



20 years ago, I resigned from being a primary school teacher librarian. I began employment with the Education Department in the mid 1970s. This was at a time when school libraries were being built and promoted as being integral to the school. In fact when new schools were being built, the library was often in the physical centre. This is what seems to be happening now. However there is much more to a school library than just the physical parts and this is what concerns me.

I had a year of full time training in librarianship after my teacher training. My work was not just to order and organise books but to encourage children to read, introduce them to all kinds of literature and take them through a graduated approach in research, note taking and analysis, teaching not to plagiarise.

In the last 20 years i have seen the changes in the area of librarianship. Teacher Librarians became emergency teachers for classroom teachers, devaluing their role in the school and then they were replaced by qualified librarians who did not have teaching training. These library assistants were much cheaper to employ within a school budget.

My very meagre report into the 'impact of recent policies and investments' is this, money being spent to build new libraries without properly trained teacher librarians employed to work in them will not improve literacy and if a teacher puts in extra time to train to be a teacher librarian they have to be confident that they can work in that field and not be the emergency teacher within the school.

20 years ago i acted as the Teacher Librarian co-ordinator within our area, the majority of the schools within the area, both public and private, had trained teacher librarians, it would be interesting to know how many primary schools would have trained teacher librarians now.

Your sincerely
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