

Partnership and Family Learning Self-Evaluation

Executive Summary

Peep is a charity which supports parents/carers and children to learn together. We provide services for families and training for practitioners. Peep programmes offer an evidence-based, flexible way to enhance the home learning environment and early attachment by building on what families already do in everyday life. Our programmes fit into the following definition of family learning-

'Family learning is a powerful method of engagement and learning which can foster positive attitudes towards life-long learning, promote socio-economic resilience and challenge educational disadvantage' (Family Learning Network, 2016).

We currently receive core funding for two full-time posts (Scottish Development Co-ordinator and Qualifications Co-ordinator) from the Scottish Government's Children, Young People and Families Early Intervention Fund and the Adult Learning and Empowering Communities Fund. The posts are vital to develop and support the growth of Peep programmes across Scotland.

We value our partnerships with local authorities and third sector organisations. We work with local authorities to form what is called a Training and Support Agreement. This agreement allows local authorities to identify trainers who are then inducted and supported to provide training in our main programme (Peep Learning Together Programme) to practitioners. This programme is accessed by a wide range of families and is offered as a universal programme in all nine local authority areas with whom we have a Training and Support Agreement.

This is the first time that Peep have been involved in a formal self-evaluation process, and we welcomed the opportunity. Education Scotland had a particular interest in the partnership and family learning quality indicators, and offered mentoring support for the duration of the project. Working with Education Scotland allowed us to use a bespoke framework to suit our needs. We intend to use the results to improve the existing partnerships we have with local authority areas and third sector organisations.

For the purposes of this self-evaluation, we were advised to focus on three quality indicators:

- 2.2 Impact on organisations we support
- 2.5 Family Learning
- 8.1 Partnership working

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People chose to focus on three overarching questions and we identified quality indicators and evaluation methods to glean the information we required. These are:

Overarching question	Quality indicator	Evaluation methods
1. How clear and effective are our partnership arrangements with local authorities?	2.2 Impact on organisations we support 8.1 Partnership working	Interviews with key lead from nine local authority areas
2. How well does our partnership work with local authorities ensure family learning staff are inclusive and engage families who will best benefit from support?	2.2 Impact on organisations we support 2.5 Family Learning	Survey monkey sent to 240 practitioners (30 from each local authority area) in eight local authority areas Parent/carer creative evaluation sessions in seven local authority areas
3. How is our partnership work with local authorities improving outcomes?	2.5 Family Learning	Survey monkey sent to 240 practitioners (30 from each local authority area) in eight local authority areas Parent/carer creative evaluation sessions in seven local authority areas

Within each quality indicator, there are a list of challenge questions. We worked with Education Scotland to contextualise the questions, making it relevant to our partners, practitioners and families. Overall, we found the self-evaluation tool extremely logical and easy to use. By having the overarching questions, quality indicators and the more detailed challenge questions (see table below) the process was not onerous nor complicated. As an organisation, using this process to evaluate our work has really helped us to identify key areas on which to improve.

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Challenge Questions

Overarching Questions – Key Leads	<u>How Good Is Our Third Sector Organisation (2015)</u>	Challenge Questions
<p>1. How clear and effective are our partnership arrangements with local authorities?</p>	<p>2.2 Impact on organisations we support</p> <p>8.1 Partnership working</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well do we support local authorities to be effective, efficient and improve their practice? Does this result in them making positive and sustained impacts of the people they work with? • How well do we increase capacity in local authorities to plan, monitor and evaluate to improve outcomes? • How well do we communicate with local authorities? Is communication regular and in a format which suits each local authority we support? How could we do this better? What would partners like? • How clear are the partnership agreements we enter into? • How can we develop and agree shared priorities with local authorities? • How well do we plan, monitor and evaluate our work with local authorities? • How clearly have the purposes, aims, roles and responsibilities in our partnership been communicated to the local authority? How do we know? • Are we clear what added value the partnership brings and what difference it makes to the people we work with? • How well do we work with local authorities to plan for the future and meet changing and emerging needs?

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Overarching Questions – Practitioners and Parents/Carers	<u>How Good Is Our Third Sector Organisation (2015)</u>	How good is our school 4	Challenge Questions *P/C denotes questions that were adapted and asked to parents/carers
2. How well does our partnership work with local authorities ensure family learning staff are inclusive and engage families who will best benefit from support?	2.2 Impact on organisations we support	2.5 Family Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do our training materials support local authorities to ensure provision is responsive to the needs of families? • How effectively do we use current available data about levels of poverty in our community to help us target our interventions? • Do our training materials promote equality, fairness and diversity? • What difference is Peep making to people’s lives? P/C • How effectively do we support you to monitor programmes? • Do our materials allow you to deliver your programmes flexibly to meet the needs of each family? P/C • To what extent do we share how your Peep delivery links with current policy, including GIRFEC, the wellbeing indicators and how these can have a positive impact on children and families? • Through our training materials, how well do we increase capacity in the organisations we support to promote inclusion, equality and fairness? P/C
3. How is our partnership work with local authorities improving outcomes?		2.5 Family Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What evidence do we have that Peep provision is improving the life chances of families involved? What difference is Peep provision making to the lives of the children and families who take part? P/C • Are outcomes for children improving as a result of their participation in Peep provision? How do we know? P/C • Do families feel that they are participating, achieving and progressing within Peep programmes? P/C

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We visited ten groups of parents (in seven local authority areas) who are participating in Peep programmes. We delivered a creative evaluation session, using visual evaluation tools including a stomp map. Parents/carers and their children were supported to put a sticker on the image(s)/statement(s) they agreed with. The map contained images and words that represented the challenge questions. Forty-two parents/carers participated in the sessions in total. All parents who participated felt that their Peep practitioners made them feel part of the group and forty-one felt included by their practitioners. Just over half of the parents scored their Peep practitioners as promoting equality, fairness and diversity. When practitioners' were asked to rate the same statement, it scored much higher. Parent quotes gathered from the sessions emphasise the dual benefit of learning together for both parent and child, and shows the impact of the Peep Learning Together Programme as a family learning programme.

Stomp Map



'Who needs the baby books with the height and weight recorded when we have a record of the stuff we actually do with our child (Peep Progression Pathway) - this really helps us remember what we have done at the different developmental stages'
(Parent)

Sixty-three practitioners from eight local authority areas completed a questionnaire via Survey Monkey. Practitioner feedback was mostly very positive about how Peep training supports their practice and in delivering family learning. Practitioners felt that more links were needed to current policy as part of their

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support from Peeple. Practitioners shared examples of evidence they have collated that show positive family learning outcomes for both parents and their children.

'Peep is a non-threatening and relaxed group that parents find easy to engage with, with even the most confident parents gaining new knowledge and experience. It is a flexible programme that can be adapted to meet the needs of a specific part of the community.' (Practitioner)

Nine key leads were interviewed using questions focussed on the partnership they have with Peeple. The results showed overwhelmingly the impact that Scottish Government funding is having on the support offered to develop and embed Peep programmes within local authority areas. These partnerships could not be established, developed or supported without the two posts in Scotland.

'I think there is a strength in the smaller team in Scotland - we get to know you all well and everyone knows us really well. There is also access to the wider network across Scotland sharing challenges and successes. I think there is a better understanding of local communities because of the small team based in Scotland.' (Key lead)

Peeple will continue to build on the good practice highlighted by the self-evaluation, but more importantly will use the feedback to improve areas that have been identified through using this self-evaluation tool.