

Key Messages from Maths Moderation Spring 2019

Strengths

- Teacher feedback highlighted the benefits of having table leads. Discussions were more focused and challenging. Teachers felt more confident to question each other following the table leads input.
- More pupils now are provided with opportunities to reason and problem solve
- Pupils are generally very productive providing evidence for assessments
- Fewer teachers are reliant on test questions for teacher assessment
- Teachers fed back that they found it useful to discuss activities and assessments with other teachers from the same year group (particularly those in single form entry schools)
- Teachers commented that discussions with colleagues made them feel more confident in their assessments

Observations

- It is more worthwhile if teachers bring 'borderline' pupils to LA moderation sessions. These are the pupils that teachers are slightly unsure about and have led to interesting discussion in school. Schools who bring sound EXS or GDS pupils do not gain much from the external moderation experience as they often are not learning anything new from colleagues.
- Consider carefully what work needs to be moderated. It is not always helpful to bring 20-25 objectives worth of evidence that is quickly discussed within the time provided rather than fewer objectives deeply discussed and explored.
- How is reasoning and mathematical thinking captured? This can sometimes provide really strong evidence, more so than lists of calculations.
- How is evidence of **recalling** times tables captured?
- Ensure level of independence is clear
- How do you know knowledge is embedded? Assessing a pupil during a block of work that they are immersed in for a couple of weeks does not always show what knowledge is secure and embedded. Over time, this might provide a 'false' assessment
- Teachers need to plan ahead for assessment and consider what evidence may be needed to demonstrate, for example, greater depth. During discussions, many teachers commented that they thought pupils could have worked at a higher level but hadn't planned an appropriate assessment to judge this.
- Developing fluency, reasoning and problem solving are the three aims of the mathematics national curriculum. They are not hierarchical, for example, pupils do not need to start with fluency questions and then move onto reasoning and then problem solving. Using this approach can lead to some slower workers or lower attaining pupils only ever practising fluency. Pupils need reasoning and problem solving skills taught and modelled and this is rarely seen when this approach is taken. Pupils should use reasoning when developing fluency in arithmetic, they are not isolated skills. Moving rapid graspers quickly through this perceived hierarchy (moving quickly on to or starting at reasoning) leads to those pupils not fully developing fluency skills.
- More variation of skills needs to be evidenced showing how pupils can use what they know from earlier questions to solve later examples.
- More evidence needed for multi step problem solving. Pupils need support in understanding how to solve problems: how to comprehend what the problem is asking; devising a plan; selecting the correct maths to solve the problem ; solving the problem and understanding whether the solution is reasonable and reflecting on/ evaluating the strategy used.