

# CHAPTER 8- CURRICULUM AND METHODOLOGY

## CAIBIDIL 8 - CURACLAM AGUS MODHEOLAÍOCHT

The National Forum Report on Early Childhood Education held in 1998 defined curriculum as:

*"...the creation of a flexible, informal, planned learning environment where young children are actively, safely and happily involved in a range of formative and learning experiences and where the role of the adult is that of supporting, guiding and mediating the environment"* (Coolahan, 1998: 47).

There is no overarching curriculum in operation in the early years sector for children aged birth to 6. We understand curriculum to be a framework or approach to education and care in the early years, not exclusively a prescriptive or formal approach. Play is an integral part of such a curriculum and methodology to facilitate learning and development in the early years. Various service providers and umbrella organisations have employed particular approaches for use within early years settings under their remit, including High/Scope, Montessori and Steiner. The Early Start curriculum (In-career Development Team, 1998) has been developed for use within Early Start settings. The Primary School Curriculum (DES, 1999b) caters for the majority of children in the 4 to 6 year old category in the formal system.

The Department of Education and Science provides a number of interventions for children affected by educational disadvantage. The Rutland Street Project was initiated in 1969 in a deprived area of Dublin inner city. The aim of the intervention programme is to ease the transition from home to formal schooling. A curriculum was developed for the project, specifically for the context of early intervention and there is great emphasis placed on parental involvement and support. The curriculum focuses on cognitive and linguistic development while there is also a particular emphasis on social and emotional development.

The Early Start pilot programme aims to tackle educational disadvantage by targeting children in the year preceding entry to the primary school. It builds on the experience of the Rutland Street Project and follows the curriculum devised by the In-career Development Team (1998). This places an emphasis on cognitive, linguistic, personal and social development while there is a commitment to promoting active parental involvement. Although the Department of Education and Science largely fund the Traveller Preschools, it does not prescribe a curriculum for these settings.

The infant classes in the formal education system follow the Primary School Curriculum (DES, 1999b). This curriculum builds on the 1971 Primary School Curriculum and was devised following a wide consultative process. It contains information on the

Rinne an National Forum Report on Early Childhood Education, a réachtaladh i 1998, an sainmhíniú seo a leanas ar churaclam:

*"...the creation of a flexible, informal, planned learning environment where young children are actively, safely and happily involved in a range of formative and learning experiences and where the role of the adult is that of supporting, guiding and mediating the environment"* (Coolahan, 1998: 47).

Níl aon churaclam forghabhálach i bhfeidhm in earnáil na mblianta luatha i gcás leanaí ó aois breithe go 6. Tuigimid le curaclam gur creat nó cur chuige le haghaidh oideachais agus cúraim sna blianta luatha atá ann, ní cur chuige saintreorach nó foirmiúil atá ann. Tá an spraoi ina lárchuid den churaclam agus den mhodheolaíocht sin chun an fhoghlaim agus an fhorbairt a éascú sna blianta luatha. Bhain soláthraithe agus eagraíochtaí forghabhálacha áirithe úsáid as cuir chuige shonracha le húsáid i dtimpeallachtaí blianta luatha atá faoina gcoimisce, lena n-áirítear High/Scope, Montessori agus Steiner. Forbraíodh an curaclam Early Start (In-career Development Team, 1998) le húsáid i dtimpeallachtaí Early Start. Freastalaíonn Curaclam na Bunscoile (DES, 1999b) ar fhorbairt na leanaí atá sa chatagóir aoise 4 go 6 sa chóras foirmiúil.

Soláthraíonn an Roinn Oideachais agus Eolaíochta roinnt idirghabhálacha do leanaí a fhulaingíonn míbhuntáiste oideachasúil. Cuireadh tús leis an Rutland Street Project i 1969 i gceantar díothach i lár chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath. Is é aidhm an chlár idirghabhála ná an t-aistriú ón mbaile go dtí an scolaíocht foirmiúil a éascú. Forbraíodh an curaclam don tionscadal, go sonrach do chomhthéacs na hidirghabhála luaithe agus leagtar béim mhór ar rannpháirtíocht agus tacaíocht tuismitheoirí. Díríonn an curaclam ar fhorbairt chognaíoch agus theangeolaíoch cé go ndírítear freisin ar an bhforbairt shóisialta agus mhothúcháin.

Díríonn an clár píolóta Early Start ar dhul i ngleic le míbhuntáiste oideachasúil trí dhíriú ar leanaí sa bhliain roimh dóibh dul isteach sa bhunscoil. Tógann sé ar eispéireas an Rutland Street Project agus leanann sé an curaclam a chuir an In-career Development Team (1998) le chéile. Leagann sé sin béim ar an bhforbairt chognaíoch, theangeolaíoch, phearsanta agus shóisialta agus táthar tiomanta do rannpháirtíocht ghníomhach tuismitheoirí a chothú. Cé gurb í an Roinn Oideachais agus Eolaíochta den chuid is mó a mhaoíníonn Réamhscoileanna na dTaistealaithe, ní mholann sí curaclam ar leith do na suímh sin.

Leanann ranganna na naíonán sa chóras foirmiúil oideachais Curaclam na Bunscoile (DES, 1999b). Tógann an curaclam sin ar Churaclam na Bunscoile,

content and methodologies followed in the infant classes. These classes comprise a large percentage of the 4-6-age cohort as approximately 50% of all 4 year olds; virtually all 5 year olds and all 6 year olds are attending infant classes (DES, Forthcoming)<sup>6</sup>. This curriculum is designed to be delivered by trained primary teachers who are in the process of receiving in-career development on all aspects of the Primary Curriculum 1999.

The Primary School Curriculum (DES, 1999b) espouses the uniqueness of each child and the curriculum is designed to nurture all aspects of the child's development. Although the curriculum is structured and elaborate, it affords the flexibility to be adapted and actively involves the child as an agent in his/her own learning. This allows the child to engage in a wide range of learning experiences and to encourage children to respond to teaching methodologies and content. A fundamental principle of this is to start from and build on the existing knowledge of the child to enable him or her to;

*"...move from the known to the unknown, from the simple to the more complex, from the concrete to the abstract..."* (DES, 1999b: 14 - Introduction).

While great strides have been made in tailoring the Primary School Curriculum to the needs of young children, there are a number of concerns regarding its implementation. Coolahan (1998), prior to the introduction of the Revised Curriculum (DES, 1999b), and the White Paper on early Childhood Education, Ready to Learn (DES, 1999a) expressed concern regarding early childhood care and education in the formal system. These reports cited problems such as the physical environment, equipment and resources, methodologies and teacher training and qualifications;

*"The methodologies and skills required for an early childhood education specialist differ from those required in formal primary education"* (DES, 1999a: 31).

Both of these reports call for reform and renewal within the colleges of education regarding early childhood care and education to ensure that teachers are abreast of the most recent research and developments in relation to child development and the education of young children. They also expressed their concern regarding the academic orientation of the infant classes and the direct instruction methodology in use. Recent developments regarding enhanced resources and reduced pupil-teacher ratios in the infant classes have been designed to address some of these concerns.

As is evident, there is a broad spectrum in service provision. This diversity has positively benefitted the early childhood care and education sector by developing a range of expertise in different approaches and in offering choice of provision for

1971, agus cuireadh le chéile é tar éis próisis leathain chomhchomhairle. San áireamh ann tá faisnéis faoin inneachar agus faoi na modheolaíochtaí a leanann ranganna na naíonán. Áirítear ar na rangana sin céatadán mór den chóhort aoise 4-6 de bhrí go bhfuil thart ar 50% de gach leanbh 4 bliana d'aois; formhór gach leanbh 5 bliana d'aois agus gach leanbh 6 bliana d'aois ag freastal ar ranganna naíonán (DES, Le foilsíú)<sup>6</sup>. Tá an curaclam sin deartha le seachadadh ag múinteoirí oilte bunscoile atá ag fáil forbartha inghairme faoi gach gné de Churaclam na Bunscoile 1999.

Maíonn Curaclam na Bunscoile (DES, 1999b) uathúlacht gach linbh agus tá an curaclam deartha chun gach gné d'fhorbairt an linbh a chothú. Cé go bhfuil an curaclam struchtúrtha agus ilchasta, tá sé solúbtha sa chaoi is gur féidir é a oiriúnú agus déanann sé an leanbh gníomhach ina c(h)uid foghlama féin. Tugann sé sin deis don leanbh tabhairt faoi réimse leathan eispéireas foghlama agus spreagann sé leanaí freagairt do mhodheolaíocht agus d'inneachar teagaisc. Bunphrionsabal de sin is ea tosú le heolas reatha an linbh agus tógáil air sin le cur ar a c(h)umas:

*"...move from the known to the unknown, from the simple to the more complex, from the concrete to the abstract..."* (DES, 1999b: 14 – Réamhrá).

Cé go ndearnadh go leor oibre maidir le Curaclam na Bunscoile a chur in oiriúint do riachtanais leanaí óga, tá roinnt imní ann faoi chur-i-ngníomh an churaclaim. Léirigh Coolahan (1998), roimh thabhairt isteach an Churaclaim Athbhreithnithe (DES, 1999b), agus an Páipéar Bán faoi Oideachas Lauthóige, Ready to Learn (DES, 1999a) imní faoi chúram agus oideachas Luath-Óige sa chóras foirmiúil. Luaigh na tuarascálacha sin fadhbanna cosúil leis an timpeallacht fhisiceach, trealamh agus acmhainní, modheolaíocht agus oiliúint agus cáilíochtaí múinteoirí;

*"The methodologies and skills required for an early childhood education specialist differ from those required in formal primary education"* (DES, 1999a: 31).

Éilíonn an dá thuarascáil sin athchóiriú agus athnuachan laistigh de na coláistí oideachais maidir le cúram agus oideachas Luath-Óige le cinntiú go mbíonn múinteoirí cothrom le dáta faoin taighde agus faoi na forbairtí is déanaí a bhaineann le forbairt leanaí agus le hoideachas leanaí óga. Léirigh siad imní freisin faoi threochlaonadh acadúil ranganna naíonán agus faoin modheolaíocht dhíreach teagaisc a úsáidtear. Tá forbairtí a rinneadh le déanaí maidir le hacmhainní feabhsaithe agus cóimheasa laghdaithe daltaí-múinteoirí i ranganna naíonán deartha chun aghaidh a thabhairt ar roinnt den imní sin.

Faoi mar is léir, tá speictream leathan ann maidir le soláthar seirbhíse. Tá an éagsúlacht sin tar éis dul chun sochair don earnáil cúraim agus oideachais

<sup>6</sup> Department of Education and Science (Forthcoming). *Eurydice Dossier . Unpublished Overview of Education System*. Dublin: Department of Education and Science International Section.

families. This diversity in service provision should be recognised and supported. It is imperative that a curriculum is dynamic and flexible to meet the changing developmental needs of children in this age cohort (DES, 1999a).

However, the absence of a curricular framework for the early years has contributed to the fact that early childhood care and education services are of variable quality. Evaluation of the educational content of services is difficult to implement for parents, providers and regulatory authorities, in the absence of recommended curricula and methodologies.

The aims of establishing curriculum standards are to ensure that early childhood care and education is structured, developmental, of high quality and creates in young children an appetite for further education (DES, 1999a). To this end, the White Paper proposes curricular guidelines as opposed to prescribing a particular curriculum so that individual providers can design their own curriculum within the parameters of the guidelines;

*"Thus, curricular guidelines, rather than prescribing specific curricular details, will outline the broad principles with which curricula should comply. Individual providers will have discretion to design and modify their particular curriculum within these guidelines."* (DES, 1999a: 56)

The guidelines must take cognisance of the wide range of learning experiences and contexts in the holistic development of the child, including the cognitive, physical, emotional, sensory, linguistic, moral and social aspects. A curriculum must be accompanied by apposite methodologies if it is to be implemented to its maximum potential (DES, 1999a). The rate of development and the pace of learning in these years are unparalleled by any other time in the child's life. A curriculum must therefore meet the rapidly changing learning and developmental needs in this period.

In addition to these guidelines, the White Paper proposes the drafting of a more detailed "Specimen Curriculum" for parents or providers who may have difficulty following or adapting the curriculum guidelines or devising their own curriculum. At present, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment are in the process of designing curricular guidelines for use in the diverse range of early childhood settings catering for children aged 0-6 years of age.

The transition from the early years setting to the formal school setting is significant. It is imperative to create a learning continuum to effect this smooth transition and minimise any disruption between the two learning contexts;

*"There is need for a continuing process whereby the child's experience in the infant classes interacts with the developmental experience of home and family."*

Luath-Óige trí réimse saineolais a fhorbairt i gcuir chuige éagsúla agus trí rogha soláthair a thabhairt do theaghlach. Ba chóir an éagsúlacht sin i soláthar seirbhísí a aithint agus ba chóir tacaíocht a thabhairt di. Tá sé rithábachtach go mbíonn curaclam dinimiciúil agus solúbtha chun freastal ar riachtanais athraitheacha forbartha leanaí sa chohórt aoise sin (DES, 1999a).

De bhrí, áfach, nach ann do chreat curaclaim do na blianta luatha baineann caighdeán éagsúla leis na seirbhísí oideachais agus cúraim Luath-Óige. Tá sé deacair ar thuismitheoirí, ar sholáthraithe agus ar údarais rialúcháin meastóireacht ar sheirbhísí inneachair oideachais a chur-i-ngníomh in éagmais curaclam agus modheolaíocht mholta.

Is iad na haidhmeanna a bhaineann le caighdeán churaclaim a bhunú ná a chinntiú go mbíonn cúram agus oideachas Luath-Óige struchtúrtha, forbartha, agus ar ardchaighdeán agus go gcothaíonn siad fonn i measc leanaí óga tabhairt faoi bhreisoideachais (DES, 1999a). Chuige sin, molann an Páipéar Bán treoirlínte curaclaim seachas curaclam sonracha a fhorordú sa chaoi is gur féidir le soláthraithe aonair a gcuraclam féin a dhearadh laistigh de pharaiméadair na dtreoirlínte;

*"Thus, curricular guidelines, rather than prescribing specific curricular details, will outline the broad principles with which curricula should comply. Individual providers will have discretion to design and modify their particular curriculum within these guidelines."* (DES, 1999a: 56)

Ní mór do na treoirlínte féachaint don réimse leathan eispéireas agus comhthéacsanna i bhforbairt iomlánaíoch an linbh, lena n-áirítear gnéithe cognaíocha, fisiceacha, mothúchána, céadfacha, teangeolaíocha, morálta agus sóisialta. Ní mór go mbeadh modheolaíocht oiriúnach mar chuid de churaclam má táthar lena chur i bhfeidhm chun a phoitéinseal is fearr a bhaint amach (DES, 1999a). Ní tharlaíonn an ráta céanna forbartha agus foghlama ag aois ar bith eile i saol an linbh agus a tharlaíonn sna blianta luatha. Ní mór don churaclam, dá bhrí sin, freastal ar na riachtanais forbartha agus foghlama a bhíonn ag athrú go tapa sa tréimhse sin.

I dteannta na dtreoirlínte sin, molann an Páipéar Bán Specimen Curriculum níos mionsonraithe a chur le chéile do thuismitheoirí nó do sholáthraithe a mbeadh deacrachtaí acu na dtreoirlínte curaclaim a leanúint nó a oiriúnú nó a gcuraclam féin a chur le chéile. Faoi láthair, tá an NCCA i mbun treoirlínte curaclaim a dhearadh le húsáid sa réimse éagsúil timpeallachtaí Luath-Óige a fhreastalaíonn ar leanaí idir 0-6 bliana d'aois.

Tá an t-aistriú ó thimpeallacht na mblianta luatha go dtí an timpeallacht fhoirmiúil scoile suntasach. Tá sé rithábachtach leanúntas foghlama a chruthú chun an t-aistriú gan tuisle sin a dhéanamh agus chun aon chur isteach ar an dá chomhthéacs foghlama a íoslaghdú;

(DES, 1999b: 30 - Introduction).

An appropriate curriculum for children with special or additional needs is particularly important. This grouping is diverse so a responsive, flexible and dynamic curriculum is essential to meet the range of needs. The NCCA (2002) has produced a series of curriculum guidelines for teachers of children with mild, moderate and profound disabilities.

Following thematic analysis, the following **categories** emerged:

- 8.1 Assessment
- 8.2 Curriculum Development
- 8.3 Curriculum Implementation
- 8.4 Curriculum Philosophies
- 8.5 Government Publications
- 8.6 International Perspectives
- 8.7 Methodologies

These categories are further analysed under the following **sub-categories**:

- Description/Analysis
- Guidelines
- Evaluation
- Policy

*"There is need for a continuing process whereby the child's experience in the infant classes interacts with the developmental experience of home and family."* (DES, 1999b: 30).

Tá curaclam oiriúnach do leanaí ag a bhfuil riachtanas speisialta nó breise thar a bheith tábhachtach. Tá an ghrúpáil sin éagsúil agus dá bhrí sin éilfear curaclam freagrach, solúbtha agus dinimiciúil chun freastal ar an réimse riachtanas. Tá sraith treoirlínte curaclaim do mhúinteoirí leanaí atá faoi mhíchumais éatroma, mheánacha agus throma curtha le chéile ag an NCCA (2002).

Tar éis anailís théamach a dhéanamh, tháinig na **catagóirí** seo a leanas chun cinn:

- 8.1 Meastóireacht
- 8.2 Forbairt Curaclaim
- 8.3 Cur-i-nGníomh Curaclaim
- 8.4 Fealsúnachtaí Curaclaim
- 8.5 Foilseacháin Rialtais
- 8.6 Peirspictíochtaí Idirnáisiúnta
- 8.7 Modheolaíocht

Déantar iad sin a anailísiú faoi na **fochatagóirí** a luadh roimhe seo:

- Tuairisciúil/Anailísiúil
- Meastóireacht
- Treoirlínte
- Beartas

## 8.1 ASSESSMENT

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning cycle (Ridgeway, 2003). In the absence of statutory guidelines, it has been difficult to assess the educational components of early years settings. Donohoe (2003) and Gunning (2003) have examined different assessment tools for use in early years settings.

### 8.1.1 Description/Analysis - Tuairisciúil/Anailísiúil:

Ridgeway, A. (2002). "Role of Assessment as an Integral Part of the Teaching/Learning Continuum: Some Experiences from the U.S. and Italy." pp. 215-233. (in) Horgan, M. and Douglas, F. (Eds.) (2002). *Lessons for the 21st Century – Research, Reflection, Renewal*: Proceedings of the OMEP (Ireland) Conference.

Donohoe, P. (2003). *Gauging the Student's Preferred Learning Modality as a Foundation for Future Learning*. Paper presented at the OMEP (Ireland) Conference, Cork.

Gunning, I. (2003). *Learning Stories as an Assessment Tool*. Paper presented at the OMEP (Ireland) Conference, Cork.

## 8.1 MEASTÓIREACHT

Is cuid lárnach den timthriall foghlama agus teagaisc í an mheastóireacht (Ridgeway, 2003). In éagmais treoirlínte reachtúla, tá sé deacair meastóireacht a dhéanamh ar chomhchodanna oideachasúla na dtimpeallachtaí luathbhlianta. Tá scrúdú déanta ag Donohoe (2003) agus Gunning (2003) ar uirlísí éagsúla meastóireachta le húsáid i dtimpeallachtaí luathbhlianta.

There has been a large amount of work completed by various organisations and institutions in recent years in developing a curriculum for the early years. Hayes (1999b) focuses on the importance of collaboration and consultation in curriculum development with all stakeholders. Project E.Y.E. has produced a number of booklets outlining the different aspects of development in the early years (Douglas, Horgan and O'Brien, 2000). The NCCA (2002) have devised a number of draft curriculum guidelines for the education of children with mild, moderate and severe learning disabilities within the formal system.

### 8.2.1 Description/Analysis - Tuairisciúil/Anailísiúil:

Hayes, N. (1999b). *Partnership in Curriculum Development*. Paper presented at the *Enhancing Quality in the Early Years* International Conference on Practice and Policy in Early Childhood Care and Education, Dublin.

Donnelly, P. (2003). *Wondering, the World and the Universe: Philosophy in the Early Years Classroom*. Inaugural Eriugena Lecture, St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra.

Morgan, M. (2003). 'Too much knowledge ... Too much Fear.' (in) Dunne, J. and Kelly, J. (Eds.) (2003). *Childhood and its Discontents – The First Seamus Heaney Lectures*. Dublin: Liffey Press.

### 8.2.2 Evaluation / Meastóireacht:

Douglas, F. and Sammon, M. (2000). *The Evaluation of the Moyross Intervention Education Pilot Project – Evaluation of Curriculum Change*. Limerick: Curriculum Development Unit, Mary Immaculate College.

### 8.2.3 Guidelines / Treoirínte:

Douglas, F., Horgan, M and O'Brien, C. (Eds.) (2000). *Project E.Y.E. An Irish Curriculum for the Three to Four-Year-Old Child*. Cork: University College Cork.

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (2002). *Draft Curriculum Guidelines for Teachers of Students with Mild General Learning Disabilities - Drama*. Dublin: National Council for Curriculum and Assessment.

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (2002). *Draft Curriculum Guidelines for Teachers of Students with Mild General Learning Disabilities – English: Communication and Language*. Dublin: National Council for Curriculum and Assessment.

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (2002). *Draft Curriculum Guidelines for Teachers of Students with Mild General Learning Disabilities – Gaeilge: Teanga agus Cultúr*. Dublin: National Council for Curriculum and Assessment.

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (2002). *Draft Curriculum Guidelines for Teachers of Students with Mild General Learning Disabilities - Mathematics*. Dublin: National Council for Curriculum and Assessment.

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (2002). *Draft Curriculum Guidelines for Teachers of Students with Mild General Learning Disabilities - Music*. Dublin: National Council for Curriculum and Assessment.

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (2002). *Draft Curriculum Guidelines for Teachers of Students with Mild General Learning Disabilities – Physical Education*. Dublin: National Council for Curriculum and Assessment.

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (2002). *Draft Curriculum Guidelines for Teachers of Students with Mild General Learning Disabilities – Social, Personal, Health Education*. Dublin: National Council for Curriculum and Assessment.

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (2002). *Draft Curriculum Guidelines for Teachers of Students*

Thug eagraíochtaí agus forais éagsúla an-chuid oibre chun críche le blianta beaga anuas maidir le curaclam a fhorbairt do na luathbhlianta. Díríonn Hayes (1999b) ar an tábhacht a bhaineann le comhoibriú agus comhchomhairle le gach lucht leasa maidir le forbairt curaclaim. Faoi thionscadal E.Y.E. cuireadh roinnt leabhrán le chéile a thugann cuntas ar ghnéithe éagsúla na forbartha sna luathbhlianta (Douglas, Horgan and O'Brien, 2000). Tá roinnt dréacht-treoirínte curaclaim curtha le chéile ag an NCCA (2002) maidir le hoideachas a chur ar leanaí atá faoi mhíchumais éatroma, mheánacha agus throma laistigh den chóras foirmiúil.

with *Mild General Learning Disabilities – Social, Environmental, Scientific Education*. Dublin: National Council for Curriculum and Assessment.

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (2002). *Draft Curriculum Guidelines for Teachers of Students with Mild General Learning Disabilities – Visual Arts*. Dublin: National Council for Curriculum and Assessment.

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (2002). *Draft Curriculum Guidelines for Teachers of Students with Moderate General Learning Disabilities. Volume 1: Teacher Guidelines*. Dublin: National Council for Curriculum and Assessment.

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (2002). *Draft Curriculum Guidelines for Teachers of Students with Moderate General Learning Disabilities. Volume 2: Communication and Language, Mathematics, SESE*. Dublin: National Council for Curriculum and Assessment.

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (2002). *Draft Curriculum Guidelines for Teachers of Students with Moderate General Learning Disabilities. Volume 3: Arts Education, Physical Education and SPHE*. Dublin: National Council for Curriculum and Assessment.

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (2002). *Draft Curriculum Guidelines for Teachers of Students with Severe and Profound General Learning Disabilities. Volume 1: Teacher Guidelines*. Dublin: National Council for Curriculum and Assessment.

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (2002). *Draft Curriculum Guidelines for Teachers of Students with Severe and Profound General Learning Disabilities. Volume 2: Communication and Language, Mathematics, SESE*. Dublin: National Council for Curriculum and Assessment.

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (2002). *Draft Curriculum Guidelines for Teachers of Students with Severe and Profound General Learning Disabilities. Volume 3: Arts Education, Physical Education and SPHE*. Dublin: National Council for Curriculum and Assessment.

#### 8.2.4 Policy / Beartas:

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (1999). *Special Educational Needs – Curricular Needs: Discussion Paper*. Dublin: National Council for Curriculum and Assessment.

Irish National Teachers' Organisation (2000a). *Early Years Learning. Proceedings of Early Childhood Conference*. Dublin: Irish National Teachers' Organisation.

### 8.3 CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION

A number of commentators have considered the question of curriculum implementation in early years settings. Kelleher (1991) focused on the treatment of infant education in the 1971 Primary School Curriculum. Horgan, M., (1995c) analysed the differences between planning and practice regarding the curriculum in junior infants. King (2000; 2002) examined the implementation of the mathematics curriculum in early years settings. The implementation of early literacy programmes has been analysed by a number of researchers, including Loughrey (2001); Boyne (2002); McCormack (2002); Mehigan (2002) and Murphy, B. (2002a).

#### 8.3.1 Description/Analysis - Tuairisciúil/Anailísiúil:

Horgan, M. (1991). Aspects of Play in the Junior Infant Classroom. *Irish Education Studies*, Volume 10, Spring, pp. 67-81.

Kelleher, A. (1991). *Infant Education and the 1971 Curriculum*. M.Ed. Thesis. Dublin: University College Dublin.

Hayes, N. (1993b). *What are Four Year Olds Doing in School?* Paper presented to the Psychological Society of Ireland Annual Meeting, Sligo.

### 8.3 CUR-I-NGNÍOMH CURACLAIM

Tá roinnt tráchtairí tar éis féachaint ar chur-i-ngníomh curaclaim i dtimpeallachtaí luathbhlianta. Dhírigh Kelleher (1991) ar an gcaoi ar dhéileáil Curaclam na Bunscoile 1971 le hoideachas naíonán. Rinne Horgan, M. (1995c) anailís ar na deacrachtaí idir pleanáil agus cleachtas maidir leis an gcuraclam sna naíonáin bheaga. Scrúdaigh King (2000; 2003) cur-i-ngníomh an churaclaim matamaitice i dtimpeallachtaí luathbhlianta. Rinne roinnt taighdeoirí, lena n-áirítear Loughrey (2001); Boyne (2002); McCormack (2002); Mehigan (2002) agus Murphy, B. (2002a) anailís ar chur-i-ngníomh clár luathlitearthachta.

- Lally, J. (1993). *The Management of the Reading Curriculum in Dublin Primary Schools*. M.Ed. Thesis. Dublin: St. Patrick's College.
- Horgan, M. (1995c). Management of the Junior Infant Curriculum in Irish Primary Schools – Rhetoric versus Reality. *Compare*, Volume 25, No. 3, pp. 253-261.
- Horgan, M. and Douglas, F. (1995a). Early Childhood Education in Germany and Ireland – A Study of Provision and Curricular Implementation in Two Unique Environments. *International Journal of Early Years Education*, Volume 3, No. 3, pp. 51-67.
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### 8.3.2 Evaluation / Meastóireacht:

Shiel, G. and Hogan, J. (1997). Teaching Beginning Reading: A Survey of Teachers of Pupils in First Class. *Irish Educational Studies*, Volume 16, pp. 235-249.

### 8.3.3 Policy / Beartas:

Swan, D. (1990). Play, Practicality and Policy in Irish Education. *Irish Educational Studies*, Volume 9, No. 1, pp. 278-288.

## 8.4 CURRICULUM PHILOSOPHIES

The philosophies underpinning certain curricula have also been examined. Waldron (1992) examines the influence of Freire on child education. Horgan (2002) traces the evolution of curriculum in recent years and its effect on the participation of the child in his/her own learning. Conway (2003) examines the impact of the Sesame Street programme on children's learning.

### 8.4.1 Description/Analysis - Tuairisciúil/Anailísiúil:

Waldron, F. (1992). *Child Education and Liberating Pedagogy: An Exploration of the Relevance of Freirean Pedagogy to Child Education*. M.A. Thesis. Dublin: University College Dublin.

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Hayes, N. (1999b). *Partnership in Curriculum Development*. Paper presented at the Enhancing Quality in the Early Years International Conference on Practice and Policy in Early Childhood Care and Education, Dublin.

Horgan, M. (2002). "From Automaton to Activist: A Conceptual Analysis of Early Years Curricula." pp. 26-48. (in) Horgan, M. and Douglas, F. (Eds.) (2002). *Lessons for the 21st Century – Research, Reflection, Renewal*: Proceedings of the OMEP (Ireland) Conference.

Conway, P. (2003). *The Sesame Street Story: Lessons in Curriculum, Culture and Collaboration*. Paper presented at the OMEP (Ireland) Conference, Cork.

Hayes, N. (2003a). *Transformations: The Role of Interactions in Early Education*. Paper presented at the OMEP (Ireland) Conference, Cork.

## 8.4 FEALSÚNACHTAÍ CURACLAIM

Scrúdaíodh freisin na fealsúnachtaí atá taobh thiar de churaclaim áirithe. Scrúdaíonn Waldron (1992) tionchar Freire ar oideachas leanaí. Féachann Horgan (2002) ar fhorás curaclaim le blianta beaga anuas agus an tionchar a imríonn sé sin ar rannpháirtíocht an linbh ina c(h)uid foghlama féin. Féachann Conway ar thionchar chlár Sesame Street ar fhoghlaim leanaí.

## 8.5 GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS

In the absence of a curricular framework for early years learning, the government has produced certain reports and policy documents that impact on early years curricula. Coolahan (1994; 1998) provides an overview of the opinions and concerns of stakeholders in education regarding curriculum development and implementation. The White Paper on Early Childhood Education (DES, 1999a) outlines the strengths and weaknesses of the current system and advocates a more co-ordinated approach to curriculum development. The Education Act (DES, 1998b) endows the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment with responsibility for all aspects of curriculum development, including that in the early years. The Primary School Curriculum (DES, 1999b) caters for children aged 4-6 who are attending the formal education system.

### 8.5.1 Description/Analysis - Tuairisciúil/Anailísiúil:

Coolahan, J. (Ed.) (1994). *Report of the National Education Convention Secretariat*. Dublin: National Education Convention Secretariat.

Coolahan, J. (Ed.) (1998). *Report on the National Forum for Early Childhood Education*. Dublin: The Stationery Office.

### 8.5.2 Guidelines / Treoirínte:

Department of Education (1994a). *The Education of Traveller Children in National Schools – Guidelines*. Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department of Education and Science (2002a). *Guidelines on Traveller Education in Primary Schools*. Dublin: The Stationery Office.

### 8.5.3 Policy / Beartas:

Department of Education (1990). *Report of the Primary Education Review Body*. Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department of Education (1992a). *Green Paper on Education – Education for a Changing World*. Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department of Education (1993). *Report of the Special Education Review Committee*. Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department of Education (1995). *White Paper on Education – Charting Our Educational Future*. Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department of Education and Science (1998b). *Education Act*. Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department of Education and Science (1999a). *Ready to Learn - A White Paper on Early Childhood Education*. Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department of Education and Science (1999b). *Primary School Curriculum*. Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department of Education and Science (1999c). *Primary School Curriculum – Your Child's Learning - Guidelines for Parents*. Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department of Education and Science (1999e). *School Planning: Developing a School Plan, Guidelines for Primary Schools*. Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department of Education and Science (2000a). *Education Welfare Act*. Dublin: The Stationery Office.

## 8.5 FOILSEACHÁIN RIALTAIS

In éagmais creata curaclaim d'fhoghlaim luathbhlianta, tá roinnt tuarascálacha agus cáipéisí beartais foilsithe ag an rialtas a imríonn tionchar ar churaclaim luathbhlianta. Tugann Coolahan (1994; 1998) forléargas ar dhearcaí agus imní lucht leasa an oideachais maidir le forbairt agus cur-i-ngníomh curaclaim. Tugann an Páipéar Bán faoi Oideachas Luath-Óige cuntas ar láidreachtaí agus ar laigí an chórais reatha agus éilíonn sé cur chuige níos comhordaithe maidir le forbairt curaclaim. Tugann an tAcht Oideachais (DES, 1998b) an fhreagracht don NCCA as gach gné d'fhorbairt curaclaim, lena n-áirítear curaclaim luathbhlianta. Freastalaíonn Curaclam na Bunscoile (DES, 1999b) ar leanaí idir aoiseanna 4-6 atá ag freastal ar an gcóras foirmiúil oideachais.

## 8.6 INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Relatively few commentators have carried out comparisons of curriculum development and implementation in the early years between Ireland and other jurisdictions. Horgan and Douglas (1995a) examined Irish and German curriculum provision and implementation. The role of assessment in the USA and Italy in the early years is examined by Ridgeway (2003).

### 8.6.1 Description/Analysis - Tuairisciúil/Anailisiúil:

Horgan, M. and Douglas, F. (1995a). Early Childhood Education in Germany and Ireland – A Study of Provision and Curricular Implementation in Two Unique Environments. *International Journal of Early Years Education*, Volume 3, No. 3, pp. 51-67.

Ridgeway, A. (2002). "Role of Assessment as an Integral Part of the Teaching/Learning Continuum: Some Experiences from the U.S. and Italy." pp. 215-233. (in) Horgan, M. and Douglas, F. (Eds.) (2002). *Lessons for the 21st Century – Research, Reflection, Renewal*: Proceedings of the OMEP (Ireland) Conference.

Shiel, G. (2002). Kindergarten Children's Involvement in Early Literacy Activities: Perspectives from Europe. *Reading Teacher*, Volume 56, No. 3, pp. 282-284.

## 8.6 PEIRSPICTÍOCHTAÍ IDIRNÁISIÚNTA

Is beag tráchtairé a rinne comparáid idir Éirinn agus dlínsí eile maidir le forbairt agus cur-i-ngníomh curaclaim sna blianta luatha. Scrúdaigh Horgan agus Douglas (1995a) soláthar agus cur-i-ngníomh curaclaim in Éirinn agus sa Ghearmáin. Scrúdaíonn Ridgeway (2003) ról na meastóireachta i SAM agus san Iodáil sna blianta luatha.

## 8.7 METHODOLOGIES

There are a number of curriculum methodologies or approaches in use in the Irish context in the absence of a national curriculum framework. Dunlea (1990) and Hurley (1997) provide an overview of Montessori education in Ireland. The High/Scope curriculum is examined by O'Flaherty (1995) while Cogan (2003) and Madigan (2003) outline the effects of the High/Scope curriculum on children. The In-career Development Team (1998) produced curricular guidelines for the Early Start intervention programme. A work programme for Naíonraí settings in Gaeltacht settings was devised by Mac Con Iomaire (2001).

### 8.7.1 Description/Analysis - Tuairisciúil/Anailisiúil:

Dunlea, C. (1990). *The Relevance of Montessori Education: A Study of Children in Montessori Schools in the Cork Area*. M.Ed. Thesis. Cork: University College Cork.

O'Flaherty, J. (1995). *Intervention in the Early Years. An Evaluation of the High/Scope Curriculum*. London: National Children's Bureau.

Cogan, B. (2003). *Before and After High/Scope*. Paper presented at the OMEP (Ireland) Conference, Cork.

Madigan, I. (2003). *What do we want for Children?* Paper presented at the OMEP (Ireland) Conference, Cork.

### 8.7.2 Evaluation / Meastóireacht:

Hurley, S. (1997). *A Comparative Study in Early Childhood Education (The Irish National School Curriculum and the Montessori Method)*. M.Ed. Thesis. Dublin: Trinity College Dublin.

Donnelly, M. (2001). *A Comparison of the Effects of the High/Scope and Playgroup Curricula on Children's Development in Disadvantaged Rural Areas in Ireland*. M.Psych.Sc. Thesis. Dublin: University College Dublin.

### 8.7.3 Guidelines / Treoirlínte:

In-Career Development Team (1998). *Early Start Preschool Intervention Project - Curricular Guidelines for Good Practice*. Unpublished.

Mac Con Iomaire, M. (2001). *Clár Oibre do Naíonra na Gaeltachta*. Gaillimh: Údarás na Gaeltachta agus Seirbhísí Naíonraí (Gaeltachta) Teo.

## 8.7 MODHEOLAÍOCHT

Tá roinnt cur chuige nó modheolaíocht curaclaim á n-úsáid i gcomhthéacs na hÉireann in éagmais creata curaclaim náisiúnta. Tugann Dunlea (1990) agus Hurley (1997) forléargas ar an oideachas Montessori in Éirinn. Scrúdaíonn O'Flaherty (1995) an curaclam High/Scope agus tugann Cogan (2003) agus Madigan (2003) cuntas ar thionchair an churaclaim High/Scope ar leanaí. D'fhoilsigh an In-career Development Team (1998) treoirlínte curaclaim don chlár idirghabhála Early Start. Chuir Mac Con Iomaire an clár oibre do thimpeallachtaí Naíonraí i gceantair Ghaeltachta le chéile (2001).