

Boosting pupil and teacher confidence



School name:	Cheswardine Primary School	School type:	Primary School
Region:	Shropshire	Ofsted rating:	Requires improvement
Area type:	Rural	Pupil premium %:	12%
Number of pupils:	85	EAL %:	0%

Why Abacus? Cheswardine is a small school in Shropshire. When **Stuart King** started as **Head Teacher**, there was no planning framework in place for teaching maths. He decided to implement Abacus, and has seen a real impact in how maths is taught throughout the school.

Key points to take away

- Abacus **saves teachers' time** by providing comprehensive plans that they can adapt.
- Pupils now **approach problem solving with confidence and enthusiasm**.
- Abacus **helps with parental engagement**.

Background

When I took over as Head Teacher, there was no maths planning tool in use in the school and teachers were spending a huge amount of time preparing all of their own plans and resources. Therefore, maths featured strongly on our school improvement plan – I was keen to raise its profile across the school. To give teachers a backbone to work from, we implemented Abacus as our main maths programme. Now teachers don't have to start from scratch, and we feel confident that we are teaching everything we need to within the new curriculum – we don't have to keep checking.

“We feel confident that we are teaching everything we need to within the new curriculum.”

Abacus provides teachers with a starting point, which saves time. Our teachers can just go to Abacus, look at the plans and choose which engaging content to use. The plans are fully editable, so teachers can make the tweaks they need to ensure lessons are targeted to their classes.

So if you're looking for a programme that's got lots of resources, that helps with planning and saves teachers' time, use Abacus.

Abacus also helps boost teacher confidence. If you have teachers who don't feel confident teaching maths, Abacus can help. If your teachers are already good maths teachers, like ours, I think Abacus further enhances their confidence and gives them new ideas to use in the classroom!

Problem solving is integrated throughout Abacus

Abacus helps us develop pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills. There are activities for the whiteboard and extra resources to reinforce concepts and help assess children's understanding. The textbooks also have problem-solving activities on each page, and we use these a lot. For us, this means that we don't have to think: "Right, we need to do a problem-solving lesson today"; we know it's already included in every lesson.

“Children now approach problem solving with confidence.”

Since we started using Abacus, I've noticed a difference in the older pupils, especially with pupils showing average attainment. Children now approach problem solving with confidence, and we are seeing improved outcomes.



Imagery with thanks to St Paul's C of E Primary School

Confident learners

I think confidence and enjoyment has a big impact on pupils' learning, because it means they will try without worrying they will get something wrong. Knowing this, we've been developing a "have-a-go" attitude alongside using Abacus. Before anything else, we take time to think: "Right, what is the best way forward here?"

If pupils are confident, they start to enjoy learning. Children need to want to learn to actually learn – if they know it's going to be fun, they'll take things on board. We therefore try to make learning maths fun, and the games and interactive activities in Abacus really support this approach.

Using Abacus to improve parental engagement

The pupils all like different things in Abacus, but most love the games, and they play some of them at home. We downloaded and printed the password bookmarks from *My Abacus*. Introducing Abacus at home can have a positive impact on parental engagement. For example, one of our Year 6 pupils' confidence has grown because her mum supports her with the games.

In cases where parents are worried that Abacus is all games or don't understand our approach, we send them the videos. Some of these show that there is much more to Abacus than games. Other videos explain the calculation methods used in Abacus and the rationale behind them.

A positive impact on all

Using Abacus has had a great impact on both teachers and pupils. It has given teachers a starting point and really enhanced their lessons. I've also seen the children's attitude to and confidence in maths improved significantly since we started using Abacus.

“In cases where parents are worried... or tell us they don't understand our approach, we send them the videos in Abacus.”

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 pearsonprimary.co.uk/impact to see more impact case studies.