

Cooney, Leonora, 2013, *Numeracy Development in Primary Schools in the Republic of Ireland: Challenges for Teachers in Implementing Curricular Strategies*

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

The 1999 Primary School Curriculum in the Republic of Ireland places a strong emphasis on the development of literacy and numeracy skills. In the intervening years since its implementation, the standards reached in these skills has caused some concern. In July 2011, the Department of Education and Skills responded to this concern by publishing the strategy document 'Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life' which presents a ten-year plan for the development of literacy and numeracy skills, encompassing all areas of education from early childhood through to the end of second-level education.

This paper investigated areas of perceived weaknesses in the mathematics curriculum and the effect, if any, the departmental strategy will have on their improvement.

The research findings revealed that teachers are actively engaging with the mathematics curriculum but have some difficulties in implementing areas of the curriculum effectively. There is an acknowledgement of a lack of cohesion between home, school and even other class teachers in approaches to developing problem-solving skills. There is also an absence of engagement with the literacy and numeracy strategy document, and a perceived dearth of support for its implementation among some staff members. Teachers need to feel more supported, by management and in-service providers, in their implementation of strategies for the development of numeracy in their students. Finally, there is a demand for more specific continuous professional development for teachers in relation to the development of numeracy strategies and skills.