

Hennessy, Brian, MEd, 2013, *An investigation into the use of Assessment for Learning with regard to Future Planning and Practice in DEIS Schools in Cork City, Ireland.*

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

This study concentrated on the area of assessment within schools working under the status of DEIS: Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools. The purpose was to investigate the approaches to, and the usage of, assessment in three designated disadvantaged primary schools in Cork City.

This study investigates if the data received from standardised testing and classroom assessment influences the teaching, learning, target setting and mind-set towards beneficial assessment for both teachers and schools. The research was completed in three primary schools in the Republic of Ireland and the data received was collected from 49 teachers and three principals.

It investigates if teachers are using summative assessment, formative assessment or a balance of both. It also explores the way, teachers and schools use the information gleaned from these exercises to influence their teaching and planning. The study focuses in particular on Assessment for Learning and Assessment of Learning. It is influenced by the work of Black and William and the recent work carried out by The National Council for Curriculum Assessment. Both have encouraged schools to incorporate Assessment for Learning into their practice.

An Introduction outlines all the relevant elements of the study and is followed by a comprehensive Literature review. A consideration of the research methodologies, which inform the selection of a research instrument and engagement, precedes the presentation and analysis of data. The study concludes with the formulation of relevant conclusions, recommendations and the identification of future study opportunities.

The management in the schools have included some of the advances in assessment in the school policies but these advances have not been communicated effectively to staff members and, as a result, a whole school approach is not evident. Although the schools are effectively utilising the supports of DEIS with regard to intensive teaching initiatives, the schools are not taking advantage of the extra support systems in place for DEIS schools with regard to assessment. The schools would benefit greatly from the creation of a whole school approach to assessment with a new assessment policy and by involving the teachers in its creation.