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Reflecting on practice in early years' settings: developing teachers' understandings of children's early mathematics.

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Summary: This paper presents some of the findings of the Researching Effective Continuing professional development in Mathematics Education (RECME) Project which was set up to investigate, amongst other things, the role of research in 'effective' CPD for teachers of mathematics. The focus in this paper is on a CPD initiative that involved a network of teachers and early years practitioners. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) covers the care and education of children from birth to five years old and the place of mathematics in these settings has historically been problematic; we suggest this makes this initiative particularly interesting. During meetings, which involved practitioners from a variety of settings, participants carefully considered children's mathematical work, especially their spontaneous mathematical graphics. This focus led the practitioners to consider ways in which they might support the children's mathematical development in EYFS settings. We suggest that the professional development of the participants occurred through this collaborative work on researching children's mathematics in the classroom.

Classification: B50 C31 C39

Keywords: teacher education; educational research; early years foundation stage; pre-school education; continuing professional development; collaborative work; mathematical graphics; classroom research; case studies; learning; thinking

<http://www.bsrlm.org.uk/IPs/ip29-1/BSRLM-IP-29-1-03.pdf>