

Families Learning Together (FLT) Whole Family Wellbeing Fund Evaluation Report (2024-26)

Supporting whole-system change through prevention, partnership and family learning

1. Introduction and Background

Purpose of this Evaluation

This report evaluates the implementation and impact of the Families Learning Together (FLT) project funded through the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund (WFWF) between October 2024 and March 2026.

The evaluation has been developed to meet key funding requirements, specifically:

- that funded activity incorporates effective and formative learning and evaluation supporting national learning and improvement; and
- that learning can be drawn at a national level from the experience of participating Scottish local authority areas.

The report considers both project outcomes and system learning, examining how FLT contributed to Scotland's ambition to shift support for children and families towards prevention and early intervention, reducing reliance on crisis response.

The focus of this report is the extent to which FLT demonstrated a sustainable, scalable model of preventative family support, aligned with the aims of WFWF.

People

People is a UK wide charity which empowers parents to improve their children's life chances. People trains practitioners to deliver evidence-based Peep interventions, which help parents to support their child's early development.

Research demonstrates the lifelong impact of early childhood development - inequality begins in these early years and perpetuates intergenerational cycles of poverty. The Growing Up in Scotland (GUS) study found that at age 5, children in the highest income quintile were 13 months ahead of those in the lowest in their vocabulary.

People's programmes combat developmental inequalities by helping parents to do the things that make the most difference for children: providing a rich home learning environment, with high-quality, low-cost learning opportunities, and supporting secure, caregiving relationships. People's flagship programme - Peep Learning Together - is sector-leading in its evidence base; demonstrating an additional four months' progress in communication and in core language skills, and an additional three months' progress in early literacy for the most disadvantaged children in an independent evaluation (a large scale Randomised Controlled Trial funded by the Education Endowment Foundation).

What the project was set up to do

Families Learning Together was designed to test how evidence-based family learning could be extended to families earlier and in different contexts, before - or instead of - accessing more formal early learning and childcare services.

The project specification identified three funded delivery elements:

- Peep Antenatal Programme – engaging families during the perinatal period to strengthen attachment, early communication and understanding of child development
- Peep Learning Together Programme (LTP) – supporting parents and carers to build confidence through everyday play, interaction and family learning
- Peep Progression Pathway – providing opportunities for parents and practitioners to gain accredited qualifications and progress into volunteering, further learning or employment
- Peep Practitioner Accreditation – supporting practitioners in their delivery whilst building confidence and understanding of the programmes; this also provides an opportunity for authorities/organisations to ensure high quality delivery and quality assurance across services.

The model aimed to strengthen outcomes through a whole-system approach, training practitioners across local services and enabling support to be delivered through trusted community settings.

FLT was expected to contribute to outcomes for three core groups:

Children

Children experience consistent, positive, loving parenting and increased opportunities for play and learning in everyday activities.

By supporting parents, the programme aims to improve children's:

- personal social and emotional development
- communication and language
- early literacy
- early maths
- health and physical development

Parents

Parents:

- feel confident supporting their child's development and learning
- understand how children develop
- feel supported by peers and professionals
- can progress into learning, volunteering or employment where appropriate

Practitioners

Practitioners across services:

- increase their knowledge, skills and confidence
- have improved opportunities for collaboration and joint working across sectors

Why Families Learning Together was a strong fit for the Whole Family Well-being Fund (WFWF)

WFWF seeks to support whole-system transformational change, reducing the need for crisis intervention and shifting investment towards prevention.

Families Learning Together (FLT) aligned strongly with this ambition because it focused on:

- engaging families early, including during pregnancy and infancy
- strengthening the home learning environment
- building capacity across existing local services rather than parallel programmes
- creating stronger links between children's and adult services
- embedding support in trusted, universal and community settings

Rather than introducing a stand-alone intervention, FLT tested whether workforce development, shared approaches and family learning could strengthen local systems around children and families.

Project roll-out

All 32 Scottish local authorities were informed of the funding opportunity. Each authority was invited to submit an expression of interest and provided with guidance outlining expectations for all parties involved. The local authorities were made aware that funding would be allocated to 10 areas only for the duration of this project. We received more than 10 applications to People and Scottish Government selected areas which showed that they:

- had a good level of preparedness to engage in the project
- had a high degree of buy-in from across services, both to participate and to sustain the impact of the project beyond the period of Scottish Government funding
- could provide input to evaluation and reflection on the approach
- could make links to wider work across the Children's Services Planning Partnership.

Initially implemented across 10 funded areas, FLT adopted a locally responsive implementation model, enabling delivery to reflect different community contexts, local priorities and existing service infrastructure. We increased the reach to 11 areas as we split the fund between two smaller authorities. This supported growth in rural and smaller communities.

Areas were supported to:

- map local services and family pathways
- identify workforce development needs
- co-design delivery approaches with practitioners and families
- integrate family learning into existing local provision

As implementation progressed, the model extended beyond the original funded footprint with NHS staff trained and serving wider community areas benefitting families and children across original boundaries. This can be seen within approaches involving Aberdeenshire and North Ayrshire, indicating wider confidence in the transferability of the approach.

This expansion provided an early indication of national relevance: local systems recognised that family learning could be embedded within existing structures to strengthen prevention and improve support pathways.

2. Delivering on anticipated outcomes

From programme delivery to system change

At its core, Families Learning Together tested whether a relatively modest investment in family learning could contribute to meaningful whole-system change.

The evidence suggests that it did.

Rather than operating as an isolated programme, FLT strengthened local systems by improving workforce capability, increasing collaboration across services and supporting more joined-up experiences for families.

Appendices attached include several examples showcasing cross-sector delivery during FLT (such as a collaboration with dietetic services, work within a secondary school, and more).

Across participating areas, implementation highlighted a consistent finding that prevention works best when support is relational, local and integrated.

1) Children: Earlier opportunities for play and learning, and building secure relationships

FLT supported children by helping parents to strengthen the everyday interactions that matter most in early development.

Through antenatal and early years delivery, families engaged earlier in conversations about:

- attachment
- communication
- responsive parenting
- play and language development
- understanding children's cues and behaviour

Parents consistently reported stronger understanding of the learning that takes place in everyday opportunities, and increased confidence in supporting learning at home.

One parent reflected:

"The Peep information on brain development helps me to understand my baby more, and his cues in speech and forming words."

Another shared:

"My relationship with N feels stronger and I have a better understanding on how to help her develop."

These experiences matter because they directly support the conditions associated with improved early outcomes: secure relationships, responsive parenting and everyday opportunities for learning.

Importantly, FLT engaged families in ways that often happened before difficulties escalated, aligning strongly with WFWF ambitions around prevention. As an example of this, please see a case study of our work around dietetics in the 'Fun with Food' project, in the appendix.

Delivery in accessible settings - including libraries, schools, health services and community hubs - has served to reduce the stigma that might be associated with accessing services and has increased parents' opportunities for engagement. By helping services to feel easily accessible and welcoming in this way, we have widened our reach of parents through FLT. By working in a wide range of settings beyond early years, we have been able to upskill practitioners across sectors.

2) Parents: Building confidence, connection and progression

A core aim of Families Learning Together was strengthening parents' confidence and capability.

Across funded areas, family learning approaches helped parents better understand:

- child development
- communication and play
- how everyday interactions support learning
- practical ways to build positive routines at home

Parents frequently described increased confidence in their parenting and stronger relationships with their children.

Equally significant was the impact on social connection. Parent peer networks developed across areas and created trusted spaces where families felt welcome, respected and supported by others with shared experiences. This is an ongoing development that will be supported throughout FLT areas and beyond. This addressed an important preventative challenge: reducing isolation and strengthening informal support before difficulties become more acute.

In some areas, practitioners were trained to deliver the Peep Progression Pathway, so that parents can gain a recognised qualification via Scottish Qualifications (SCQF). All 11 areas took up the training involved in becoming a delivery centre to enable them to offer this qualification. As the project came to an end, we are still supporting areas to develop their Pathway offering. This ongoing support will ensure that in time all will offer this provision. Parents can then use this qualification to support them in volunteering, co-delivering groups, further education and employment.

One parent who initially participated in sessions later trained as a practitioner and secured employment as a Community Early Years Practitioner.

While individual stories are important, the wider significance lies in what they demonstrate. FLT helped build community capacity, enabling families not only to receive support but, in some cases, to become part of the local support system themselves.

Below are some quotes from parents who participated in the Peep Progression Pathway:

'I enjoyed learning about the early maths concepts and how we incorporate this into our daily lives. It has been great to read over my keepsake book and I look forward to sharing it with B when he is older.'

'[Peep Programmes have] not only helped me develop my child but has opened learning experiences for myself. I would thoroughly recommend.'

'I absolutely love doing the pathway courses as you learn so much and it always makes you think in a different way about how you can develop your child.'

'We have thoroughly enjoyed the progression course. It's such a positive experience and we have both gotten so much out of it and learned so much.'

'This course was great, it was so good to learn with G and put into practice all the things I learnt and see the difference it made. We really enjoyed it. A super, well-run course. Really enjoyed coming every week and seeing how the learning related to what G had done.'

'Me and E have both really enjoyed the Peep Progression Pathway. I feel I have learnt so much about E's development and how to support her. I feel I am now equipped to support her development with confidence.'

'I feel more equipped, more empathetic and aware of my behaviours and actions I can take to support C.'

3) Practitioners: Building a more connected early years system

Perhaps the strongest evidence of transformational change emerged through workforce development. A major contribution of Families Learning Together was its ability to bring together practitioners from services that often work separately but support the same families.

Across funded areas:

972 practitioners received training through funded FLT activity, including:

- 530 in the Peep Learning Together Programme (LTP)
- 295 in the Peep Antenatal Programme
- 147 in the Peep Progression Pathway

Participants included professionals from:

- health visiting
- midwifery
- speech and language therapy
- education
- community learning and development
- libraries
- childcare
- prisons
- third-sector services

This multidisciplinary approach mattered because it helped establish a shared language and understanding of family learning across systems.

Practitioners reported:

- stronger referral pathways
- improved consistency of messages to parents
- greater awareness of available support
- stronger relationships across agencies

Local leaders described the emergence of new professional networks that reduced duplication and improved co-ordination.

For the Whole Families Well-being Fund, this is significant. The project demonstrated that preventative support becomes more sustainable when it is embedded across existing services, rather than dependent on isolated projects or short-term staffing models.

We have also worked collaboratively with other organisations to support practitioners and families at a national level. For example, we recently met with the National Early Language and Communication (NELC), building on a relationship which was born during FLT. Initial meetings led to SLT and Education Scotland staff taking part in our training with a national lens. This has seen an increase in SLT support within Peep groups as well as with more consistent messaging being shared with families. The next steps in our collaboration are to share NELC's Chatting Together postcards and practitioner guide (attached as appendices) across all our platforms. These postcards will also be included in 'HomeLink bags', which have been co-created by Play Talk Read and Peeple for families within HMP Addiewell and HMP Kilmarnock. This pilot has the potential to become a national intervention; 12 of the 14 prisons in Scotland saw staff trained in a variety of our programmes during FLT.

Transformational change: Aligning with the national principles of holistic family support

Families Learning Together demonstrated strong alignment with Scotland's National Principles of Holistic Family Support.

Whole-family support

Support focused on strengthening family relationships and parental confidence, recognising parents as children's first educators.

Earlier intervention

Families were engaged antenatally and in early childhood before concerns escalated.

This recently created film shares more about our work across Scotland and its early intervention approach: [Peep in Scotland](#).

As we see our programmes being used within new sectors or environments, we have increasingly seen the potential for our programmes to be used with parents of the future. For an example of our work being used in secondary school settings, please see appendices 4 and 5 to learn about our work with Sanquhar Academy and Ayrshire College. Ayrshire College received Peep Progression Pathway training within FLT, this has seen the college look at ways to support students within their qualifications. This is still a work in progress, with plans to include both students and local families taking part in a Pathway together.

Accessible and relational support

Delivery through community settings reduced barriers and stigma.

Multi-agency collaboration

Children's and adult services increasingly worked together through shared training and joint planning.

Family voice and participation

Delivery models were shaped locally through community engagement and practitioner knowledge of family need.

Importantly, the project demonstrated that whole-family support is not simply about offering more services - it is about making systems work together more effectively around families.

National Learning and Improvement

One of the core purposes of the Whole Family Well-being Fund is generating learning that can inform national improvement.

Families Learning Together generated important lessons for Scotland:

1. Prevention is strengthened through trusted relationships

Families engaged most effectively where support was embedded in familiar community settings and delivered through trusted relationships.

2. Workforce development can drive system change

Training practitioners across sectors improved collaboration and created more coherent local pathways for families.

3. Local flexibility matters

Areas achieved strongest engagement when implementation reflected local systems and community context rather than a rigid delivery model.

4. Sustained implementation support is essential

Training alone was insufficient. Ongoing mentoring, co-delivery, practice observation and peer learning significantly increased practitioner confidence and helped embed approaches locally.

3. Lessons Learned

Implementation highlighted several important lessons for future delivery.

Variation in local systems affects pace of change

Differences in Children's Services Planning Partnership (CSPP) maturity and local partnership structures influenced implementation. Some areas already had strong cross-sector relationships, while others required significant relationship-building and service mapping. This suggests whole-system change requires different levels of support depending on local readiness.

Community mapping is a critical early step

In several areas, mapping revealed fragmented systems where services supporting the same families had limited awareness of one another. Although time intensive, this process proved important in identifying gaps, duplication and opportunities for collaboration.

Shared data infrastructure remains a challenge

Variation in local data systems affected consistency of reporting and outcomes measurement. Nationally, stronger cross-sector approaches to data and shared outcomes frameworks will be important if preventative approaches are to be evidenced effectively over time.

Sustainability depends on embedding change within systems

A key lesson from FLT is that sustainability relies less on programme continuation and more on whether local systems continue to:

- use shared approaches
- maintain cross-sector relationships
- prioritise preventative family learning

The strongest examples of sustainability were where multidisciplinary working had become part of routine local practice.

4. Reflections and Conclusions

Families Learning Together has demonstrated that relatively modest investment in preventative family learning can contribute to meaningful whole-system change.

The project strengthened support for children and families not by creating parallel structures, but by increasing capability and collaboration within local systems.

Children benefited through stronger home learning experiences and more responsive parenting.

Parents gained confidence, peer support and, in some cases, opportunities for progression.

Practitioners developed shared knowledge, stronger networks and more integrated approaches to support.

Most importantly, FLT showed how prevention can be made practical.

The project offers a compelling example of how Scotland can move towards services that are:

- preventative rather than reactive
- joined-up rather than fragmented
- relationship-based rather than crisis-led

While continued commitment will be needed to sustain and deepen impact, the evidence from FLT suggests that whole-system preventative change is both achievable and scalable when investment focuses on relationships, local partnership and family capability, and this is made a priority within the local authority.

The FLT project also allowed us to realise increased capacity across rural, disadvantaged and specialised groups. The project has acted as a catalyst for growth across Scotland: unlocking new partnerships and strengthening practice, expanding training capacity, and (most importantly) improving outcomes for children and families. FLT has created a more connected, skilled and confident workforce, empowered parents as leaders, and opened innovative pathways for young people and students. FLT leaves an

ongoing legacy: a stronger, more collaborative early years landscape where families are supported to learn connect and thrive.

For Scotland, the national learning is clear: supporting families earlier, through trusted relationships and connected systems, creates stronger foundations for children and reduces the need for later intervention.

Summary

The Families Learning Together project has demonstrated that early, relationship-based family learning can strengthen outcomes for children and families while also improving how local systems work together. The next phase of activity should therefore focus on embedding, sustaining and scaling the learning generated through WFWF investment, ensuring gains are retained beyond the funded period.

Sustaining multidisciplinary approaches within local systems

One of the strongest outcomes of FLT was increased collaboration across health, education, community learning, libraries, third sector and early years services.

The priority now is to ensure these relationships do not dissipate once funding ends.

Participating areas should consider how to:

- maintain cross-service practitioner networks established through FLT;
- continue joint planning between children's and adult services;
- embed shared language and approaches to child development within routine practice; and
- retain referral pathways and collaborative delivery mechanisms developed during implementation.

This will help preserve the preventative infrastructure developed through the project and reduce a return to siloed working.

Points of national learning:

1. Sustainable prevention requires investment in relationships between services, not solely programme delivery

Evidence from FLT suggests sustainability is strongest where approaches became embedded within existing services rather than dependent on temporary project structures.

Local areas should consider how to sustain:

- practitioner confidence through peer support and reflective practice;
- local champions and communities of practice;
- workforce capability developed through training; and
- integration of family learning within existing service planning.

Future planning should focus on how systems sustain preventative practice, rather than continuation of stand-alone activity, and on increasing local ownership.

2. Prevention is most effective when support is offered early, universally and through trusted relationships

Family learning needs to be embedded earlier in local pathways - FLT demonstrated strongest preventative value where families engaged antenatally and during the earliest years, before concerns escalated.

Future delivery should therefore explore how family learning can become more routinely embedded within:

- maternity and antenatal pathways;
- health visiting contacts;
- family hubs and community settings;
- early years transitions; and
- wider whole family support pathways.

3. Transformational change depends on embedding capability within systems

Embedding support earlier increases opportunities to strengthen attachment, communication and confidence before families require more intensive intervention.

Parents' experiences highlighted the importance of trusted, accessible and non-stigmatising support.

4. Prevention is most effective when support is designed *with* families, rather than simply delivered to them

To strengthen families' voices in service design and delivery, future development should continue to involve families in shaping:

- where support is delivered;
- how programmes are offered;
- barriers to engagement; and
- opportunities for peer support and progression.

Maintaining parent voice will help ensure services remain responsive to local need and continue to engage families who may otherwise remain disconnected from support.

5. Demonstrating the value of prevention requires stronger cross-system approaches to evaluation

The project highlighted inconsistency in local reporting and data systems.

To strengthen national learning and evidence of long-term impact, future activity should explore:

- shared outcome measures across areas;
- proportionate reporting mechanisms for practitioners;
- stronger links between family outcomes and systems change measures; and
- longer-term tracking of preventative impacts.

This is particularly important for understanding outcomes that emerge over time, including:

- strengthened home learning environments;

- reduced isolation;
- progression into learning and employment; and
- reduced demand for more intensive services.

Considering opportunities for targeted national scale-up:

Families Learning Together has shown that family learning approaches can be adapted across different local contexts while retaining core principles.

There is now an opportunity to consider how learning from participating areas could inform wider preventative approaches nationally, particularly in relation to:

- antenatal and early years engagement;
- whole-family support pathways;
- multidisciplinary workforce development; and
- reducing fragmentation across services supporting young children and families.

Future scale-up should retain the balance that proved effective in FLT: with national consistency in aims, while maintaining flexibility for local delivery.

Conclusion and next steps:

The most important next step is not simply continuation of activity, but retention of the system changes already achieved.

FLT has demonstrated that when practitioners work together, families are engaged earlier and support is rooted in trusted community relationships, preventative change is possible. The challenge now is to ensure this learning becomes part of routine local practice across Scotland's support for babies, young children and families.

This keeps the focus firmly on systems + children/families + prevention, rather than People organisational sustainability.

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Chatting Together Practitioner Guide

- [Chatting Together Guide](#)

Appendix 2: Chatting Together Tips

- [Chatting Together Tips](#)

Appendix 3: Fun with Food Case Study - Peep in collaboration with Dietetic Services

Overview

The NHS Ayrshire and Arran Dietetic Health Improvement (DHI) Team partnered with Early Years colleagues and Peep to develop a universal approach to promoting healthy growth in early years settings. The working group enhanced Peep's three nutrition session plans with DHI Team resources and activities, adding a final celebration week to complete the 4-week healthy eating programme named "Fun with Food". Four groups were piloted in early 2024 and following a period of development, where session plans and accompanying resources were further progressed, the programme was delivered 19 times in 14 different centres across Ayrshire to families with young children throughout 2025 (further details and feedback in our longer separate case study).

Programme content

Each session centred around an activity involving basic food items, accompanied by food based songs, stories and Things to do at home activities (TDAHs). These components enabled opportunities to discuss key messages with families which included:

- Family bonding
- Fruit and vegetables
- Fussy eating
- Age appropriate portion sizes
- Healthy snacks
- Sugar intake
- Parental modelling
- Eating well on a budget

These messages were spread over the 4-weeks with detailed explanations and guidance included in the session plans. Local evidence based diet and health information leaflets and other resources, promoted through the NHS, were used to consolidate the families learning during the sessions. Sessions were delivered collaboratively by Early Years practitioners (EYPs) and a DHI team member.

Feedback

Feedback was gathered from families by asking 5 simple open questions to explore things they have learned, changes they have made, their confidence around healthy eating, the best part of the group and any improvements they would make. EYPs also shared feedback they had received through the floor books and learning journals. To collect feedback from the EYPs, copies of the completed review and reflections were obtained for each session.

Throughout the progression of Fun with Food, feedback from the families has been overwhelmingly positive. Several key themes were identified from the feedback gathered:

- Trying new food
- Doing more food-related things together at home
- Increased awareness about sugar and portion sizes
- Family bonding
- Parent engagement

Similarly, the EYPs delivering the sessions reported a variety of benefits to the families, as well as constructive feedback to improve the sessions and accompanying resources. Key themes from the EYPs' feedback included:

- Exploring new food
- Parental engagement
- Effectively supporting children with additional support needs
- Eating well on a budget
- Trying the Things to do at home activities.

Strengths

There are early indications that the collaborative model of using Peep to encourage healthy eating behaviours could serve as a universal approach to promoting healthy weight in early years. The project has resulted in an information-rich, fun, and inclusive programme that is familiar to practitioners to implement.

Families benefitted from socialising with other families, sharing in each other's challenges and progress with food, in a relaxed environment where they could receive evidence based advice free from judgement or stigma. Experienced nutrition trained dietetics staff and EYPs were able to offer their expertise and guidance in a setting where families felt safe, while the length of the programme allowed relationships to be formed so that families felt comfortable engaging in sensitive conversations. Fun with Food also gave families direct contact with NHS information leaflets and resources and space to discuss them dietetics staff.

EYPs benefitted from the dietetic support, be that through a DHI team member's presence at the session, or through the programme and wider resources provided. As a result of the project, early years practitioners reported feeling more confident discussing diet and nutrition with families. The programme also aided planning and preparation as the session plans and accompanying documents were comprehensive and eliminated the need to develop activities, shopping lists, handouts for families etc.

The DHI Team benefitted as the Peep groups proved an effective, stigma free vehicle to communicate key healthy eating messages to families across Ayrshire. Through the EYP's trust and rapport with families, and the flexibility of Peep, the DHI Team were able to connect with families and engage in thoughtful and important conversations, sometimes about sensitive topics around diet and growth. Lack of trust and relationship can often be a barrier in public health interventions but having both is vital in enabling practitioners to support families to make positive changes; this quality is a fundamental strength of the partnership approach.

Barriers

Although cost of the basic food items for each session was low, it was still a barrier to delivery. Some local food larders provided food for the sessions and supermarket community champions were also able to contribute which helped reduce costs.

Assessing the impact of the programme on family food habits was also challenging. While the qualitative feedback obtained offers valuable insights into family experiences, it fails to measure the impact on dietary changes such as increased fruit and vegetable intake or reduced sugary drink consumption.

Next steps

The project will continue to expand, with further centres and practitioners across North, East and South Ayrshire. The DHI Team are currently exploring different models of delivery to improve the scalability and sustainability of the programme, as well as considering funding opportunities and working with a university to undertake independent evaluation.

Appendix 4: Sanquhar Academy Core Connections report



Peep Core Connections Case Study at Sanquhar Academy



Overview of Peep at Sanquhar Academy

Intergenerational Peep at Sanquhar Academy is like a typical Peep group—all the usual fun and learning benefits for children, parents, carers and practitioners, but with an extra layer/ positive addition of Academy aged pupils.

“Intergenerational practice is inclusive, building on the positive resources that the younger and older persons have to offer to each other and those around them.” Beth Johnson Foundation (a charity dedicated to making the UK age-friendly)

Partners involved

- Sanquhar Academy BGE Nurture Classroom pupils
- Carina Reynolds: Teacher of Nurture and Inclusion at Sanquhar Academy in Dumfries and Galloway

- Ashley Weir: Nurture Teacher Sanquhar Academy Cluster Dumfries and Galloway
- Parents and Carers of 1–3-year-olds and their children living in the Upper Nithsdale area of Dumfries and Galloway

How Academy Peep is offered

Sanquhar Academy promotes a whole school nurture approach and were awarded the National Nurturing Schools Award in 2024. Sanquhar Academy is currently the only school in Dumfries and Galloway who holds this award and are always keen to explore innovative ways to support their learners.

The Peep-Core Connections Project is a multi-generational project that Ashley Weir and Carina Reynolds designed where pupils from the BGE Nurture Classroom (S1-S3), young children aged 1-3 years and parents/carers of the young children learn together.

The BGE Nurture Classroom is a safe space for pupils who find it difficult to access mainstream classes on a full-time basis. These pupils have a wide range of additional support needs. For pupils who attend the BGE Nurture Classroom, one of the most effective ways of learning and to meet the diverse needs of the pupils is through “Experiential Learning” e.g. learning by doing and what better way to teach about relationships/connections, emotional literacy and child development and parenthood than through Peep Learning Together Programme!

Pupils become “Peep Helpers” and help with the planning of the Peep sessions, set-up and delivery of the Peep sessions, review of the Peep sessions and also complete follow up work/ activities related to what the focus/aim of the Peep session has been.

The topics covered in the sessions were from the Personal and Social Development strands of the Peep Learning Together Programme, but the Peep-Core Connections Project could be adapted to cover any of the Peep Learning Together Programme strands.

Outcomes for Families

- Meeting other parents. This in turn allows them to access other community provision as there are now other familiar faces and their support network is widened.
- Parents/ Carers gain ideas for things to make and do at home with everyday items that will support and encourage their child’s development.
- Encouragement that the everyday things they do with their children support key areas of learning such as personal and social development.
- Peep allows them the time and space to stop and reflect on these things and the have the child development knowledge to appreciate the value of their interactions with their child
- The structure of the Peep group - this provides focus, purpose and a safe and welcoming space
- The participation of the school students in the Peep group – they felt that this positively contributed to the dynamic of the group and that themselves and children learned lots from the pupils.

Feedback

Parents/ Carers commented that:

"Through the Peep-Core Connections Project they feel more confident to support their child's learning and development"

"The sessions made a difference to their relationship with their child and that the project has also helped them to support their child's language development"

Feedback from the parents/carers about the Academy pupils being involved in the Peep-Core Connections Project was also really positive. Parents/Carers commented that...

"...it was lovely to have the pupils present and to see them learn."

"...my child looked forward to seeing the pupils at the sessions."

"...it was great to see their children develop positive relationships with the Academy pupils"

Thoughts on the programme from Parents/ Carers about the Peep-Core Connections Project created.

welcoming

inclusive

non-judgemental

Outcomes for Pupils

- Gain practical experience of working with children and their carers
- Work as part of a team
- Develop relationships with others in the community e.g. parents/carers and children
- Develop emotional literacy skills
- Develop communication skills
- Develop meta-skills
- Learn about child development and parenthood
- Support the pupils to develop the 4 capacities of Curriculum for Excellence: Successful Learners, Confident Individuals, Responsible Citizens and Effective contributors

Pupil Feedback

Pupils commented really positively about the impact Core-Connections Project had on them, every pupil involved with the project shared that they had enjoyed taking part in it.

Some pupils shared that it was the highlight of their week and that they would love to take part in Peep-Core Connections sessions again.

Here are a few comments from pupils who took part in the project:

"I developed my skills in communication and my confidence in talking to adults has really improved"

"Peep is so much fun and I love playing with the wee children. They always smile and laugh at me and I know they like me"

"As well as Peep session I also enjoy talking about the session afterwards (review) and helping to plan what activities we will do with the children the following week".

Outcomes for School

The project is a great benefit to the school as it brings the community into the school and creates a supportive and inclusive atmosphere where parents come in with their children to engage with staff and pupils.

Outcome for Practitioners involved

Highlight of our week

Seeing pupils flourish in different environments

Pupils shine

Pupils take on responsibilities

The joy on their faces

Plans for the Future

- Carry out Peep-Core Connections Project with other BGE Nurture pupils focusing on different strands.
- Senior Phase Peep-Core Connections programme.
- Implement into other schools via the Nurture Teacher service (D&G) or any interested practitioners from other local Authorities who would like to deliver something similar.
- Peep Progression Pathway for parents and pupils.
- Links to possible careers for pupils e.g. Childcare and Health.

Further information

For further information on the Peep-Core Connections Project feel free to contact:

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Appendix 5: Ayrshire College Peep collaboration report



Ayrshire College - Peep Collaboration Journey So Far – April 2024

Current

The Peep Learning Together Programme continues to develop at Ayrshire College. This programme extends what our students along with parents/grandparents/childminders from our local community already do, to support children learning within their everyday routines and the opportunities that present themselves within these, while using low cost and readily available objects and resources.

We have collaborated to create, develop and embed a practical programme, within our courses to support our students in building their confidence, supporting parents/grandparents/childminders, recognising and supporting individual needs, building awareness of the importance of the environment, developing a practical understanding of the WHY behind our pedagogy and practice and the importance of this.

Our student practical programme which includes delivering our community sessions are fully supported by our lecturing staff throughout every session. Their practical learning begins in September with Story and Song sessions, progressing in October to include stay and play sessions and after an introduction to the ORIM Learning Framework and the flexible structure of a Peep session for our students we begin to introduce Peep sessions in February. So far we have delivered these on campus as well as in local community hubs, local country parks and we are always looking for new ways to deliver this and provide experiences for our students. A local Early Childhood Centre have recently approached us and asked if we can support Peep sessions with their families. We are currently considering how this may progress.

We have collaborated with Peep since 2019 and we are always keen to share what we do with other colleges, highlighting the benefits for our students, staff and the local community.

It is all about bringing learning to life for our students and ensuring that our students have a safe, consistent and nurturing environment to practice the skills required for the Early Years sector.

In Kilmarnock campus we offer 3 community sessions a week with our level 6 students and there are also opportunities to join our HNC students for Forest Kindergarten sessions. All of our sessions are free for families, and we have had to introduce a new booking system because the sessions are so popular.

Three of our staff are now trained as People approved trainers through our Training and Support Agreement (TSA) and can deliver training to students, staff and partners such as Local Authority, Local Employers and other partners such as the NHS.

Future

We hope to further develop the work we do alongside People and the Corra Foundation both in our college and further afield.

Family learning is a priority for Scottish Government and People have been awarded a three-year contract to research and deliver a test of change collaborating and supporting with a cross sector of professionals to deliver the Learning Together Programme and also the Parent Pathway. Ayrshire is one of the identified Local authorities and we are hoping to support this test of change by providing support in training, environment, offering time to observe sessions being delivered as well as providing opportunities for our students and families to share their experiences with others.

Ayrshire College has campuses in East, North and South Ayrshire. These are areas which have been identified as high multiple deprivation areas within the Scottish Index Multiple Deprivation. 1 in 5 children have been classed as growing up in extreme poverty and this also translates to our adult students. We have students with a variety of responsibilities and some students are not only studying with us full time but also have caring responsibilities and work two jobs to try and make ends meet while trying to achieve the qualification they need to work in the Early Learning and Childcare sector to improve their lives.

The cost-of-living crisis is also having a financial impact and we are collaborating with People to try and find creative ways to support our students in funding the optional training required to facilitate Peep sessions. We offer this training for our current HNC Childhood Practice students as an additionality at the end of their course so that they can progress to facilitate Peep sessions. We have a delivery agreement with People that reduces the cost of this for Ayrshire College students but for the reasons discussed the number of students being able to access this is greatly reduced.

To demonstrate true commitment to supporting family learning, embedding this training within college courses would be an ideal way to move forward. We have classes of Childhood Practice students, Health and Social Care students, Social Science students, Uniformed Services students, Sport and Fitness students and many more that would be able to benefit from training such as People's Peep Facilitator training. This would be a cost-effective way to deliver training to a large number of people just about to start their career, influencing future workforces and having a positive impact in our communities as well as in children's lives.

We also plan to create and develop a level 5 unit *Introduction to Learning Together with Peep* and a SCQF level 6 unit *Best Practice and Practical Learning Together with Peep* for our students.

27 families that are currently attending our community sessions are in the process of becoming enrolled as Ayrshire College students. This will build further on their sense of community and belonging, breaking down barriers accessing college, building confidence and it will also provide access to benefits such as our free breakfasts and free soup for lunch, access to our Learning Resource Centre (LRC), computers and printers.

We are exploring new training and delivery opportunities for our staff and students such as Ante-natal Peep, working with families and their midwives through the local parenting sessions already offered. We are investigating securing new partners to support delivery of Peep within different environments such as in Secondary schools, Prisons, Armed Service Personnel, Emergency Service Personnel, Community partners, ESOL and Ukraine visitors, Fit Ayrshire Dads, as well as collaborating with our Essential Skills department to introduce BSL within Peep sessions.

"Wherever there are children, Peep should be there too" Liz Ersoy (2023)

IMPACT

My Dad is dying, he is only 51 and i've really had the most difficult year and honestly some days i have struggled to leave the house but your groups force me to do it and i'm so thankful



IMPACT

I love the sessions so much. It sounds silly but i really feel like everyone is so cliquey at the local groups and i'm so out of place. I never feel lonely or excluded at the college, just feel so welcome and comfortable there.



IMPACT

I don't feel judged it's hard work with the babies, I get so much support at the college. I just love it



There are always different things for my younger daughter to be entertained with. We have created tuff trays at home after getting inspiration from the sessions – sand, rice, gloop etc.

I like how the students welcome at the entrance. The singing at the start is good. Every week there was so much choice and different activities. I liked messy play for my child as she doesn't have a lot of chance to do this at home..

The sessions have been really beneficial for us all. When I first had Jacob I was really nervous about leaving the house with two small children. Everyone was so friendly and helped out which resulted in my confidence growing.

FEEDBACK

. The students really got to know the boys. So many mornings it was just good to get out the house and see friendly faces after a tough morning.

Most of all, the sessions are so much fun and the lecturer does a brilliant job leading them. We are very grateful for the opportunity.

Both students and lecturers are very welcoming and pay attention to the needs and wants of my children. They provide a wide variety activities that are both enjoyable and contribute to the development of the children. Students have also made specific adjustments for my younger son who has additional needs and eats non food items.

Love that each week is different in terms of the activities set up. Great there are so many to choose from and Isabella loves going round to see what there is and spend time doing her favourites. I find it really interesting as a parent to see what she gravitates towards.

I love all the thought that has been put into every activity to make it such a rich learning opportunity for the children. Islas love the sand table and the reading corner as well as the bookbug sessions. It has allowed me to see what she enjoys and adapt it at home.

My daughter absolutely loves the set ups with all the different things to do at every session all the girls are absolutely lovely and kind. Me and wee girl love the songs and the reading at the end of the session.

FEEDBACK

My little one enjoys the different age appropriate sensory play, there are many sensory items that I had never thought of before that are super simple but very effective like sponges, different fabrics, different noisy toys ect that we have incorporated into play at home.

It has been wonderful seeing both the students and children grow in confidence as the weeks go by. The learning experiences have been great for all ages and stages and nothing is too much trouble for the students. They are happy to get down and messy with the children!

My children get so much from these sessions and I would rather attend these than toddlers as I feel they provide so much more fun and learning experiences for the children, they are more child led and inclusive.



FEEDBACK



Vanessa Jayne Kent
Top contributor · 2 Feb · 📷

We just love these sessions so so much. Thank you all for making it so enjoyable for my babies and for always being so lovely with me xx

Yay. 🎧

You, LEvans Mortimer and 10 others

Early Years Fun and Play Sessions @ Ayrshire College
Top Vanessa Jayne Kent · 9 Feb · 📷

Started our own treasure basket at home thanks to the inspiration from you lot 💕

Love Comment Send

You, LEvans Mortimer and 14 others

Top comments ▾

Ann Bloor
❤️❤️❤️
5 w Like Reply

Roil Woodsmall
Love this. Xx
5 w Like Reply

LEvans Mortimer
Fantastic, I'm sure Ayla will have hours of fun x
5 w Like Reply

2 📷❤️

1 🥰





FEEDBACK



<  Early Years Fun and...  

 **Vanessa Jayne Kent**
 Top contributor 25 Feb · 

One of jaces first ever sessions in October 2022 vs his most recent session Feb 2024! Just thought i would share, he just loves it so much and to see how much he has developed and how much his confidence has grown is amazing! x



1 comment

  17

 Love  Comment  Send

 **Lecturer Lori**
 Admin Top contributor
 We are privileged to be part of Jace's journey 🥰

Like Reply 1 🥰



Student FEEDBACK

Our sessions give us an insight into what it will be like to support children and families in a nursery environment.

I have gained so much confidence through these sessions.

Gives me time to explore appropriate activities and practice these in a safe environment.

I love that we get feedback each session from families and childminders. This helps build my confidence and helps me identify things that have gone well.



The sessions are fab

The sessions are my favourite part of the week

I enjoy seeing the children develop



ATTACHMENT



BELONGING



CONNECTION



DEVELOPMENT

STUDENT FEEDBACK

WEEK TO WEEK MY
CONFIDENCE IS
GROWING

I AM LEARNING SO
MANY SKILLS IN THE
SESSIONS

























OUR SESSIONS ARE SO
IMPORTANT AND
BRING CLASS
LEARNING TO LIFE

WE LEARN SO MANY
THINGS IN OUR
SESSIONS THAT WE
COULDN'T LEARN
OTHERWISE

I CAN SEE THE
DEVELOPMENT OF
THE CHILDREN WE
SUPPORT



Lecturer Feedback

<p>FEEDBACK</p>  <p>As a lecturer I love being a part of this experience, seeing my wee people helping other wee people is an amazing part of my job.</p> 	<p>FEEDBACK</p>  <p>Our sessions support bringing the theory that we are teaching to life and we often see those 'light bulb' moments when the learning is contextualised.</p> 	<p>FEEDBACK</p>  <p>The sessions are crucial in supporting our students to gain experience in working with children and families in a safe and nurturing space.</p> 
<p>FEEDBACK</p>  <p>Our practical sessions give students the opportunity to plan, implement and evaluate play experiences for children and families</p> 	<p>FEEDBACK</p>  <p>Real interactions and reactions to activities and resources help the students to reflect, adapt and differentiate.</p> 	<p>FEEDBACK</p>  <p>Our practical sessions help us to stay current, motivated, passionate and enthusiastic which is great and is shared with our students, families and the children.</p> 
<p>FEEDBACK</p>  <p>As a lecturer this is the favourite part of my week. I love seeing not only my students grow in confidence but also the parents, grandparents, childminders and of course the children.</p> 	<p>FEEDBACK</p>  <p>Our sessions are so innovative and show best practice in a college environment, they are breaking barriers and grow from strength to strength.</p> 	<p>FEEDBACK</p>  <p>An important part of our sessions is that everyone's voices and individual needs are heard and considered in the plans of delivery for each session.</p> 
<p>FEEDBACK</p>  <p>Our practical sessions provide a safe, nurturing and inclusive space for our students, the families and the children too.</p> 	<p>FEEDBACK</p>  <p>Seeing our students confidence growing and their skills developing throughout the sessions is lovely especially after recent events.</p> 	<p>FEEDBACK</p>  <p>With our support our students are having such a positive impact on children and families lives and this is crucial.</p> 

SOCIAL MEDIA

FaceBook: Early Years Fun and Play Sessions @ Ayrshire College

Twitter: @AyrshireKelc

