



# PEEP Learning Together Evaluation report: Year 1

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## Executive Summary

Thrive at Five is a place-based initiative focused on helping children develop strong foundations for life and learning in their early years. In the 2024–25 school year, PEEP Learning Together<sup>1</sup> was implemented in our Abbey Hulton and Bentilee schools to support children's home learning environment and their communication and language skills. PEEP is a structured intervention delivered to the parent(s) and child together and active parent engagement is key to intervention success. Each session focuses on a particular topic related to children's development and includes discussion, activities, songs and stories, as well as advice and approaches for parents to adopt at home.

This evaluation summarises this first year of implementation by focusing on facilitating factors and barriers to implementation, initial impact on children, parents and PEEP facilitators and recommendations for future implementation.

In 2024, Thrive at Five funded and organised two training opportunities for school and Thrive at Five staff. Schools were asked to deliver a minimum of six sessions (including a taster session), including one session from each of the five PEEP topics.<sup>2</sup> The initial implementation of PEEP in school nurseries was planned for September 2024. Due to low parent interest, it was decided to try implementing PEEP in the spring term instead and PEEP was implemented in four schools during March and April, 2025. There was an additional school that tried to deliver PEEP, but there was not enough parent interest to run the intervention. Factors facilitating implementation included using many different strategies to advertise PEEP, running sessions during the school day, and well organised facilitators and sessions that included enjoyable activities that enabled parents and children to spend treasured time together.

Factors that made implementation hard included low parental engagement in some schools, difficulties reaching the families who needed support the most and the time it took to prepare sessions and find resources within the school environment.<sup>3</sup>

Each school had on average between 2 and 6 parent-child pairs attend every week. Between 5 and 8 sessions were delivered in each school, one school did not reach the minimum delivery of six sessions. Sessions were delivered by either school staff or Thrive at Five-funded peripatetic leaders. Only one school delivered sessions from each of the five PEEP topics. Taken together, this shows the different local delivery of PEEP in the four schools and how the full potential of PEEP has not been delivered in this first pilot year. The second implementation year should focus on delivering at least 10 sessions, using the full spectrum of PEEP topics.

After the intervention ended, parents reported numerous examples of how the child's home learning activities had changed, such as more reading, singing, crafts, recognising letters and counting. Findings from the LanguageScreen measure<sup>4</sup> also suggests that language skills

<sup>1</sup> [Peep - charity supporting parents with children's learning](https://www.peep.org.uk)

<sup>2</sup> [Early Learning Goals mapped to Peep Learning Together topics | www.peep.org.uk](https://www.peep.org.uk/early-learning-goals-mapped-to-peep-learning-together-topics)

<sup>3</sup> Some resources such as puppets, phonics and maths books were provided by Thrive at Five

<sup>4</sup> LanguageScreen measures language and communication skills and was conducted in autumn 2024 and summer 2025

improved. That said, scores were found to be high at the start (meaning majority of children did not need language support), suggesting that the children who needed the PEEP support the most did not receive it. This concern was shared by the session facilitators and needs to be considered for year two of implementation.

Over 90% of parents<sup>5</sup> agreed that PEEP had increased their confidence and knowledge about how to help their child learn at home. There were also examples of how PEEP activities at home had facilitated better sibling relationships. Facilitators reported that the sessions had helped them build relationships with parents and improve everyday practice by explaining learning outcomes to parents through ClassDojo (an online system for schools to share information with parents).

## Recommendations

All recommendations for future implementation are discussed at the end of the report (see page 15), below are the three main recommendations:

1. Ensure the families who need the support from PEEP the most are invited to attend the intervention. This means considering who these families are and using school advertising and direct contact appropriately.
2. To maximise impact, deliver PEEP early in the school year (either in the term before or after Christmas) and deliver 10 sessions, taking full advantage of the PEEP topics available.
3. Support school staff to be the primary facilitators of the PEEP sessions, with support from peripatetic leaders when needed. This will enable staff to build upon the PEEP themes in the classroom, benefitting more children.

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<sup>5</sup> Total number of parents were 24

## Background

Thrive at Five is an early years charity with a mission to support children to thrive, from pregnancy to five years old, by bringing together communities, families and partners and by joining up and strengthening early years systems. Our goal is to increase the proportion of children who reach a Good Level of Development at the end of their reception year.

Thrive at Five's local backbone team works with partners on a range of approaches including supporting implementation of evidence-based interventions during children's nursery and reception years. The nursery year marks the start of children's more formal educational experience and by laying strong foundations during this year we can help children reach reception without the need for additional support. Our nursery and reception strategies are therefore complementary and Talking Time in nursery and the Nuffield Early Language Intervention (NELI) in reception are already being implemented across all seven primary schools in Abbey Hulton and Bentilee (see figure 1).

The current evaluation focuses on the first year of delivery of PEEP Learning Together.<sup>6,7</sup> This is an additional intervention for nursery children and their families, targeting a child's home learning environment and their communication and language skills.

A child's home learning environment (HLE) is understood as the aspects of home life that support learning, including the regularity and quality of activities that parents/caregivers and children do together. This includes activities such as reading together, playing games and singing songs, and materials which enable these activities such as books and toys. Many of these activities also incorporate improving a child's communication and language skills, such as recognising letters and book sharing.

Nursery		Reception
All children: Talking Time	Targeted children: PEEP Learning Together	Targeted children: NELI

Figure 1. Schematic showing how our nursery and reception strategies fit together.

<sup>6</sup> From here on referred to as PEEP

<sup>7</sup> [Peeple - charity supporting parents with children's learning](#)

## PEEP Learning Together

Peep was developed by the charity Peeple to teach parents about how children learn and develop and to subsequently help parents build on what they are already doing at home to enable a positive home learning environment. The intervention is available for different age groups. The version evaluated here targeted children aged 3-4 who attended school-based nurseries.

PEEP is a structured intervention delivered to the parent(s) and child together. Active parent engagement is key to the intervention's success. Each session focuses on a particular topic related to children's development and includes discussion, activities, songs and stories, as well as advice and approaches for parents to adopt at home. In total, there are 36 PEEP sessions to choose from, spanning five topics closely linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile;<sup>8</sup> Personal, social and emotional development, Communication and language, Health and Physical Development, Early literacy and early maths. All sessions are based on ORIM; Opportunity, Recognition, Interaction and Modelling, four practical ways that parents can help children learn and develop (see appendix 1 for more detail).

A recent randomised controlled trial found that children eligible for Pupil Premium improved their core language skills and communication after attending a 20-session long version of PEEP Learning Together.<sup>9</sup> Parents also reported improving the home learning environment and increasing their confidence in playing with their child.

## Evaluation

The current evaluation focused on three objectives;

1. Assessing whether implementation occurred as intended and the associated barriers and facilitating factors
2. Assessing whether the intervention achieved positive impact on children, parents and facilitators
3. Identifying steps to strengthen the delivery of the workstream going forwards.

The data informing these three objectives comes from nursery LanguageScreen scores from autumn 2024 and summer 2025; interviews<sup>10</sup> with school-based PEEP facilitators and Thrive at Five staff (peripatetic leaders and Deputy Partnership & Programmes Lead & Early Years Development Lead), and 10 parents who attended PEEP with their child.<sup>11</sup> Data was also collected through a survey on session topic, attendance and engagement completed by the PEEP

<sup>8</sup> [Early Learning Goals mapped to Peep Learning Together topics | www.peeple.org.uk](https://www.peeple.org.uk)

<sup>9</sup> [Peep Learning Together Programme - trial | EEF](https://www.eef.org.uk)

<sup>10</sup> All interviews were recorded, transcribed and analysed using framework analysis focusing on the evaluation objectives.

<sup>11</sup> At least one parent from each school participated.

facilitator and a post-intervention survey for parents focusing on the home learning environment, knowledge and confidence.<sup>12</sup> Findings are presented under each evaluation objective.

## Implementation of PEEP Learning Together

The initial implementation of PEEP in school nurseries was planned for September 2024. However, it quickly transpired that parental uptake was very low due to parents focusing on their children's transition and settling into school. Consequently, it was decided to try implementing PEEP in the spring term instead and PEEP was implemented in four schools during March and April 2025. An additional school tried to deliver PEEP, but there was not enough parent interest to run the intervention. The other two schools did not have staff or classroom space to deliver PEEP.

### *Training*

The implementation of PEEP was supported by 2 days of training for at least one staff member of each school, for our peripatetic leaders, and for the local Thrive at Five team. The training was funded and organised by Thrive at Five. This training was made available twice, before the 2024-2025 school year started and subsequently during the school year. The facilitators who attended the first training event commented that it had been a while since they attended the training by the time they delivered their PEEP sessions. Training was described as '*great*' (peripatetic leader). One facilitator delivering PEEP had not attended the training and was keen to do so next time it was offered. She was supported by Thrive at Five staff to deliver the PEEP sessions.

### *Support from Thrive at Five*

All schools received significant support from Thrive at Five to deliver PEEP. Stoke's Early Years Development Lead supported implementation by identifying sessions from each PEEP topic, including identifying a good taster session ('Imaginative play with puppets') where children received hand puppets they could play with at home. This small gift also acted as an incentive to parents and in a later session children were given a phonics and maths book.<sup>13</sup> These resources were provided by Thrive at Five. In total, there were 14 sessions identified and recommended by the Early Years Development Lead (see appendix 2). To help delivery, these sessions were summarised and prepared for the session facilitators. There was also considerable support from the two peripatetic leaders working with the schools that delivered PEEP, through either backfilling for staff delivering PEEP or delivering PEEP in partnership with school staff or on their own.

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<sup>12</sup> This survey was based on the Home Learning Environment survey, used in the RCT mentioned above

<sup>13</sup> If parents attended most sessions, they were also given a £10 shopping voucher as an extra incentive to attend.

### Delivery

Schools were asked to deliver a minimum of 6 PEEP sessions, ideally aiming for 10 sessions. On average schools implemented 6.5 sessions (range 5 to 8 sessions, see table 1). Three schools delivered the sessions within the school day; the fourth school delivered the sessions after school. In terms of PEEP topics delivered, these differed between schools (see figure 2). Only Kingsland delivered sessions from every PEEP topic. Sessions from the Communication and Language and Early Literacy topics were delivered by all schools.

School	Day and time of PEEP session	Number of sessions delivered	Average number of parent-child pairs per week (range)
Abbey Hulton	Wednesday, 9.15-10am	5	7 (6-8)
Eaton Park	Friday, 9.15-10am	7	6 (4-10)
Kingsland	Tuesday, 1.45-2.30	8	9 (7-14)
Maple Court	Monday, after school	6	2 (2-3)

Table 1. Details on how each school delivered PEEP and to how many parent-child pairs.

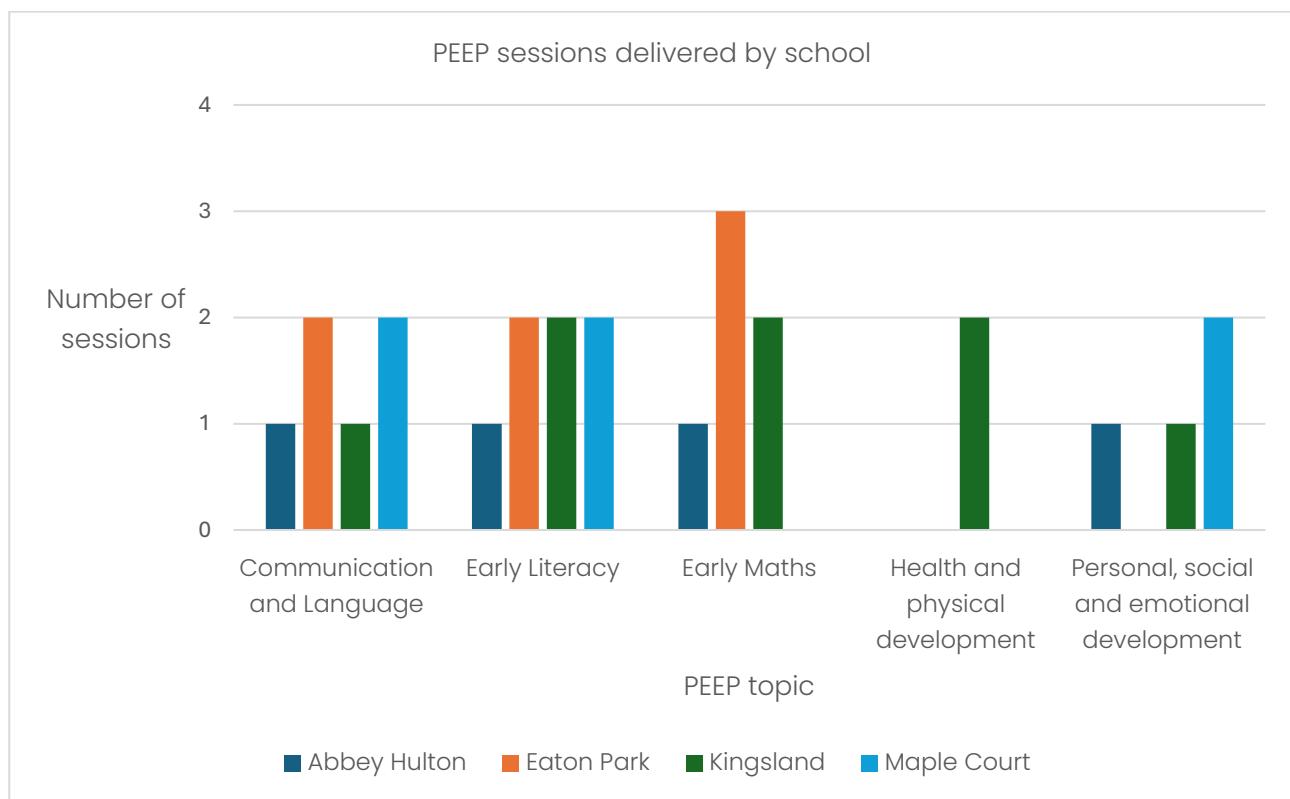


Figure 2. Types of PEEP session by school. One session topic is missing from Abbey Hulton.

### *Attendance*

Session attendance varied between schools, with average attendance between 2 to 9 parent-child pairs. In total, 35 parent-child pairs attended at least one PEEP session (see table 1 above). Many parents attended every week, however not surprisingly the taster session had the highest attendance. Most children attended with their mothers, with some fathers and a grandparent also attending. Some children had both of their parents attending and in some cases siblings also attended. There were clear signs that many parents were committed to the intervention, such as sending apologies when not able to attend.

### **What worked well in implementation?**

The first year of implementing a new intervention is always difficult and this was recognised by the Early Years Development Lead acknowledging '*For some schools, it's going to be a slow grower*'. Thus, the focus for this first year was to deliver a minimum of six PEEP sessions to as many families as possible, with the expectation that tweaks to optimise delivery would happen in subsequent years. The factors that helped implementation are described below.

### *Reaching parents*

Several strategies were used to inform parents about PEEP. These included posters around the school grounds, invites in school bags, messages on ClassDojo,<sup>14</sup> and proactive targeting of parents at the school gates. Parents reported that it was helpful to hear about PEEP on ClassDojo (which can translate messages to different languages) and from their child's teacher. One school successfully targeted families who teachers thought would benefit from attending PEEP.

### *Attendance*

Practical aspects that encouraged engagement and attendance was regular reminders to parents. This was especially important in schools who had their PEEP intervention interrupted by bank holidays and whole-school activities (Mondays and often Fridays). One facilitator was proactive in asking parents 'are you coming today?' when seeing them at the school gates which was perceived to improve attendance. Some parents would not have been able to attend PEEP without bringing a younger sibling and were grateful that this was an option. Attendance was also bolstered by time of day, the three schools that ran the PEEP sessions within the school day had higher attendance (6-9 parents on average) compared to the school that ran it after school (attended by 2-3 parents).

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<sup>14</sup> [ClassDojo](#), an online system for schools to share information with parents

### *Parent engagement and enjoyment*

A consistent finding was how well the parents and children engaged with the sessions and its activities. In general, parents talked more on a one-to-one basis than when sat together as a group. In one school parents did not engage well in the group discussion at all but happily chatted in smaller groups or when doing activities with their child. This led the facilitator to change the session format to better suit the parents but still get the key messages of each session across. She provided more time for activities and focused on introducing ORIM during one-to-ones with the parents. These one-to-one chats (which happened at all schools to varying degrees) were appreciated by parents as shown in the quote below

*The group was lovely friendly and relaxed, staff took time during each session to have a one-to-one with each parent and child, my child enjoyed the various targeted activities put out each week and found them stimulating (Parent 7)*

As suggested in the above quote, session engagement was sustained by the various PEEP activities. These activities included playing with Play-Doh, building exercises, making sensory bottles, story time and singing. Children in particular enjoyed toys and resources they did not have in their normal classroom. Parents repeatedly reported that the sessions helped them bond and build a stronger relationship with their child. Of the 24 parents completing the post-intervention survey, 100% of parents agreed or strongly agreed that the sessions had been enjoyable. In several sessions, children with the help of their parents made something they could subsequently take home with them which parents appreciated, and facilitators found this helped parent engagement.

Engagement was also sustained by providing an opportunity for parents to spend time with their child. This was mentioned repeatedly as a key advantage of the PEEP sessions, suggesting there are few such distraction free opportunities (for example phones were not allowed in the sessions) in daily life for parents. One mother reported that she and her child '*looked forward to doing this [PEEP] every week. It also give us chance to spend time together*' (Parent 14). Parents overwhelmingly reported that they would recommend the sessions to other parents.

### *Session content and delivery*

Parents reported that they found the facilitator and sessions well organised. This was echoed by the peripatetic leaders;

*[Facilitator] was amazing with all the resources she had planned and ready, and you know, everything was really well thought through and linked to the session. (Peripatetic leader)*

Part of this was enabled by the Early Years Development Lead who identified the most appropriate PEEP sessions, which saved the facilitators time (see appendix 2 for details). She also met with the facilitators to talk the intervention through and how it could be delivered.

*And she did say to me, you know, think about the children that you've got and the parents that you've got and just take out [pick out] the bits that you think would be most appropriate for those. So I did adapt it quite a bit really. (Facilitator)*

Each PEEP facilitator identified what sessions they thought the children in their school would benefit from the most (for example, one school focused more on literacy and maths, less on independence), at what level and in what order. For example, one facilitator reported not doing two maths sessions in a row to help parent engagement. This local adaptation meant that no school delivered PEEP sessions in the exact same way.

A key component of PEEP is ORIM, an acronym that was found to be unhelpful by session facilitators. Instead, facilitators implemented the ethos of ORIM through using other key words and explained to parents that there are opportunities in everyday life for learning activities and gave examples of what parents could do to interact with their child.

Session delivery was also helped by the fact that school staff could borrow resources from different classrooms and peripatetic leaders could use material they had already developed for the school readiness workshops to deliver session content. The peripatetic leaders were instrumental in being able to deliver PEEP, either through back filling for staff delivering PEEP, supporting facilitators or delivering in tandem with school staff. It was also acknowledged that PEEP will be easier to deliver next year, as facilitators have their session plans ready and know what resources to use.

### **What were the challenges in implementation?**

The barriers to implementing PEEP are discussed below. Some of these barriers were experienced by all schools, whilst others were more school specific.

#### *Low parent uptake*

Low parent interest prevented one school from delivering PEEP. In the schools that delivered PEEP, parent attendance varied, and no session was consistently 'full' (it is recommended that sessions are not delivered to more than 10 parent-child pairs at a time). One school had to cancel a session due to only one parent attending and it was recognised that it was difficult to run sessions as intended when only two children and their parents attended. In some cases, even with direct conversations and reminders, some parents did not attend. One facilitator said '*I didn't realise how difficult the implementation would be in getting parents through the door*'.

The time and day of the PEEP sessions are likely to have influenced uptake. Many parents work during the day so were unable to attend, others have older or younger children who they may not have wanted to bring to the session or knew they could bring. It is also likely not all parents may have been interested in attending the PEEP sessions or not understanding what they were about. One of the parents who had taken part in PEEP said '*I just think people would feel more confident coming to the activities if there was more of an explanation on what we will be doing*'

(Parent 15), another parent mentioned how she was surprised the sessions were so much more than simply doing crafts.

### *Engaging the families that need support the most*

In all schools there was a concern from staff whether the families who attended PEEP were the ones who needed the support the most. PEEP has the chance to improve children's home learning environment, but could also create more inequity if it does not reach the families who need it the most. It was acknowledged that several schools may have felt pressure to fill places (using the approach '*Let's just get any parents.*' (Early Years Development Lead)), with less thought about what families PEEP should target. Several facilitators discussed the 'eager beaver' parents who signed up quickly but were not the target audience, in the words of one facilitator:

*...one little girl that attended every single session, she's working above age-related expectations in all areas. So she wasn't necessarily a child that we would want to be targeting because she already has the parenting, her parents are on board. (Facilitator)*

Data from the LanguageScreen measure conducted in Autumn 2024 supports this idea.

LanguageScreen measures children's language and communication skills and categorises them into red (definitely needs support), amber (may need support) and green (do not need support). Data was available for 21 children (from three schools) and shows that 11 of these children were in the green category, meaning their language and communication skills is not a concern (see table 2).<sup>15</sup> While this does not necessarily mean that the children have a positive home learning environment, it shows that they do not need more language and communication support (a focus of PEEP).

It is likely that schools may have felt pressure to fill places (especially after the false start in the autumn) and different approaches were used to invite parents. Broadly, the first approach was a 'first come, first served' approach which benefitted the parents who were able to respond to the PEEP invitation quickly. This approach may not have benefitted the parents with a lower level of English, more complex life situations etc. The second approach was to ask parents to register interest, and of those keen to attend, school staff chose which ones to invite first based on perceived need. This latter approach was perceived to be more successful in engaging families who needed the support PEEP could offer the most.

Category	Red (definitely needs support)	Amber (may need support)	Green (not a concern)
Number of children	5	5	11

Table 2. Number of children (N=21) in the three LanguageScreen categories in autumn 2024.

<sup>15</sup> A slightly different pattern was found in the school who did not use LanguageScreen. They used Early Communication Screen to categorise 5 children as red (significant language delay, require intervention), 3 children as amber (mild to moderate language delay) and 3 children as green (normal range or above for language skills).

### *Session delivery*

It was acknowledged that school staff were '*time starved*' which made it hard to plan sessions and get resources together. Several facilitators planned the sessions in their own time outside of their work hours. All facilitators also mentioned a lack of resources to deliver PEEP apart from the resources made available by Thrive at Five. When peripatetic leaders delivered sessions there was an extra hurdle of contacting school staff to identify what resources were available. Facilitators who were also school staff did not have this problem. It was mentioned that some phonics books were quite old, and by the end of the school year it was hard to find spare exercise books in one school.

Other issues that made implementing difficult included a lack of space. In one school, the PEEP sessions were held in a conference room, where children could not reach the table.

### **What changed for children after attending PEEP?**

#### *Home learning environment*

All parents agreed or strongly agreed in the post-intervention survey that the PEEP sessions provided a good opportunity to support their child's learning. Parents also agreed or strongly agreed that after attending PEEP, they engaged in more home learning activities such as reading to their child or helping them learn the alphabet (see figure 3) and that children's behaviour at home had positively changed (78.3% of parents agreed or strongly agreed that their child paints or draws more at home after attending PEEP). One parent reported '*I've found that since coming into school my child's wanted to sit and learn through play at home with me too*' (Parent 12).

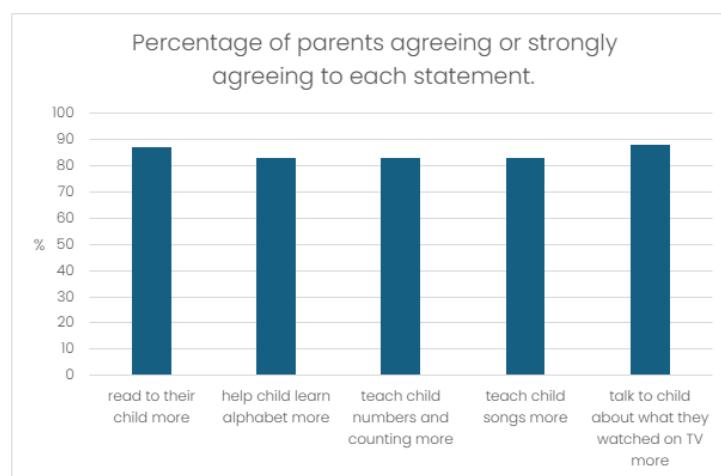


Figure 3. Percentage of parents agreeing or strongly agreeing to the statements after attending PEEP (N=24 parents, representing all 4 schools). Items were taken from the Home Learning Environment questionnaire, with the additional item about TV watching.

Facilitators reported that parents often said 'oh we could do this at home' when doing the PEEP activities. A facilitator talked to a grandparent who echoed this.

*She was like, oh, I never thought to do this sort of thing. We just have colouring books and crayons at my house for when they come over. I can do different things now to help them.*  
(Peripatetic leader)

Other examples included how PEEP sessions had taught parents '*learn the way my son likes to learn things*' (Parent 15) and realising that '*we don't have to get them to read exact stories we can let them look at the pictures and try to interpret what they think is happening and how characters are feeling*' (Parent 15). For this specific family it had made reading time more enjoyable. Other parents had reported '*counting objects inside the house, counting steps when we change rooms*' (Parent 2) or ordered the resources that were used in the PEEP sessions such as more puppets or organised a mini obstacle course.

### *Language and Communication skills*

Findings from the post-intervention parent survey showed that 87% of parents agreed or strongly agreed that their child recognises letters better (for example on food packaging) after attending PEEP. Improved language and communication skills were also identified when examining the autumn 2024 and summer 2025 LanguageScreen scores of the children who attended PEEP. Scores were available for 21 children from three schools. Mean score in autumn 2024 was 90.38 (SD 11.68) and in summer 2025 96.76 (SD 11.78), and this increase was statistically significant ( $t(20) = -4.245, p < .001$ ).<sup>16</sup> It should be noted that if a child scores above 90, they are considered to be in the green category and their language and communications skills are not of a concern.

Several PEEP sessions focused on language and communication and there was clear evidence from the interviews that letter recognition had become more of a focus for several families. One facilitator described one parents experience as '*the parent said it takes forever to walk home now because their child is on each road sign. They're looking for the letter that starts their name or they've recognised that.*'

### *Concentration, confidence and emotional regulation*

In addition to the positive findings regarding home learning environment and language and communication, additional benefits included children's improved ability to sit down and concentrate on tasks, emotional regulation and improved confidence. Taken together, this was seen to have helped children prepare for reception.

*I think it's greatly improved his attention span for activities.* (Parent 15)

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<sup>16</sup> One school used the Early Language Screen Score in the autumn of 2025 and in summer 2025. A significant increase was seen in this measure as well, from 4.82 (SD 3.68) to 7.91 (SD 1.92),  $t(10) = -4.024, p < .001$

*That session [on how to handle emotions] was really good because it sort of gave him a bit of focus on the different emotions cause he struggles with his emotions and how to handle them already so that session was really helpful. (Parent 19)*

*Some of the resources they had out, it was like the children were teaching the parents. They [the children] were like, well, look, I can count 12345 or I can measure this one is heavier and you know, like they were really engaged with the activity and wanted to share the experience with the grown up that was there with them. And I just think that in itself is worth its weight in gold, isn't it? Giving children the confidence to feel good about themselves. (Peripatetic leader)*

### **What changed for parents and wider family after attending PEEP?**

In the post-intervention survey, over 90% of parents agreed that PEEP had increased their confidence and knowledge about how to help their child learn at home.<sup>17</sup> These are important findings as we cannot expect a child's home learning environment to improve without parents knowing what to do and feeling able to do this. Several parents also reported that PEEP had made them re-think what they had at home which could facilitate learning activities.

Many parents also reported how much they had enjoyed spending time with their child in the PEEP sessions, bonding and strengthening their relationship.

*Myself and my child really enjoyed these sessions as it was really nice to interact with her and doing stuff in school. (Parent 25)*

Several parents also mentioned getting an important insight into the school and their child's learning environment by attending PEEP. The school setting also facilitated relationship building with school staff and seeing staff as people rather than teachers. This provided schools with an opportunity to show that schools can be a positive environment for those parents who may not have enjoyed school themselves.

The PEEP sessions also facilitated relationship building with other parents, and a few parents mentioned how they benefitted from having a reason to get out of the house. In addition, one parent reported that she had '*learned from other moms as well. How they're interacting with their child and learning*' (Parent 25) which she said had been helpful.

Finally, there were several examples of how the siblings of the children attending PEEP benefitted from what was learnt in the sessions. For example, one parent shared how her son now makes up stories and 'reads' to his little sister after attending PEEP which built a stronger sibling relationship.

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<sup>17</sup>Confidence - 91.3% of parents agreed or strongly agreed. Knowledge - 95.6% of parents agreed or strongly agreed.

## What changed for PEEP facilitators after attending PEEP?

Delivering PEEP had a positive impact on the PEEP facilitators. The less experienced facilitators discussed how delivering PEEP had increased their confidence in delivering a family-focused program and feeling more comfortable talking to parents. For one of the more experienced facilitators, the benefit of delivering PEEP was to be seen as more approachable and building relationships with parents. One facilitator had taken what she learnt in PEEP and applied it to everyday practice through including a description of the learning of the week for parents via the ClassDojo. This is an important finding as not all parents can attend PEEP, so there needs to be information and support to improve a child's home learning through other means.

*I think it's made me more aware of sharing what the actual learning outcomes are. So rather than just putting photographs of what the provision is on Dojo, because that's our platform. Giving just a brief description, this week we're learning about capacity. Or this week we're learning about length. We're talking about using the vocabulary of tall and short and short or whatever. .../ I think that just helps parents to engage a little bit more at home as well because they know what we're learning, in school. (Facilitator)*

Finally, a note of caution. These quantitative measures and interviews were conducted shortly after PEEP ended. A follow-up measure later would capture to what extent the home learning activities had been embedded into family life and whether these changes for children, families and facilitators remain long-term.

## Recommendations to strengthen the delivery of PEEP

Several recommendations have been identified to further strengthen the implementation of PEEP and are based on the findings in this report. The ideal implementation of PEEP for the second year of implementation is to

- Deliver at least 10 sessions
- Ensure fidelity to the PEEP intervention by following the recommended structure and using the learning objectives supplied
- A balance of sessions from each of the PEEP topics
- Delivered by a member of the classroom staff so that themes can be built upon

### *Identifying the families who may benefit the most*

To identify the families who may benefit the most from attending PEEP, the insight gathered by teachers and school staff needs to be used. This includes results from the reception baseline assessment, LanguageScreen or Early Communication Screen and insight from parent interactions.

### *Advertising to parents*

Both parents and facilitators reported that the PEEP sessions could benefit more families. To successfully advertise PEEP to families, it is important to consider the needs of the local parents, such as low levels of English and where parents interact with school information (ClassDojo, school Facebook, class what's app groups). It is also good practice to include photos to show parents what they can expect from the sessions. Parents also reported that they appreciated a verbal invite from the schoolteacher or a school staff member they already had a relationship with. Parents also told us it would be helpful to know more about the sessions before they signed up.

### *Session delivery*

It was suggested by school and Thrive at Five staff that PEEP either runs in the second half term before Christmas or runs in the first term after Christmas. Ideally, PEEP should be delivered as soon as possible within the school year to reach maximum impact, however with children transitioning and settling into nursery in early autumn, it is best to avoid the first term (as this year's experience showed). Benefits of this later timing included

- Teachers know who the children are who may benefit the most
- Allows schools to run PEEP again in the spring term if there is a lot of parent interest
- More resources may be available compared to at the end of the school year
- Not competing with other school activities such as Easter or end of year activities
- Easier for peripatetic leaders to support delivery as in spring they are needed to support the Nuffield Early Language Intervention run in reception classes

In terms of what day of the week and time of day to deliver the PEEP sessions, the morning sessions seemed to suit parents better, although one school had a high uptake with afternoon sessions. The sessions run during the school day had higher uptake than the one which was held after school finished. Importantly, what is likely to be the best time for one school may not be the best for another as after-school clubs etc may differ.

### *Length of intervention*

Whilst it is important to tailor the PEEP sessions to the families attending, it is also important to deliver sessions from all five PEEP topics to ensure maximum impact. This did not happen in this first year. Delivering ten sessions (including a taster session) was seen to be feasible by facilitators and Thrive at Five staff, assuming delivery was not in the last term of the year.

### **Summary**

Feedback from the parents who attended and the facilitators who delivered PEEP has been very positive, with numerous benefits identified for children, parents and facilitators. This evaluation has found many examples of how a child's home learning environment has improved after attending PEEP. These results are similar to what has been found in other areas where PEEP has

been implemented, strengthening the current findings.<sup>18</sup> Moving forward, it is now important to focus on identifying the children and parents who need support the most and deliver 10 sessions to them, using the full spectrum of PEEP topics.

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<sup>18</sup> [Children and Family Hubs: Hackney | www.peeple.org.uk](http://www.peeple.org.uk)

## Appendix 1: ORIM<sup>19</sup>

Opportunities: Parents and carers make the experiences of day-to-day life into learning opportunities through the ways that they interact with their children: listening, talking, singing, playing (indoors and outside), encouraging, and giving them time and attention. Parents also give children opportunities to explore and experiment with everyday objects.

Recognition: When parents and carers show that they recognise and value their children's efforts and achievements – and the children themselves, just for who they are – it contributes to children's understanding and belief in themselves as learners. Recognition can be simple and low-key (e.g. a quiet word, smile, or high-five), or more obvious praise and encouragement, or putting their painting on the fridge or making up a story in which the child appears as a character.

Interaction: Parents and carers support their children's development by interacting with them in many ways, such as:

- listening and talking with them about what they are doing and or how they are feeling
- involving them in everyday tasks such as cooking or cleaning
- explaining or demonstrating how to do something
- offering reassurance or encouragement as a baby explores (without getting too involved)
- helping a toddler to manage their frustration
- watching television with their child and chatting about what they are seeing.

Modelling: Babies and young children learn from watching and listening to those around them. The most powerful models for them are those that they spend the most time with and who they love the best – their parents and carers. Through these models, babies and young children absorb behaviours, attitudes towards learning and how to interact with others. They also learn more specific things, such as how literacy and maths are used as part of day-to-day life, such as writing a shopping list or paying for the shopping.

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<sup>19</sup> [orim4people](http://orim4people.com)

## Appendix 2: PEEP sessions

Peep strand	Session topic
Communication and language	Imaginative play with puppets*
	Making the most of technology
	Talking and listening to children
Health and physical development	Building a brain
	Developing balance and coordination
	Food for life
Early Literacy	Becoming a reader
	Becoming a writer
	Sharing books with young children
Early Maths	Exploring measures
	Exploring numbers
	Mathematical adventures
Personal, social and emotional development	Helping children understand feelings
	The importance of help and encouragement

List of PEEP topics and corresponding session titles Stoke's Early Years Development Lead suggested implementing