

Head Teacher's Report
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St Margaret Mary RC School, Carlisle 2004

We have been using the INPP Schools' Programme for a number of years now. We have seen some remarkable improvements in children's physical abilities, their balance and coordination, their learning and importantly in the dignity and self esteem it affords them. We have evidence from some groups of quite dramatic rises in reading scores and also in standardised tests of neurological development. This includes the standard "Draw a Person" test. Some of our results in this area were published in "The Well Balanced Child". Hawthorn Press.

The programme is taught to whole classes rather than to individuals and we have found that the optimum age for beginning is at Year 3. Before this, our younger children follow a modified version prepared by INPP. Our younger children also follow the "Basic Moves" course. At any one time we will have three classes of children following the programme.

The adults in school including teaching staff and support staff are committed to delivering the programme and have been trained by INPP to do so. It is a relatively cost free programme requiring only time and commitment. In our school it is offered to all the children not merely those children experiencing specific difficulties.

We have been working recently with a consultant Paediatrician who summed it up like this; "Children learn with their bodies before they learn with their heads. Movement is our first language. Because our Education system has focused on the cognitive and the Health Service has focused on disease, we have missed out on the nurture of this vital transitional phase, which needs to be fostered in early development. This programme redresses this imbalance and provides a physical education in its truest sense, as part of a holistic education to nurture the whole child." (Dr Arthur Paynter quoted with permission)