



An Chomhairle Náisiúnta Curaclaim agus Measúnachta
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment

The challenge of change – experiences of Project Maths in the initial group of schools

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Purpose of meetings in the 24 schools

- Teacher reflections – impact of Project Maths on
 - their own classroom practice
 - their use of resources
 - assessment practices
 - the school maths department
 - student learning experiences
- Feedback on syllabuses and assessment
 - Strands 3, 4 and 5

Teachers report that

- teaching for understanding takes more time than previous approach – they need to adjust to this
- they are less confident than before about their teaching and about preparation for the exams
- they are using more varied methodologies; students are more engaged
- there is more collaboration at school level; peer support is valued
- there are signs that, as the JC experience beds in, students are better prepared for the change at LC

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Some teacher comments

- *A greater demand on time for students and teachers*
- *You got so used to the paper that you knew what got them through and you did what it took, especially to get the weaker students through.*
- *I would have done more of the talking than the students ... (but not now).*
- *I'm using more teaching resources to do things differently, e.g. geogebra, and wiser use of the calculator.*

More teacher comments

- *We had no book, which in hindsight is good, because you can't describe this teaching method in a book.*
- *Kids still have difficulty with the change from procedures; they are comfortable with procedures – it's like order to them.*
- *There's more interaction (now) between teachers (at school) and the focus is on maths approaches.*
- *It was hard at the start but once everything settled down...I wouldn't go back.*

Emerging pointers

- Continued support is required if teachers are to
 - engage with syllabus learning outcomes and assessment
 - make connections across syllabus topics and strands
 - embed changed classroom practices
- Experienced or maths qualified teachers have found the change easier to manage; they have been a support for their colleagues
- It is a work in progress – continued monitoring, support and evaluation will be needed

Next steps

- Consideration of the implications of this feedback for continuing teacher support
- NFER research under way
- Informing future NCCA work