



AN EEF SCHOOL CASE STUDY: ADDRESSING ASSESSMENT IN MATHEMATICS

Hayfield Lane Primary School, Doncaster



School context:



Hayfield Lane Primary School serves around 375 pupils in the Yorkshire town of Doncaster. The proportion of pupils eligible for the Pupil Premium is slightly below the national average.

1 What problem were you looking to solve?



A new scheme of learning, focused on spending longer on topics in order to embed understanding, was recently introduced. The maths lead noticed through careful analysis of assessment outcomes that fluency was a particular issue, especially for disadvantaged pupils, and that while every attempt was made to link topics to previous learning some pupils were 'forgetting' key content. Drawing on evidence from cognitive science, as well as a need for assessment to feed into lessons more effectively, the school decided to try a form of retrieval practice with one focus year group initially with a view to scaling up if successfully implemented.

2 What were the anticipated barriers/challenges?



There was initially some discussion about whether the time given to retrieval would be beneficial given that some teachers already reported challenges in covering the curriculum. For this reason, a trial with one class was proposed and agreed. 'Bought in' review resources did not allow the flexibility to be reactive to children's needs, so an approach combining agreed key topics and questions reacting to the class need was decided upon – this had an impact on planning time and considerations for scale-up moving forward. Staff training was not an issue during the trial phase, but it was recognised this would need to be factored in should the approach be scaled up.

3 What did you do?



A portion of lesson time is given over to 'maths daily review' in which pupils complete questions linked to learning from last lesson, last week, and further back. These are written by teachers to ensure a focus on identified key topics and issues identified through diagnostic assessment.

This review is completed at the start of each lesson with any areas of concern being reviewed by the teacher and followed up in subsequent daily review sessions.

4 How do you monitor/evaluate that the intervention is working?



Initial assessment data, combined with 'book looks' and discussions with teachers and children, suggest that this approach is proving effective in addressing the issue of fluency.

The use of bought-in standardised assessments, to be next used when all children return to school following partial closures, will determine whether the approach will be scaled up to a whole-school strategy. Should this be the case, additional staff training and preparation time will be prioritised.

Additional:

- Improving mathematics in key stages 2 and 3 guidance report eef.li/maths-ks2-ks3/

- EEF Blog: 'Assessing learning in the new academic year (Part 1 of 2) – three key questions for school leaders to consider': Prof. Rob Coe, looks at the different purposes of assessment to help teachers and school leaders think through what you want to put in place for the autumn. <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/eef-blog-assessing-learning-in-the-new-academic-year-part-1/>

- EEF guide to supporting school planning: A tiered approach to 2021 eef.li/school-planning/



Reflection questions



- How effective is your mathematics assessment in providing teachers with information about what pupils do and do not know?
- Does your assessment include an appropriate balance of written tests alongside discussion, observation, and low-stakes quizzes?