

Peers Early Education Partnership

Annual Report 2003–04

Contents

1 Building on firm foundations

2 Peers PEEP

3 Research and development

4 National dissemination

5 Financial reports

1 Building on firm foundations

The dynamic of the review of the 2002–2003 year was carried into the new financial year as the processes begun were continued and refined.

Much of the success of PEEP is due to the effort put into developing and supporting staff. The process of redefining posts and integrating them carefully into a coherent structure continued during the year. The process of regular staff development activities supported the development of individual skills as well as the efficiency and effectiveness of the organisation. Although the dissemination of PEEP has been developed over the last two years, and has added very significantly to the work done by the organisation, the number of staff has remained the same. This is a tribute to the dedication and flexibility of the staff and their commitment to the mission of PEEP and to the increasing skill in managing both staff and processes.

Although the work generated by PEEP has increased significantly, results have not replaced people as the focus of the organisation. Managers have continued to develop their skills and other staff have taken their share of the responsibility in developing the organisation. Staff representatives operate at all levels of the organisations, participating in the job evaluation process and at all levels on management decision making. A wide variety of policies have been updated to ensure that PEEP remains a secure and affirming place to work as illustrated by the very low staff turnover rate.

Further work was done on the financial systems with the creation of a new chart of accounts so that costings of the various elements of the project could be accurately calculated and reported. The information now available to funders is more specific and can be monitored easily.

PEEP has been generously funded by a relatively few funders over the period of its development. The time is approaching for new funding sources to be developed so that the sustainability of the work can be assured. PEEP has made significant strides in generating its own income from the sale of its materials and training, but further financial support will be necessary particularly in the short term so that the foundations created in the first nine years of the projects life will be built on for the benefit of individuals and communities.

2 Peers PEEP

PEEP groups

A total of 379 children in 22 PEEP groups for parents/carers with children under three years each met 33 times in the year, maintaining the well-established extensive contact with families in the area. A further 48 three and four-year-old children and parents met in weekly groups as well.

New and on-going developments have focused on making PEEP more accessible to specific groups of people. The Saturday group has continued to meet in a more informal two-hour session each week where the emphasis has been on activities. Participation by the whole family is encouraged, including fathers. Parents are offered the opportunity for one to one conversations with the group leader rather than the general open discussion which happens in other PEEP groups.

An exploratory initiative with young parents has been set up in order to generate ideas for how best to meet the needs of this group in the future. This has been achieved in collaboration with a number of local partner organisations, including The Oxfordshire Teenage Pregnancy Strategy Group, Cuddesdon Corner Family Centre and Connexions.

Home support

Link Plus pilot

In response to the very positive feedback on Link visiting, it was decided to extend this provision and offer a second visit to families between six and eight months after birth. The Link Plus pilot started in the autumn of 2003. Whilst the early PEEP contact ensures all families are visited within the first two months after birth, it can be difficult for them to fully appreciate the potential of the PEEP activities at this stage. Once the baby is a little older, it is possible for the Link visitor to engage the baby and model stories and singing very effectively. Parents may then make a decision to join a group or may prefer to use PEEP at home on their own.

Home programme

An exciting new development has been the introduction of the Home Programme. PEEP staff now work closely with other agencies to engage with families who, for various reasons, have been unable to access PEEP groups. Link visitors visit in the usual way and then a plan is developed between the visitor and the family, based on what the family would like to do using the PEEP materials and the PEEP approach. Families and visitors have found that the three to six visits gave a valuable foundation for doing PEEP at home.

PEEP in settings

PEEP currently works with Foundation Stage staff teams in six primary schools and four pre-schools in the catchment area. A total of 465 children attended the classes in schools and 72% of their parents/carers attended PEEP events. Over 2000 books and playpacks were borrowed, often with the child leading the discussion about which book or pack they wanted to borrow. In the pre-schools, over 150 children were involved in PEEP activities with 45% of their parents also participating. More than 730 playpacks were borrowed.

In these settings, a PEEP teacher and a PEEP assistant go into a nursery class for one day per week during the term. The aim is to support the regular teachers in engaging with parents in the life of Foundation Stage settings. The approach is flexible in order to maximise the opportunities created by having the PEEP teacher on site. In the past year, significant developments have been achieved where the same PEEP teacher has worked regularly with the staff in a setting. Constructive working relationships have been built up and creative, co-operative working practices have been established. Thus it has been possible to provide a consistently welcoming approach to parents, and having made contact and gained their trust, to support them in their

relationships with their children by offering PEEP activities and ideas for them to use at home. The experiences gained in these settings can be transferred to work in other settings. It is hoped that from within the regular sessions open to all parents, further focused support can be developed for particular groups, e.g. parents with skills for life needs.

Future developments are anticipated in working with children with special needs. All group leaders have undertaken special training to prepare for this, and closer relationships with key specialists have developed. This puts PEEP in a strong position to make progress in offering support in this area.

PEEP materials

The informal packs developed last year are still offered at Ones level. Feedback suggests that the folders are preferred from Twos upwards. Offering slightly differentiated material represents another increase in accessibility.

Improvements in the OCN accreditation system

In consultation with staff at OxOCN, the requirements for adults working towards OCN accreditation have been amended. The parent's diary pages have been replaced by a portfolio. This is a systematic collection of materials, with explanatory comments by the parent/carer, which documents the child's development, e.g. photographs, souvenirs, drawings or other work made by the parent/carer and child together. It has proved to be a more appealing and achievable record of PEEP activities, and represents an important genuine link with established styles of continued learning. There has been a very enthusiastic response and the numbers working for OCN accreditation have increased.

Collaboration with other agencies

Considerable progress has been made this year in strengthening and extending partnerships with other organisations. PEEP has led on some of these initiatives and opportunities to work collaboratively with other agencies have developed.

Increased contact with the LEA led to an approach to PEEP to become involved with county staff in developing the consultation phase for the Leys Children's Centre. This was a very valuable opportunity for PEEP to work with the county and support its successful bid for a Children's Centre for Greater Leys and Blackbird Leys. It has resulted in a growing constructive relationship to reach Early Years priorities.

PEEP staff members take an active part in countywide meetings with the Early Years team and also through membership of the Birth to Threes Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

During the year, a new service level agreement was negotiated between Rose Hill/ Littlemore SureStart and PEEP. An evaluation was carried out with a view to identifying how the two organisations could integrate their work more effectively. It was decided to have a jointly-managed staff member from PEEP who would be in the SureStart centre for regular periods each week in order to provide better continuity and closer working relationships. This simple, creative solution has proved very successful and has transformed the relationship.

Relationships with other organisations and individuals, for example, pre-school teacher counsellors, health visitors and pre-school supervisors have continued to be fostered this year. The outcome of the increased contact with agencies has made it possible to broaden PEEP's reach and increase accessibility.

Staff development

As demand for national training grows, staff from Peers PEEP have become increasingly involved in disseminating the PEEP model. One staff member and one volunteer have been seconded to work on dissemination and training, and other staff members contribute to practitioner training, Visitors' Days and Information Days.

New premises

Since 1996, Peers PEEP has occupied premises generously made available by Peers School. In 2003, the school indicated that they would have to take occupation of those premises for the large number of new students that the school needed to admit. PEEP appreciates generosity of the school in making space available in the past and also for the sensitive way in which the Head Teacher dealt with the difficult issue of taking back the premises at relatively short notice.

The planning of a new building, albeit under some pressure, gave us the opportunity to look at the needs of the project more clearly and try to meet them wherever possible. Although the new accommodation is a simple, modular building, it has provided much more appropriate facilities for staff. Despite the disruption of moving, more space, more light and greater comfort have all contributed to an increased sense of cohesion and purpose in the project.

3 Research and development

New website

With PEEP's growth in recent years and the rapid increase in interest, there was a pressing need for a more extensive website. This could provide information about PEEP and offer ongoing support and information about new developments to organisations using the programme. Future possibilities include a forum for practitioners across the PEEP network to share ideas and experiences.

A company was selected following a tendering process and briefed to produce a bright attractive site with clear and simple navigation. It will be easy for staff to make changes and keep it regularly updated. By the end of the year, the developer had produced a design concept and presented an outline of the functionality for discussion.

Songbooks and CDs

An increasing demand for CDs to accompany the songbooks prompted a review of these popular materials in the *Learning Together* series. A working group was set up to consider changes and improvements. It has been decided to combine the existing books into two new ones: *Singing Together 1*, for babies to two-year-olds, and *Singing Together 2* for three- to five-year-olds (extended to support the whole of the Foundation Stage). The songs have been reorganised into groups according to their main focus, e.g. moving and shaking, out and about, children's friendships. Each section will have notes to parents about the value of singing and suggestions for times and ways of sharing the songs with children. A CD will be packaged with the books. It is envisaged that a cassette will be available separately, at least for an initial period. The new edition of the songbooks will make it easier to provide direct links with the parents' and practitioners' materials.

New information leaflets

The Information Paper has been revised. Work on a series of new leaflets about PEEP has started with a new general information leaflet. It is short and clear, and is illustrated with bright and lively photographs and drawings by a staff member. Feedback has been positive and other leaflets on more detailed aspects of the PEEP programme, e.g. the use of music, PEEP and special needs, have been planned.

Research studies

The *Foundation PEEP Study* – following three- and four-year-olds engaged in PEEP – produced its final results in October 2003. It found that children at this age whose families were engaged with PEEP made significantly greater progress than others in several key areas, notably in verbal comprehension, vocabulary, concepts about print, phonological awareness, writing, early number concepts and self-esteem. The publication of the results coincided with the launch of National Parents Week. At the launch, Margaret Hodge, Minister for Children, Young People and Families, referred to PEEP as a programme whose effectiveness was verified by research findings. The full report of the study can be found at www.dfes.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/RB489.doc.

Both the *Enabling Parents Study* and the *Birth to School Study* are progressing and are due to report in summer 2004, in 2005 respectively.

4 National dissemination

Training development

Planning and design for the new two-day *PEEP for Practitioners* course started in April. Two staff members took responsibility for the initial design and structure. A programme was developed with a supporting handbook and a manual containing a concise version of the *Learning Together* series. Information and ideas were drawn from earlier practitioner training courses, practitioners' experience and Peers PEEP in-house staff training. The overall focus gave more emphasis to equipping practitioners with practical skills and techniques, whilst also offering plenty of opportunity to explore the materials, principles and approach in PEEP work. The course is supported by a comprehensive handbook presented in a ring binder. This format can be personalised by the trainees. The content will be reviewed regularly ensuring consistent quality and up-to-date links to the latest developments and frameworks .

One Peers PEEP staff member was seconded to deliver the training. In the first term *PEEP for Practitioners* was supported by other members of the management team acting as co- leaders. This input enabled further development and fine-tuning of the training materials. A close working relationship between Peers PEEP and the national training work continues to be important as we share the benefits and the challenges of new and innovative work with others. The training has been well received with very positive evaluations. Initial post-course contact suggests that the training is generating the development of PEEP work in a wide range of organisations and settings across the UK.

Information delivery

Analysis of the pattern of requests for training suggests that the process of information delivery is working effectively. Fifteen Consultation Days and nine Information Days were organised in various parts of England and Scotland. It would seem that Information Days are often requested as a result of managers and practitioners having contact with others involved in PEEP work. Requests for *PEEP for Practitioners* training have come from all areas where Information Days have taken place.

Four Visitor Days were also arranged in Oxford. These offer visitors the opportunity to observe a PEEP group as well as learn more about the PEEP programme and activities. The content of the day has been modified to maintain consistency with the other information delivery events. Patterns of requests for training also suggest that a good deal of our work is generated through word of mouth and practitioners observing PEEP work in action.

Delivery of the two-day *PEEP for Practitioners* training course started in May 2003. By the end of March 2004, 27 courses had been delivered to 356 participants. We have worked with a wide range of practitioners from a variety of programmes and settings (see below). Evaluations and

post-course contact suggest that participants have found the training course very useful in giving advice and guidance on establishing partnerships and a multi-agency approach. A substantial part of this new work has been within SureStart programmes, but a wide range of organisations working with families and young children are now also involved in PEEP work.

We have continued to offer on-going support to practitioners using PEEP, mostly through telephone and email contacts (approximately 200 contacts in the year). It is hoped that the continuing development of the website will enhance practitioner support. We have also organised post-training visits either to Peers PEEP in Oxford or in the local area where possible. These visits are very helpful to organisations setting up PEEP activities, because they offer an opportunity to see good practice and to share expertise, for example, aspects of starting OCN accreditation.

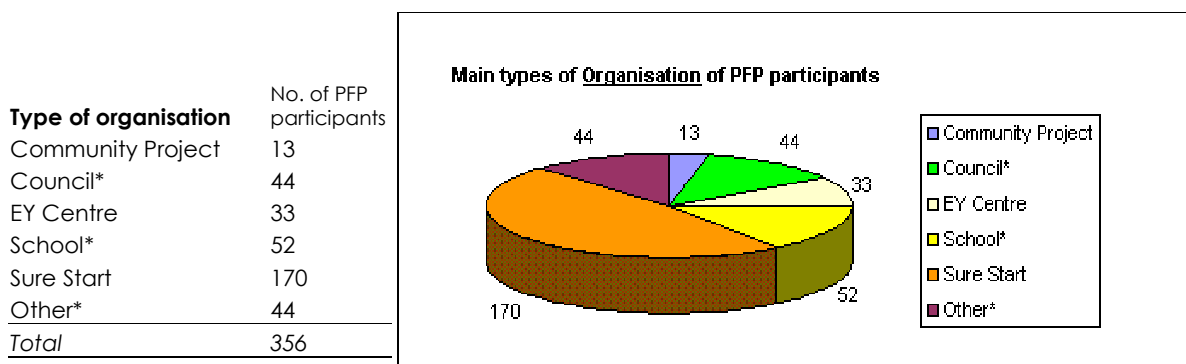
Requests for training have increased steadily over the year and administrative systems and procedures have been developed to support this increase in demand. With the present training resources, the *PEEP for Practitioners* training courses are full until March 05. Thirty-four courses are planned on which 400 to 500 people will receive training. Some of these bookings are for return visits to enable existing PEEP work to be developed further. No further bookings for the training course will be accepted for a period, while the focus shifts to training more trainers.

Developing regional trainers and support networks

In order to meet the demand for training, and to ensure that PEEP work can be effectively sustained in other areas, we are working towards developing trainers based in other regions. The process has started with two practitioners attending and working alongside our trainer on *PEEP for Practitioners* courses. We will be working through the process and developing a package of training and support over the coming year and aim to have two or three regional trainers operating by the end of the year.

We have also planned a consultation process aimed at all those we have trained through *PEEP for Practitioners*. This will give us valuable feedback about the impact of the training, and the supporting materials, including the handbook and the Learning Together materials. This process should also give us a clearer picture of the ways in which PEEP work is developing across the UK and the kinds of ongoing support that practitioners would find useful.

PEEP for Practitioners participant data 2003–2004

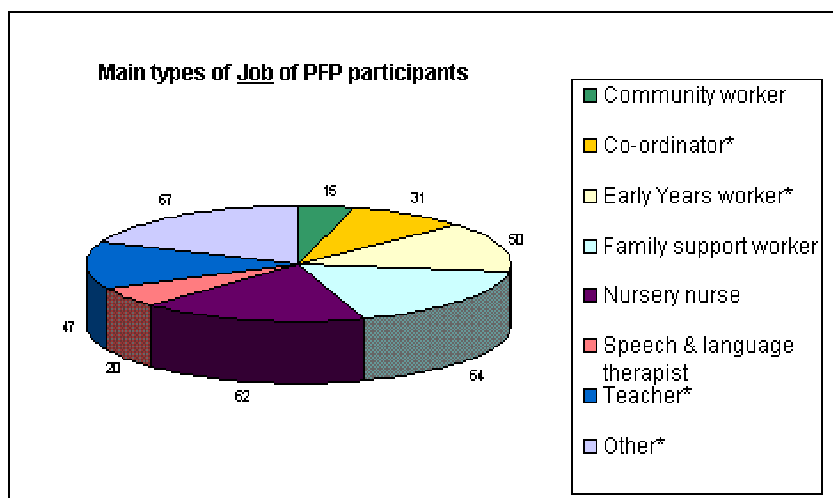


Council includes education, early years, family learning, portage, psychological services, social services

School includes nursery, preschool, primary, college

Other includes Family Centre, Flying Start, PCT/Health Centre, Parent & Toddler group, Library, Navy

Type of job	No. of PFP participants
Community worker	15
Co-ordinator*	31
Early Years worker*	50
Family support worker	64
Nursery nurse	62
Speech & language therapist	20
Teacher*	47
Other*	67
Total	356



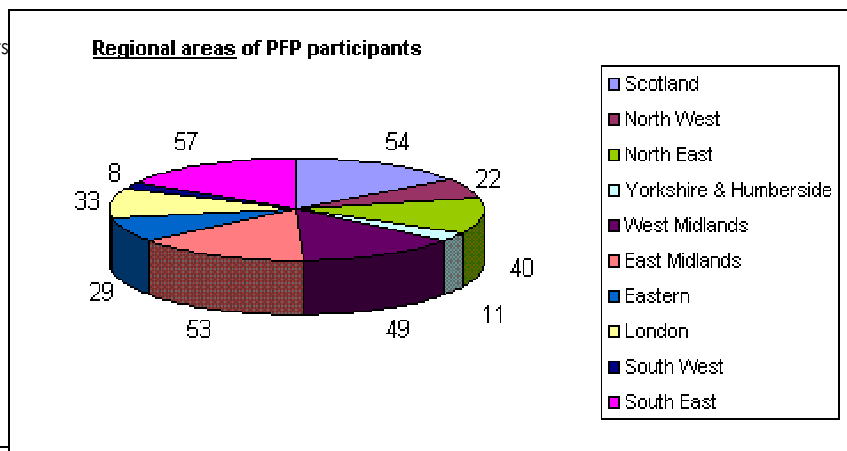
Co-ordinator includes adult education, development, early years, family learning, family support, health, peep, learning and play

Early Years worker includes crèche, preschool, learning and play

Teacher includes head, nursery, primary, advisory, college, outreach, family learning

Other includes health visitor, group leader, administrator, library worker, manager, maternity support worker, outreach worker, parent, portage worker, psychologist, parent and toddler leader, social worker

Region	No. of PFP participants
Scotland	54
North West	22
North East	40
Yorkshire & Humberside	11
West Midlands	49
East Midlands	53
Eastern	29
London	33
South West	8
South East	57
Total	356



5 Financial reports

Consolidated statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 March 2004

Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds 2004	Total funds 2003
£	£	£	£

INCOMING RESOURCES

Donations	199	-	199	1,408
<u>Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects:</u>				
Grants receivable	456,821	110,000	566,821	755,114
<u>Activities for generating funds</u>				
Sales of publications and associated training	167,690	-	167,690	185,719
Investment income - interest received	5,415	-	5,415	6,656
Other income	878	-	878	20
Total incoming resources	631,003	110,000	741,003	948,917
RESOURCES EXPENDED				
<u>Cost of generating funds:</u>				
Fundraising costs	396	-	396	4,945
Cost of publications and associated training	112,085	-	112,085	95,443
<u>Charitable expenditure:</u>				
Costs in furtherance of the charity's objects	527,606	110,000	637,606	674,169
Support costs	125,767	-	125,767	123,490
Management and administration of the charity	10,867	-	10,867	10,109
Total resources expended	776,721	110,000	886,721	908,156
NET INCOMING RESOURCES	(145,718)	-	(145,718)	40,761
Balances brought forward at 1 April 2003	400,371	-	400,371	359,610
Balances carried forward at 31 March 2004	<u>254,653</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>254,653</u>	<u>400,371</u>

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2004

GRANTS RECEIVABLE

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2004 £	Total Funds 2003 £
The Esmee Fairbairn Foundation	275,236	-	275,236	201,848
Garfield Weston Foundation	50,000	-	-	-
Hamilton Trust	50,000	-	50,000	50,000
Hamilton Oxford Schools Partnership (EAZ)	-	-	-	20,417
Sure Start	76,500	-	76,500	76,500
Basic Skills Agency	60	-	60	23,613
MKOB Learning & Skills Council	5,025	110,000	115,025	68,136
DfES	-	-	-	314,600
	<u>456,821</u>	<u>110,000</u>	<u>516,821</u>	<u>755,114</u>

RESOURCES EXPENDED

	Staff costs £	Deprec -iation £	Other costs £	Total 2004 £	Total 2003 £
Fundraising costs	-	-	396	396	4,945
Cost of publications and training	-	-	112,085	112,085	95,443

Costs in furtherance of the charity's objects	459,331	-	178,275	637,606	674,169
Support costs	46,350	16,766	62,651	125,767	123,490
Management and administration of the charity	-	-	10,867	10,867	10,109
	<u>505,681</u>	<u>16,766</u>	<u>364,274</u>	<u>886,721</u>	<u>908,156</u>

STAFF COSTS

	2004	2003
	£	£
Wages and salaries	454,701	452,548
Social security costs	39,257	32,590
Other pension costs	<u>11,723</u>	<u>11,373</u>
	<u>505,681</u>	<u>496,511</u>

The average number of employees during the year was 44 (2003: 45). There were 22 members of staff (2003: 23) who were accruing benefits under defined contribution pension schemes.

No employee of the Trust received remuneration for the year in excess of £50000.

No remuneration was paid or expenses reimbursed to any trustee during the year to 31 March 2004.

Balance sheet as at 31 March 2004

		Group		Trust	
	Note	2004	2003	2004	2003
		£	£	£	£
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	6	176,622	54,141	134,822	-
Investments	7	-	-	2	2
		<u>176,622</u>	<u>54,141</u>	<u>134,824</u>	<u>2</u>
CURRENT ASSETS					
Stocks		35,014	32,602	-	-
Debtors and prepayments	8	85,392	46,610	31,312	42,620
Cash at bank and in hand		104,460	375,130	97,959	327,436
		<u>224,866</u>	<u>454,342</u>	<u>129,271</u>	<u>370,056</u>
CREDITORS: Amounts falling due within one year	9	<u>146,835</u>	<u>108,112</u>	<u>117,434</u>	<u>87,576</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>78,031</u>	<u>346,230</u>	<u>11,837</u>	<u>282,480</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>254,653</u>	<u>400,371</u>	<u>146,661</u>	<u>282,482</u>

FUNDS

Restricted funds	10	-	-	-	-
Unrestricted funds		254,653	400,371	146,661	282,482
TOTAL FUNDS		<u>254,653</u>	<u>400,371</u>	<u>146,661</u>	<u>282,482</u>

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective June 2002).

These accounts were approved by the trustees on 29 September 2004.

Peers Early Education Partnership

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