

Peep and the Pupil Equity Fund



'Children make the most intellectual gains where there is high levels of parental involvement in children's learning'. Building the Ambition (2014)

The Peep Learning Together Programme is a strong fit to the priorities and intentions of the *Pupil Equity Fund*. The headings and highlighted terms in this document are taken from the *National Occupational Guidance for the Pupil Equity Fund* and Education Scotland's *Interventions for Equity Framework*.

Early Intervention

Peep is an early intervention/prevention charity. We aim to improve life chances and close the attainment gap by working with parents and carers to enhance their children's learning and development from birth. We train approximately 350 practitioners annually to deliver our family learning Peep Learning Together Programme with parents and children aged 0-5. The Programme is based on research, including the *Growing Up in Scotland (GUS)* study, which tells us that the quality of the home learning environment, family relationships and pre-school provision are key to improving life chances and promoting educational equity. Robust evaluations have found that the Programme increases parental engagement with their children's learning and development. *The National Improvement Framework (2016)* states that *'Parental and family engagement is a key factor in helping all children achieve the highest standards whilst reducing **inequity** and **closing the attainment gap**.'* Along with *The National Parenting Strategy (2012)* and *Building the Ambition*, the *Framework* recognises the role of parents as first educators and that *'The nurturant qualities of the environments where children grow up, live and learn, parents, caregivers, family and community – will have the most significant impact on their development.'* – *National Parenting Strategy*

Equity

The Learning Together Programme provides a **clear focus on delivering equity** by addressing the confidence and knowledge gap in parental capacity to improve the home learning environment and to engage with nursery and school. Peep also promotes equity of access to national campaigns and gifting programmes by working with parents to increase their confidence, understanding and ability to share these resources with their children.

Closing the Attainment Gap

The Learning Together Programme is based on **evidence of what is known to be effective at raising attainment for children affected by poverty**. Five independent studies by the Universities of Oxford and Warwick show that Peep:

- engages isolated families;
- increases parents awareness of their child's development and how to foster it;
- helps children develop strong foundations for literacy and self-esteem;
- supports practitioners to develop fresh skills which allow a focus on potential rather than problems.

Reducing Stigmatisation of Parents

The Learning Together Programme begins with and builds on what parents *already* do, so parents do not feel judged, they feel valued. A local authority Peep Coordinator commented:

'The programme has the child and family at the centre. We work with the parent to give them the best possible experience and interactions with their child. We are encouraging, motivating and supporting families through an informal education approach. Parents model success with their children!' Alison Wales, South Ayrshire.

Providing a High-Quality Learning Experience

The Programme encourages sensitive learning interactions between the parent-child, practitioner-parent and practitioner-child, applying and sharing current early learning research in a dynamic, practical, and effective way.

Partnership Working

The Programme can be delivered by a single organisation. However, it lends itself well to partnership working. Practice examples include joint working between schools and Children & Families services; voluntary sector organisations; Leisure & Culture and Lifelong Learning.

Transitions between School Stages

The Learning Together Programme is used to support transitions. Some of the benefits of Peep for transitions are highlighted by this practitioner:

'Parents say that Peep strengthens the relationship with their children and increases their knowledge of the impact they have on their children's education and development. We link to the literacy and numeracy programme of the school so parents can reinforce learning at home. Parents feel more confident to engage with the school and wider community. We have a parent council for the first time in 20 years'. Soozin Rogers, Clovenstone Primary, Edinburgh.

Family Learning

The Learning Together Programme is included in the recently launched *Family Learning Review: Supporting Excellence and Equity* as an example of 'What Excellent Family Learning Looks Like.'

Parents are able to complete SCQF credit-rated Peep Child Development units and take advantage of a number of Further Education agreements to access places and/or interviews to a number of vocational courses. This increases intergenerational transfer of positive attitude to learning and work.

Improving Literacy

A longitudinal evaluation of the Learning Together Programme by the University of Oxford found that children who participated in Peep developed strong foundations for literacy. The Programme promotes key home learning, including early literacy activities such as sharing books, singing and play. It also increases parents' understanding of how literacy is taught at school, improving their ability to support and reinforce this. The Peep Learning Together Programme has a specific *Early Literacy* strand comprising 15 topics.

Improving Health and social and emotional wellbeing

The Programme does this by engaging isolated families in a strengths-based programme which contains specific *Health and Physical Development* and *Personal, Social & Emotional Development* strands.

Enhancing Learning and Teaching

The Programme is evidence-based with rich child development content shared in an informal, non-threatening manner. It enhances the knowledge of practitioners and the learning of parents and children. It allows parents to gain an understanding of the school learning environment and for the school to gain a greater understanding of the home learning environment of their students.

Providing Leadership Opportunities

The Programme provides the opportunity to develop specialist knowledge in working with parents, to liaise and collaborate with external organisations and to deliver adult learning (optional adult learning units). Peep Practitioners complete the two-day Peep Learning Together Programme which includes the City & Guilds unit *Engaging Parents in their Children's Early Learning* (SCQF 6).

Research and evaluation

The Programme is evidence-based and Peep is a research organisation. The Programme provides evaluation tools. The Improvement Model has been used to measure the impact of local Peep programmes.

For further information please contact:

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