

Numeracy Catch Up Maths 2020-2021

On the basis of data from baseline assessment which all of year 7 did in September 2020 the maths faculty identified some possible students who would benefit from specific numeracy support. As we had no data from end of primary, due to lockdown and the pandemic, we had no other source of reliable data on which to select students.

We were lucky in that we had a teaching assistant who happened to be a qualified maths teacher available to work with these students.

We began by asking that teacher to look at the selected students by visiting and observing them in lessons and looking at their books.

After that in discussion with the maths faculty leadership a group of 11 students was agreed as the focus for this intervention.

The aim of the intervention was to improve students' understanding of basic arithmetic skills which they clearly had gaps in. The aim was also to allow students to then better to access topics in their normal maths classes.

Students participated in small groups, twice a week for 20 minutes. The teacher would withdraw them for this time from their maths lessons and in consultation with the maths faculty leadership planned and delivered all these sessions.

These students had specific learning materials designed for these sessions, in order to consolidate the mathematical skills that they needed practice on.

During the lockdown period, online MyMaths tasks were also set every week and these students had their own Google Classroom which the teacher used to support them during lockdown.

No resources were needed other than photocopying as we already had all the physical resources needed in the faculty.

Outcome:

In the end of year 7 assessment, this group of students sat a specific numeracy assessment and showed progress in their basic arithmetic skills.

Seven of the selected students showed significantly better performance compared to earlier assessments. Four others made moderate progress. Two students in particular showed extremely good progress in this assessment.

The area where most students had got better was in their arithmetic fluency in the core operations of adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing- skills which they can now use to access the curriculum going forward.

As well as the end of year assessment the teacher kept records showing students progress throughout the year and class teachers reported on the improvement the students attending the catch up sessions showed in their normal maths lessons.

Teachers of these students in year 8 have now been asked to focus on continuing to provide differentiated material to support the further development of their arithmetic skills and confidence with number.

We plan to follow a similar model this year, with a fully qualified maths teachers taking the lead on the year 7 catch up this year.

Paul McGarr, head of mathematics, September 2021