



School reviews

"We have started to implement the new curriculum in years 3 and 4 since September and have found it very difficult to resource and often had to write activities from scratch. After doing my research, I found out that Collins were preparing to launch their new maths scheme, having previously been impressed and amazed by the quality of the schemes, I had high hopes. After speaking with Sharon (the rep) I quickly received some sample materials and was very impressed, yet again the resources were of high quality and supports children's understanding in an engaging way. The resources matched the national curriculum really well and have clear progression across units of work. The lessons have opportunities to be differentiated in 5 ways and the units are flexible and give teachers the opportunities to be creative. I am extremely impressed with the online planning tool and am really looking forward to implementing this scheme of work across years 3 and 4 and then into years 1 and 5 next year."

Charlotte Angeli, Senior Leader, Chigwell Primary School

"Just a quick note to let you know that Busy Ants is going very well so far at Hague! Teachers love the planning. It's flexible and well thought through. The online resources are really good and the children are enjoying their maths lessons."

Sue Walsh, Deputy Head, Hague Primary School

"Busy Ant maths has helped my class to think more for themselves when they are working on problem solving. They are more successful in completing their main activity and their extension work. For me the time it takes to plan for a week's learning is definitely less since using Busy Ant. The resources are adaptable and allow me to provide differentiated work, supporting my lower ability group and challenging my more able group. The children are now sometimes reluctant to finish the maths lesson as they are enjoying their learning so much! I have definitely seen an increase in independence and confidence with the children and because they are completing a lot of practical work and having to think a lot more for themselves the mathematical vocabulary they are using has increased. From the support activities to the stretch and challenge book I can always find something to meet the learning needs of my class in ability and confidence."

Louise Cain, Year 3 Teacher, Richmond Avenue Primary School

Interview with Laura Reynolds, Y3 Co-ordinator at South Farnham School

Why did you choose Busy Ant Maths as part of the new curriculum and not another resource?

We have used Collins resources previously and as a four form entry we need to ensure that the consistency goes across all four classes, and the Busy Ants scheme made sure that we could continue that consistency and it was in keeping with the new Programmes of Study for the New Curriculum. It's got the lovely levels of challenge, the differentiations, the support and extension, along with really detailed teacher notes, and areas for success and learning objectives. So it was really clear to implement across each class and across the whole school.

So Busy Ant Maths isn't just textbooks for the children, there's also the teacher's guide and an online resource?

Yes, we use the Teacher Guide to take our planning from, so we prepare our medium-term planning based on that. We work as year groups to take the resources, we look at the resources, and we sit and plan and think about how it's going to work within each of our classes. It does allow each class to be achieving the same objective and then what we think about as teachers is how we will deliver that planning. So it's really clear in the Teacher Guide, really clear and really well presented in the Pupil Books and then each class in our year group will adapt its teaching style depending on the cohort of that class.

So it does have flexibility to it, it's not just a prescribed lesson?

It does, it gives you very clear objectives and success criteria but the way that you deliver it using your kinaesthetic activity or perhaps a visual on the board can really be adapted for the children within your class. So if you've got a large majority of children who would really benefit from a hands-on "*let's use a big dice on the floor*" or "*take some counters out*" or "*have a little loop card activity*", then it allows for that.

So what happens if the children who need a bit more time with the resource are focusing on that, what do the other children do?

We have a very good adult to child ratio within our school, we're fortunate enough to have the members of staff to support children who might need a little extra support, and the Busy Ant support documentation can help with that and activities. We also then have the adults, if there was a group of children who needed a little bit more challenge, then they can go and work on the extension activities within the classroom, at a table, or in one of the many rooms that we have around the school.

So how have you found implementing the Busy Ant Maths guide into your planning, has it been a straightforward process or have there been challenges?

It has, it's been really straightforward. We've got a very extensive maths curriculum team who met on a regular basis throughout last year looking at how the changes are going to affect our planning and having decided that Busy Ants was going to be a really good step forward for us we were then able to sit together in year teams and take the planning, take the Teacher Guide, look at the Pupil Books, and put the planning in place so that when September came we were all ready to go.

What sort of impact or benefits have you seen with the children themselves?

The children really enjoy the books and the colours. The word "*challenge*", the fact that it is "*challenge 1, 2 and 3*", is really the vocabulary that extends their learning without us needing to continually prompt "*have you thought about what you could do next*", "*what might your next steps be*". Having it in the book itself takes them to want to become independent and want to challenge themselves. They've really enjoyed the learning activities and I think the children have seen it not just as an activity which can extend their learning but also consolidate whatever they've done previously to that activity.

And are you enjoying using the resource?

We are, it's lovely to have the opportunity to make sure that we're using the new Programmes of Study and including the level of challenge that comes along with it. The support material is fantastic for the children who need support and the challenge material, the extension material is great for challenging those children. There are times where we need to think about how it's working within our classroom but making sure the learning objective is still met. The children are loving it, they're loving the activities and following the scheme and books really well.

Can you think of an example of when the children have responded very well to the resource?

I think the learning activities and what we have experienced so far, bearing in mind we've only implemented it over the last four weeks, I think the learning activities the children are seeing a large impact from them from a consolidation and extension point of view, I think they can see the benefit of it. They are thoroughly enjoying it. Lots of them are game-based which is always going to encourage and excite the children. So I think that's been the biggest impact that we've seen from the new scheme that we are using.