**Introduction:**

A school self-evaluation of our numeracy learning outcomes was begun during the period September 2014- June 2015.During this evaluation teaching and learning in the following area was looked at:

*Problem Solving.*

Teacher practices, teaching approaches and learning outcomes based on pupil attitudes and test scores were looked at.

**School Context:**

Caragh N.S. is a mixed school of 545 pupils. All development of our pupils is done with a holistic approach Our attendance levels are excellent. Our pupil’s behaviour is excellent. Standardised tests in June of each year are used to reflect our numeracy levels which are well above the national average. For more information on how we intend to improve our pupils’ learning please see our School Improvement Plan which is available on the school website www.caraghns.ie

**Focus of the Evaluation:**

We undertook a review of the Maths Curriculum among staff during the first term in 2014. This indicated a need to investigate further our teaching approach to problem solving across the class levels and to see if a focus on a whole staff approach would improve attitudes and learner outcomes throughout the school .We collected information from parents, teachers and pupils, through questionnaires, interviews and focus groups

**Our school has strengths in the following areas with regard to Problem Solving:**

* 50% of Senior Cycle children have a positive attitude towards this topic.
* Teachers’ planning is based on the Maths curriculum and the school Maths plan.
* Talk & Discussion and opportunities for pupils to explain answers form part of Maths lessons.
* There is an agreed whole school policy on Maths Language and agreed strategies for teaching problem solving.
* The school has a good supply of Maths resources available.
* Results of assessments are used to inform teacher planning.

**The following Areas are prioritized for improvement with regard to Problem Solving:**

* Strategies to support pupils problem solving need to be agreed at whole school level.
* Increasing opportunities for pupils to engage with problem solving.
* Increase the use of Maths in the school environment.
* Creation of Maths trails within and outside the school building.
* Increased use of Maths games, puzzles, practical investigations and open-ended tasks.
* Examine how we can support parents with regard to the content and methodologies used in problem solving.
* Examine strategies to provide challenge for more able students in this area.

**We have decided to prioritise these areas because:**

* They will allow for differentiation of learning outcomes
* They will allow children to develop specific skills in problem solving across all strands and strand units.
* They will ensure a school wide approach to the development of problem solving skills.