

Peep case study: Transition from Nursery to School (Hampshire)

'This year coming to Peep has helped me engage with my child through a way of learning I wouldn't have even thought of. New techniques and ideas to make learning fun!' – Peep parent

'It's great to see parents blossom and become more confident as they realise everything they do in normal life contributes to their child's learning.' – Peep practitioner

'Learning is most successful when parents/carers and teachers work in partnership and the Peep programme supports this shared journey.' – Head teacher

In Springwood Infant School in Waterlooville, Hampshire, Peep is offered to support transitions and school readiness from nursery to reception. Weekly 75-minute Peep sessions are offered to parents and their four to five year old children, delivered by their Peep-trained Learning Support Assistant Lyn Hayes (and initially supported by a Peep-trained pre-school practitioner, Sammi Hosking). The school serves a mixed population near the town centre, and children arrive with a wide variety of pre-school experiences. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium/ free school meals is above average, and it is partly for this reason that the school decided to use the Peep Programme.

Peep is becoming so embedded in school culture that parents see it as a normal part of school life. It is having a positive impact on children's learning outcomes and their settling into school, on parents' understanding and confidence in how they can support their children's learning at home, and on family-school relationships.

How is Peep offered?



The school and its major feeder pre-school, Bushytails, invites all parents whose children are due to start at the school in September, to attend a Transition Peep group of six weekly sessions during June-July. The school's reception class Learning and Support Assistant (LSA) Lyn Hayes plans and delivers these sessions, while the pre-school use their existing relationships with families to help the school staff and families get to know each other more quickly. So many families wanted to attend that three groups were held.

Weekly Peep sessions continue in the autumn term, with new parents also being invited to join. The practitioner primarily uses the Peep topics, but also weaves in the Characteristics of Effective Learning, what will be happening during the school day, and how parents can support this. The Peep Learning Together Programme (LTP) complements the Early Years Foundation Stage, with the LTP's five developmental strands focusing on Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language, Early Literacy, Early Maths, and Health and Physical Development. Depending on the needs and interests of the families, groups sometimes have a specific focus, such as Communication and Language, and other times follow all the Peep strands. Regular stay and play sessions, underpinned by the week's Peep session focus, is also offered to all reception parents. The initial Peep group was over-subscribed so there are now two larger Peep groups each week.

Outcomes

1. **A high proportion of parents attend Peep sessions with their child during the year.** By the end of the school year about 70% of families have attended Peep sessions, with almost half participating regularly throughout the school year.
2. **The Peep sessions improve families' transition into the school: Peep children settle in particularly quickly, and both parents and children develop friendships and are comfortable with the adults in the school.**

'M is now very excited to learn and is more confident.' (Parent)

'It's building T's friendships and confidence – especially in the first Peep sessions before starting school. I believe this positively impacted him when starting school' (Parent)

'I was able to ask questions without feeling silly.' (Parent)

'It's great to be able to learn different techniques and get advice from other parents on how to help the children learn.' (Parent)

'Helping parents to build relationships with each other to provide a network of support and friendship has been very rewarding.' (Learning Support Assistant / Peep practitioner)

'A discussion with the LSA identified that parents who have engaged with Peep have settled into school particularly well and made at least good progress.' (Local Authority Early Years Advisor)

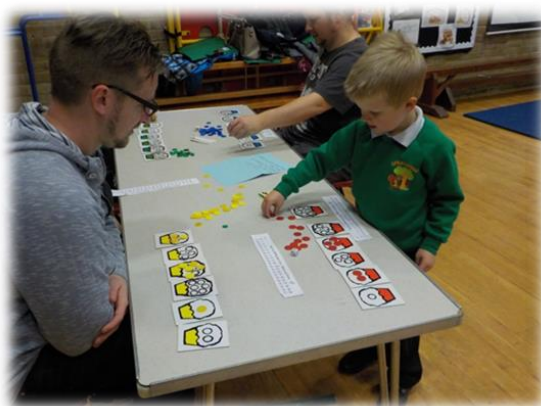
3. **Peep parents have become more knowledgeable about the value of the 'home learning environment' and about how they can support their children's learning at home.** Parents learn more about how to support their children's learning, by building on all the valuable things they already do.

'This year coming to Peep has helped me engage with my child through a way of learning I wouldn't have even thought of. New techniques and ideas to make learning fun!' (Parent)

'We have both very much looked forward to the sessions. It's made us have a commitment to learning together that we have continued at home.' (Parent)

'Peep helps the children gain confidence and helps us to help our children with their school work. It's really nice to share their learning with them and see them interact with their peers.' (Parent)

'It is great to see parents blossom and become more confident as they realise everything they do in normal life contributes to their child's learning. Listening to parents about what they need help with meant that I broke down barriers and ensured that they were able to understand how to support their child's learning in a specific way.' (Learning Support Assistant/ Peep practitioner)



4. **The school staff make strong and effective links between what happens in the classroom, what happens in the Peep group and what happens at home** (the whole is greater than the sum of its parts):

'The Peep programme provides a good opportunity for parents/carers and children to work alongside trained staff to enhance learning opportunities. The parents involved feel more confident in how to support their children, and the children benefit from activities designed to build upon their skills.' (Head teacher)

- Parents who have attended Peep make four times as many contributions to children's learning journals in the form of 'proud clouds' than parents who have not. These contributions are thoughtful and knowledgeable. They demonstrate that parents are recognising and valuing both the developmental steps that their children are making, and that the learning opportunities which they provide at home are worth capturing. Parents notice not only the more 'academic' learning by their children, but the development of their equally important physical, personal and social skills, such as empathy and having a go at new things, which are also covered within the Peep Learning Together Programme.

Comments made by parents on their 'proud clouds' include:

'I am proud of F's attempt of cutting a star out all by himself.'

'C tried raspberries, blueberries and beetroot for the first time. He liked raspberries and blueberries and now has them at home.'

'During Peep, P counted backwards from 10.'

'I helped collect some dropped bottles for an elderly lady.'

- Activities which the children are doing in the classroom at that time are woven in to Peep sessions, so the parents gain the confidence, background knowledge and relevant information to help them effectively support their child's learning at home.
- The Learning and Support Assistant/ Peep practitioner (LSA) shares the content of school learning for upcoming weeks in the Peep group. This provides a great opportunity for the less confident children to be the expert when this content is delivered back in the classroom.



5. **Children's outcomes are being improved by the Peep sessions and strong family-school partnership.**

Outcomes at the end of the year have identified that 73% of children who regularly attended Peep sessions attained their Good Level of Development (GLD - the government's measure of five year old's attainment at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage). This compares with the school's GLD of 52% the previous year, and progress has been faster. Whilst some children in the group were already on track to attain this, all children have made good progress from their starting points.

'Our data indicates that those involved in the Peep programme are showing rapid progress in comparison with their peers. Learning is most successful when parents/carers and teachers work in partnership and this programme supports this shared journey.' (Head teacher)

'Some of these children are performing among the most able in the year group and this demonstrates an excellent use of Early Years Pupil Premium funding. An example of the impact of the programme is that a child who did not speak in school is now communicating more confidently as a result of the school and family working so closely together, and the child is gaining confidence through observing and feeling secure within this relationship. Observations made during the Peep group are captured in the learning journals and contribute to the full picture of children's learning.' (Local Authority Early Years Advisor)

6. The Peep sessions are enhancing parents' own confidence and skills, and having a lasting impact on their increased engagement with school and with supporting their children's learning:

- As Peep parents gain confidence, they support the delivery of the group by reading the story to the group. This in turn promotes the English language learning of parents who have English as a second language.
- The parents wish to continue as a group as their children move into Year 1 (the year they turn six). The school and the group are looking at how best to do this. Options include the parents becoming 'Expert Peepers' and supporting other parents whose children are moving from Nursery to Reception year. When parents were asked if they would like the group to continue into Year 1, comments included:



'Yes, please. I really think it will help the transition into Year 1. It also helps me understand what E is learning and the tools I can use to help her succeed in her learning.'

'Yes, curriculum changes and new methods are unfamiliar. M is more confident through doing the Peep sessions and I want it to continue that way.'

'We would love Peep to continue so we don't lose the interaction with the school environment.'

How is the work funded?

Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) funding provides focused support for every 3 and 4 year old in England and Wales who is eligible for free school meals, to help close the attainment gap. Similar funding is available in Scotland via the Pupil Equity Fund.

A DfE survey (January 2017) indicates that EY providers are mainly using the funding to support communication and language, personal social and emotional development (PSED), literacy and numeracy, and/or physical development and outdoor play. They are doing this through additional staff time for EYPP children, buying resources, staff training, and engaging parents to support home learning - all of which can link to the Peep Learning Together Programme.

For more funding info see www.peeple.org.uk/EYPP-and-Peep.