

Angland, Fiona, 2009, *Catering for Children with Special Needs in Primary School: the Case of the Gifted/Exceptionally Able Child in Ireland.*

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

This dissertation investigates the perceptions of practising teachers regarding provision for the gifted child in recognised primary schools in the Republic of Ireland. At the start of the study, three research questions relevant to the topic are formulated.

The literature review examines legislation in Ireland which defines the rights of the exceptionally able. The current understanding of intelligence is also explored, as well as the role of the teacher in recognising the potential and educational needs of the exceptionally gifted child.

The research methodology used in the study is discussed and the main research strategies employed here are outlined. The researcher used a combination of questionnaires and interviews, together with a case study of one ten-year old child.

The findings of the study indicate that the needs of the gifted/ exceptionally able child are not appropriately met at present in primary schools. The study provides evidence that there is a clear lack of teacher training in the area of Gifted Education. Research findings also demonstrate the need to devise and implement whole-school policies on facilitating and providing an education that is appropriate for the gifted/ exceptionally able child in primary school

The study concludes that gifted education in primary school in Ireland has, for too long, been neglected. It also recommends that an education which is suitable to the needs and abilities of gifted/ exceptionally able children, and which allows them reach their full potential, should be available.