

Press release: Children who have early education get higher GCSEs

A child has more chance of getting better exam results and ultimately earning higher wages by receiving pre-school education, a study published today (September 9 2014) has shown.

Please note that this article was originally published by the DfE.

A child has more chance of getting better exam results and ultimately earning higher wages by receiving pre-school education, a study published today (September 9 2014) has shown.

The Effective Pre-School, Primary and Secondary (EPPSE) research shows children who go to pre-school are projected to earn £27,000 more during their career than those who don't. They are also more likely to get better GCSE results - the equivalent of getting 7 Bs compared to 7 Cs.

The research also found that early education helped young people to specifically do better in GCSE English and maths. The effects were better if the pre-school was of high quality, and pre-school is particularly valuable for children from less advantaged backgrounds.

Sam Gyimah, Education and Childcare Minister, said:

Before they have even worn their school uniform for the first time, a child's life chances are being decided. Early education not only sets a child off on the right foot at school but, as this extensive research shows, has effects that last right into the workplace.

No child should start school behind their peers. This is why as part of our plan for education we are committed to providing flexible, affordable and good quality childcare, giving parents more of a choice about where they can send their children, so that they can get the best start in life.

The EPPSE project launched in 1997 and has followed 3,000 children from early childhood to the age of 16. The research was carried out by leading academics at the Institute of Education, University of Oxford, and Birkbeck, University of London.

Professor of Educational Psychology at Oxford University Kathy Sylva, who worked on the research, said:

The EPPSE study is unique because it provides valuable evidence in Europe on the long term value of pre-school - no other research has done this.

The results are clear - early education pays off, and high quality pre-school education gives children the very best start in life.

High quality early education has enduring benefits for the children who experience it and also the society that invests in it.

The government funds 15 hours per week of early education for all 3- and 4-year-olds. Last month, the eligibility of 2-year-olds to receive 15 hours per week of free childcare was doubled to include 40% of all 2-year-olds from poorer families. Tax free childcare has also been introduced, which could save a working family up to £2,000 per child per year from 2015.

Notes to editors

1. The EPPSE [‘Students’ educational and developmental outcomes at age 16’](#) report is available online.
2. The Effective Pre-school and Primary Education project (EPPE) started in 1997 and was the first major longitudinal study in Europe to investigate the impact of pre-school provision on a national sample of children.
3. The are 5 principal investigators: Prof Kathy Sylva and Prof Pam Sammons (both University of Oxford), Prof Ted Melhuish (Birkbeck, University of London), Prof Iram Siraj and Brenda Taggart (both Institute of Education).
4. The [final reports on the KS4 phase of the project](#) explore the influences on students’ academic and social outcomes at age 16. The research also estimates some of the economic returns from society’s investment in early education.

Research was conducted through a nationally representative sample of children in 141 pre-school settings was drawn in 1997 from 5 English regions (6 local authorities). A sample of children who had no or minimal pre-school experience were recruited to the study at entry to school for comparison with the pre-school group.

EPPSE researchers assessed the children at recruitment to the study to create a profile of each child’s intellectual and social/behavioural development using standardised assessments and reports from the pre-school worker who knew the child best. Children were assessed again at entry to school and the children have been followed up at ages 6, 7, 10 and 11 in primary school and at ages 14 and 16 in secondary school.

The children involved are now aged between 18 and 21. The original sample was spread over 4 academic years. The youngest completed their GCSEs in 2012.

A sample of children who had no pre-school experience were also recruited for comparison.

At GCSE, the benefits of going to pre-school translate into an extra 41 points - the difference between getting, for example, 7 grade Bs versus 7 Cs.

Additional analysis of the EPPSE findings by the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) shows that there are also economic returns. IFS estimate that children who’ve attended pre-school will be £27,000 better off over a lifetime.

DfE enquiries

Central newsdesk 020 7783 8300

General enquiries 0370 000 2288

Investigators

- Ted Meluish (Birkbeck, University of London) - 07855 309427

- Pam Sammons (University of Oxford) - 01865 274142
- Kathy Sylva (University of Oxford) - 01865 274008

Was this page useful?: Was this page useful?

News source: <https://thehub.walthamforest.gov.uk/news-source/govuk>

Source URL: <https://thehub.walthamforest.gov.uk/news/press-release-children-who-have-early-education-get-higher-gcses>