

Understanding Quality in Early Years Settings: practitioners' perspectives

Background

The Labour Government considers early years policy a key driver in achieving the wider socio-political goals of eradicating poverty, particularly child poverty, and promoting social inclusion (Baldock *et al.*, 2009). This has resulted in an unprecedented investment in children's services with 'quality' as a central theme. *Every Child Matters* (DfES, 2003) articulated the government vision with multiple references to 'quality' 'education', 'care', 'staffing' and 'training'. *The Ten Year Strategy for Childcare* (HM Treasury, 2004) consolidated this commitment, drawing on evidence from the *Effective Provision of Preschool Education* study (EPPE) (Sylva *et al.*, 2004) with an explicit emphasis on 'high quality provision' as one of the primary objectives of the strategy.

Following an extensive interdepartmental review of services in 2002 (Baldock *et al.*, 2009), and the *Laming Report* into the death of Victoria Climbié (Laming, 2003), Government policy focused on the needs of children, and part of this policy shift was an effort to strengthen multi-agency work with children and their families (Baldock *et al.*, 2009). Initiatives which extended Early Excellence Centres and the Sure Start Programme into Children's Centres were launched with the express purpose of bringing services together. These reforms, through the Children Act 2004, the Childcare Act 2006 and the overarching *Every Child Matters* agenda (DfES, 2003), have led to much wider integration of children's services, drawing together professional teams of practitioners from a range of backgrounds and disciplines to work together in increasingly complex settings. In this new early years landscape, rigorous attention has been paid to establishing 'quality' through standards for practitioners and settings, regulated through official bodies such as Ofsted and monitored by local authorities. The concept of 'quality' in early years services, however, has long been the subject of debate, not least because of the diverse perspectives involved (Dahlberg *et al.*, 2007, Moss, 1994, Penn, 2000) which include children, practitioners (an inclusive term that encompasses all the people working with children in early years settings), parents, managers and politicians (Moss, 1994, Woodhead, 1998). It cannot be assumed that everyone involved in the provision of services for children understands 'quality' in the same way.

An added dimension is the introduction of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) (DfES, 2007), a developmental framework for children up to the age of five, which guides practice in all early years settings and sets out a series of learning goals that all children should attain by the age of five. The EYFS is somewhat contradictory. The non-statutory guidance establishes principles of practice based upon children's play interests, but this appears to conflict with the statutory framework that establishes the legal requirements relating to children's welfare and learning, calibrated by the Early Learning Goals. This contradiction chimes with Moss's concerns about the effects of competing paradigms in early years provision (Moss, 2008).

The principled practice of working with children within a framework of policies that aim to provide flexibility and choice collides with an inflexible system of prioritising targets, inspections and accountability (Anning *et al.*, 2006). This situation is made more complex by being operationalised by a workforce from a diverse range of backgrounds and disciplines. An explanation of these tensions formed the basis of the project.

Objectives

Our objectives were:

4. To understand practitioners' perspectives on 'quality' and 'success' in the context of their particular settings.

This objective was met:

practitioners used the terms 'quality' and 'success' interchangeably (we shall use the term 'quality' henceforth);

discourses vary slightly according to the context of the setting and perceptions of its role within the local community;

quality is an elusive concept, seen in some settings as an aspiration, in others as a dynamic process;

relationships are seen as central to 'quality' in all settings, between all participants in the setting;

aspirations for children differ according to the context of the setting;

partnerships with parents are viewed as important but in different ways in different settings;

the quality of staff is seen as crucial and this has implications for recruitment and development.

5. To examine how these understandings are expressed in the daily experiences of the children with whom they work.

This objective was met through examining children's experiences in relation to the curriculum espoused by the practitioners in each setting. We found that:

a strong correlation existed between practitioners' understandings of 'quality' and children's experiences;

on the other hand, there were also constraints and imperatives in the contexts that shaped children's experiences;

relationships were warm and positive in every setting.

6. To assess the implications of these understandings for practitioners' training and development, particularly in the light of proposed policy changes for the care and education of young children.

This objective was met. The implications for staff training and development were:

the fostering of professional relationships, including informal and formal mentoring and supervision and networks of settings for sharing good practice, should be made a priority;

the issue of status in relation to Qualified Teacher Status and Early Years Professional Status is divisive, and it must be addressed in the quest for quality in early years settings.

In addition to meeting these objectives we also found that each setting we visited was engaged in a struggle of some kind, for quality or against its erosion. The turbulence of recent policy

changes appears to have exacerbated this sense of struggle. These points are discussed in more detail below (see Results).

Methods

We adopted a broadly symbolic interactionist approach to the research (Schwandt, 1998) using a range of data collection methods (in-depth interviews, focused discussions and observations of children) to address the research objectives. This approach allowed us to gain insights into how meanings and shared values were constructed amongst practitioners. Data were collected from 18 early years settings across two London boroughs and in two shire counties (See Table 1 in Appendices). Whilst we do not claim that the sample can necessarily be generalised beyond these contexts, sites were selected from a range of socio-economic contexts, including inner city, outer city, suburban and rural localities in an attempt to reflect the diversity of the early years sector.

Interviews

Qualitative data were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews and focused group discussions from 165 practitioners (See Table 2). We interviewed the head of centre or head teacher in every setting and also practitioners in various roles and at each level of seniority. Interviews were designed to gather information about practitioners' professional histories and values (supplemented by a biographical questionnaire), their understandings of the contexts of the settings (structure, aims and purposes) and their perspectives on quality, which included an exploration of their ideals, aspirations, inspirations and constraints.

The focus groups involved activities and discussions about the concept of 'quality' in early years settings. These activities also provided us with the opportunity to observe relationships and interactions and to draw inferences about the way the staff group worked together.

Observations

Observations were conducted using the Target Child method (Sylva *et al.*, 1980). Each child was selected at random by the research team and was observed for periods between 30 minutes and one hour. The activities of each child, interactions with children or adults and events happening around them were recorded every two minutes. A total of 70 children were observed in all (See Table 3).

Workshop

In the later stages of the project a workshop was held to which participating practitioners and members of the project advisory panel were invited. The purpose of this event was in part to disseminate findings relating to earlier stages, and also to further probe data pertaining to the implications of practitioners' understandings of quality for staff training and professional development. Data were collected through discussion and activities focusing on staff recruitment, development and related issues.

Analysis

The data were analysed using frameworks derived from classic studies of children's learning (Isaacs, 1932), Government documents focusing on children's learning, (DfEE & QCA, 2000 , DfES, 1990 , DfES, 2007) and also a synthesis of research about children's learning (Ball & Royal Society of, 1994). From these a series of analytic lenses was devised that allowed us

to gain insights into emerging themes in practitioners' understandings of quality. A framework for defining quality devised by Tanner and her colleagues (Tanner *et al.*, 2006) was helpful in illuminating the priorities of the settings. We drew on Maclure's (2003) discussion of discourse analysis to help us to recognise how values and practices are fixed and delineated within group cultures, and we found Goodson's (2003) ideas on professional identity highly relevant, particularly his work on the ways in which the official implementation of change can erode professional confidence.

Our analysis of the observation data focused upon interactions between children and adults, and the kinds of experiences the children had in the settings. In their review of psychological studies, Sylva and Pugh (2005) marshal research evidence which shows how young children learn through interactions and conversations with adults and older peers. We referred to the EPPE study (Sylva *et al.*, 2004), the EYFS (DfES, 2007) and to Susan Isaacs's revolutionary observational work with children (1932) to clarify our understandings of quality experiences for children and to relate them to the discourses of the settings we visited. With these studies and texts in mind, we analysed episodes of 'sustained shared thinking' between adults and children and examples of first hand experiences. We also noted examples of children managing resources as they initiated activities and pursued their own play agendas.

Ethics

There were particular ethical issues in this research because it was conducted with and around young children. Informed consent was obtained from the children's parents as a matter of course but, given the age of the children, not formally from the children themselves. Instead we sought their assent, paying careful attention to their facial expressions, body language and utterances, so if they showed any sign of not wishing to be involved, we stopped at once. At no point did we photograph the children.

RESULTS

We report our findings below under headings that correspond to the objectives:

1. Practitioners' understandings of 'quality' and 'success' in the context of their particular settings.

As already stated, 'quality' and 'success' were used interchangeably by the participants. Our data suggest a commonality across settings in the discourse of 'quality', and also some subtle differences which seemed to be linked to the context of the setting.

Practitioners talked about 'quality' in terms of relationships, aspirations for children, partnerships with parents and the wider community and the quality of staff. When asked about 'quality' in relation to the setting, they all referred to official measures such as Ofsted inspections and children's attainments against the EYFS Profiles. Officially published outcomes of inspections were cited in all 18 settings as an indicator of 'quality', if a 'Good' or 'Outstanding' grade was achieved. But they also talked about 'quality' in less tangible terms: their aspirations for children, the kinds of experiences they wished children to have, resources (time as well as materials), relationships and shared values.

These less tangible indicators suggested that each practitioner had personal templates for 'quality' which were composed from experiences of working with children and the influence of more experienced practitioners (see Results Q3 below). The combination of official

determinants of 'quality' and personal templates may explain the elusive nature of the concept of 'quality'. Our data did not yield a precise definition, but there seemed to be two distinct ways of understanding 'quality': as a process, dynamic, ever-shifting and locally determined, or as a target, something to be achieved but essentially static and defined by statutory frameworks and regulations (Tanner *et al.*, 2006). In settings where 'quality' was seen as dynamic the statutory frameworks were used as a starting point, a process that seemed to be particularly strong in four of the Children's Centres. In these settings we observed a culture of debate or 'positive dissensus' (Mac Naughton, 2005) in which practitioners constructed, deconstructed and reconstructed their understandings as a team. One explanation for this might be that the leaders of these settings foster a culture in which contest and argument are viewed as healthy in pursuit of 'quality'. So in some settings, relationships were well-established and dissensus was safe, and indeed encouraged, while in others, there was more constraint and less evidence of dynamism as practitioners struggled to understand new roles in the face of rapid change or to challenge deeply entrenched attitudes and structures. In these settings practitioners tended to talk about 'quality' in terms of external indicators. Further research would shed light on how these cultures develop in complex early years settings.

This theme of 'struggle' is a pervasive strand in the data, and practitioners in each of the settings we visited talked about it in one form or another: the struggle to become established in the community, to form relationships with parents, to fulfil expectations. Two of the Children's Centres (see Table 1) were in transition from nursery status, and the Heads of these settings were managing full-scale building projects with associated budgets, in addition to their normal roles. Two others had recently completed major building projects and a further four had moved to new premises shortly before the research commenced. Schools, in turn, were struggling with the creation of new facilities and services as required by the *Every Child Matters* legislation. These struggles seem to symbolise the turbulence of rapid and far reaching policy initiatives, and are indicative of the tensions that practitioners experience trying to reconcile their beliefs about 'quality' in the shifting landscape of early years services. An area in which we found differences between settings in understandings of 'quality' was in the curriculum offered to children. In some settings, practitioners said that children's activities should be based upon children's interests, and that the role of the practitioner was to observe, extend and support child-initiated play agendas. In others, the emphasis was on activities prepared by adults in which children were expected to participate. While the EPPE report (Sylva *et al.*, 2004) recommends a balance of adult and child initiated activities, practitioners in Children's Centres appeared to place more value on supporting child initiated activities. On the other hand, practitioners in Reception Classes appeared to place more value on adult-led activities, in some cases leaving child-initiated activities until everything else had been completed. We infer that these differences are rooted in the contexts of the settings and perhaps in the cultural differences between the professional identities of teachers and early years practitioners. Teachers in Foundation Stage Units are aware of the expectations of colleagues in Key Stage 1, of the demands of national strategies for literacy and numeracy, and the pressure to prepare children for later stages of education. In contrast, Children's Centre practitioners have different priorities. In our study, they tended to see their work in terms of providing rich experiences for children, in building confidence and independence and making up for perceived deficiencies in children's lives, which is of course an element of the remit of Children's Centres.

An important element of the EYFS is the increased focus on partnership with parents (Baldock *et al.*, 2009). Practitioners in all the settings said that partnership with parents were crucial for 'quality'. Our data suggest that differing priorities in the settings result in these partnerships being understood in different ways. Children's Centre practitioners and nurseries described partnerships with parents as intrinsic to their work with children and an

essential element of 'quality', seeing these partnerships as symbiotic. They talked about knowing parents very well, and many offered parents unlimited access to the setting. School-based settings, on the other hand, tended to have demarcated times and places when parents were allowed in, and practitioners in these settings talked about partnerships in terms of providing information in a transmission model (Epstein & Saunders, 2002).

The importance of relationships was a theme that recurred in the majority of the interviews and focus groups. Practitioners in all the settings demonstrated their commitment to the children's welfare, development and learning through warm, positive relationships with children and we had no doubts about their sincerity. Without positive relationships founded on mutual trust, shared values and a common purpose, practitioners said that 'quality' provision was impossible.

These relationships between staff teams were said to be a critical element, reflected in the priority given in some settings to the induction of new staff (See Q3 below). However, there appeared to be a lack of confidence in the initial training of childcare workers, with at least three of the participating Children's Centres declining to recruit newly-qualified staff at NVQ Level 2 and 3 (Children's Workforce Development Council, 2009). This practice, if it becomes widespread, could lead to a divided workforce, with experienced, well-qualified staff employed exclusively by well-funded Children's Centres and less qualified, less experienced practitioners staffing private day nurseries and less well-funded nurseries. Two other Children's Centres are selective about which training providers they will use, a finding that raises questions about the inequities of initial training. Our interview data revealed concerns about the academic capability of newly-qualified practitioners, notably that some were unable to write well enough to complete the requisite reports and observations on children. In one Children's Centre in our sample, all practitioners were expected to write their own reports. Support was provided to enable them to do so, which was a drain on time and limited resources. The issue of social class is significant here. As Osgood (2008) points out, working class practitioners, who make up the majority of the early years workforce who are qualified to the equivalent of NVQ level 2 and 3, are inherently disadvantaged in terms of their professional identity by the essentially middle class discourses and values that shape and define early years policy and practice. The issue of status in staff teams was also raised in discussion about 'quality', and is discussed below in Q 3.

2. Examining how these understandings are expressed in the daily experiences of the children with whom they work

To address this question, 70 observations of randomly selected children were conducted (See Table 3). In summary, there appeared to be a strong correlation between practitioners' understandings of 'quality' and how these were expressed in the curriculum and the experiences that children had, but there were also some divergences. For example, practitioners expressed their commitment to active learning through child-led activity, whereas in our observation data there are examples of children sitting passively during extended carpet periods. On the other hand, there was strong correlation between practitioners' emphasis on the importance of relationships to 'quality', and the warm, positive relationships we observed between practitioners and children in all the settings.

Our observation data were analysed for sustained shared thinking and first-hand experiences (see Methods, above). Whereas many practitioners spoke of the importance of these interactions, we found that frequently interactions with children were for managerial or monitoring purposes. In 70 observations, we found 52 instances of sustained shared thinking between children and adults, in contrast to 298 instances of short, managerial interactions ('do your coat up'; 'please don't run...'). Perhaps the prevalence of short interactions is unsurprising. What is striking, however, is that only two of the sustained

complex interactions took place in school-based settings, with the remaining 50 occurring in Children's Centres or nurseries, suggesting that opportunities for sustained shared thinking seem to occur more readily in Children's Centres and nurseries than in school-based settings. We found 33 examples of first-hand experiences across the 70 observations: for example, children building walls with real bricks using cement they had mixed themselves, imaginative uses of light boxes, innovative ways of painting and representation, children planting and growing vegetables that they would later eat, cake-making for a picnic to be held for parents and carers later in the week. Five of these observations were made in school settings, with the remaining 28 in Children's Centres and nurseries.

Our observations show that whereas many of the children's activities were planned in advance, Children's Centre and nursery staff seemed adept at identifying learning opportunities based on the children's interests and at introducing spontaneous activities. In some settings, children had free access to resources so that *they* could decide what they needed for their activities. The role of adult in these settings was to observe children's play, support and develop it, and also to observe and to listen, so that children's learning and progress could be recorded. In other settings, adult-led activities, in which children had to participate, took priority. Resources were set out for the children to choose and use, and they were expected to stop what they were doing and work with adults at set times. In Reception classes we saw a more formal structure to the day, with children choosing their own activities from a limited selection at specified times of day, and considerable time spent on focused literacy and numeracy activities. In this more regulated context the pressures of performativity seem to be having what practitioners describe as a negative effect on opportunities for play (Mahony & Hextall, 2000). The pressure on EYFS teachers to prepare children for Key Stage 1, particularly to get them used to learning in formal ways, was noted in an earlier study, (Adams *et al.*, 2004), and was also identified as problematic in the recent Cambridge Primary Review (Alexander & Flutter, 2009). Professional identity linked to organisational culture clearly plays a part in how 'quality' is understood in settings, perhaps because of the way that services for children and their families have developed in recent years.

3. Assessing the implications of these understandings for practitioners' training and development, particularly in the light of proposed policy changes for the care and education of young children.

Consistent themes in our data were the importance for 'quality' of good relationships, effective teamwork and good quality staff. Our data suggest that practitioners were aware of the importance of clearly articulated, shared values, and the majority of Head teachers and Centre Leaders took steps to induct and develop practitioners in the particular ethos of the setting. These steps included the establishment of informal mentoring networks within and between settings, formal opportunities to share practice and experience and regular continuing professional development activities. The importance of early career experiences of working with knowledgeable, charismatic colleagues was raised in individual interviews by eighteen practitioners, seven of whom were Head Teachers or Centre Leaders, which suggests that induction and mentoring are significant for professional development. However, induction only happens in Children's Centres and nurseries if the head prioritises it and there are few incentives for practitioners to attend training sessions in their own time and, in some instances, at their own expense.

The issue of the status of teachers in early years settings emerged as a significant factor in the interview data. Experienced practitioners who held qualifications in Childcare and Education expressed dissatisfaction with the perceived higher professional status of teachers, believing that teachers may not know as much about young children or playful learning as

they do (Broadhead, 2004). Yet teachers are deemed more competent and essential for 'quality' provision (Sylva *et al.*, 2004), a notion supported by the current officially determined ratios of staff to children, which indicate that one person with QTS is worth more than another with lesser qualifications. Whereas the findings of the longitudinal EPPE study (Sylva *et al.*, 2004) suggest that in settings where staff have higher qualifications children make more progress, implying that higher qualifications may provide the means to better 'quality', other research (e.g. (Alexander & Flutter, 2009)) suggests that there may be inconsistency in the quality of children's experiences and that teachers, trained to at least degree level, do not inevitably have a deep understanding of the purpose of the EYFS. Furthermore, other settings (such as the private day nursery in our sample) are concerned that the cost of employing graduates or practitioners with Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) are prohibitive and that 'quality' may be eroded as a result.

Our data suggest that practitioners were not convinced that a graduate workforce is a guarantee of 'quality' provision. In the workshop, Centre Leaders expressed the view that newly qualified teachers are generally knowledgeable about curriculum delivery but lack the understanding of children's learning that would inform the creation of effective learning environments. This raises disturbing questions about initial teacher training in relation to early years education. The newly introduced EYPS may address some of these issues, but it is too early to say whether it will resolve them all. Furthermore, the Government's intention to introduce a graduate into each early years setting by 2015 (Baldock *et al.*, 2009) may have an unforeseen outcome in a reduction in confidence of staff with lower qualifications, who perceive that they do not have the skills to carry out certain tasks that are the preserve of QTS colleagues. Whether they actually have these skills is a moot point; that they *perceive* that they have not is deskilling and de-motivating, and may ultimately lead to the loss of experienced practitioners.

Conclusion

The concept of 'quality' was elusive, and was complicated by the struggle in which each of the settings we visited was engaged. Schools struggle with requirements under *Every Child Matters* and with expectations of colleagues in Key Stage 1 whilst Children's Centres struggle with the practicalities of establishing themselves in the communities they serve.

The context in which practitioners work shapes their understandings of 'quality', in that practitioners in school settings focus on preparing children for the rigours of Key Stage 1, while Children's Centres and nurseries focus on creating experiences for children based on play and compensating for perceived deficiencies in their lives. Our data, admittedly drawn from a small sample, reveal marked inequities in children's experiences.

Our findings regarding staff training suggest that urgent attention should be paid to issue of status in early years settings, and that creating properly resourced professional networks and mentoring schemes could be a way of ameliorating the lack of professional confidence we found in some of the settings we visited.

Activities

We have presented three refereed conference papers:

- Alexander, E. (2008) **A Successful Child? An exploration of early years practitioners' perspectives in the context of Understanding 'Quality' in Early Years Setting**, British Educational Research Association Annual Conference, Edinburgh, 3rd – 6th September 2008.
- Cottle, M. (2008) **Organising Children's Centres: issues and challenges**, British Educational Research Association Annual Conference, Edinburgh, 3rd – 6th September 2008.

- Alexander, E. (2007) **Listening to Children: balancing respect and privacy in an ESRC-funded Project**, British Educational Research Association Annual Conference, London, 5th – 8th September 2007.

In addition, four proposals have been accepted for refereed conferences to be held later this year: two papers have been accepted for European Early Childhood Education Research Association Annual Conference, Strasbourg, (August 2009) and two for British Educational Research Association Conference, Manchester (September 2009).

We have also presented findings within our local academic community:

- Alexander, A. (2009) **Understanding 'Quality': observing children's experiences**, symposium paper, Roehampton Research Conference in Education, Roehampton, December 18, 2008.
- Cottle, M. (2007) **"What's it like here?" Using visual research methods to understand children's perspectives on their early years settings**, symposium paper, Roehampton Research Conference in Education, Roehampton, December 14, 2007.

We have engaged users of research in several ways:

Our project advisory group included members from early years settings (schools and children's centres) and representatives from a local authority, a policy organisation and the academic community.

We presented the project findings at a Dissemination Event held at Roehampton University which was attended by representatives from the academic community, the National Foundation for Educational Research, early years practitioners and other users.

Dr Alexander presented early findings for discussion at the London Montessori Early Years Forum.

We also conducted a Dissemination Workshop for the participants in the research, in which findings were shared and further data were generated through a series of collaborative activities. We will be hosting a British Educational Research Association Special Interest Group Event on the implications of our findings for Higher Education Institutions at Roehampton University (July, 2009).

Outputs

To date, two papers have been submitted to peer-refereed journals:

Alexander, E. **A Successful Child? An exploration of early years practitioners' perspectives in the context of Understanding 'Quality' in Early Years Settings**, *Early Years* (under review)

Cottle, M. **Organising Children's Centres: issues and challenges**, *International Journal of Early Years Education* (under review)

A further three papers are in preparation and will be submitted to *British Educational Research Journal*, *Journal of Education for Teaching* and *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal* by end of July 2009. These will focus on practitioners' understandings of quality, children's experiences and implications for staff training and development respectively.

Impacts

This research has generated considerable interest within the early years community and wider:

A copy of the paper presented at the Dissemination Lecture has been requested by the National Foundation for Educational Research, and the Children's Workforce Development Council.

Evaluation of the Dissemination Workshop showed that the participants valued the opportunity to engage with the findings and take discussions back to their colleagues. One of the participating settings has approached us regarding future research collaboration.

The BERA SIG Event will provide further opportunity for discussion with colleagues in the academic community.

Dr Alexander has been approached to act as consultant on quality issues for the Day Care Trust.

Future Research Priorities

The following issues for further research arose from the project:

- The significance of practitioners' personal templates for 'quality', framed as 'what is good for children' and based upon experience, life history, age, class and gender seems to be significant. A fruitful area of research would be an investigation into the relationship between biography and professional identity in early years practitioners.
- Professional identity and status are important issues in this enquiry. Research into how professional identity is constructed in early years settings, by individuals and by groups, is important as the sector evolves in a new landscape of education and care.
- The development of Children's Centres as organisations could be investigated from a cultural perspective.

Word count: 4998

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Appendices

Table 1: Contextual Information on Settings

Type of setting	Funding	Location	Designated Children's Centre
Children's Centre	Maintained	Inner city	Transitional*
Children's Centre	Maintained	Outer city	Transitional*
Children's Centre	Maintained	Outer city	1-3 years
Children's Centre	Maintained	Outer city	1-3 years
Children's Centre	Maintained	Rural	1-3 years
Children's Centre	Maintained	Rural	1-3 years
Children's Centre	Maintained	Suburban	1-3 years
Children's Centre	Maintained	Suburban	1-3 years
Children's Centre	Maintained	Suburban	1-3 years
Children's Centre	Maintained	Inner city	Over 3 years
Children's Centre	Maintained	Rural	Over 3 years
Nursery	Maintained	Inner city	n/a
Nursery	Private	Rural	n/a
Nursery	Maintained	Rural	n/a
School	Maintained	Outer city	n/a
School	Maintained	Rural	n/a
School	Maintained	Suburban	n/a
School	Maintained	Suburban	n/a

*Transitional setting (due to or had become a Children's Centre within 6 months to year of field visit)

Table 2: Practitioner Roles by Setting Type

Type of Setting	Current Role						
	Nursery Nurse / Officer	Teacher	Assistants	Head / Manager	Other senior roles*	Early Years Educator**	Totals
Children's Centre	37	27	10	10	9	13	106
Free-Standing Nursery School	7	5	6	3	6	0	27
School (FS)	3	12	13	4	0	0	32
Totals	47	44	29	17	15	13	165

*Other senior roles' does not include practitioners with a dual role (e.g. nursery nurse and senior role), these practitioners selected their principal role

**Early Years Educator was a universal title implemented in Children's Centres as part of financial restructuring of the setting

Table 3: Target Child Observation

To cite this output:

Alexander, Elise (2009). Understanding Quality and Success in Early Years Settings / Practitioners' Perspectives: Full Research Report
ESRC End of Award Report, RES-061-23-0012. Swindon: ESRC

REFERENCE No. RES-061-23-0012

Setting	Age of children observed in years				Total
	0<2	2<3	3<4	4<5	
Children's Centre	3	8	20	13	44
Nursery	2	0	4	3	9
School	n/a	n/a	9	8	17
Totals	5	8	33	24	70