

Transcript Analysis from Francis Street Visit

Project Setting & Context

The teachers and pupils at Francis Street CBS Primary School took part in two projects this year – the Lego project and the Fiche project.

I spoke to 4 teachers at the school (with 5,2,3, and 3 years teaching experience)

One teacher was a resource teacher and the other 3 were all mainstream teachers. The projects involved approximately 30 pupils.

The following are brief descriptions of the projects:

'The projects were brilliant, they were amazing for the children'

'They were really good, the kids and the teachers had great fun doing it'

'They were brilliant, I loved it and it was great for them'

'They are really worthwhile, it gets them to think and to think differently, it brings in science and engineering and they were very constructive as each pupil could work at their own pace'

Project Implementation

They believed that the principal factors that made the projects possible were *'the training and the co-ordinators – who were really supportive and they didn't make you feel like you had to be an expert'*

And also the fact that the projects *'didn't tax on our time'*

One said the DLLI: *'integrated very well into the class curriculum and could be used for themes in the classes'*.

All four declared they never at any stage felt like giving up.

In relation to fitting DLLI activities in the school day they said they had no problems as they integrated the projects into the curriculum and *'therefore you could justify spending time on it'*

Impact On Your School

The teachers recalled some of the most satisfying outcomes of the project:

'The delight in their eyes, they loved watching themselves on the big screen'

'The special needs children shining and integrating very well with their peers'

'My class wasn't the most motivated class so it was great when they would ask you when they were going to get to do the Lego, they have to have something to look forward to'

'I have one very difficult special needs case and working with the camera was the only time he focussed on the task in hand and it gave him a great sense of importance'

And one teacher was keen to note that *'I have every intention of doing it next year'*

They pointed out that the *'support, the excellent training and the fact that they were interested in it'* helped them to succeed.

'it's down to getting out what you put in. And we were very keen, we put in lots!.'

There was a resounding 'no' from all four teachers when asked if they thought that the project fell short in any respects:

'The projects cover a lot of the curriculum'

'I was involved three years ago with the storytelling project, and I can see a huge difference between that experience and now. There was way too much in that project, it took over the entire year. Whereas this year it was much easier'

Training & Support

The teachers emphasised that *'the training was very appropriate, and it was given by primary school teachers, and it was very hands-on'*

.Furthermore, 'the training was good fun, there was a great work ethic on the courses and they gave us lots of very good notes that you could refer back to'.

Another noted: *'It has been very interesting for the students, and extremely beneficial. The level of technical expertise they have acquired is fantastic. And there is great support for the participating teachers'*

The only suggestion they made in relation to improving the tailored training was to have a couple of refresher days after the initial training and maybe one or two more structured class visits at the start.

Future Direction

All four of the teachers would like to see such projects rolled out on a wider basis to benefit more children but they acknowledged the challenges to such laudable ambitions:

'Time is a big factor, as you would definitely need 2 people working on it in a big class'

'You would have to overcome the fear that a lot of teacher's have of the unknown'

Upon reflection they had a few final comments to make in relation to their experiences:

'For children in disadvantaged areas these projects are one of the most empowering things. The projects are very much related to their experience, as they live in the digital age, however for them to actually stand behind the camera and take control of it is magnificent'

'I can definitely see myself doing it for another three years. However three years ago I never wanted to see another computer, but due to the way the projects are organised now and integrated into school life that has changed'

[This material is supplied solely for use at the use at the KONFeT Conference, Project Evaluation Workshop, Ljubljana, 20 April 2009. It may not be used otherwise without written permission of the owner.]