally play well together without fighting). -YES/NO**
- 7.2 Staff provide some opportunities for children to work together to complete a task (Ex. a group of children work to cover a large mural paper with many drawing; make a soup with many ingredients; cooperate to bring chairs to table). -YES/NO**

Harms, Clifford & Cryer (1998)

# Complex value-added model: the effect of pre-school's quality on children's cognitive progress

	Pre-reading	Early number concepts	Language	Non-verbal reasoning	Spatial awareness
<b>ECERS-E</b>					
Average total	positive*	positive		positive	
Literacy	positive*	positive			
Maths				positive	
Science/Environment				positive#	
Diversity	positive#	positive		positive	
<b>ECERS-R</b>					
Average total					
Space and furnishings					
Personal care					
Language and reasoning				positive#	
Activities					
Interaction		positive			
Programme structure					
Parents and staff	positive#				

\* When change of centre is not in model # verging on statistical significance

# Complex value-added model: the effect of pre-school's quality on children's social-behavioural development

	Independence and concentration	Cooperation and Conformity	Peer Sociability	Anti-social/Worried
<b>ECERS-E</b>				
Average total	positive#	positive#		
Literacy		positive#		
<b>Maths</b>				
Science/ environment	positive#			
Diversity	positive#	positive#		

# Conclusions

- ❖ **'Quality' is not a universal concept but depends on national curricula and cultural priorities.**
- ❖ **Children from settings with high scores on the ECERS-R 'interaction' scale had sound social and personal skills when they started school.**
- ❖ **Children from settings with high scores on the ECERS-E scale had strong literacy, numeracy, and cognitive skills when they started school.**
- ❖ **ECERS-R is sensitive to aspects of quality related to social development: ECERS-E is sensitive to aspects of quality related to intellectual and social development.**

# Quality

Things for parents to look for in a good quality setting include:

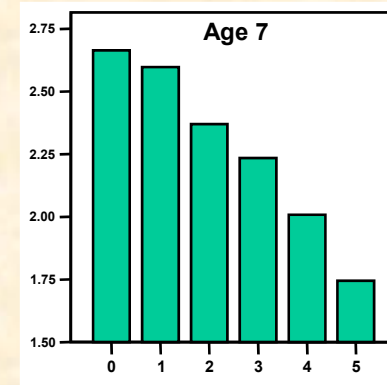
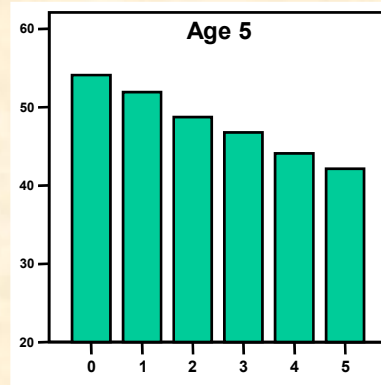
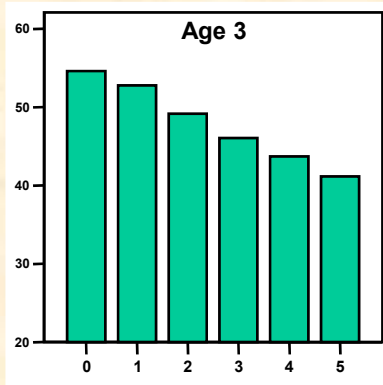
- ❖ Adults have warm, responsive relationships with children.
- ❖ Setting has clear educational goals.
- ❖ Staff have recognised early years qualifications.
- ❖ Trained teachers are amongst the staff.
- ❖ Parents are supported in involvement in children's learning.

# **Influences on the attainment gap**

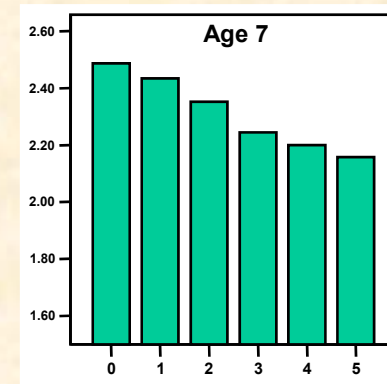
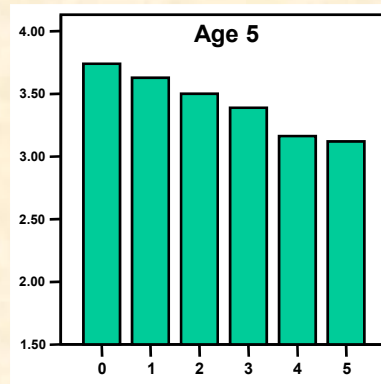
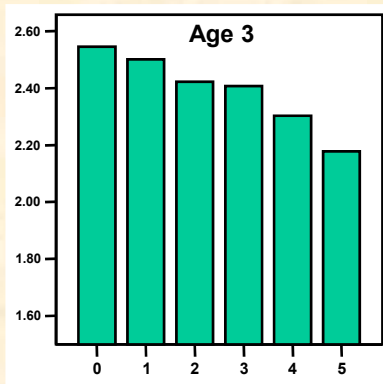
- **Social Class/Parental Education**
- **Poverty: FSM**
- **The Home Learning Environment**
- **Pre-school Education**

# Multiple Disadvantage

## Language and Literacy

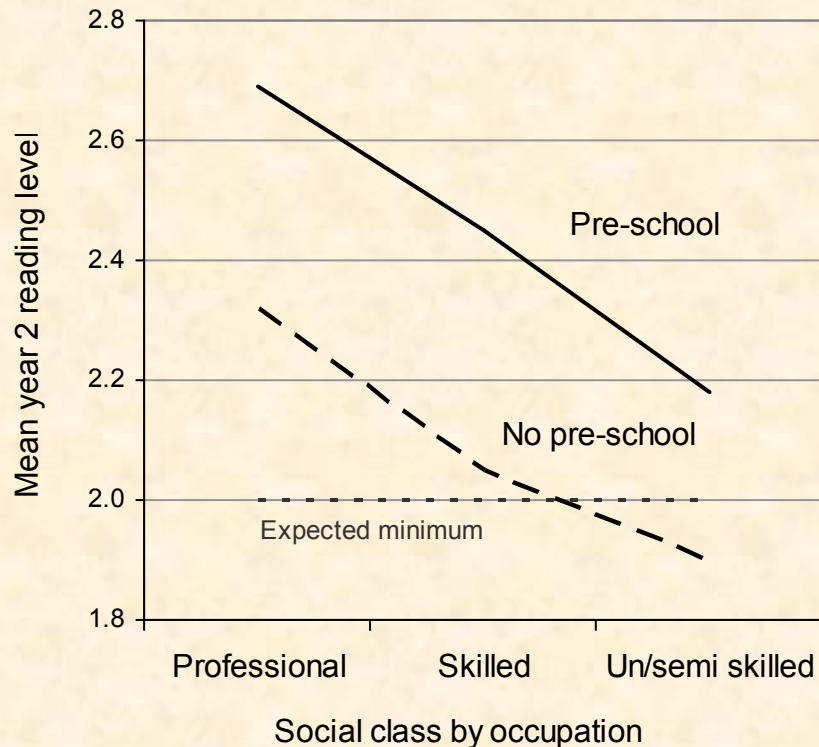


## Independence and Concentration/Self Regulation

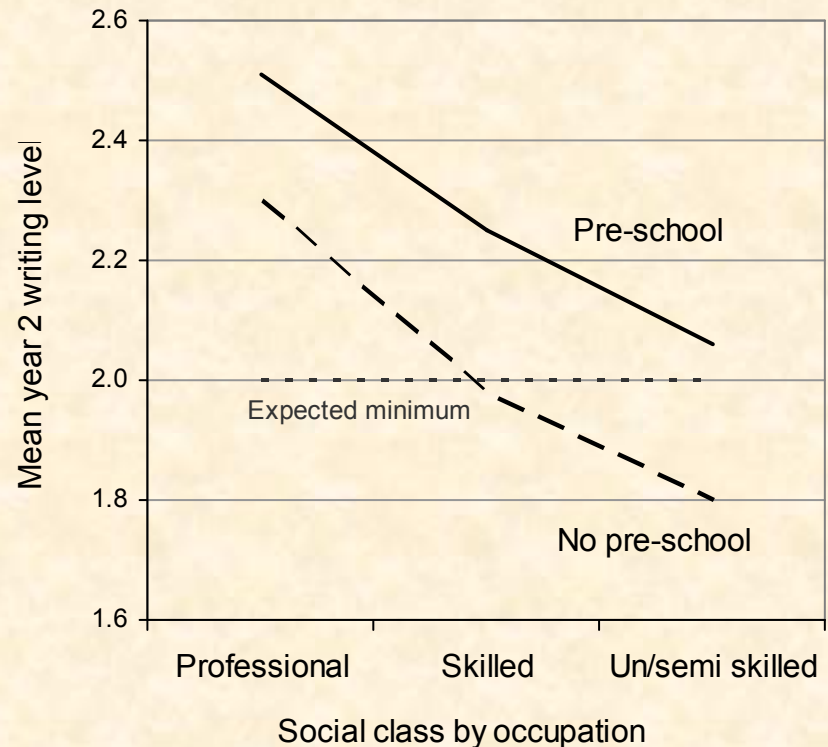


# The contribution of social class and pre-school to literacy attainment (age 7)

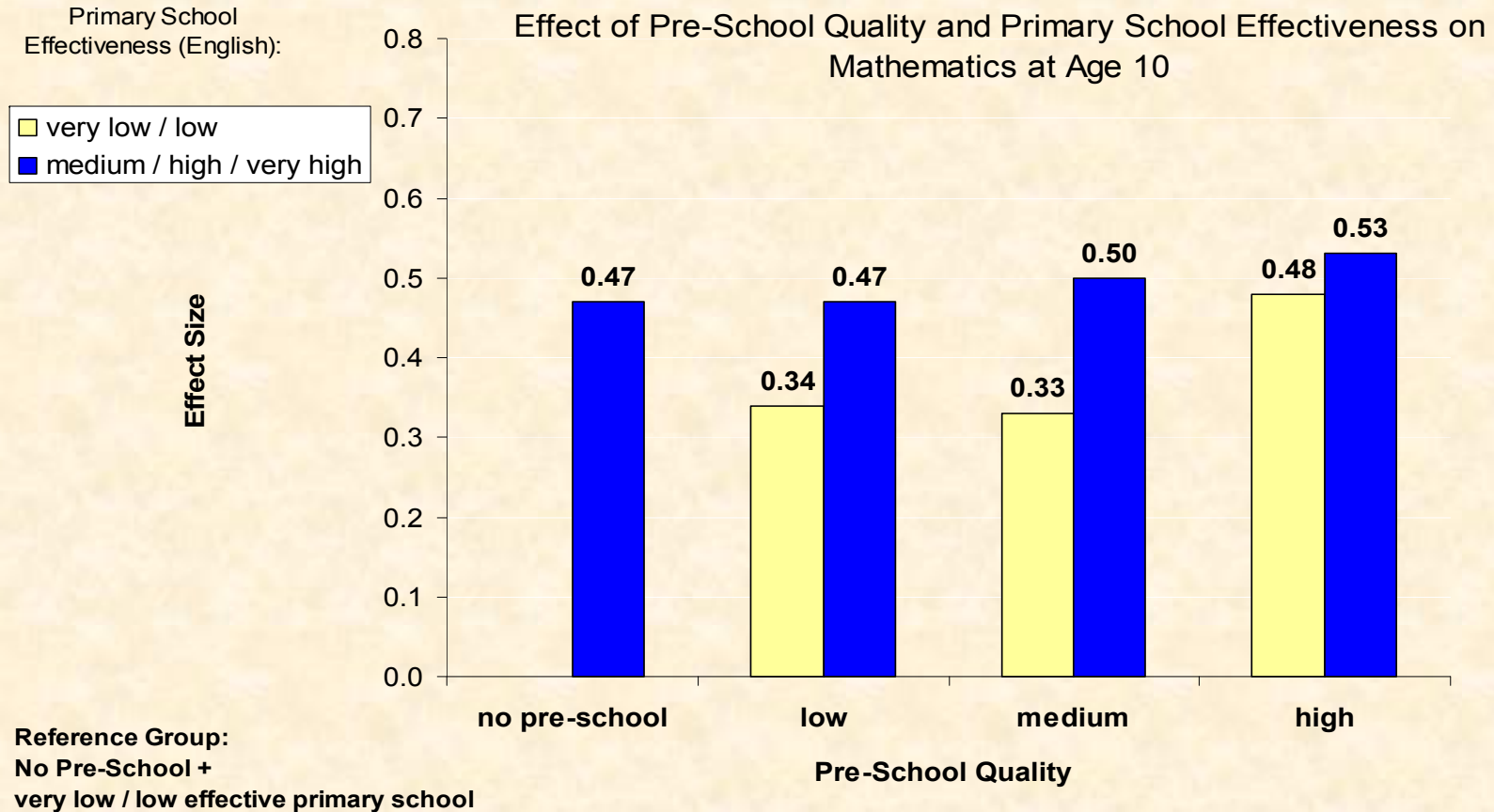
**READING at key stage 1, social class and pre-school experience**



**WRITING at key stage 1, social class and pre-school experience**

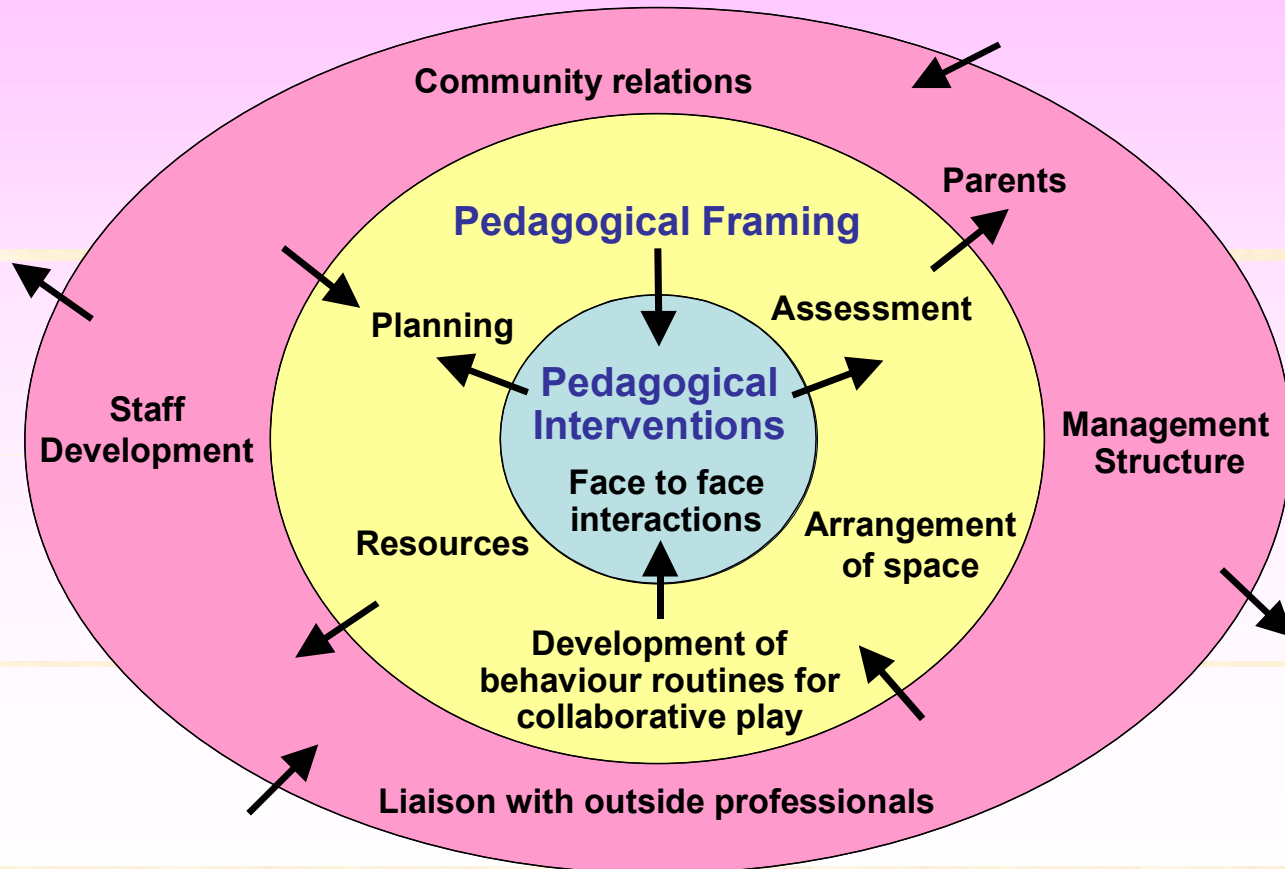


# The Combined Impact of Pre-School Quality and Primary School Effectiveness (Value add) - Mathematics



**Reference Group: No Pre-School and Very low / low Primary School Effectiveness**

# Case Studies of Effective Pedagogy in the Early Years



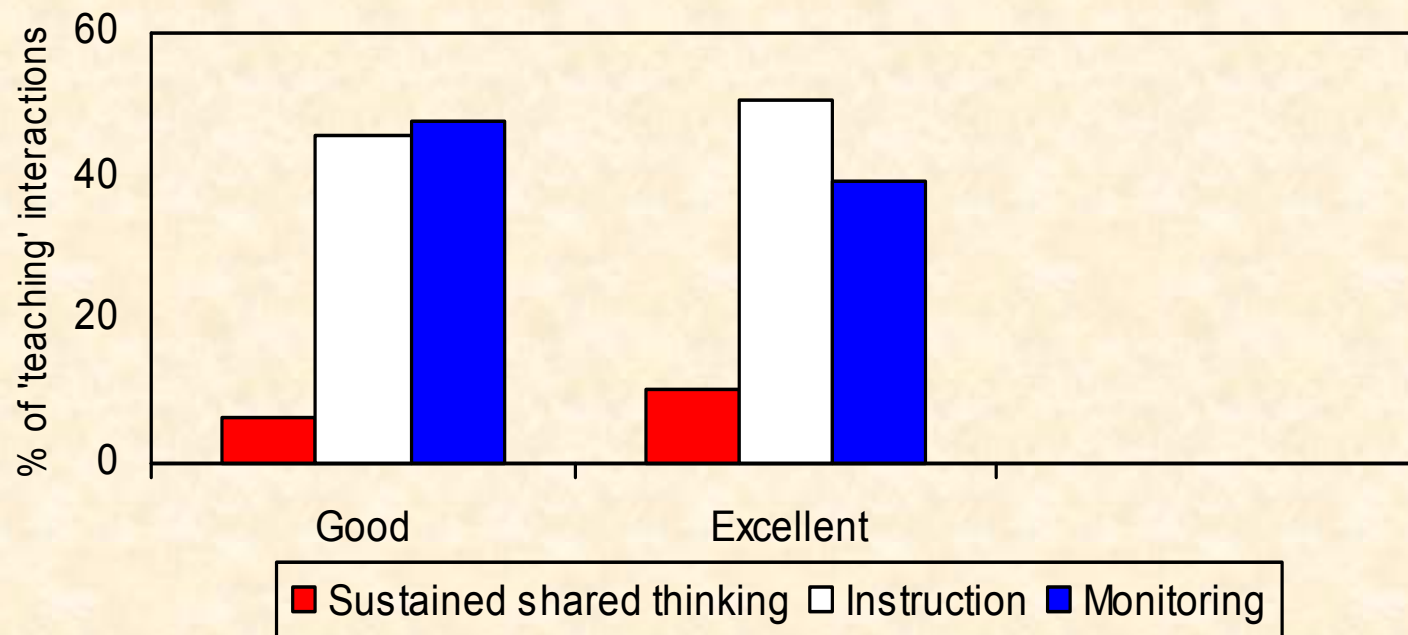
## **Pedagogy- the key findings are in the following areas:**

- Management and staff**
- Ethos and climate of the settings**
- Adult-child verbal Interactions**
- Differentiation and formative assessment**
- Discipline and adult support in talking through conflicts**
- Parental partnership with settings and the home education environment**
- Pedagogy**
- Knowledge of the curriculum and child development**

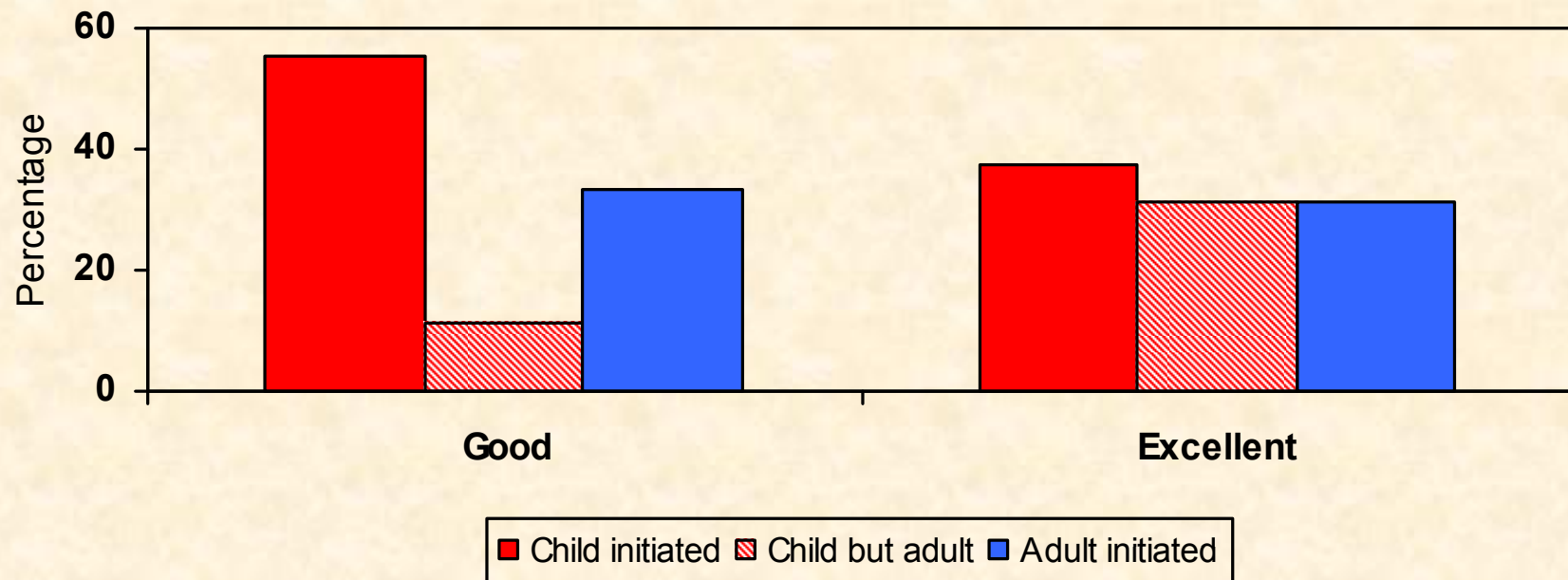
## **Effective Pedagogy in the Early Years**

**Sustained shared thinking: An episode in which two or more individuals “work together” in an intellectual way to solve a problem, clarify a concept, evaluate activities, extend a narrative etc. Both parties must contribute to the thinking and it must develop and extend.**

## Percentage of pedagogical interactions (cognitive and monitoring) in settings varying in effectiveness



## Percentage of high cognitive challenge activities within each initiation category in each setting type



# EPPE Case Studies

- ❖ **The individual case studies show how diverse early years settings are. It shows that there is not a 'level playing field' in terms of training of staff, ratios, resources, salaries and accommodation.**
- ❖ **The most effective settings provide both teacher-initiated group work and freely chosen yet potentially instructive play activities**
- ❖ **Excellent settings tend to achieve an equal balance between adult-led and child-initiated interactions and activities**

# EPPE Case Studies

- ❖ Cognitive outcomes relate to teacher/adult planned and initiated focused group work and the amount of sustained shared thinking between adults and children
- ❖ The curriculum is being differentiated according to age, but is uneven in coverage
- ❖ Effective pedagogy is both 'teaching', and the provision of instructive learning environments and routines

# EPPE Case Studies

- ❖ **Effective practitioners assess children's performance to ensure the provision of challenging yet achievable experiences**
- ❖ **Effective practitioners model appropriate language, values and practices, encourage socio-dramatic play, praise, encourage, ask questions, interact verbally with children**
- ❖ **Early Years staff and parents normally prioritise social development, but our evidence suggests that those who see cognitive and social development as complementary achieve the best profile in terms of child outcomes.**

# EPPE Case Studies

- ❖ **Our analysis has shown that practitioners knowledge and understanding of the particular curriculum area being addressed could not be taken for granted or DAP.**
- ❖ **The most highly qualified staff provide the most instruction, but also the kind of interactions which guide but do not dominate children's thinking.**
- ❖ **Less qualified staff were better pedagogues when they worked alongside qualified teachers.**

# EPPE Case Studies

- ❖ We have found that the most effective early years settings in these terms adopt discipline/ behaviour policies that involve staff in supporting children in rationalising and talking through their conflicts.
- ❖ Where a special relationship in terms of shared educational aims had been developed *with* parents, and pedagogic efforts were made at home to support the children, we found better child outcomes
- ❖ There is some evidence that sending children to pre-school frees parents to seek employment and further study, and that parents are frustrated by the inflexibility of centre opening times and the length of sessions.

# Home learning before 3 years

What parents and carers do is most important and makes a real difference to development. Activities for parents which help children's development include:

- ❖ reading to children;
- ❖ teaching children songs and nursery rhymes;
- ❖ playing with letters and numbers;
- ❖ painting and drawing;
- ❖ taking children to libraries;
- ❖ (for social outcomes) creating regular opportunities for play with friends.

# Main Findings

- ❖ Pre-school experience, compared to none, enhances intellectual and social development in all children.
- ❖ Good quality pre-school experiences support better cognitive and social-behavioural development for children.
- ❖ Good quality can be found across all types of early years settings, but the state sector has more good quality.
- ❖ For all children good early HLE helps cognitive and social development.
- ❖ Disadvantaged children in particular can benefit significantly from good quality pre-school experiences.

**For further information about EPPE  
visit the EPPE website at:**

**<http://www.ioe.ac.uk/projects/eppe/>**

**A series of EPPE Technical Papers provides  
details of research methods and findings.**

**Technical Papers 8a, 8b and 10 provide all the  
findings from the pre-school period**