

Maths Champions Case Study

The Elms and The Oaks, Birmingham

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Introduction

I have never been scared of maths but it wasn't my favourite subject. The Maths Champions project has helped me to make sure my maths is as good as it can be and the BKSB tool enabled me to do this and support my teams to do the same.

Highlights and lowlights of the project

The team have had mixed responses to the Maths Champion project. When we started all staff completed the BKSB assessment as required but some have looked at their own maths skills using BKSB tools much more than others. A few of the team have taken their own mathematical learning and development further using this tool and found this useful.

Some of the team, however, struggled with the BKSB assessment and found that part of the project very daunting due to their past experiences of maths at school or the length of time since they last did a formal maths test. I supported these team members through this section, but they have decided that they are not ready to take their own mathematical learning further at this stage, although they are benefitting from the modules provided by the Maths Champion project in how they support children's mathematical development.

Impact of the project

This project has given our setting a heightened focus on maths. It has enabled me to support my teams with their knowledge and understanding in this area of learning, their overall planning and the support and environment they provide for their children. All of this has improved the opportunities we are able to provide for our children across the nurseries.

The team

The biggest impact has been the increased emphasis on maths in all rooms with all team members (not just those who took part in the project). The team are much more aware of the maths already happening in the setting with the children and are picking up on this more through their observations and assessments. This has meant there has been a marked increase in children's progress in maths already. It has also enabled us to plan more effectively for maths in each of the rooms both through extending what the children are already doing and also planning for further activities.

All staff appear to be more confident when supporting children's maths through play. The staff have also created more mathematical themed displays than before which has enabled maths to be a focal point in the different rooms with the children.

Parent partnerships

We have reflected on how we support parents to understand the importance of early maths opportunities at home and as such we have created parent's packs to support this area of learning with simple games and tasks that they are able to do at home.

Parents are now able to see how we support maths through play and that maths in early years is not formalised like in schools and can be included in games and everyday activities.

The environment

As a result of the Maths Champion audit tool we identified that all of the rooms required additional resources to support this area. Funding by our management team was provided to support this.

The resources we need have now been identified and ordered which will enable many more mathematical opportunities to be present for all children in the settings. We have also asked parents to bring in unwanted resources that we can use for maths activities, e.g. odd socks and more junk modelling equipment to support more maths in the setting. The parents have been fully supportive in this area so we are seeing the benefits already

Our baby room staff have identified that their room have very little maths resources and are looking for ideas and inspiration to support this in an age/stage appropriate way. They have already started to plan their next steps of action in this area.

Children's development and progress

Children are able to access many more opportunities for maths as the team are more confident about providing this and stretching the child's interests and stage to engage learning. This has impacted on the children's level of progress, and looking at children's individual and overall trackers it is clear to see their progress has improved in this area of learning.

Future plans after the project

We plan on continuing the good work the project has started and supporting our team members to continue to develop their own skills, whether this is their personal maths skills and knowledge through BKSB or their skills in supporting maths with the children through the online courses we received as part of the project.

We plan on revisiting the initial audits to evaluate how well we have progressed so far and give us focus on what we need to do next. The rooms all have different goals set and we will continue to monitor and support their progress against these.