

Improving primary maths results across a trust using the mastery approach: a case study

Whytemead Primary School is part of the Schoolsworks Multi-Academy Trust and they have implemented the **Maths — No Problem!** programme across the trust.



There are about 200 teaching staff across the whole trust. They serve almost 3,500 pupils. Richard Waddington, an experienced school leader and maths specialist is head teacher at Whytemead and maths lead across the trust.

The school was familiar with mastery and for them a Concrete, Pictorial, Abstract (CPA) approach was absolutely critical to their choice of programme. But they identified key differences between **Maths — No Problem!** and their previous implementation:

- The emphasis that **Maths — No Problem!** places upon pupils knowing and using correct mathematical language
- The importance of the skill of journaling for both learner agency and formative assessment and feedback

Schoolsworks prioritises professional development, especially for leadership and their maths leads who then cascade to the teaching team. They have regular maths lead meetings and they visit schools in staff triads, looking for effective use of Checking Stations and careful use of manipulatives within the classroom settings to enable access for all.

Trust

Richard explains that the most important factor when implementing a new scheme is staff buy-in and trust. Across multiple schools, staff could feel that a new programme is being imposed upon them with no explanation. Or they might misunderstand why the programme is being introduced. Richard talks about the importance of time, effective communication and good relationships so that staff fully understand what is happening and become part of it, rather than feel this is something that is just happening to them.



Same-day intervention

At Whytemead, maths is taught at the same time every morning. They teach a standard lesson for 40 minutes following the **Maths — No Problem!** structure of Explore, Master then Guided practice before learners attend a 20 minute whole-school assembly, leaving desks and books without packing up. They then return and finish the lesson for 20 minutes more using their **Maths — No Problem!** Workbooks. What's impactful is how that middle 20 minutes is used when the majority of the class is in the assembly. Pupils who are identified or who self-identify as struggling remain in class and work intensively, either in

a new pair or on a one-to-one basis with their teacher or TA to address misconceptions and get back on track. This means that the final part of the lesson is a chance to rejoin their peers and successfully complete the learning. Richard comments, "The structure may seem disjointed but it's anything but. When we first mooted it, staff worried that this would affect the pupils ability to remember the lesson content. I had to reassure them and point out that this argument would suggest that the teaching and learning taking place was only surface-level if the pupils were predicted to have forgotten concepts after just 20 minutes! But it's important to be able to express these concerns as a teaching team so we can address them."

Community

Having **Accredited** and other **Maths — No Problem!** schools to reach out to is something that really makes the difference for Whytemead when they are looking for reassurance and clarification. In particular, they called out staff at Liphook Federation in Hampshire who really helped with their advice as experienced programme users.

Whytemead Primary School

www.whytemead.w-sussex.sch.uk

Schoolsworks Multi-Academy Trust

www.Schoolsworks.org

Get in touch with us today:

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