

## Final Report on GTCNI-funded professional development (Follow up training after a Phonographix course)

1. Having attended a Phonographix training course I then wanted to develop this further by attending in-service training with a qualified tutor. I was then able to observe and practice the techniques and strategies that were demonstrated at the course. I was then able to put the theory into practice with children in a classroom setting, though under guidance.

2. It was invaluable to have had the opportunity to have gone into the classroom situation and watch an expert at work. To see the theories put into practise, as it were, was of great benefit. At the core of the course was using sounds in a way which was previously unfamiliar to me, so it was a great help to be repeatedly exposed to this so as to recondition myself to these before going into my own classroom situation. I also found it of great benefit to not only observe her at work but to have had the opportunity to work alongside her and consolidate my learning. I was able to see the progression that the lessons should take and see resources being used.

3. The course advocates the teaching of skills such as blending, segmenting and phoneme manipulation at a variety of levels, so to see this in practice has proved invaluable when undertaking the lessons within my own classroom. The children in my class are now better equipped to use the various techniques and strategies to help them learn to read. There has been a marked improvement in the quality of their independent writing and spelling. I have been able to buy some of the resources that I saw being used so these have added to the enjoyment of the lessons.

4. Within my own classroom I can see the benefits as the children are attempting to decode words and use the skills that they have learnt so far. The reading ages of the children in school have been scored using a standardised test and comparisons will be taken next year. Hopefully, this will show improvement in both this and the CCEA Reading and Writing Outcomes.

5. On returning to school the information gained was then disseminated to the other members of staff via a series of staff meetings. The staff were very receptive and enthusiastic about the findings and were eager to try various techniques during reading and language activities. With the support of the principal it was suggested that other staff be nominated for future training.

6. I have been very impressed by the changes in the attitudes of the children in my class even in the short time that I have been using the methods advocated by Phonographix. Now they are so much more willing to attempt to decipher words. When the children are writing independently they are also more willing to attempt to spell unknown words themselves, sounding out the various parts., so this is evidence of them using the skills they have been taught and recognising their relevance. This should only improve with time and should have far reaching benefits in every aspect of their work.

7. We have committed to train more staff. This will take place over several years, so until more staff can be trained, a timetable has been put in place where I am released to go into other classes for one hour per week to teach a lesson. This will be done in conjunction with the class teacher. It is also our intention to speak to parents at the beginning of the new school year.

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