

A flexible tool that has a positive impact on attainment



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| School name: | Cardiff Muslim Primary School | School type: | Independent primary |
| Region: | South Wales | Estyn rating (Welsh inspectorate): | Adequate |
| Area type: | City | EAL % | 75% |
| Number of pupils: | 124 | | |

Why Abacus? Cardiff Muslim primary school used the previous version of Abacus for several years. When Abacus launched in ActiveLearn Primary, **Amy Clements, Maths Co-ordinator**, 'test-ran' it with her year one class for a year. The school decided to continue using Abacus as their sole maths programme. Amy explains how they use Abacus at Cardiff Muslim primary, and why it works for them.

Key points to take away

- Abacus can be implemented in different ways to support your approach to maths teaching.
- Abacus sets high maths standards and ensures learning is consolidated.
- Abacus helps teachers keep all pupils engaged and motivated.

A flexible resource to support your school's approach

One of the benefits of using Abacus is that it's flexible and can be used in different ways. Until recently we were using Abacus in a very structured way, teaching each block and then doing the assessment. It was brilliant because, with the traffic-light system, we were able to clearly see if pupils' attainment was going up or down.

As a school, we are currently contemplating moving towards a more creative curriculum approach, with themes that will run across multiple subjects. As maths co-ordinator I'm trialling how we might use Abacus in a different way. So, we might see what skills we need to teach children in year one and then tap into the objectives and resources in that way. Or we may use Abacus as a skeleton, and broadly follow the plans, but then if, for example, 3D shapes is on the plan but doesn't fit into the current theme, we'll miss it out, but then perhaps pull it back in next half term when we're doing, say, an 'at the seaside' theme.

Abacus sets high standards and has an impact on attainment

I'm keen to continue with Abacus, because after the first year using the new version I saw that the children's assessment results had risen compared to the previous year. There's a range of things that could have impacted the results, but it did look positive for the new scheme – it was definitely something that I could take to the trustees and say, "Well, last year, they got this. This year, they got this. So something's working!"

“After the first year... I saw that the children's assessment results had risen.”

I love the way that Abacus repeats things every half term – it's a kind of circle of learning, reinforcing the skills and embedding the learning; there's so much to cover that



unless you keep revisiting previous skills, children can forget them. I feel that Abacus is a strong programme; it gives us a good standard to work with and ensures that we have enough to keep the children challenged.

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Abacus helps teachers to engage and motivate all pupils

Abacus provides a really good opportunity to boost children's confidence because you're easily able to target each child's needs – they are able to complete the same activity at their own level alongside all the other children in class, and then they feel happy that they've achieved something. The teachers also find the videos help them to keep all of their pupils engaged; for example, if there's a year three teacher with some low-attaining pupils, she can go into the key-stage-one area to improve her skills and find out what she can do to fill gaps. Or the reverse; a key-stage-one teacher looking to stretch their children can pop to the key-stage-two videos and have a little browse.

When we first implemented Abacus, we had a whole-school initiative where we were encouraging all children to log on to pupil world for homework. It's difficult to inspire all the children at the same time, when they have different access opportunities at home, but those who did use pupil world really loved the different rewards that they got – the sticker factory and the race world; they were all talking about those.

“Pupils loved the different rewards that they got... they were all talking about those.”

Your feedback matters!

If you've been using Abacus, we'd love to hear your feedback too, so we can keep making Abacus better and better – please tell us what you think by submitting feedback in ActiveLearn Primary.

Find out more

To contact your local Pearson Primary representative email primaryappointments@pearson.com or visit uk.pearson.com/primary-educators/making-an-impact.html to see more impact case studies.