

Education Children and Families Committee

10am, Tuesday 21 May 2013

Early Years Strategy Progress Report

Item number	7.6
Report number	
Wards	All

Links

Coalition pledges:	P1 , P6
Council outcomes	CO1
Single Outcome Agreement	SO3

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Executive summary

Early Years Strategy Progress Report

Summary

The report summarises the key achievements in early years and highlights the priorities for the future challenges and priorities of the service.

Key Achievements include:

Improving the quality of early years services; focussed work on 0-3s developments; the introduction of new posts within nursery schools and classes; re-invested resources in areas of need; increased number of local authority nursery places; increased number of places for vulnerable twos; increased support for parents and improved outdoor learning experiences for children. Appendix 1 gives an overview of the impact these achievements have had on the lives of young children, their families and staff working in early years.

Future Challenges and Priorities include:

Continue to improve quality of early years services; agree way forward to implement the proposed increased entitlement to early learning and care; enhance and develop new services in identified areas; continue the phased introduction of new posts and titles and joint management arrangements within early year establishments.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the committee:

1. Notes the content of the report and priorities for the next stage of development within early years; and
2. Approves the proposed establishment of a new nursery in the grounds of Fox Covert Primary School and notes that, on completion of the proposed feasibility study to inform the proposal, approval will be sought from Committee to the necessary statutory consultation process being undertaken.

Measures of success

Overall progress is measured using a suite of indicators within the Children and Families Service Plan to ensure that our children have the best start in life, are able to make and sustain relationships and are ready to succeed.

Financial impact

Detail of the additional funding requirements for the capital investment is contained in the main report. All other developments within early years will be funded through the revenue budget and the early years change fund.

Equalities impact

All work within this area seeks to address inequalities both in terms of provision of resources and impact on outcomes for children and their families. There are no negative impacts arising from this work.

Sustainability impact

There are no impacts on carbon, adaptation to climate change or sustainable development arising directly from this report. These matters will be considered as part of the planning, design development and implementation of each individual project involved in the development of the early years estate.

Consultation and engagement

The necessary consultation will be undertaken with all key stakeholders in the following areas of development within early years:

- Expansion to 600hrs of early learning and care
- The development of nursery provision at Wardie and Duddingston Primary Schools
- The potential development of an Early Years Centre at Fox Covert Primary School
- Early Years staffing review
- The development of childcare co-operatives
- The development of a new play strategy for Edinburgh.

Background reading / external references

- [Early Years collaborative](#)
- [National Parent Strategy](#)
- [Consultation on Children's Bill](#)
- [Report to Council on 2 May 2013 regarding New Capital Projects – Children and Families](#)

Early Years Strategy Progress Report

1. Background

- 1.1 The Early Years Strategy launched in January 2010 sets out a vision and long term commitment to improve the life chances for children, supporting the coalition agreement to ensure every child has the best start in life.
- 1.2 The strategy has 4 aims:
- Aim 1: To develop integrated, flexible services to provide effective learning and childcare for all children and families
 - Aim 2: To develop a highly skilled and motivated workforce to deliver a high quality Early Years Service
 - Aim 3: Universal Services have been developed in partnership to support all children and families
 - Aim 4: Learning through Play opportunities and active learning are developed as integral parts of the Early Years Service.
- 1.3 Substantial progress towards these long term aims has been made and this report summarises key achievements in 2012/13 and sets out priorities for 2013/14.

2. Main report

National Context

- 2.1 In October 2012, the Scottish Government launched the Early Years Collaborative which aims to ' make Scotland the best place in the world to grow up in' and put the Early Years Framework into practical action by:
- Bringing community planning partners together to seek improvement in early years and share learning and success and challenges with each other.
 - Delivering tangible improvement in outcomes and reduce inequalities for Scotland's vulnerable children.
 - Put Scotland squarely on course to shifting the balance of public services towards early intervention and prevention by 2016.
 - Sustain this change to 2018 and beyond.
- 2.2 In Edinburgh, a multi agency Early Years Collaborative Team has been established and attended the learning sessions in January and May 2013. Small tests of change are currently being trialled.

- 2.3 In October 2012, the Scottish Government launched the National Parenting Strategy, stating that *“Valuing and supporting Scotland’s parents is one of the single biggest ways of giving the nation’s children the best start in life”*.
- 2.4 Following this launch, the Supporting Parents and Carers framework in Edinburgh is currently being revised and will support children from 0-18years. Children and Families will work to ensure that families receive the information, advice, encouragement, and practical support they need, when they need it, so they can raise their children with confidence and manage their successful transition into adulthood.
- 2.5 The Children’s Bill, to be published in September 2013, is expected to include:
- An intention to expand free nursery provision from 475 hours to 600 hours a year in September 2014 for all three and four-year-olds; a duty to consult on parental early learning and childcare needs with parents of children under school age every 2 years to identify what patterns of hours best suit parental early learning and childcare needs; and a requirement for local authorities to respond to those views through published local plans or strategies.
 - An entitlement for any 2 year old who is looked after to a minimum of 600 hours early learning and childcare.
- 2.6 In March 2013, a short life working group was set up to oversee the consultation process with parents and key stakeholders on the models of delivery for the increased entitlement to 600hrs of early learning.
- 2.7 The Scottish Governments Early Years and Early Intervention Change Fund has supported the development and strengthening of early years services especially for vulnerable children and their families.

Key Achievements in Early Years 2012/13

Aim 1: To develop integrated, flexible services to provide effective learning and childcare for all children and families

Quality of Services

- 2.8 During 2012 – 2013 Education Scotland carried out inspections of 4 partner providers (1 not yet published) and 3 nursery classes (1 not yet published). This represents a significantly lower number than in previous years. As in the previous year all inspections were positive with no grades less than satisfactory.
- 2.9 Grades ranged from satisfactory to very good as follows:
- 21 grades – 7 satisfactory, 8 goods and 6 very goods.
 - Key strengths included children’s progress in literacy and numeracy, the very good leadership of the manager and caring and supportive staff.
 - Areas for development continue to focus on curriculum development and self evaluation where there are ‘increased expectations’.

- 2.10 Early years quality improvement officers provided support and challenge for 118 partner providers, 14 early years centres, and 13 nursery schools. The team of peripatetic teachers have provided additional support to 70% of partner provider nurseries.
- 2.11 As part of the support and challenge programme for 2012 – 2013 the year, the early years team visited all nursery classes to share and gather key information on current developments and initiatives within early years. The information gathered has helped inform the programme of support and challenge and leading the agenda for the next session.
- 2.12 The numeracy and maths planning and assessment tracker has been piloted in 30 establishments. Other centres have piloted formal assessments such as the Performance in Maths and 'Aspects'. A CD rom to share good practice and support early numeracy has been developed.
- 2.13 The Early Years Support Group continues to support literacy in positive action settings. Additional Cluster based training to support the development of children's early communication has been provided by the speech and language service. A book gifting service is in place for all 4 year olds and parent postcards have been developed to support this initiative.
- 2.14 Almost all early years establishments have received 'Up, Up and Away' training and an initial evaluation report by Queen Margaret University has show that using this resource has had a positive impact on children's development of foundation literacy skills. Further training for foster carers, support for learning teachers and P1 teachers will take place over the next two terms.
- 2.15 Thirty five establishments are piloting the Pre Five Literacy Assessment Tracker and the impact of this will be evaluated at transition to P1.
- 2.16 A new resource was recently launched and distributed at the annual Early Years Conference to support staff in planning effective and quality learning experiences around the Curriculum for Excellence Health and Wellbeing experiences and outcomes
- 2.17 Ongoing support has been given to improve the quality of experiences for 0-3year olds through the delivery of a comprehensive training programme for 0-3s practitioners, support visits and development of resource materials. In September 2012, Edinburgh held the first Pre- Birth to Three Conference attended by over 120 practitioners

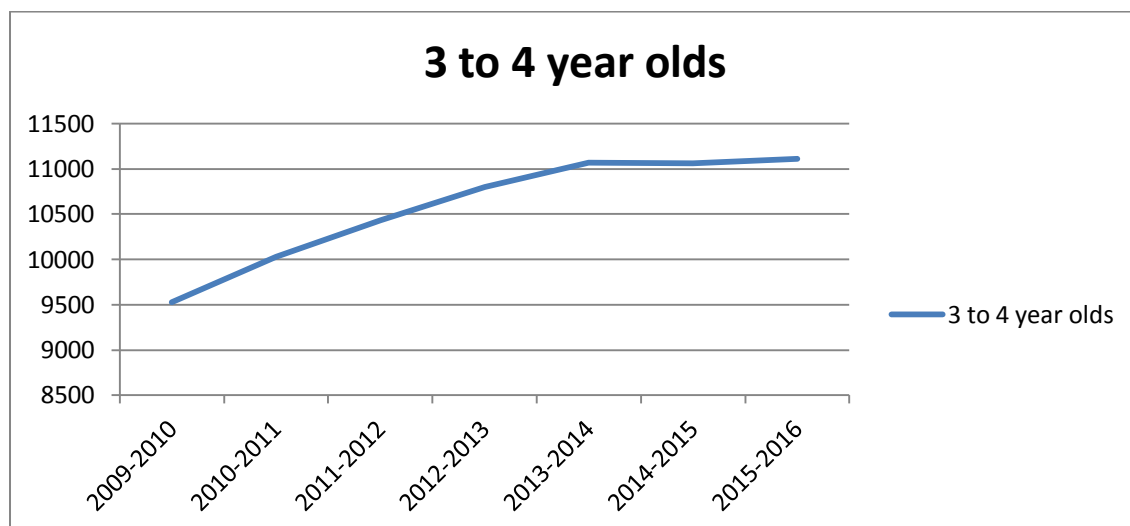
Successful Transitions

- 2.18 The curriculum for excellence early level spans nursery to end of Primary 1 and consequently there is a significant focus to ensure effective transition arrangements and continuity of learning experiences for children. Smaller class sizes in many schools support children's learning experiences in Primary 1. It is important that key features of active learning approaches evident within nursery are reflected in the day to day organisation in primary 1.

- 2.19 Two CPD opportunities for session 2013 - 2014 have been arranged to support continuity and progression into primary 1 for primary teachers and senior managers in primary schools
- 2.20 Arrangements for entry to primary school for August 2013 have been amended in line with other authorities and in response to parental requests. All children will now be admitted within the first week and attending from the beginning of the third week of term.
- 2.21 A series of roadshows for staff and parents highlighted issues and concerns around deferrals and delayed entry into primary one. Subsequently many parents have been reassured that schools are taking account of active learning approaches to ensure a smoother and seamless transition for children and parents between nursery and primary 1.
- 2.22 Additional resources were allocated to nursery classes this year to enable them to work with families to support the transitions of children into nursery and into P1. The impact of this work will be evaluated in summer 2013

Demographics

- 2.23 Over the past 5 years the number of pre-school aged children has continued to increase.



- 2.24 This year on year increase has resulted in increased demand for nursery places particularly in key areas of the city.
- 2.25 Wherever possible, the number of local authority nursery places has been increased to meet this demand. There are however restrictions in the capacity of some nursery buildings, limiting the option of increasing nursery places. Overall, the number of places has increased by approximately 10% over the past academic year

Estate Development

- 2.26 Our ambition is to ensure that each neighbourhood, community or cluster has access to integrated flexible early years services. In order to realise this vision resources are being re-aligned.

- 2.27 Work has been ongoing to increase capacity, improve the fabric of nursery buildings and develop early years centres. Early Years Centres can offer a wider range of support enabling children to experience education and childcare in a universal setting, meeting the demand for preschool education and enhance provision for vulnerable 2-3 year olds in identified areas of the city.
- 2.28 The Early Years Change Fund has supported the development of Fort and Craigentenny Early Years Centres
- 2.29 At Fort EYC the indoor learning environment has been significantly upgraded and has had a very positive impact on children's experiences. Fort Early Years centre now offers a wide range of services including pre-school education; affordable childcare; places for vulnerable 2s and family support.
- 2.30 Pilrig Child and Family Centre will be re-located in August 2013 following the development of the early years centre at Craigentenny Primary School. The Early Years Centre will offer support to children and families from 0-5year olds in a universal setting.
- 2.31 Funding from the Early Years Change Fund has also supported the development at the Royal Mile Primary School. A class for 2-3 year olds is being developed and preschool education extended.
- 2.32 On 2 May 2013, in considering areas for [priority new investment in the Children and Families Estate](#) Council approved the capital funding to deliver a new 40/40 nursery in the grounds of Wardie Primary School and the replacement of the existing nursery at Duddingston Primary School together with an increase in its capacity from 40/40 to 60/60.
- 2.33 The intended provision of a new nursery at Wardie Primary School would require a full statutory consultation process to be undertaken in accordance with the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#) in advance of any project actually being progressed. A feasibility study will be progressed to inform the location and cost of the proposed new facility from a capital and revenue perspective. On completion of the feasibility study the necessary approval to undertake the statutory consultation process would then be sought from the Education, Children and Families Committee to whom, on completion, the outcome of the process would ultimately be taken for consideration and final decision
- 2.34 The development at Duddingston Primary School involves the replacement of an existing establishment, albeit with an increased capacity, therefore no statutory consultation process would require to be undertaken in advance of the project actually being progressed to delivery following completion of the necessary feasibility study.
- 2.35 An initial scoping exercise has been carried out to consider the possible location of an early years establishment in the west part of the city. This exercise concluded that increasing the capacity of the Council's nursery estate to address waiting lists in the west of the city could not be achieved through expansion of existing services and that a new nursery facility is required.

2.36 In order to minimise costs, a number of council owned sites were considered. The Fox Covert joint-campus site represented the only currently viable option for the location of a new nursery.

2.37 It is proposed that a new nursery is located in the grounds of Fox Covert Primary School here having a capacity for 40 morning and 40 afternoon places; this would be well positioned to relieve pressure in this area. There is an existing parent led partner provider playgroup currently located at Fox Covert Primary School which would be an integral part of this development. A full consultation with the school communities and the partner provider playgroup will be carried out in considering the best way to take forward the expanded Early Years services at the location.

2.38 The standard brief produced by Children and Families for a 40/40 nursery to comply with all necessary requirements, including the School Premises Regulations and the Care Commission, identifies a requirement for internal space of 258m² and an outdoor area of a minimum of external space of 372m². In the absence of any recent cost information regarding a nursery of this size, a budgetary estimate of £774,000 has been identified by applying an assumed all-in rate of £3,000/m² to the internal space requirement. The budgetary estimate assumes there are no site acquisition costs and that the new building can be accommodated within the existing primary school grounds. The proposed nursery would be funded from existing sources as follows:

Early Years Contingency Funding in existing approved Capital Investment Programme	£243,000
Early Years Change Fund	£200,000
Balance funded from capital receipts generated from the closure of nursery schools which were ring-fenced for reinvestment in the early years estate	£331,000
Total	£774,000

2.39 Should the proposal be approved, a feasibility study will be commissioned to inform the location, design, costs and timescales for the project.

2.40 The intended provision of a new nursery at Fox Covert Primary School would require a full statutory consultation process to be undertaken in accordance with the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#) in advance of any project actually being progressed. The feasibility study would inform the location and cost of the proposed new facility from a capital and revenue perspective. On completion of the feasibility study the necessary approval to undertake the statutory consultation process would then be sought from the Education, Children and Families Committee to whom, on completion, the outcome of the process would ultimately be taken for consideration and final decision.

Aim 2: To develop a highly skilled and motivated workforce to deliver a high quality Early Years Service

Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) registration

- Early Years staff both within the local authority and partner provider nurseries have continued to be supported to meet Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) registration requirements: In total, 52 practitioners in partner provider and 20 in local authority practitioners are studying for a BA in Childhood Practice. Twenty of these BA students are studying a modular BA course run by Dundee University which is now being supported in Edinburgh.
- 2.41 The percentage of staff within partner provider nurseries meeting SSSC requirements has shown a slight decrease from 89% in 2011 to 82% in 2012 due to increase in staff turnover within partner provider nurseries.
- 2.42 Support staff within the local authority early years establishments are now being registered with the SSSC, all other local authority early years staff meet registration requirements.
- 2.43 A comprehensive CPD programme has supported early years staff throughout the year and in particular, a bespoke CPD programme for early years officers has been very positively evaluated
- 2.44 The third year of Froebel course at Edinburgh University has 18 students undertaking a wide range of development projects to impact on practice. Former students have formed a masterclass network based on practitioner enquiry. A fifth conference is planned for June 2013 with collaboration with parents to support children's development as the theme.

Early Years Staffing Review

- 2.45 The Early Years Staffing review has continued with changes to job titles and amended job description for early years staff. Staff have been consulted throughout this process and the staffing structures now provide greater flexibility for the service, enabling staff to move across the sector and have a clear career pathway.
- 2.46 Twenty four early years officers have been introduced into large nursery classes and joint management arrangements are in place in three early years establishments.
- 2.47 Child and Family Centres have been all been renamed as Early Years Centres with new signage. The staffing structures within the Early Years Centres have been re-aligned: early years practitioner posts have been introduced ; the job description and job titles of deputies/ senior nursery officers and senior early years worker have been revised and renamed as senior early years officer; the job title for all Early Years centres will become Head of Centre.

Aim 3: Universal Services have been developed in partnership to support all children and families

Support to Parents

- 2.48 The Supporting Parents Framework for Edinburgh sets out an ambition for families with young children (0-5s) in Edinburgh to have access to advice, information and support services as well as specific targeted programmes and interventions consistently available across the city. The Framework is currently being updated and will set out recommendations for the future development of work to support parents.
- 2.49 The universal Parents Early Education Partnership Programme (PEEP) has continued to be rolled out across the city. There are now approximately 50 groups running with 232 practitioners trained from a wide range of agencies. See Appendix 2 for Summary PEEP Report 2009-12.
- 2.50 More targeted support has continued to be provided services to vulnerable families with young children by the Early Years Centres and Sure Start Projects through home and centre based support, work in the community and the delivery of parenting programmes such as peep, incredible years and mellow parenting

Childcare

- 2.51 Children and Families commissions childcare organisations to deliver inclusive affordable childcare. Funding arrangements are to be reviewed to ensure coherence between the Childcare Strategy and the 'Improving Employability Strategy' led by City Development. Options to deliver sustainable targeted childcare support to families will be explored including the potential option to tender contracts in 2014/15.
- 2.52 The Capital Coalition has pledged to establish city wide childcare co-operatives for affordable childcare for working parents. Work has been undertaken to raise awareness of the Council's priority to develop Childcare Cooperatives in the City. Discussions have taken place with representative from childcare providers and attended by representatives from the Co-operative Enterprise Hub, along with officers from Children and Families and the Co-operative Development Unit.
- 2.53 A plan is being developed to support organisations that are currently interested in pursuing the co-operative model. Children and Families has established a Service Level Agreement with Lothian Association of Youth Clubs to provide support and advice to the Out of School Care sector to support organisations who may be interested in the co-operative model.

Vulnerable Twos

- 2.54 The Early Years Change Fund has supported the development of services for approximately 150 places for vulnerable two year olds including respite, play and stay activities and support to parents. These services have been developed in 6 areas of the city where there were limited services for under 3s. These developments are linked to local primary schools at Hillwood, Oxfangs, Broomhouse/ St Josephs, Sighthill, Leith/ Lorne and Balgreen Playgroup.

Aim 4: Learning through Play opportunities and active learning are developed as integral parts of the Early Years Service

- 2.55 Over the past year Play Development has been involved in the Play Talk Read programme in Edinburgh and the development of the Scottish Government's National Play Strategy, due to be launched this summer. Play staff have contributed to local and national conferences.
- 2.56 The promotion of active learning outdoors has been targeted through OPAL (Outdoor Play and Active Learning) training. Four play conferences and over 20 other CPD opportunities on play and active outdoor learning have been organised for staff working with nursery and early primary aged children, and over 700 have attended.
- 2.57 Over 250 staff have benefited from play for parenting training (including play@home and Pre-birth to 3).
- 2.58 All local authority nurseries were awarded OPAL grants to improve outdoor play and learning opportunities for children.
- 2.59 As fewer of the city's youngest children get regular access to natural outdoor play environments than in the past, recognition of the importance of promoting outdoor play to both parents and professionals has grown. In January 2013 an ambitious programme was launched to introduce 'natural' water play features to 40 Edinburgh Early Years settings, transforming grounds, bringing outdoor free-play alive, and giving children the opportunity for daily access to waterplay environments.
- 2.60 In addition, the Early Years Change Fund has been used to improve the learning environment outdoors at 2 early years centres. The outdoor environment at Granton and Fort early years centres now provides a stimulating and attractive environment for children to explore, be creative and take risks.
- 2.61 Work with Grounds for Learning has resulted in six Edinburgh primary schools being selected to receive grants and support worth a total of £150,000 to transform their school grounds for natural play and outdoor learning opportunities.
- 2.62 The annual Playday event in the Grassmarket highlights the value of free play opportunities and again attracted around 500 families.

Priorities for 2013/14

- 2.63 The Children's Bill to be published in September 2013 is expected to include an intention to expand free nursery provision from 475 hours to 600 hours a year in September 2014 for all three and four-year-olds and an entitlement for any 2 year old who is looked after to a minimum of 600 hours early learning and childcare
- 2.64 The consultation exercise, which began in April 2013, will be extended to gather the views of all key stakeholders including parents and carers, staff, partner

- provider nurseries, voluntary sector and trade unions. Currently, the level of funding allocated to local authorities for this increase is unknown and the feasibility of options will need to be taken into account before the optimum model of delivery can be agreed.
- 2.65 The City of Edinburgh will be working with the Scottish Book Trust in 2013/14 to roll out the Assertive Outreach Programme. The Assertive Outreach programme has been funded by Scottish Government to provide training to staff from local authorities, health boards, third sector organisations, as well as parent volunteers, to be able to take Bookbug Sessions into the homes of vulnerable families and expand Bookbug provision within the community.
- 2.66 As part of gathering information on the feasibility of delivering the extended hours, two nurseries are to extend their nursery provision into the summer holidays. These pilots will be evaluated and findings will help assess this model of delivering the increased entitlement.
- 2.67 The multi agency Early Years Collaborative Team will attend the third learning session in October 2013 and will work with 'home teams' to undertake small tests of change. The model which identifies changes for improvement is to 'think big, start small, and scale fast' This approach emphasises the importance of community engagement and will take a concerted and long term effort to deliver transformational change in early years from all community planning partners.
- 2.68 Work will continue to re-align resources and ensure that each neighbourhood will have access to integrated flexible early years services and increase the number of available nursery places, plans include:
- The development of Early Years Centres at Craigentiny and the potential development of an early years centre at Fox Covert Primary School
 - Increasing services for vulnerable 2 year olds in at the Royal Mile, Oxfords, Broomhouse/ St Josephs, Hillwood, Sighthill, Balgreen, Leith Walk/ Lorne
 - Proposed development of two new nursery classes at Wardie and Duddingston Primary Schools
 - Proposed expansion of Kirkliston Nursery to 70:70.
- 2.69 The Staffing review will continue to incrementally introduce new roles including new leadership and management roles within early years settings to create a more flexible workforce which can meet the future needs of the service
- 2.70 Continue to support the development of co-operative childcare models
- 2.71 In partnership with local health visitors, support the introduction of the 27month assessment
- 2.72 Work will progress towards the aspiration for families with young children(0-5s) in Edinburgh to have access to advice, information and support services as well as specific targeted programmes and interventions consistently available across the city

- 2.73 The introduction of a National Play Strategy is expected to influence the way that play is addressed, including a rights based approach. A working group has been convened to draft a new play strategy for the city in response.
- 2.74 In partnership with Grounds for Learning, support will be given to the transformational change to the school grounds of 6 primary schools for outdoor play and learning.

3. Recommendations

It is recommended that the committee:

- 3.1 Notes the content of the report and priorities for the next stage of development within early years; and
- 3.2 Approves the proposed establishment of a new nursery in the grounds of Fox Covert Primary School and notes that, on completion of the proposed feasibility study to inform the proposal, approval will be sought from Committee to the necessary statutory consultation process being undertaken.

Gillian Tee

Director of Children and Families

Links

Coalition pledges	P1. Increase support for vulnerable children, including help for families so that fewer go into care P6. Establish city-wide co-operatives for affordable childcare for working parents
Council outcomes	CO1. Our children have the best start in life, are able to make an sustain relationships and are ready to succeed
Single Outcome Agreement	SO3. Edinburgh's children and young people enjoy their childhood and fulfil their potential
Appendices	1. Impact of Key Achievements 2. PEEP Summary Report 2009-12

Appendix 1

Aim 1

Quality of Services

Effective arrangements for assessing and tracking children's progress is a key characteristic of curriculum for excellence and the early years quality improvement officers are leading a pilot for Pre 5 literacy and numeracy assessment trackers. early evaluation of the impact on children's learning has been very positive.

Practitioner's evaluative comments:

"The literacy pilot has provided a focus on particular aspects of literacy and as a result has enabled us to be more creative in planning activities."

"It has helped to assess children's literacy skills and we are therefore able to more effectively identify next steps"

"It makes staff reflect on learning experiences within numeracy."

"Has enabled us to highlight gaps in development and provide information on focused areas for observation"

CPD

A comprehensive programme of CPD is offered to support staff to provide effective learning and childcare for all children and families.

There is a particular focus to ensure that all children have the best start in life and programmes such as PEEP , Up, Up and Away provide particular support for developing literacy skills in children who are most at risk of failure.

Practitioner's evaluative comments:

"It has allowed staff to gather evidence and meaningful observations of children's behaviour and needs and this has affected the strategies we then use."

"We use the literacy rich checklist in the nursery and it helps identify areas for development which we have included in the school improvement plan."

"The parent postcards and exemplars for staff guidance were extremely helpful for supporting parent with children's next steps."

Comments from practitioners on the impact of the Early Years Conference in February 2013

Dr Margot Sunderland gave the keynote 'Working with children with difficulties and challenging behaviour'. Her presentation was an excellent balance of brain research and practical examples of how to help children and their families. Previous conferences have convinced us of the need to support children under three with convincing arguments from

Appendix 1

Aim 1

neuroscience by Suzanne Zeedyk and John Carnochan. The messages this time were that we can continue to help children beyond three and that this time is a critical period for the development of the frontal lobe of the brain.

Margot Sunderland delivered an inspirational talk with very powerful messages. We as early years practitioners have a huge responsibility as brain sculptors to improve the learning outcomes and opportunities of all our children. We will certainly take back to our establishments the importance of amplifying the positive and moderating the negative.

WOW! 150 adults engaging in a dynamic and interactive learning experience. The creative use of familiar contexts to develop rhythm and rhyme was truly inspiring

Comments from practitioners on the impact of the Pre Birth to Three Conference in September 2013

What a great conference, well done

There was a really good balance of content in the programme. I thoroughly enjoyed the day and hope this becomes a regular feature of the CPD Like the early year's conference.

A very good fun day, I got lots of good ideas to take back. The trainers were all very inspiring thank you

I really enjoyed the speakers, workshops and chance to network - it would be good to have pre birth to three conference annually.

Estate Development

New Early Years Centre; Case Study

Anna is the 4 ½ year old daughter of Sophia and Adam, a Polish family resident in Edinburgh with no extended family supports within the country.

Anna began attending the Early Years Centre in January 2012 9am-11.30am as her pre-school entitlement.

Nine months ago Adam requested additional hours for Anna to assist him in managing his shift work within Edinburgh's hospitality industry, and to give Sophia time to attend English classes in order to increase her chances of gaining paid, part time employment within the City.

Anna now attends 8.15am-3pm 2 days per week and her regular 9am-11.30 for the other three days.

Adam shared that this arrangement had been the "perfect" solution for his family. Both parents are able to use the additional time to support their work and learning commitments which will support positive long term outcomes for the family unit.

Adam feels supported by the Centre who he believes has a good understanding of the needs of his family and are willing to be flexible in order to meet these needs.

Adam is confident that Anna is very happy at the Centre where both her educational and care needs are being met by skilled and caring professional staff.

Appendix 1

Aim 2: - Workforce Development

<p><u>Community and Parents</u> Facilitating parent support groups along with other professionals to discuss challenging issues. E.g. behaviour, fussy eating and speech and language development.</p> <p>Supporting parents through the process of the Child's Planning meetings by providing 1-1 advice and preparation beforehand. Using GIRFEC materials to help parents understand implications for their child.</p> <p>Establishing regular meetings with other early years settings in our community e.g. NKS, Gingerbread ASC and local partnership nursery.</p>	<p><u>Working with other professionals</u> Have Lead Professional role in Child Planning meetings. Regularly liaise with other professionals to support needs of child and family.</p> <p>Preparing progress reports to share with other professionals e.g. Reports for LAAC reviews.</p> <p>Designated Member of Staff for child protection. Liaising with police, social work and health on child protection cases.</p> <p>Regular links with Named Person for children to keep them updated on any wellbeing concerns etc.</p>	<p><u>Quality</u> Hosted the last unannounced Care Inspectorate Inspection and gave the inspector a full account of the achievements and developments in the nursery. Outcome 4 Excellent Grades</p> <p>Building on reflective practice within the nursery and continually monitoring and reviewing practice to ensure issues are addressed promptly and areas for change are identified and improved efficiently and effectively.</p> <p>Ensuring effective management leadership in the nursery in the absence of the head teacher.</p>
<p><u>Impact on other staff</u> Providing strong leadership and support for staff. Modelling good practice. Demonstrating flexible approaches to supporting families. Promoting positive approaches to challenging situations. Holding PRD meetings with staff.</p>	<p>Impact of the Senior Early Years Officer role in Lochrin Nursery School</p>	<p><u>Support for Under 3's</u> Home visits to children on the waiting list. Early identification of children on waiting list with additional needs e.g. through liaison with the health visitor. Set up Stay and Play sessions at Grassmarket nursery.</p>
<p><u>Impact on children</u> Leading Technologies improvements in the nursery. Supporting staff in use of iPads to enhance learning across the curriculum.</p> <p>Piloting approaches to increasing consultation with children e.g. involving children in staff/parent consultations.</p>	<p><u>Impact on own Professional Development</u> Developed leadership and management skills More self aware and confident in SEYO role. Greater awareness of impact of local and national developments on day to day issues within the nursery.</p>	<p><u>Developing the outdoor areas</u> Leading the OPAL funding project and working with staff, parents and children. Developing partnership with outside contractors in our local community and building relationships that support nursery improvement e.g. Local building contractors who carried out preparatory work for our water play development. Using these partnerships to identify learning opportunities for the children.</p>

Comment from practitioner studying BA Childhood Practice

At present I am enjoying my studies. Work-based learning is a major and central feature of this provision and this suits my learning style. This course has developed my work practice and has raised my awareness of a number of key areas, particularly the holistic view of children's development, learning and well-being.

Appendix 1

Aim 3: - Support to Families

Support for Vulnerable Two Year old Children and their Families

Newservice Nursery School

Newservice Under 3s is a collaboration between a Nursery School, a local authority provision and a playgroup, a voluntary provision. It runs one afternoon per week for a small group of children and parents. It is staffed by the playgroup leader and an early years practitioner from the nursery. The nursery, playgroup and the link health visitor all identified families that they thought may benefit from a little extra support. Each week has a different theme for parents, a story, songs and a play experience for parent and child together. One family that has clearly benefited was a parent with a little boy and a new baby. Post natal depression and high levels of anxiety about leaving the house were preventing this parent from offering her child opportunities to socialise with other children. Her sister in law also had three young children under three. Both parents were invited to attend the group. Having someone she knew well, helped the mother to get in the door and once there she enjoyed it. During the sessions the early years practitioner made time to talk with her, gain her confidence and play with her son. In January her son started nursery with the early years practitioner as his link worker. The settling in process took into account the mother's need for company that she knew and her fear of small crowded spaces. The child made a very good transition into nursery and the mother is now able to bring him on her own and is confident to approach her link worker.

Head teacher: Newservice Nursery School

Mainone Early Years Hub: Maintown Primary School and Onetown Primary School

Mum is struggling to provide care for her two year old and his 3 year old sibling who attends the nursery class at Onetown Primary School. Nursery staff had concerns that Mum was often depressed, lacked confidence and was critical of her own role as a parent. Staff were also concerned about her relationship with her two year old. He had regular tantrums in public areas and this increased Mum's anxiety. Encouraged by staff, Mum attended a parenting course held in the school. Staff saw progress for the family as a result. Mum has learned successful strategies to support her child's behaviour and now engages more positively with him, she has had the opportunity to look at her own role as a parent and is more relaxed and confident in her parenting skills, she has also made friends therefore feels less isolated. The nursery staff are happy that with a little support things have improved significantly for the family. Staff are now in the process of setting up Happy Play Days (Care/Learning and respite) in the school. This little boy starts nursery after the Summer, but staff are very clear that had it been set up earlier it could have offered that extra support that just helps make that difference.

EYP: Onetown Primary School

Good Days Primary School

The PrePare Team referred Mum to Greenland Child and Family Centre when the baby was born two years ago. The baby is now two years old and is progressing well. Through the Child's Planning Meeting it was agreed that Play Away provision in Good

Days Primary School would offer the support required to help improve outcomes for the family. The family have now made the transition from the Child and Family Centre to Play Away and Mum is attending the weekly Incredible Years Programme to support her in her role as a parent. She is also joining in with the Stay and Play activities with her two year old and is thoroughly enjoying the new ideas for play activities at home. The little girl has happily settled into Happy Play Days and is growing in confidence. Mum is delighted to have had the opportunity to attend Play Away provision as it is within her local community, the activities are

Appendix 1

Aim 3: - Support to Families

helping her confidence and skills grow as a parent and her child has the opportunity to play with other children in a safe, secure environment.

EYP: Good Days Primary School

Good Days Primary School

The Smith family have been a concern for staff at Good Days Primary School. There are three children in the family, a two year old, two attending Good Days Primary and Mum is currently expecting her fourth child. There are issues of attendance and time keeping for the older children and the Health Visitor has involvement in supporting the two year old as Mum has learning difficulties and the home environment is chaotic. A place was offered in the Play Away Provision at Good Days Primary but as the family historically don't engage with support, the school staff and health visitors were concerned they wouldn't attend. With the support of staff and other parents attending Play Away sessions, Mum has been attending regularly with her two year old and enjoying the benefits on offer.

EPY: Good Days Primary School

Comments from parents attending Sure Start Projects.

'The support I received has changed mine and my son's life. By helping me with getting a home of my home and helping me get out of an abusive relationship which has benefitted with my son's up bringing'

'I have always worked until I had my daughter when I had to go onto benefits. I felt alone and depressed. The staff at the project helped to build my confidence and self esteem which meant that with the help of the family support worker I joined a child care course and got a job as a youth worker. I could have not done it without her help'

'When I met the support worker I was at the end of my tether. My son has ADHD and his behaviour was uncontrollable. The support worker has given me and my son some valuable advice making his behaviour easier to understand- I don't know what I would have done without her support'

'Being part of a group has helped me share my problems and also my confidence has come a long way, I feel really supported and have made new friends'

'Being able to discuss parenting issues with other young mums makes things easier to deal with as I feel that I am not alone'

I feel better about myself – I know I am a good parent now as I can meet my child's physical and emotional needs now'

'I am more aware of my child's needs and I have a better understanding of what is normal behaviour and what to expect'

Appendix 1

Aim 4: - Waterplay

City of Edinburgh Council Outdoor Play and Active Learning – Waterplay Project

OPAL Waterplay Objectives:

- To enhance young children's experience of Outdoor Play and Active Learning
- To increase opportunities for contact with natural elements
- To improve the nursery playground
- To increase awareness of water, its properties and uses, conservation and recycling
- To engage with parents and the wider community

Water is one of the building blocks of life; a natural element with which children should have first hand contact to experience its forms and properties. Water's sensory and aesthetic qualities enhance children's learning experiences.

Early Years staff from 41 settings received training in waterplay principles and discussed sustainability and ecological issues. Nurseries were encouraged to harvest rain water for the project, and many have opted to use closed waterbutts for their supply. The water used by the pumps is in low quantities – the hand pump is fed from a container under a half-barrel which is filled by the children themselves (through a small hole in the top), transported by them from waterbutts or from the mains supply. Water does not run constantly, but is transported in child-led quantities to fill the reservoir under the half-barrel, then hand pumped by the children into a shallow rill or stream bed with puddle areas for sensory and environmental play. These channels end in a soak away area where the water enters the natural ground water system, or a drain as appropriate

Although the project was centrally funded and co-ordinated, building work was carried out by volunteers from staff, parents and the wider school community. All the participating nurseries were issued with Health & Safety information with the emphasis on the benefits of waterplay, but taking full consideration of hazard reduction. All settings involved in the waterplay project are encouraged to hold a waterplay event to raise money for Water Aid, and to help children to think about water supply and use at home and abroad.

"Since the garden has been changed slightly, the children's play has changed dramatically. The children played on wheelies in the garden on the concrete. They now explore the garden finding shards of ice in tyres and love the sand pit. They are far more interested in exploring the garden than they used to be." Granton C&FC

"The outdoor play has become much more open-ended and encourages active learning, problem solving and creative thinking." Canal View Nursery

"The children have loved the opportunity to experience outdoor water play. The feature has opened up a whole range of new opportunities for the nursery garden - a place to find materials for bridges and dams or a simple fishing rod. It's been fantastic to watch them invent so many different ways to use it." Gilmerton C&FC

"I didn't want to come to help this morning but I'm so glad I did. It's the first time I've been to my son's nursery but I'll be back to help again." Father

PEEP Summary Report 2009- 2012



Aims of Evaluation

- To analyse the trained staff citywide
- To identify the distribution of PEEP groups citywide
- To measure the impact of the programme for parents/carers, practitioners and children.
- To set recommendations for the future sustainability of the programme.

PEEP in Edinburgh

Background

Parents Early Education partnership (PEEP) is a universal early learning intervention which aims to support all parents and carers with children from birth to five years. PEEP contributes to encouraging children's development and learning through everyday experiences in a group or at home. The programme is free and open to everyone. The purpose of PEEP is to raise educational attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy and to promote positive relationships between children and their parents and carers.

“Fun, informal and learnt without knowing I'd learnt”

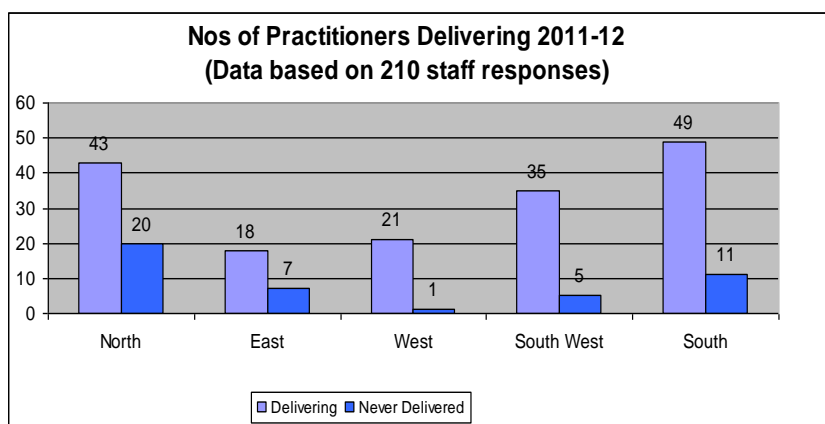
Early Years Practitioner

Training

From 2009-2012 Edinburgh has supported the systematic delivery of the PEEP programme in all areas of the city. 212 Practitioners have been trained to date and come from a variety of professional backgrounds including: NHS, City of Edinburgh Children and Families staff, voluntary sector and parents who have participated in the PEEP programme with their own child. Each practitioner who participates in the training has the opportunity to become accredited through a City and Guilds level 3 qualifications, approx 25% of practitioners have completed portfolios to date.

“I hope that more staff are given this training opportunity and that PEEP is delivered as regular practice”

Nursery Headteacher



79% of trained staff have delivered a PEEP group in the past 12 months.

21% of staff trained have not delivered groups, although some reported using the PEEP principles within their current practice e.g. when doing a home visit, when facilitating stay and play sessions and in the playrooms.

“Great course, lovely introduction to a lovely, flexible programme”

Voluntary organisation

Barriers to delivery include being released from their current post to deliver, some staff have identified a lack of confidence to start a group and others have no PEEP practitioner to co-deliver the programme with.

The table below compares trained staff with children aged 0-5 in each neighbourhood. One neighbourhood highlighted for potential development is the West of the city where there are 24% of children aged 0-5 and 10% of trained staff. We do however have staff trained in most of our positive action areas of the city. Please see appendix 1 for information on distribution of trained staff.

Neighbourhood	% Trained Staff	% children aged 0-5
North	29%	33%
East	13%	9%
West	10%	24%
South West	20%	13%
South	29%	21%

“Really makes you think about what can be provided for parents and children”

Family Learning

Staff have commented on the programme through practitioner evaluations and said that their group work skills had improved; they had increased confidence when working with parents/carers. Practitioners have also experienced a more collaborative way of working and a shared vision through the use of the PEEP principles and the ORIM framework (Opportunities, Recognition, Interaction and Modelling).

“My child is more willing to sit down with me at home to do activities”

Parent

When reporting on the impact of the programme all practitioners say they are working better with other agencies and almost all say they are now more reflective practitioners.

Recommendation 1

To plan two further training courses in 2012 -13 and give priority to the West of the city where need has been identified.

To increase the number of practitioners completing City and Guilds qualification information support sessions will be held

Continue to provide operational support to practitioners provided centrally.

“We sing and read together more than we did before”

Parent

Groups and Service Delivery

In 2009, 6 PEEP groups were running in the North and East of the city increasing to 108 groups during 2012. There is currently city wide coverage of PEEP groups ranging from babies to four year olds and approx 1100 parents and carers have been supported this year. Groups have been running in a flexible way to reflect local need with some being open access to the community whilst others are closed to users of establishments. Please see appendix 2 for PEEP groups citywide

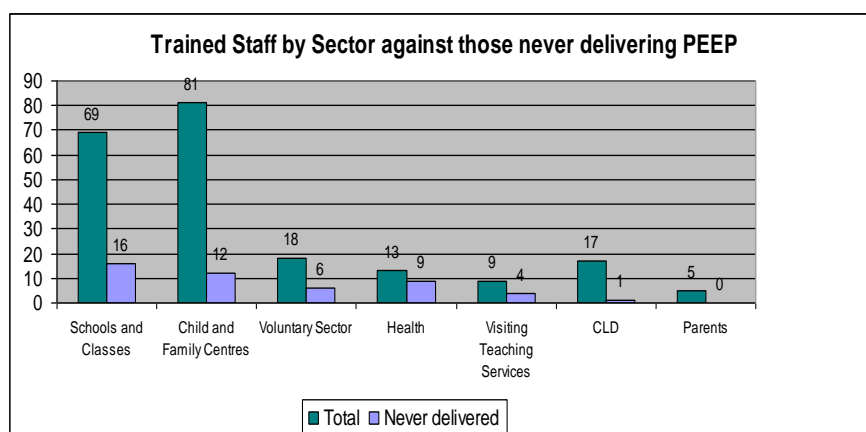
“Great for me to meet other parents”

Parent

Multi agency working has been successful and has helped to keep the programme sustainable. Staff who work in the voluntary sector and CLD have been able to work alongside practitioners in schools and classes to deliver a flexible service. Child and Family Centre staff are providing most of the groups for babies and ones, whilst schools and classes are using the programme mostly for the purposes of transition for twos, threes on waiting lists for a nursery place and for pre-school transition into primary school.

“I now think more about what we do together”

Parent



“ Fab experience, loved every minute of it”

Parent

Parent/carer evaluation returns report that they sing more with their child, read stories more, understand how to interact with their child and most have commented on the increased confidence of both them and their child.

“You don’t need to buy loads of toys for your child”

Parent

Recommendation 2

Increase operational support and information to practitioners to continue to develop PEEP within their establishment.

Continue to provide practitioner networking events to promote collaborative working and information sharing.

New Developments in 2012

Liberton / Gilmerton Baby Pilot

The purpose of the Liberton / Gilmerton Baby PEEP Pilot was to provide opportunities for families with a new baby the opportunity to access and attend a PEEP group. During the course of the pilot, which ran from January - June 2012, the aspiration was to have 8 babies groups running in the four areas of the neighbourhood. 6 new baby groups were started and approx 60-70 families were reached.

Initial findings show that there was a slow uptake through health centres and some groups were either oversubscribed or reported low attendance. In addition the issue of limited availability of trained staff to facilitate the groups became apparent.

The aspiration is to increase groups to eight which will include a baby group and a ones group in each of the four areas. This will allow for babies to move onto an age appropriate group within walking distance of their home.

Recommendation 3

To build capacity and train new staff in the area who wish to deliver groups.

To further develop capacity to run groups

Build on partnerships through libraries and voluntary organisations

Offer PEEP taster sessions at baby clinics in the Liberton / Gilmerton area

"I enjoyed learning about child development when my baby was still so young"

Parent

"It was great being part of a supportive group who shared information and learned about what was available in our community such as the library, cooking groups, swimming and rhyme time."

Parent

Making the Most of Children's learning and Development Pilot

SVQ's for parents. 2 groups of parents in Clovenstone in the South West and The Haven in the North of the city were offered an opportunity to embark on an accredited introduction unit on child development. 15 parents in total completed the 20 week programme and have successfully completed their assessment. Parents completed evaluations and all enjoyed the group, found the course interesting and said their child enjoyed the group. When asked if they had learned more about child development all families said they had.

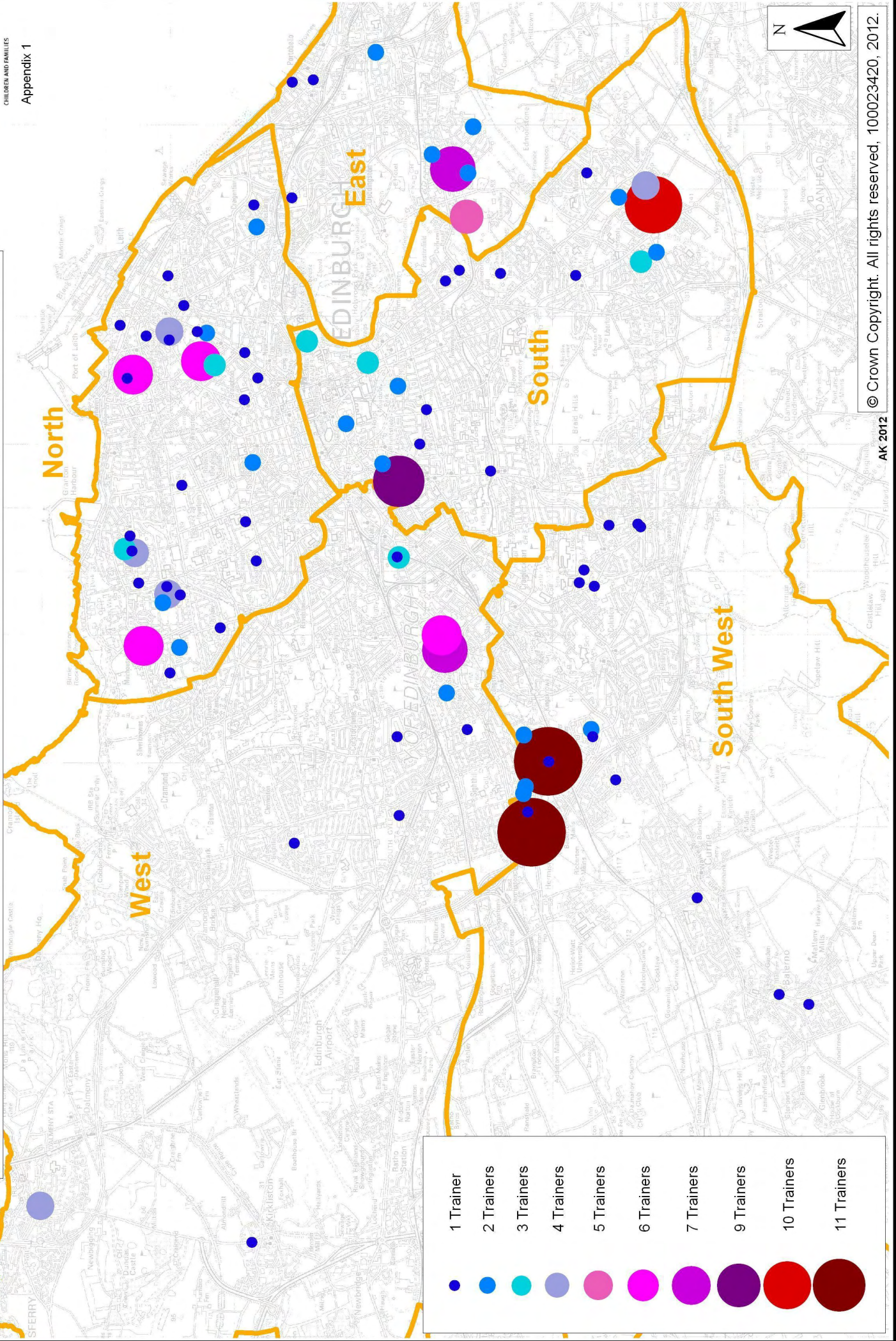
This has been a partnership between Early Years, CLD and the Workers Education Association. Having the availability of staff with a background in adult education and being PEEP trained has had a positive effect and given the pilot a good start.

Recommendation 4

To provide operational and peer support to PEEP practitioners who wish to offer this programme in their existing PEEP groups

To increase additional training opportunities to up skill PEEP practitioners through additional training in partnership with the WEA (Workers Education Association).

Distribution Of Trained Staff In The City Of Edinburgh, July 2012



PEEP Groups In The City Of Edinburgh, July 2012

