

St John Southworth RC Primary School, Nelson

Background

This is an average-sized primary school, with around a third of the pupils from White British and another third from Pakistani backgrounds. A high proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language, and the number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, although there is an above-average proportion with a statement of special educational needs. The school has recently gained a number of awards including Healthy School status and the Racial Equality Mark.

How the school uses 'I can do maths'

We use the Schofield & Sims **Mental Arithmetic** workbooks every day in our school, as part of the **I can do maths** teaching method, for all our pupils in years 3 to 6. The pupils work individually in their classrooms for 10 minutes each morning during registration time. Each pupil works on a book that is matched to his or her level of ability. On a Friday morning, all the pupils who are on the same book get together to look at some of the mathematical concepts they have worked on during the week. This is an intensive 50-minute session. We mark the books on the Thursday, so that the teacher can plan the Friday session to reflect any learning that is required. Issues focused on will include misconceptions, new areas of learning for younger pupils, and choosing the best strategies for answering particular questions.

The pupils are becoming much more adept at using mental maths strategies rather than written calculations. Mathematical vocabulary is now retained as it is revisited on a regular basis. For the lower-ability children, there are still issues around the amount of reading in Part C, although the higher-ability children enjoy the challenge of this section, where they must choose the correct mathematical operation.

Comments from Ofsted

In 2011 Ofsted commented that 'the school's Year 6 results have met or exceeded government floor targets in each of the last three years', specifying that 'some weaker areas, such as performance in mathematics, are now considerably stronger'.

Ofsted also singled out for praise the fact that 'teachers make good use of the school's accurate assessment systems to plan tasks that meet the needs of different groups of pupils'.

School details

- Pupils:** 209
- % of EAL pupils:** 58.1
- % of SEN pupils:** 5.7
- % free school meals:** 16.7

Testimonials

*We began to use **I can do maths** following an Ofsted inspection in 2008, which found that our children were not as proficient as they should have been in mental calculations. We immediately began to see the benefits and have continued with it for the last four years.*

Margaret Borman
Headteacher

Key Stage 2 maths SATs results

