

Finn, Mary, 1995, *Staff Development as a means of helping teachers to cope with change*

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

This dissertation has sought to analyse the concept of staff development taking Irish second level education as its prime focus. The methodologies used were a review of literature and a micro research project carried out in the school where the author is a member of staff. The historical background of staff development and in-service policies over the past twenty five years were outlined. Consideration was taken of essential elements of programme formation, such as clarity of objectives, needs assessment and collaborative planning. Models of staff development already in existence in Ireland were reviewed.

A selective approach was taken which allowed for a variety of initiatives to be surveyed. Projects in management training, professional teacher development and curriculum innovation were researched.

The results of the school based survey were presented and based on the findings, conclusions were drawn and recommendations made for the specific school involved. General conclusions and recommendations for staff development based on the literature review have also been suggested. It is the contention of the author, that the multiplicity of curriculum and attitudinal changes which are pertinent to the development of Irish education as the twenty first century approaches, must be supported by comprehensive staff development programmes. Though national guidelines and support systems are essential, sufficient flexibility must prevail to enable each school meet its own unique needs.