

## **The South Yorkshire Maths Hub A case study from a Primary Specialist!**

### ***A school's journey from 'Requires Improvement' to 'Good' and beyond...***

Back in 2018, School A was a school categorised as 'Double Requires Improvement'. After a conversation between the then place-based Assistant Maths Hub Lead (AHML) and the school Headteacher, the school embarked on its journey with South Yorkshire Maths Hub as part of our Mastery Readiness 2018-19 Cohort.

The school attended all the mastery readiness sessions, engaged fully with the school visits and put a new maths lead in place to take the school forward. The school committed to putting professional development for all teaching staff at the heart of their CPD offer. The Mastery Readiness Lead (who was also the place-based AMHL for the area) supported the school to improve practice and put whole school structures, planning and policies in place.

In 2019, the school continued its journey as part of a Teaching for Mastery Development workgroup. The school were able to continue working with the same specialist and start to develop the implementation of the 5 big ideas in several classrooms. Planning processes and the use of S plans were now in place across the whole school and money was invested in carefully chosen, quality manipulatives. The school visits were used as opportunities to observe classroom practice alongside the maths lead, support the professional development of the leadership and to advise on next steps and targets for next time.

During the school visits, a notable improvement was observed in the quality of representations and manipulatives used to teach concepts with. Teachers were slowing down the curriculum to teach in more depth and for conceptual understanding. Most importantly, children were showing a greater engagement in maths lessons and were able to explain their thinking with the use of appropriate stem sentences.

Throughout this time, the local authority continued its monitoring visits and reported a significant change in practice, leadership and outcomes for pupils (as evidenced in visit notes from the NLEs) Ofsted inspected the school in November 2019, whilst the school were still working with their mastery specialist for South Yorkshire Maths Hub.

The school was judged as a **'Good'** school.

### **Here are some of Ofsted's comments...**

*"Leaders have high aspirations and ambitions for all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff have high expectations of what pupils can and should achieve. Pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics has improved since the last inspection."*

*"Teachers have good subject knowledge."*

*curriculum plans in every subject. These plans outline what pupils should learn and when. The plans are well developed in reading, writing and mathematics.”*

*“There is a well-considered curriculum for pupils’ personal development. There is a strong focus on supporting pupils to be resilient. An inspector saw pupils putting this into action in mathematics lessons. Pupils were confident to try more difficult problems and learn from their mistakes.”*

The school had achieved a good rating but didn't stop there. Having witnessed first-hand the differences their development work was making; the school continued its journey with the hub and engaged in Embedding during 2020-21 and Sustaining in 2021-22.

By this point, the school's maths lead had taken on the role of Assistant Head and passionately wanted to share his own experiences and expertise with others. He successfully applied for the role of Primary Mastery Specialist and trained as part of Cohort 7 during 2021-22, alongside continuing as a Sustaining school.

Now, during the current year (2022-23) he is leading his own Mastery Development workgroup of 6 schools and giving back to the local area and hub that supported himself and his own school on their journey. The school are also actively engaged in Sustaining Phase 2!

## **Reflection**

This school's case study and journey from 'Requires Improvement' to 'Good' has been an absolutely pleasure to be part of and a substantial measure of our impact over a number of years. Impact in the school has been significant and sustained, as evidenced through external moderation and pupil outcomes.

Both the hub and school feel the reasons for this success lie firmly with a committed leadership team, the new maths leader's determination and passion for maths, and the quality support, professional development and advice provided from the maths hub over the years.

Having a consistent maths specialist supporting the school, from the very early steps of Mastery Readiness to Sustaining Phase 2 has really made the journey seamless, with no loss of pace or purpose during the transition between phases.

## **Next steps and suggestions for the future**

This school has proved that with the right conditions, commitment and support a school can make rapid change happen. Change that transforms the teaching of maths and pupil outcomes and that is sustainable. As a maths hub, we need to take schools that are in similar positions and employ the strategies and support that have worked. We need to engage them on the Mastery Readiness programme and continue to work with them through to and beyond the sustaining phase. We need these phase transitions to be seamless and progressive.

Using the expertise of this school and its leadership to improve the practice of others is now key to our future developments. This is already happening with the deployment of the maths leader as a primary mastery specialist this year, in 2022, and for the foreseeable future.

*if you'd like to find out more about this school's experience, then please get in touch with us at [admin@symathshub.org.uk](mailto:admin@symathshub.org.uk)*