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Using final year teacher education students to evaluate the mathematical needs of a small rural school and to help the teachers to realise their wish to improve the mathematics within the school.

Hejný, M. et al., 4. bi-annual conference on elementary mathematics teaching (SEMT-4). Prometheus, Praha. 92-96 (1997).

Within the UK there are many rural schools serving village communities. These schools often comprise of two classrooms only, with children aged 4+ to 7+ in one classroom (Key Stage 1 & Reception) and the 8 year olds to 11+ years in the other (Key Stage 2). The total number of children in the school could be as low as 50. The teachers in these schools find considerable difficulty in determining a suitable mathematics curriculum within the National Curriculum which will cope with a class in which there are children covering a four year age span and within each age, children of varying mathematical ability and development. The paper evaluates the work of a research group comprising nine fourth year Teacher Education students specialising in Mathematics, two school teachers and two University Mathematical Education lecturers. The task of the research group is to determine a scheme of work in Mathematics for a rural school, particularly emphasising numeracy, problem solving and investigations, teaching strategies to be used in this particular situation and the means of assessing such a wide spectrum of children so that they all are working at their maximum potential. The paper includes slides of the work in progress, the evaluation of a mathematics week in the school with which the project hopes to complete its work and to assess the benefit the resulting in-service work will have on the teachers. (PedF UK)

Classification: B52