

**Melhuish, E.C., Sylva, K., Sammons, P., Siraj-Blatchford, I., Taggart, B., Dobson, A., Jeavons, M., Lewis, K., Morahan, M. and Sadler, S. (1999). *Technical Paper 4 - The Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) Project: Parent, family and child characteristics in relation to type of pre-school and socio-economic differences* London: DfEE / Institute of Education, University of London.**

Abstract: Information on the characteristics of the parents, families and children was collected by parental interview at the start of the study. This information was used to describe the sample in terms of the parents (labour market participation, socio-economic characteristics, qualifications, marital status and age), the family (composition, ethnicity and language), the child's health, development and behaviour, the child's activities in the home, the use of pre-school provision and childcare history. The variation of the sample's characteristics related to the different types of pre-school centre and also to socio-economic status is reported. Consideration has been given to whether types of pre-school centre differences reflect socio-economic status or whether the differences between the users of different types of pre-school centre go beyond differences in socio-economic status.

The characteristics of parents, families, children and home activities all showed differences related to the family's socio-economic status and the variation between pre-school groups largely reflected differences related to socio-economic status. However childcare histories showed variation between pre-school groups which did not reduce to socio-economic differences. Childcare histories revealed great diversity across the whole sample and within each pre-school group.