

**Peers Early Education Partnership
(PEEP)**

**Annual Report
2007–2008**

peep

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Section 1 Reference and Administration details

NAME OF CHARITY AND WORKING NAME

Peers Early Education Partnership (PEEP)

CHARITY REGISTRATION NO:

1049764

REGISTERED OFFICE AND OPERATIONAL ADDRESS

The PEEP Centre

Littlemore

OXFORD

OX4 6JZ

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Sir Colin McColl KCMG (Chairman)

Tim Brighthouse

Bernard Clarke

Michael O'Regan OBE

Alison Street (resigned 1.4.07)

Helena Mitchell

Lesley Staggs (appointed 16.7.07)

ADVISORS

Rosemary Peacocke

Alison Street

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Peter Silva

Section 2 Governance and management

CONSTITUTION

The Peers Early Education Partnership was established under a Trust Deed dated 15 September 1995 and registered as a charity on 10 October 1995. The Trust Deed details the objects of the charity and powers of the Trustees and was last amended on 17 June 1999.

ORGANISATION

The Trust is governed by a Board of Trustees. New trustees are invited to join the board by the current trustees. The Trust Deed sets a maximum of 10 on the number of trustees who can serve at any one time. Day-to-day management decisions are delegated to the Chief Executive, who is responsible to the Trustees. The Chief Executive is supported by a staff of 15.5 (FTE), including a small management team.

Section 3 Aims, Objectives and Activities

Aims of PEEP

The objects of the Peers Early Education Partnership as set out in the governing document are:

- To advance the education of children between the ages of 0-5.
- To promote research for the benefit of the public in the field of educating children.

A. Advancing children's education

PEEP focuses on this aim in three main ways:

- Delivering of the *Learning Together* programme to families in communities in Oxfordshire.
- Providing professional development through training, support and mentoring to practitioners who work with families.
- Working in partnership with central and local government and other voluntary organisations to disseminate *Learning Together*.

This is a five-year programme (birth to four) focusing on three areas of learning: literacy and numeracy, self esteem and positive attitudes towards learning. It values and builds on families' existing knowledge and experience. PEEP is about making the most of everyday learning opportunities at home, such as listening, talking, playing, singing and sharing books and stories.

WORKING IN COMMUNITIES – Oxford Accredited Centre

PEEP staff have now been delivering the PEEP *Learning Together* programme to families in the Oxford area for thirteen years. PEEP manages this work directly and raises the required funding. The work is done in accordance with a Strategic Operational Framework, which articulates models through which the intervention works.

Specialised applications of *Learning Together* are being developed and written up and made available for use by others to meet the needs of specific groups or individual families. The development of these specialised applications has increasingly involved working in partnership with other professionals to deliver the programme.

Working in local communities in Oxfordshire is invaluable in that it:

- directly supports parents/carers with their children's development. Accreditation through the Open College Network (OCN) is also offered to parents/carers.
- enables the development of new applications of the programme
- provides a place for newly-trained practitioners to see how the programme works as well as providing an opportunity for experienced PEEP practitioners to extend their expertise by experiencing applications of the programme they wish to apply in their own communities.

Open access activities. These focus on drop-in facilities in which parents have the opportunity to get involved in supporting their children's learning without committing themselves to regular attendance.

Home visiting. Families with newly-born babies and/or new to the area are offered a home visit, during which they explore how they could use PEEP ideas and materials to support their child's learning at home.

Home programme. Home programmes are offered to families that have complex needs which are best met, initially at least, by supporting them in their home.

Groups. A variety of groups are offered to families in community venues. The standard PEEP groups offer a free, universal service to families. They may be age-specific (e.g. babies, twos) or multi-age level. Specialised groups, comprising special applications of the programme for families with particular needs, continue to be offered to families. These include a transition group 'Getting ready for pre-school' and a sensory group for children with special needs.

Comprehensive, flexible access activities. *Room to Play* is a project run in a former shop in a community shopping centre, where parents and carers can come when they like and stay as long as they like. It opens for 30 hours a week over six days, throughout the year. Experienced PEEP practitioners offer play activities and support, focusing on each family in an individual and informal way.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional development is offered to practitioners who wish to:

- deliver the PEEP *Learning Together* programme
- develop their ability to be reflective in their practice.

This professional development is the basis on which the *Learning Together* programme is disseminated nationally. Training courses and support are offered, with advice and the sharing of good practice, to such organisations as local Sure Start children's centres, family centres, schools and local authorities to run the PEEP *Learning Together* programme.

The following spectrum of services is offered:

Consultation visits are offered in which preliminary discussions can take place with senior management in an organisation/local authority to determine the potential scope for using the PEEP *Learning Together* programme.

Information sessions provide managers, practitioners and support professionals with an overview of PEEP as an organisation and the *Learning Together* programme in particular, and an opportunity to ask questions and see the materials.

Visitor days to the Accredited Centre in Oxford are offered for people wishing to see specific activities so that they can familiarise with PEEP before they start using *Learning Together* or see specific specialised applications of *Learning Together* so that they can extend the work they already do. They can talk in detail to practitioners about how the programme works in practice.

PEEP for Practitioners training is available to those who will be delivering or managing the *Learning Together* programme. Practitioners go on to become registered, with an option to gain university accreditation with Oxford Brookes University, at undergraduate (15 CAT points) or Masters' (20 CAT points) level.

The **PEEP website** (www.peep.org.uk) provides general information for people new to PEEP, as well as having an extensive log-in area for PEEP trained practitioners, containing planning and other support documents and a discussion forum.

B. Promoting research in the field of educating children

PEEP focuses on this aim in three main ways:

- Evaluating the effectiveness of PEEP work in the community.
- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the professional development offered through training, support and mentoring to practitioners who work with families.
- Conducting research in partnership with universities, other organisations or with central and local government on subjects that would be of general benefit to all work being done in education. This work would be of benefit to PEEP but does not necessarily focus on PEEP programmes.

Main Annual Objectives and strategies for 2007-08

Strategic and funding

1. Strengthen Trustees group and establish an Early Years' advisory group with trustee representation.
2. Formulate fundraising plan.
3. Establish new pattern of financial reporting.

Accredited Centre - Oxford

1. Maintain a core programme through the Oxford accredited centre.
2. Maintain the central services of the core programme (home visits, home programmes, standard groups, open access activities).
3. Develop flexible services and activities within a core programme (Getting ready for pre-school (transition) project, Early Explorers project).
4. Mentor Oxfordshire children's centre practitioners and support student placements.

New projects

1. Develop Early Learning Partnership project 1 (ELPP1).
2. Develop Room to Play shopping centre project – including evaluation.
3. Pilot special educational needs PEEP ('Sensory') group.

Dissemination

1. Maintain programme of delivery for *PEEP for Practitioners (PFP)* 2-day course.
2. Develop and monitor registration for practitioners.
3. Seek City and Guilds accreditation for PFP training.
4. Develop and maintain programme of delivery for *PEEP for Practitioners Extended* course (with university accreditation).
5. Plan, evaluate and report on ELPP3 (Early Learning Partnership project 3).
6. Support and develop PEEP trainer team and practitioner networks.
7. Develop new training – *PfP Additional*.
8. Develop new and maintain existing local authority (training and support) agreements.
9. Update PEEP website and practitioner log-in area.

Promoting research

1. Present a symposium at European Early Childhood Education Association (EECERA) conference.
2. Continue evaluation of Room to Play project.
3. Continue to disseminate findings of existing PEEP research studies.

Section 4 Achievements and performance

Achievements

A. Advancing Children's Education

LOCAL PROGRAMME

Open Access activities

Weekly play and support sessions are run by PEEP practitioners at two child health clinics in Oxford. Practitioners in these two clinics had contact with an average of 25 families each week. They are a useful way of making contact with isolated families, and offering some of the families a place on a home programme or group, or sign-posting them onto other local support. A strong working relationship has developed between the health visitors and the PEEP practitioners. Health visitors at both clinics reiterate that they find the PEEP presence invaluable, with the joint working supporting much more effective work with more vulnerable families.

Home visits

205 visits were made in the Leys to families with newly-born babies or to families who were new to the area. These visits are made in consultation with health visitor and follow after the usual health visits, thus facilitating the development of any support that families might need following the visit of the health professional. Close contact is also kept with outreach workers in cases where more pronounced needs involve social services or the courts.

Home Programme

Home programmes were begun with 19 families during this period, of which 11 were completed. Seven are still active and one is under review. We have been successful in identifying and working with families with more complex needs. This is partly due to our partnership work with health visitors, social workers, children's centre family workers, who refer families to PEEP, and partly because of our contact with families in two child health clinics. Examples include specific needs that are being addressed are depression, social isolation, relationship difficulties and domestic violence. Although general outcomes can be difficult to quantify, work is focussed on supporting the relationship between parent and child. Improvement in this relationship has led to the removal of the child from the Child Protection Register.

Community Groups

a. Standard PEEP groups

There were 21 standard PEEP groups during the year (seven per term) with 147 children and their parents/carers attending.

There were: 9 baby groups with 67 families attending.

6 groups for ones with 62 families attending.

6 groups for twos with 62 families attending.

NB: some families attended a group at more than one age level.

b. Specialised applications:

Sensory PEEP group. A new application of the PEEP *Learning Together* model for parents/carers of children with profound special educational needs was devised and delivered by a PEEP practitioner and an Early Years' Special Educational Needs Inclusion Teacher. Seven children with profound and multiple learning difficulties

and their parents attended the six-week course and there was very positive feedback and almost 100% attendance.

Early Explorers group for isolated families. This is part of the Early Explorers project to support more isolated or vulnerable families. The open access approach referred to above enables initial contact to be made with these families made. In the East Oxford clinic, health visitors and PEEP practitioners offer vulnerable families a place on a home programme or at a group specifically designed to support them.

Comprehensive, flexible access activities

Room to Play (RTP) has now been operating for two years and receives upwards of 250 visitors each week (adults and children). Over the last 12 months, it has received 6963 visits from children and 5840 visits from their adult carers (about 10% of whom are men). Many of the families, who are regular visitors, have complex and wide-ranging needs, and Room to Play often complements other PEEP provision that families are accessing, as well as sign-posting them to other forms of support. It offers an effective way of working with families along the whole range of the contact to engagement spectrum.

Mentoring

Experienced PEEP practitioners have mentored workers from several children's centres who have recently completed PEEP training. This has contributed to the quality and sustainability of the support provided for families, as PEEP programme delivery is embedded and more practitioners become involved.

In East Oxford and Grandpont Children's Centres one practitioner, based in each, has been supported to run home programmes and a group for BME families. These families are now engaging with the school in ways that they have never done before. Also, an outreach worker was supported to run a group for vulnerable families and with a play session in their child health clinic.

In Banbury an inclusion worker was supported with a group and home programmes for BME families.

We provided placements for two students from Oxford Brookes University, a trainee paediatric nurse and a health and social care student. They both attended *PEEP for Practitioners* training and supported delivery in PEEP groups.

Partnership working

As well as the joint working with local health visitors and other professionals described earlier, there has continued to be a close relationship with the Leys Children's Centre in whose area we deliver groups. PEEP staff attend planning and advisory meetings, as well as participating in and contributing to the training of children's centre workers. One of the PEEP managers chaired Oxfordshire Parenting Forum, while two managers have been involved in county partnership with other organisations, exploring how both families and parenting providers can contribute to Oxfordshire's Parenting Support Strategy. The CEO continues to serve on national bodies, including the Family Reading Campaign Steering Committee and on the Reading Forum, and works closely with several other organisations.

Early Learning Partnership Project - 1

PEEP was contracted by two of the seven lead organisations within this project, which aimed to 'engage and support isolated families who are least likely to engage with statutory services' to deliver programmes based on tried, tested and evaluated methodologies. PEEP worked with the Pre-school Learning Alliance (PLA) to train and

support 45 practitioners from the PLA and National Childminders Association (NCMA) to deliver PEEP in home programmes and group settings across parts of Staffordshire and the South Lakes. PEAL and ICAN are also part of this work. PEEP's CEO gave a presentation on PEEP at the PLA annual conference. PEEP also trained and supported staff from Barnardos in the south west and north east.

DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

Consultation meetings and Information sessions

Consultation meetings and information sessions with a range of organisations have continued to provide a useful introduction to PEEP for managers and practitioners. The Strategic Operational Framework diagrams have made it much easier to explain to local authorities and other organisations what PEEP does and how it works.

Visitors' days

Visitors came from government (Beverly Hughes, Minister for Children, Young People and Families), funding bodies, a dozen organisations using or interested in using the PEEP programme from within the UK, two from abroad and several using the PEEP programme within Oxfordshire. Foreign visitors were from the European Family Learning Project, and from APAR in Lisbon. The Portuguese project has been supported and trained by PEEP after translating PEEP materials. Staff from Lisbon have visited Oxford, and PEEP staff also visited Portugal to observe, discuss and advise on the development of the project.

Training

- **PEEP for Practitioners (PFP) training** continues to grow, with 794 practitioners attending the two-day course during the year, over a hundred more than the previous year. More than half the delegates were from Sure Start children centres and a quarter from schools/colleges (from nursery and pre-school to universities). The remainder were employed by early years' centres, community centres, local authorities (including education, family learning, libraries, portage), health services and voluntary sector organisations. Their occupations were similarly wide ranging. The majority were early years or family support workers, while the others included managers/ co-ordinators, teachers, outreach workers, health visitors, psychologists, librarians, speech and language specialists, parents and volunteers.
- The 60 PFP training events were held throughout the UK, with people being trained from all the government regions. This year much of our training was funded by the workforce development strand of the DfES's **Early Learning Partnership project** (ELP3). ELP3 aimed to provide training that enhances skills in the workforce to build effective partnerships with parents to support their involvement in their child's early learning. This reflects the aims of PFP training. Uptake was particularly strong in the south west, reflecting both the consolidation of PEEP delivery across urban areas in Bristol (where PEEP is part of the core offer for families) and new PEEP expansion into disadvantaged rural areas in Devon and Cornwall. Similarly, existing PEEP delivery was strengthened with more practitioners being trained by our regional trainers in places, such as Aberdeen, Mid-Lothian and Derby, while it also spread in newer areas, such as Westminster and the Scottish Borders.
- Following a successful pilot, **PEEP for Practitioners Extended** training was officially launched, which leads to PEEP registration with **accreditation from Oxford Brookes University**. 59 PEEP-trained practitioners attended the additional one-day PFP extended training at undergraduate level, and 26 at Masters level. Continuing tutor support was also offered through a half-day workshop and 1:1 support online and on the telephone.

- We have mapped *PEEP for Practitioners* registration to the **City and Guilds** qualification 'Engaging parents in their children's early learning' unit within the new integrated qualification framework. This work is being supported by the ELP3 accreditation team.
- We have mapped all training content to the **National Occupational Standards** for work with parents, and have started mapping it to the Early Years Foundation Stage, ready for its launch in September.
- A set of **training principles** for all PEEP training was agreed on, which will ensure that the ethos and approach taken in training will remain consistent.
- A PFP Additional training course *Learning Together: Strengthening relationships with Parents* was developed and successfully delivered in Lincolnshire.

Registration

- 431 people who had done PEEP training signed up for practitioner registration on our website, a 70% increase on last year. The first 34 practitioners submitted their portfolios, based on their planning, delivery, reviews and an observation of their PEEP work with families, and became registered PEEP Practitioners.
- The first bi-annual PEEP accreditation exam board was held in December for the pilot cohort, with five passing at undergraduate level (15 CAT points) and three at Masters' level (20 CAT points). The external examiner commented that the reflective nature of the portfolios was exemplary.

Local authority (training and support) Agreements

These were set up for Peterborough City Council, Hampshire County Council, City of Edinburgh Council and Staffordshire County Council, bringing the total to nine. They enable experienced PEEP practitioners, who have been inducted as PEEP for Practitioner trainers, to be employed by their respective council to deliver *PEEP for Practitioners* training to employees of their council at a reduced rate. It also extends our training capacity, as trainers also deliver PFP training courses for us in other areas which are beyond their council borders. The agreements demonstrate the local authorities' strategic approach to offering the PEEP *Learning Together* programme to local families. Trainers are supported via termly meetings and regular phone, email and website contact.

Website

The PEEP website is largely aimed at people working with families, who are interested in or already using the PEEP *Learning Together* programme. It contains a log-in area for PEEP trained practitioners, with many downloadable documents and a discussion forum. Downloads include session plans and support for registration. There were over 78,000 visits to the website this year and more than 13,000 documents were downloaded.

B. Promoting Research

European Early Childhood Education Association (EECERA) conference:

Prague, August 2007. Alison Street and Sally Smith collaborated with Peter Hannon from the University of Sheffield to present a self-organised symposium entitled 'Supporting parents as children's first educators: theory in practice.' They presented recent research findings on how the ORIM framework (opportunities, recognition, interaction and modelling) has been used in this way, both in the REAL project in Sheffield (Hannon) and in the PEEP Room to Play project (Smith), followed by a recent study on maternal singing to babies. They discussed the implications for ways of

supporting parents' interactions and recognition of their role in enhancing communication and early learning.

Room to Play evaluation: The second phase of the evaluation of *Room to Play* (a comprehensive, flexible access project) by Oxford University Department of Educational Studies (Coxon C, Evangelou M and Sylva K) was completed in August. The final phase report is due in autumn 2008. Broadly, its findings so far indicate that Room to Play is being used by a very diverse group of people for a range of reasons, and that it had made contact with and begun to support many isolated families. The issues emerging from the study continue to inform the on-going development of the project and are contributing to the development of a model for similar provision that could be developed in other areas. Quantitative and qualitative methods were used: semi-structured interviews with PEEP staff, observation, a quantitative questionnaire and interviews with users.

We have continued to disseminate results of two PEEP studies by the University of Oxford: the Birth to School Study (Evangelou M, Brooks G, Smith S, Jennings D 2005) and the Enabling Parents study (Sylva K, Evangelou M, Brooks G 2004).

Section 5 Financial review

The annual accounts for 2008-09 are attached.

Section 6 Future plans – 2008-09

A work plan for 2008-09 is attached.

