



CASE STUDY:

Holy Family Catholic School

Holy Family Catholic Primary School is a Youth Sport Trust Level 2 Member school based in Surrey.

Headteacher Steve Tindall has implemented Maths of the Day across the whole school after trialling the resource with Years 5 and 6, resulting in notable improvement in both attitude and attainment to Maths. In this case study, he discusses why Maths of the Day has added value to the curriculum and how teachers, support staff and young people are all benefitting.

At Holy Family Primary, we pride ourselves on a creative cross curricular timetable. We recognise not all pupils can learn in a truly academic environment, and need varied teaching methods to excel in core subjects.

Maths of the Day has been an outstanding addition to this curriculum delivery. Sport is very popular in our school, and so this programme provided us with a great opportunity to apply the skills learned through physical activity to a subject perceived by some children to be more challenging.

OBJECTIVES

The initial aim of implementing Maths of the Day was to reengage a group of bright Year 5 and 6 girls who were underperforming in Maths. The idea was to adopt the positive messages applied through the physical elements to the Maths challenges in order to raise attainment and achievement.

Another objective for introducing the programme was to build the confidence of these pupils and empower them to believe in their ability to succeed in all areas of the curriculum. There were concerns that some Year 6 pupils would not achieve the expected end of key stage standard. They displayed an approach in which they would give in too easily and became frustrated when the answer was not clear.

“I love the fact children are proactively channelling their natural competitiveness into Maths challenges. They are often learning so many Maths concepts without realising they’re doing Maths. It’s fabulous to see so many smiling faces and increase in achievement in the subject”

- Steve Tindall,
Headteacher

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After seeing a positive impact in the trial, an objective of embedding Maths of the Day across the whole school was to engage our teaching and support staff and allow them to build confidence and take ownership of leading sessions through this method of delivery.

ACTION

After using the free sample lesson plans available on the website, I decided to trial the programme with our Year 5 and 6 pupils. I invited Jon Smedley, the founder of Maths of the Day and an ex Primary Teacher to introduce the programme to our workforce. He carried out staff training, and everyone was impressed with its potential. Working alongside the Maths Coordinator, dedicated slots within the timetable were allocated to the Year 5 and 6 intervention group with the focus being 'fun, challenge, action, learn'.

The resources were simple and easy to deliver and focused on the pupils enjoying the sessions. The variety and number of lesson plans available is invaluable as it saved precious time and provided inspiration for meaningful and productive sessions.

The initial target group arrived enthusiastically and worked hard without consciously realising the content was challenging. The fact it was being delivered through active sessions allowed the pressure to be released and enabled them to enjoy their learning. They surprised themselves at how they could apply the theory in a practical setting and how much they could achieve. We were able to draw on the children's enthusiasm for sport together with their naturally competitive nature to bring about additional learning in Maths.

IMPACT ON THE SCHOOL

After the success of the trial group, the programme has now been rolled out throughout the whole school and all teachers have committed to one cross curricular session per week to embed practical learning across the whole curriculum.

Our teachers are more confident in delivering physical activity and it has allowed support staff to take more ownership, with Teaching Assistants now taking groups away from the main activity for additional interventions. Just the other day I saw a group in the hall with some cones and balls working through one of the many lesson plans available. One of the main benefits is that each of the plans only involves equipment already in the store cupboard.

The key to its success with the teachers in our school is that it allows them the time and freedom to teach in a creative and rewarding way without changing their fundamental style. Our school already delivers a lot of cross curricular activities, and so this programme fits in so effectively with our existing delivery.

The school recorded an increase in attainment in Maths for the Year 5 and 6 group initially targeted, with outstanding progress and achievement in their final SATs levels.



“I never ever thought I'd be able to do Maths this well. I can't believe it; I'm actually quite good now. I'm really pleased we did Maths of the Day!”

- April, Year 6 Pupil

“I love the Maths of the Day activities - they are great fun and I want to do more!”

- Year 5 boy



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To schools that are new to active curriculum, you can roll this programme out so easily with one year group or a booster group and quickly see the impact it makes on both confidence and attainment.

IMPACT ON THE YOUNG PEOPLE

The most striking and satisfying development since using the programme is the increase in self esteem and confidence when approaching Maths lessons. Maths of the Day has helped to eradicate the 'fear factor' which has been replaced with an understanding that Maths can be fun and success is achievable.

Gone is the 'I can't attitude', which has been replaced by pupils being able to think problems through from start to finish and solve them in a logical and productive way. Through this intervention we have seen our children work hard and apply the principles learned in the practical sessions. Our pupils are naturally competitive, and enjoy being rewarded for doing well. Maths of the Day has allowed children to learn together, develop teamwork, leadership and problem solving skills which can be applied to all areas of learning and beyond.

In particular, April one of our Year 6 girls was struggling to connect with the Maths content and despite being a bright girl was experiencing a lot of anxiety and lack of self confidence in the subject. She was significantly underachieving in this area, however was a keen netballer who loved drama. We were able to use Maths of the Day as a vehicle to inspire a transformation in her overall performance. By engaging her in a practical way she was able to overcome her confidence block and start to increase her attainment. She achieved an exceptional result in her Year 6 SATs, getting 100% in her arithmetic paper and putting her in the highest percentile overall.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

- Simple, easy and timesaving for teachers – there are over 1000 lesson plans and over 250 homework ideas teachers can use effectively with all age groups.
- Ability to draw out children's enthusiasm and passion for sport and apply the character skills learned to other areas of the curriculum.
- Opportunity to maximise impact of support staff by empowering them to take ownership and deliver additional interventions.
- No fancy or expensive equipment needed – the lesson plans use only things most schools will have easy access to.
- Proven to increase attainment and improve attitudes to Maths

For more information please contact Maths of the Day at maths@motd.org.uk or visit www.mathsoftheday.org.uk



“ Using Maths of the Day has provided teachers with a wide variety of ideas to help children develop their Maths skills in a creative and exciting way. All children have found the activities fun and challenging”

- Anthea O'Neil, Deputy Head/Maths Leader

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