

Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS)

The DEIS Action Plan focuses on addressing the educational needs of children and young people from disadvantaged communities and aims in particular to target literacy and numeracy in designated schools.

In accordance with the plan, extra resources are made available through the Primary Curriculum Support Programme (PCSP) for intensive professional development for teachers in these schools. Under DEIS, the PCSP has overall responsibility for the co-ordination of the following literacy and numeracy initiatives:

- *First Steps*.
- *Maths Recovery*.
- *Ready, Set, Go-Maths*.
- *Reading Recovery*.

A number of DEIS Cuiditheoirí work through the PCSP to support teachers in effective implementation of the curriculum.

Each DEIS Cuiditheoir is assigned a cohort of schools and works closely with these schools in identifying their needs in literacy and numeracy. Cuiditheoirí offer advice to schools on adopting effective whole school, class, group and individual pupil approaches to teaching and learning as well as advice on the co-ordination of the work of class teachers and support teachers.

A Cuiditheoir can offer sustained support, present at staff meetings, facilitate evening workshops and model lessons in class. Cuiditheoirí are trained to offer advice and support in *First Steps*, *Maths Recovery* and *Ready, Set, Go-Maths*.

First Steps

First Steps is a literacy resource that links assessment to teaching and offers practical teaching support for teachers. It was developed by the Department of Education in Western Australia in 1992 with the purpose of helping to improve student outcomes in literacy. *First Steps* compliments the English curriculum and may be used alongside other teaching materials. It offers ideas on 'how to teach' rather than 'what to teach'. The approach underpinning *First Steps* is that of moving the child from a supportive context where the teacher has a high degree of control (modelling) to a more independent context where the child has more control.

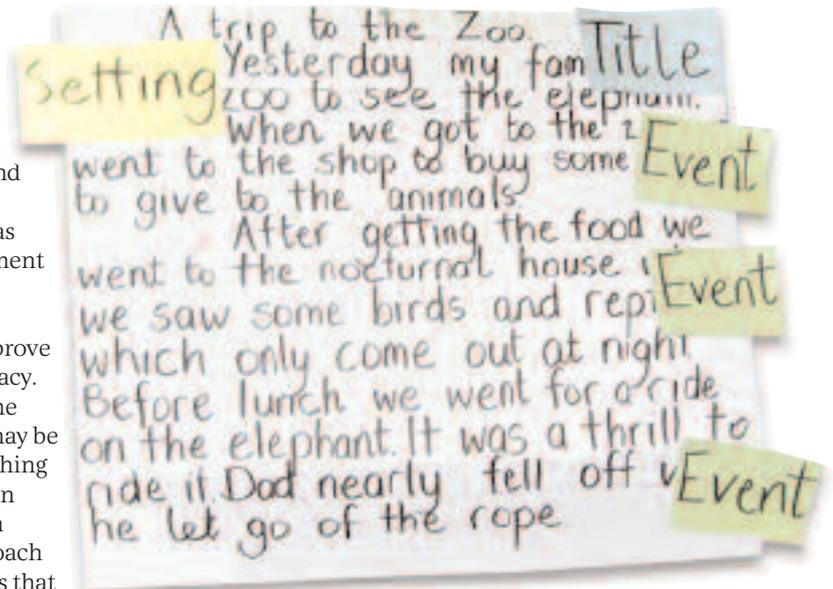
First Steps helps teachers to identify stages of development within literacy. Using this information teachers are enabled to teach to the specific needs of the child. Implementing a selective range of teaching strategies approaches and procedures helps to ensure

explicit instruction and guidance at the point of need. The *First Steps* books offer many strategies and ideas for teaching children at all stages of development.

Over the past two years the PCSP has trained over 140 practicing teachers as *First Steps* writing tutors. These tutors act as a link person with their school's designated DEIS Cuiditheoir, assisting with the implementation of the programme in their own

schools. They provide support to other staff members and are involved in planning for *First Steps* in their schools. Regional tutor networks have been established throughout the country where *First Steps* tutors meet to share best practice and further develop their literacy teaching skills.

Last year, DEIS Cuiditheoirí arranged afternoon and evening workshops for over 600 teachers from DEIS schools. In addition, many teachers



Maths Recovery

This programme incorporates a distinctive approach to assessing children's numerical knowledge and strategies in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. The assessment is interview based and involves presenting numerical tasks and engaging with the child in order to determine the extent of the child's knowledge and the relative sophistication of the child's numerical strategies. The assessment yields a profile of the child's knowledge across several aspects of early number and additional information about the current numerical strategies used by the child. The assessment also results in specific and detailed guidance for teaching.

Learning-support teachers are currently receiving training in *Maths Recovery* assessment and teaching approaches. Part of the training programme also involves introducing all relevant class teachers in DEIS schools to *Maths Recovery* teaching approaches in a classroom context through a one-day seminar 'Teaching Number in the Classroom'. Further support is offered by the PCSP DEIS Cuiditheoirí.

The *Maths Recovery* programme is co-ordinated by Noreen O'Loughlin. If you wish to find out more please contact Noreen at 061 204531 or at noreen.oloughlin@mic.ul.ie

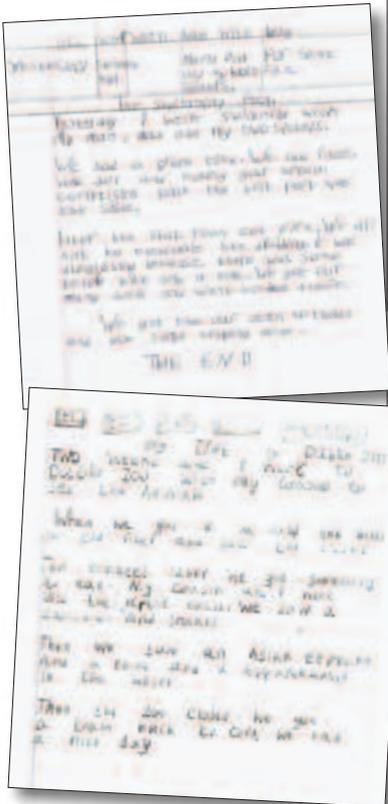
Check out www.mata.ie for more information on *Maths Recovery*.



from DEIS schools participated in one of the six *First Steps* summer courses that were organised by school or by the education centre network.

Further information can be obtained from: Deputy National Co-ordinator: Clare Griffin 087 6949446 or email clgriffin@eircom.net or Assistant National Co-ordinator: Catherine Shanahan 087 1212265 or email catherinespcsp@eircom.net

Samples of work from Morning Star NS, Cork.



Ready, Set, Go-Maths

Ready, Set, Go-Maths is a practical handbook for infant teachers. It contains the summary of findings from an action research project carried out in Northern Ireland by Eunice Pitt. The handbook also contains guidance for junior infant teachers on a range of teaching and learning approaches to develop key concepts and skills in early number.

The study found that a general pattern of learning was evident in most children. The first thing a child can do is count. The child then develops an understanding of

number which in turn leads to an ability to work with numbers. This is reflected in the guidance for teachers laid out in the book.

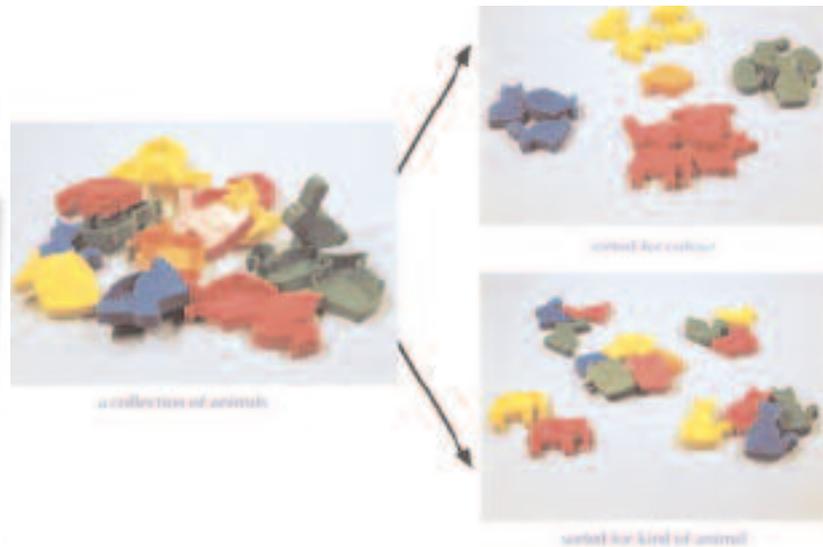
Training in this programme for all junior infant teachers in DEIS Band 1 and Band 2 schools has already commenced. The training will consist of two half-day seminars from 1 pm – 3 pm. The sessions will focus on four key areas of early mathematics:

- Sorting.
- Relationships and operations.
- Counting and recognition.
- Understanding number.

Each school will be provided with a copy of the book which outlines how the programme can be used.

Additional copies can be ordered from the Council for the curriculum examinations and assessment Belfast 048 9026 1200.

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Ready, Set, Go-Maths

Reading Recovery

Readng Recovery is an effective early literacy intervention aimed at pupils aged between five years nine months and six years six months. It is designed to significantly reduce the number of children with literacy difficulties in schools. The programme involves intensive one-to-one reading tuition on a daily basis over a period of time and is supplementary to classroom instruction.

Currently, there are seven *Reading Recovery* teacher leaders working through the

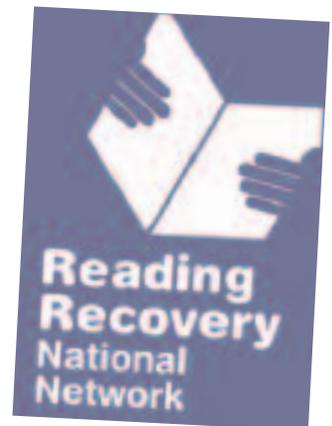
centres listed below. Over the course of a year, twelve learning-support teachers from DEIS schools are trained by each *Reading Recovery* teacher leader. To date, training of *Reading Recovery* tutors has taken place in over 150 schools.

The *Reading Recovery* programme is co-ordinated by Sr Elizabeth Connolly. If you wish to find out more please contact Sr Elizabeth through the Monaghan Education Centre at 047 74000.

Contact details for those

interested in finding out about Reading Recovery in their area are as follows:

- Cork Education Support Centre: Tel: 021 4255600
- Limerick Teachers' Centre: Tel: 061 312360
- Galway Education Centre: Tel: 091 745600
- Kilkenny Education Centre: Tel: 056 7760201
- Monaghan Education Centre: Tel: 047 74000
- Marino Institute of Education: Tel: 01 8057700
- Dublin West Education Centre: Tel: 01 452 8000



Submitted by members of Primary Curriculum Support Programme team. Further information at www.pcspp.ie