

Case Study: Holy Family Catholic School, Coventry

Mathletics

Holy Family Catholic School reviews the benefits of using Mathletics

About the School

Holy Family Catholic Primary School is based in Coventry with over 470 pupils. The school cares passionately about providing its children with an education that will prepare them for life in the 21st century. "We want our children to be confident, independent learners who know how to make informed decisions about the choices they make in life."

Jim Richardson, a year 6 teacher, has been using Mathletics for the past 5 years. He discusses the benefits of Mathletics and how it has helped his school get away from worksheets, providing pupils with something they could enjoy doing and something that everyone could have a go at.

"Maths is very important, its linked to happiness and skills in society. In today's world of bank balances and debts, you need to be good at maths. At Holy Family we try to emphasise that and we want our children to experience maths rather than do maths. Maths is part of life, not just a subject or a topic we dip into."

How Mathletics is used at Holy Family

The way we use Mathletics varies from teacher to teacher. Most teachers encourage children to use Mathletics every week and nearly everyone does. It can take a little bit of work to get it going but once it is going the momentum takes itself. Some will set 2 or 3 homework activities a week and others introduce children to a topic beforehand or they will be assessed on something they've already done in class. We also use it in class because it's often better than the worksheets or textbooks available and Mathletics is tailored to each child's level of ability.



Jim Richardson, Year 6 Teacher
Holy Family Catholic School



The best thing about Mathletics is that children can explore it themselves and I love hearing them say in class, "I've already seen it on Mathletics!" I haven't taught them it yet but they've already seen it on Mathletics. Instantly I'm looking at those children and as soon as they've done the task I want them to do, I move them on straight away to the next thing and its building a mastery of the topic.

Curriculum Alignment

What's great is that the whole curriculum is on Mathletics in simple and easy chunks so teachers can see what the children need to cover that year. Some of the activities are harder than you would have set in class because you don't have the resources or variety available.

Engagement

Children like to use technology so they are very keen on using Mathletics. The children do some very difficult activities and they do it with enjoyment.

Flexibility

As a teacher you know there are activities on Mathletics that will cover what you are teaching. The different approaches Mathletics often takes is something that teachers may not have thought about which they can use in their teaching and adds to the children's understanding of maths and consolidates their learning.

Mathletics rarely lets you down. It very rarely doesn't have something of interest and more often than not it has something you've not thought about or an angle you hadn't thought about.

Results are predominantly down to good teaching but good teaching is about finding a variety of resources and how children use them. Mathletics is extremely good in that respect - children are very keen on using it.

Self-directed Learning

One of the greatest things we do at Holy Family is encourage children to explore the curriculum, even going to areas that they haven't been taught yet and they use Mathletics to do that.

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Students can learn on Mathletics by using the help button and videos. When they start the topic in class, they are familiar and happy with it so they progress much quicker. It adds to their knowledge, their confidence, their vocabulary. The attainment and progress is much faster as a result.

Being able to use Mathletics on a tablet adds to its appeal. Children say "play" when it's not play, they are in fact learning. When using Mathletics students don't get help from each other because their accounts are tailored to their individual needs and they're doing it on their own. They are learning instantly online; they can teach themselves.

Assessments

We use Mathletics a lot for assessments for learning. We set tasks in the classroom and as children are doing the task we monitor their results and re-set it if necessary. Mathletics has a fantastic tool that lets you re-set a task for a child that hasn't got 85% or over, encouraging them try it again so they master the concept. Setting tasks can also be used for homework. My class know that if I set an activity for homework and they don't get 9 or 10 out of 10 they get it re-set for them.

We also use Mathletics for end of term and year assessments because it has some fantastic SATs type tests which are brilliant because they are automatically marked and analysed for the teachers. There's no additional work from the teachers but we can give children an assessment level and see where their strengths and weaknesses are.

Celebrating Success

Mathletics is a resource that children can use whenever they want, we don't put any restriction on it. We celebrate the children's gold certificates and their achievements. Children spend hours and hours of their own time using Mathletics, often with the help of their parents and they enjoy it. It's that freedom to succeed at home that comes into the classroom and shows in the subject and their levels.

Parental Engagement

We've found that lots of parents absolutely love Mathletics. They've signed up to the parent registration whereby they get a weekly email about their child's strengths and weaknesses, what they've done that week and how much they've used it. If a child is struggling with their maths at home and parents don't know how to solve the problem, they can use the help button so they can learn from that themselves and talk through it with their child. I've got one child in my year 6 class who sits down with his parents and regularly uses Mathletics. He's almost finished the year 7 curriculum course and I'll soon be putting him on the year 8 course which is great because he's getting one to one tuition with the help of Mathletics.



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