Ark Curriculum+



Mathematics Mastery

Action Research Project: Mathematics Mastery Primary and the NW3 Maths Hub

Final Report | March 2026

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Foreword

The NW3 Maths Hub has long valued grouping schools by curriculum or programme alignment – it's common practice within our Hub. We chose to participate in this action research because it offered an opportunity to uncover and analyse what happens when we do this. Our Hub's work is rooted in collaborative professional development, and the alignment between the Mathematics Mastery Primary (MMP) programme and the Mastery Readiness pathway made this partnership a natural extension of our core principles. Both programmes share a commitment to teaching for mastery, equity, and high expectations for all pupils, and both prioritise the long-term development of teacher expertise.

At the outset, we anticipated that working with schools undertaking both programmes simultaneously would strengthen staff confidence, support consistent pedagogy, and create the conditions for sustained improvement in mathematics teaching. We also predicted that coordinated support from Ark Curriculum Plus (AC+) and the Maths Hub would reduce duplication, provide clarity of direction, and help schools build the cultural foundations needed for a positive approach to maths.

Across the participating schools, the impact was greater and more rapid than we had expected. Teachers grew in confidence, made more deliberate use of representations, and increasingly rooted their planning in clear lesson intent. Workload shifted towards higher value activity, and professional dialogue became more precise as schools gained a shared pedagogical language. Pupils, in turn, demonstrated stronger mathematical talk, greater independence, and increased engagement with challenge. When I visited the schools taking part, the cultural shift was visible: mathematics had quickly become more prominent, more talked about, and more joyful.

Evidence showed that the schools were able to form a supportive community where challenges were normalised, solutions were co-constructed, and successes were celebrated. We saw the regular joint meetings, learning walks, and co-delivered CPD between our Hub team and AC+ create coherence and build collective ownership of improvement.

The observable shift in confidence, resilience and mathematical thinking within just 18 months suggests that this combined approach offers a powerful model for schools beginning or strengthening their mastery journey.

The project has certainly highlighted the effectiveness of **aligned structures** (both programmes and the support) and a **shared purpose** (teaching for mastery).

Ultimately, when curriculum, expert support, CPD and collaborative networks work together, schools' shifts in practice are accelerated.



Lisa Bradshaw
Senior Lead
NW3 Maths Hub

About Ark Curriculum Plus

Ark Curriculum Plus (AC+) provides subject excellence programmes that contain everything schools need to transform subject outcomes, grounded in a high-quality curriculum and integrated assessments. Over 300,000 pupils at hundreds of schools across England benefit from the AC+ programmes, which are designed to narrow the attainment gap.

Mathematics Mastery Primary (MMP) provides a carefully sequenced Reception to Year 6 curriculum, with integrated assessment, practical, subject-specific CPD, and dedicated support from an expert. The programme is evidence-informed and was developed and tested in Ark schools. It provides a pragmatic solution for every school to be able to implement a true mastery approach with confidence and consistency across classrooms.

This approach to building a school's capacity to teach for mastery in primary maths has been shown to have a positive impact on pupil outcomes:

- Research by the Education Endowment Foundation found that, on average, pupils made two months' additional progress after one year on the programme – read the EEF report.
- AC+ conducted analysis supported by the Fischer Family Trust, which reported in July 2025 that pupils in schools using MMP for four years or more are making, on average, an additional 3 months' progress, rising to 7 months' progress for disadvantaged pupils, compared to pupils in non-participating, similar schools.

Ark Curriculum+



About NW3 Maths Hub

The **NW3 Maths Hub**, part of the national Maths Hubs network coordinated by the **NCETM** (National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics), works with schools to improve maths teaching through collaborative professional development. One of its key initiatives is the fully funded Mastery Readiness Programme, designed for schools facing barriers to teaching for mastery. Its structured, year-long support prepares schools for sustained improvement.

Participating schools join small work groups led by expert facilitators, attend termly workshops, and receive bespoke support focused on five foundations:

- vision
- mathematical mindsets
- subject expertise
- systems
- arithmetic proficiency.

This prepares schools to progress confidently into full teaching for mastery development work groups, ensuring lasting improvement in maths teaching and learning.

The Maths Hubs have a wide reach with more than 50% of all state-funded schools in England taking part. Since their establishment in 2014 over 4.7 million pupils have been impacted by the programme. The networking, collaboration and CPD provided by Maths Hubs was cited multiple times as having a positive effect on improvements in maths teaching in the DfE's 2023 publication 'Coordinating mathematical success: the mathematics subject report'.

MATHSHUBS
NORTH WEST THREE



About the Research

Both programmes – Mathematics Mastery Primary (MMP) and Mastery Readiness (MR) – have been shown through independent research to have a positive impact on teaching and pupil outcomes. The working hypothesis was that by doing both together, the benefits for schools could be accelerated, better supported or, for want of a better word, supercharged. This research set out to capture authentic implementation experiences, identify what helped or hindered progress, and reveal practical lessons that other schools could use when combining a curriculum programme with a Maths Hub pathway.

Five schools in the Liverpool City Region participated in the research – they joined MMP at the same time as taking part in the NW3 Maths Hub MR work group. The aim was to understand whether adopting a structured curriculum programme alongside a collaborative mastery network would strengthen teacher practice and confidence and generate early signs of improvement in pupils' engagement with mathematical ideas.

This report presents the findings from an 18-month qualitative action research project conducted from January 2024 to July 2025. Evidence and data was gathered from regular interviews with Maths Leads, in which they shared their experiences, observations and reflections. Available SATs data is included in this final report (see Appendix 2) as contextual information only. Implementation was phased and voluntary, reflecting local context and capacity.



Executive Summary

This action research explored the simultaneous implementation of Mathematics Mastery Primary (MMP), from Ark Curriculum Plus (AC+), and the NW3 Maths Hub Mastery Readiness (MR) work group across five schools in the Liverpool City Region. The combined approach experience was positive – the schools found it beneficial to run the two programmes concurrently as they were complementary. The programmes were aligned in pedagogy and values, with a shared focus on teaching for mastery, structured talk, careful use of representations, and equity of access for all pupils. Coordinated support reduced duplication and strengthened coherence, especially as the Maths Leads became part of a local community working very closely together.

Key findings

- **Alignment and complementarity:** The two programmes worked in tandem and were experienced as mutually reinforcing. Alignment reduced mixed messages and helped establish a common language for teaching for mastery.
- **Teacher practice:** Early changes were clearest in the teaching practice. Teachers reported spending more time planning how to teach concepts, using Unit Narratives to shape lesson intent, and making more deliberate choices about representations and manipulatives. Short, targeted CPD supported confidence.
- **Workload trajectory:** Workload rose during onboarding and platform familiarisation, which is typical when implementing any new programme or making a significant change in practice. However, teachers' time soon shifted towards higher value planning and short, regular co-planning cycles.
- **Pupil impact:** Within months, pupils demonstrated stronger mathematical talk, increased confidence, and wider engagement with challenge, particularly where Talk Tasks and planned representations were used consistently.
- **Consistency and fidelity:** Sequencing and pedagogy became more consistent over time, although programme fidelity varied by context and capacity. Where Unit Narratives and pre and post unit assessments were used as intended, pitch and targeted support were more accurate.

Because adoption was phased by year group and assessment systems varied, comparable attainment evidence was limited. The study does not establish causal impact on SATs.

Implications for practice

The research revealed some strategies that the Maths Leads employed that could be applied to support other schools joining both programmes.

Schools implementing both the MMP programme and a Maths Hub pathway should aim to:

- Maintain the integrity of the MMP curriculum and teaching approach.
- Use MMP's curriculum guidance to direct planning and support lesson delivery.
- Encourage teachers to access MMP's short, on-demand CPD to enhance subject knowledge and maintain curriculum clarity.
- Use MMP's integrated assessments to guide lesson pitch and provide targeted support where needed.
- Supplement with resources and tools from the Maths Hub.
- Draw on the expertise and contextual experience within their community, comprising the Maths Hub, the AC+ team and peers from local schools to boost their confidence.
- Use the coordinated input from AC+ and the Maths Hub to sustain coherence and avoid duplication of efforts.
- Start small and accelerate early impact by showcasing and expanding on quick wins.

Together, these strategies create a connected, high-quality learning experience that supports both teachers and pupils. Schools in a MR work group are typically new to the teaching for mastery approach. The resources and support in MMP are helpful to schools at the *start* of their mastery journey (where the need is particularly acute), as well as those looking to continue successfully embedding a mastery approach.



Introduction

Purpose of the Action Research

This Action Research project explores the impact of simultaneous participation in the MMP programme from AC+ and the MR work group facilitated by the NW3 Maths Hub. It aimed to understand how these initiatives influenced teaching practice and pupil outcomes across the five schools taking part.

The Research Question

The central research question was: **What is the impact of all schools participating in a Mastery Readiness work group joining the Mathematics Mastery Primary partnership together?**

The research aimed to provide a detailed exploration of whether concurrent participation in a Maths Hub MR work group and Mathematics Mastery was beneficial to teachers and pupils. It also sought to consider the impact of the schools going on this journey to mastery together, and whether it was straightforward to implement both programmes simultaneously or whether it added disproportionate complexity.

When schools join MMP they become part of a thriving community – it was expected that also being in the Maths Hub work group would add to this substantially by creating a local community working closely with more face-to-face time together.

The research was exploring the reciprocal relationship between being in a MR work group while partnering with MMP, understanding how together they could accelerate and enhance the development of a teaching for mastery approach.

Throughout the research particular attention was paid to the following themes:

- subject confidence (primarily for teachers but also for pupils)
- teacher workload
- pupil outcomes
- impact of joint Maths Hub and AC+ support provision.

Cohort and context

Five schools in the Liverpool City Region participated: four mainstream primaries and one special secondary school, teaching mathematics at primary level. Contexts varied by governance, Ofsted ratings and pupil demographics. Detailed school profiles are provided in Appendix 1.

Although the MMP programme spans Reception to Year 6, schools typically phased adoption. Patterns varied: some introduced one year group at a time and kept Year 6 until last; others started Year 6 after SATs to reduce pressure; several began with a small set of year groups and expanded the following term. The pace was shaped by context. For example, an Ofsted inspection temporarily shifted priorities in one school, while another began with the most engaged staff to build confidence and demonstrate that 'it's doable and it works'.



Methodology

This study used a qualitative, collaborative action research approach over eighteen months (January 2024 to July 2025). At the start, Maths Leads shared their priorities, revealing different visions of success, which shaped their implementation of both programmes.

Data came from regular interviews with Maths Leads, in which they shared their experiences and classroom observations, observations by Maths Hub leaders and AC+ support staff, and school-level reflections, and informal feedback on pupil progress. Responses to project feedback forms were also collected. SATs data was reviewed as background rather than a measure of impact.

Participation was voluntary and based on informed consent. The focus was on depth of understanding and practical insights, not statistical generalisation, so schools could adapt implementation strategies for the programmes in real time to meet the needs of their context.

As part of this research project, it was important that the Maths Hub and AC+ support teams worked together to help the schools achieve the most from both programmes. Combined activities also meant that schools could maximise the time appropriately and minimise wider impact on teaching cover etc.

Timeline of implementation, training and support activities

<table>
<tr><th>Jan 2024</th><th>Spring 2024</th><th>Summer 2024</th><th>Autumn 2024</th><th>Spring 2025</th><th>Summer 2025</th></tr>
<tr><td>Join both programmes
Joint induction training</td><td>One-to-one support from AC+ starts
Maths Hub meetings start
Interviews</td><td>Interviews</td><td>Interviews</td><td>Interviews</td><td>Final feedback</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td colspan="4">Ongoing Activities</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td colspan="4">AC+
• Access to on-demand CPD
• Live, termly CPD sessions</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td colspan="4">Maths Hub
• Half-termly Work Group meetings
• Regular visits to a local school that has been delivering Mathematics Mastery for 10 years</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td colspan="4">AC+ and Maths Hub
• Joint learning walks
• Training sessions covering both programmes
• Tailored CPD sessions jointly delivered
• Regular communication between them to coordinate support for the schools</td></tr>
</table>

Findings and Analysis

The following findings capture authentic implementation experiences rather than statistical generalisations. Each finding highlights what changed, what supported progress, and practical lessons for schools considering a combined approach.

Finding 1. Teacher practice improved and confidence increased

Across all five schools, the strongest early changes were in teacher practice. Teachers spent less time producing materials and more time planning how to teach concepts; they made more deliberate choices about representations and manipulatives and reported increased confidence after accessing the MMP Unit Narratives and short, on-demand CPD videos along with resources provided by the Maths Hub. Confidence and precision were further strengthened where AC+ and Maths Hub support was coordinated (e.g., co-delivered training, coaching, and seeing practice in action), and where teachers could troubleshoot quickly within this peer community of fellow Maths Leads.

In their own words

"I'm spending less time making resources and more time thinking about how to teach the concept well."
– Joelle Harter, Blueberry Park Primary

"The Mathematics Mastery CPD videos are brilliant. I didn't know you could use Cuisenaire rods like that."
– Jennifer White, Christ The King Catholic Primary

"I've been able to home in on areas of development in school and use resources from Maths Hub and from Mathematics Mastery. Subject knowledge has definitely improved. I feel like everyone's confidence has improved as well."
– Dan Foster, St Gregory's Catholic Primary

Implications for practice

- Anchor planning activities in curriculum guidance (e.g. Unit Narratives, CPD videos).
- Encourage low-stakes trials of specific models/manipulatives.
- Share quick wins in staff meetings or planning pairs.
- Arrange for planning and training to be coordinated between the two providers (AC+ and Maths Hub).

Finding 2. Initial workload rose, then shifted to higher value activities

Onboarding produced a short-term (and expected) workload spike linked to platform familiarisation and the introduction of new routines. By the end of the first term, effort shifted towards assessment-informed planning, light, purposeful adaptation, and short co-planning cycles. Maths Leads did not feel that being in both programmes at once was "too much" when support was coordinated and when schools started small (i.e. with phased rollout or focused routines).

In their own words

"I was nervous about doing both at once, but they actually complement each other more than I expected. It's not more work, it's better work."
– Courtney Hughes, Alt Bridge School

"It has increased teacher workload, but that's always to be expected because you're moving to something completely new. Having high-quality resources ready to go means I can spend more time thinking about how to teach the concept well."
– Jennifer White, Christ The King Catholic Primary

"It does increase the workload. But for me it's gains because that's what should be happening anyway."
– Lynsey Allison, Our Lady of Walsingham Primary

Implications for practice

- Plan onboarding time and the introduction of new routines.
- Showcase early positive impact.
- Keep co-planning short and regular, and focus it on lesson intent, key representations, and anticipated misconceptions.
- Start small (e.g., year group pilots or introducing new, core routines) to manage workload while still realising early gains.

Finding 3. Pupils demonstrate stronger talk, confidence, and access to challenge

Within months, Maths Leads reported pupils explaining reasoning more clearly, using stem sentences, choosing manipulatives independently, and engaging with more challenging tasks. These changes in behaviour set the foundation for pupil success. They were strongest where Talk Tasks and Unit Narratives were used consistently and where integrated assessments guided pitch and targeted support. Initially apprehensive staff observed that pupils rose to the level of ambition in the curriculum.

Through implementing the two programmes – both with a focus on the use of mathematical language – one of the most likely gains is the acceleration of teachers effectively using talk and dialogue in maths lessons. What was striking in this investigation was the rapid and lasting change observed. Teachers built skills and confidence in using that pedagogy and as a result, pupils' behaviours were impacted swiftly.

In their own words

"Pupils are using stem sentences and talking about their thinking. It's a big shift. Their attainment is much stronger than previously."
– Jennifer White, Christ The King Catholic Primary

"Pupils in Reception have accelerated. The manipulatives and language scaffolds are helping our SEND children access the learning more independently."
– Lynsey Allison, Our Lady of Walsingham Primary

"Children are a lot more positive about the subject and they're able to discuss some of the keywords. Their spoken language and their mathematical language has greatly improved."
– Dan Foster, St Gregory's Catholic Primary

"Our pupils are enjoying maths more. They're not afraid of it anymore."
– Courtney Hughes, Alt Bridge School

"I love the pre- and post-tasks. It enables the class teacher to exactly pinpoint where the lesson needs to be pitched or highlights the lack of learning."
– Lynsey Allison, Our Lady of Walsingham Primary

Implications for practice

- Monitor where progress is being made.
- Focus CPD on the Talk Task element of MMP lessons and combine it with Maths Hub insights on the positive development of mathematical communication.
- Share improvements in practice internally e.g. by open classrooms to be observed or appointing a year group champion and getting them to share practice.
- Plan for how the early gains can be built on i.e. select key changes in practice that can be replicated when rolling out to further year groups.

Finding 4. Curriculum consistency improved and targeted support helped build teacher confidence

Over the course of the research, more teachers adopted the MMP curriculum with greater confidence. Through training, on-demand CPD, and support from AC+ and the Maths Hub, teachers' approaches to pedagogy became more consistent. By the end of the research project, teachers were much more confident to adapt the programme to the needs of their pupils.

At the start of the project there were examples of both over-adaptation (retrofitting to preferred methods, reordering units, lowering pitch) and under-adaptation (treating the programme as "plug and play") that weakened the initial fidelity of curriculum implementation. However, the Maths Leads observed that trust in the curriculum sequencing, lesson structure and pitch increased over time, enabling more pupils to access challenge.

Tracking fidelity

Fidelity to MMP in its entirety varied. Engagement Indicators were scored termly for each school and served as a proxy for implementation strength by capturing:

- induction training completion
- Maths Lead attendance at termly leadership training
- MMP school touchpoints (school visits or remote development sessions)
- learning walks
- regular co-planning sessions
- curriculum implementation.

Average Engagement Indicator scores showed moderate-to-high fidelity overall. This is broadly in line with what is seen for other schools joining the MMP programme, suggesting that being in the MR work group was not a barrier to implementing MMP with fidelity, and vice versa.

In their own words

"It's given us a spine so as a teacher you know what you're doing. It's becoming more uniform."
– Sarah Ferns, Blueberry Park Primary

"For teachers, they have the learning objectives, they can see where the lesson is aiming, with clear learning steps. The structure is helping us build confidence and consistency."
– Lynsey Allison, Our Lady of Walsingham Primary

"We appreciate the fact that everything's there and you've got so much access to a lot of things, especially with the assessments."
– Courtney Hughes, Alt Bridge School

"Initially, a lot of people were quite negative about bits of the programme. Then Raaj from AC+ came in, gathered staff feedback and did bespoke planning sessions. That was really helpful."
– Jennifer White, Christ The King Catholic Primary

Implications for practice

- Ensure awareness of the implementation requirements before launch.
- Work with Mathematics Mastery subject experts to plan which components of each programme to roll out and when.
- Identify which components will have the highest impact for the setting and prioritise implementing these with fidelity.
- Address any questions that teachers may have about the scope, design and ambition of the curriculum and the mastery approach.
- Use assessments effectively, i.e. employ pre and post unit tasks to guide pitch, identify gaps, and direct targeted support.

Finding 5. Alignment and community helped sustain change

Maths Leads described the combined approach between the MMP and MR programmes as **aligned and mutually supportive**. Both programmes share a strong commitment to teaching for mastery, focusing on talk, depth of understanding, and equity of access to mathematical success for all pupils.

By joining both at the same time the Maths Leads became part of a mini community which facilitated sharing, support and encouragement.

Alignment in practice

- **Shared values and pedagogy:** Both programmes promote structured talk, careful use of representations, and reasoning across lessons. This reduced mixed messages for staff and helped create a common language for teaching for mastery.
- **Complementary roles:** MMP provided a sequenced Reception to Year 6 curriculum, practical resources, assessments, and on-demand professional development, giving teachers clear starting points and shared reference materials. The Maths Hub Work Group offered peer collaboration, specialist insights, and opportunities to observe mastery in action, which made implementation feel collaborative rather than isolated.
- **Coordinated support:** AC+ and Maths Hub specialists communicated regularly with each other throughout the project. They coordinated visits, ran joint sessions, and undertook learning walks together. This avoided duplication of effort, reduced time demands on schools, and reinforced consistent messages.

Community as a driver

Joining both programmes at the same time amplified the professional community they would have become part of by joining either MMP or the MR work group alone. The impact of this local community was strengthened by the schools using the same curriculum, at the same point in their journey, and by being geographically close enough for more regular face-to-face meetings. Maths Leads used this network to share strategies, normalise challenges, and build confidence to persist with the move to a teaching for mastery approach. The sense of “we are doing this together” helped sustain momentum and reduced the risk of reverting to previous practices.

In their own words

"The pedagogy approaches in both programmes are aligned."
– Lynsey Allison, Our Lady of Walsingham Primary

"Everyone's on the same page. The values are aligned, so it works hand in hand."
– Joelle Harter, Blueberry Park Primary

"The end goal is the same. Viewing them not as separate entities but intertwined. The Mathematics Mastery programme is just a way of getting you there."
– Jennifer White, Christ The King Catholic Primary

"It's good to see other schools' ways of using it and how we can use it as well. We've all come on this Mathematics Mastery journey together, a little maths community, which is brilliant."
– Courtney Hughes, Alt Bridge School

Implications for practice

- Leverage the sense of community as an active implementation tool, e.g. by applying practical peer advice in staff training sessions or arranging school visits within the work group.
- Use the peer network to exchange practical strategies, troubleshoot challenges, and build confidence when introducing or refining routines.
- Reinforce shared principles across both programmes to avoid mixed messages.



Summary

This action research suggests that participating in MMP alongside the MR work group is both feasible and complementary in real school conditions. The programmes are aligned in values and pedagogy, with a shared focus on teaching for mastery, structured talk, careful use of representations, and equity of access for all pupils. When implemented together, they provided a coherent framework for improving teacher practice and building a professional community that sustained change.

Early improvements were most evident in teacher practice:

- Teachers reported spending less time producing materials and more time planning how to teach concepts.
- MMP Unit Narratives were used effectively to shape lesson intent and deploy manipulatives and representations more deliberately.
- CPD in both programmes alongside the on-demand guidance resources in MMP supported targeted development and increased confidence.
- After an anticipated initial workload rise during MMP onboarding, time was shifted towards higher-value planning and co-planning that strengthened lesson coherence.

Positive behaviour changes were observed in pupils within months, especially when MMP Talk Tasks and Unit Narratives were used consistently. These included stronger mathematical talk, increased confidence, greater independence with manipulatives, and wider engagement with challenge. Teachers embedded coherent sequencing and representation routines, pupils experienced more structured opportunities to reason and communicate, and engagement rose. All these changes may lead to improved pupil outcomes over time.

Fidelity to the MMP programme varied by context, capacity, and confidence. Engagement Indicators suggest moderate to high implementation overall, with some schools showing particularly high engagement. The most common risks were over-adaptation and under-adaptation, both of which weakened coherence. Where the curriculum sequence, lesson structure, planned representations and assessments were used as intended, pitch and targeted support were more accurate. Coordinated support from AC+ and the Maths Hub, including joint visits and learning walks, helped leaders address resistance and keep lesson intent intact without duplicating effort.

Importantly, schools described the relationship between the two programmes as symbiotic. MMP provided the structured curriculum, assessments, and practical resources that enabled teachers to get started quickly with shared reference points. The Maths Hub created a local peer network that normalised challenges, shared strategies, and provided specialist insights and exemplification, which made implementation feel collaborative rather than isolated. This alignment strengthened coherence at a whole-school level.

Limitations

The study was qualitative, small scale, and context specific. Adoption was phased by year group and assessment systems varied, so comparable attainment data were limited and should be treated as contextual only. The design prioritised practical insights over statistical generalisation, and outcomes may reflect local leadership, motivation or concurrent school improvement activities. Future research could investigate similar impact with different working groups, a larger sample size or whether other interventions are similarly complementary.



Conclusion

Undertaking Mathematics Mastery Primary (MMP) alongside a Maths Hub Mastery Readiness work group is practical and mutually reinforcing. The combined approach strengthened teacher practice, supported more coherent sequencing and pedagogy, and produced early positive impacts, with improved pupil talk and confidence, and engagement with challenge. Fidelity varied, yet coordinated support mitigated common risks and helped protect programme and individual lesson intent. The local community created by joining both programmes at the same time played a central role in sustaining momentum.

Overall, the findings indicate that alignment, coherence, and community are key drivers for success. When schools protect the curriculum sequencing, use MMP Unit Narratives and planned representations, anchor planning in short CPD, and use integrated assessments to guide pitch and intervention, the quality of classroom practice improves. When Ark Curriculum Plus (AC+) and Maths Hub activity is coordinated, support is boosted rather than effort duplicated, and messages are consistent, which helps staff adopt new routines with confidence. This alignment strengthened coherence at a whole-school level.

As many of the Maths Leads themselves noted, this is a journey. In terms of implementing a wholesale change in curriculum and teaching practice across an entire primary school, 18 months is merely the beginning.

More importantly, in that short time there has already been an observable shift for the schools involved.

"Children can definitely think deeper and they enjoy maths. I think the buzz of maths around the schools that we visit that are doing both has been spectacular. The small steps in both programmes have helped the children to really build up resilience to maths and feel that there is nothing they can't get over. That real independence is growing within maths."

– Lisa Bradshaw, Senior Lead, NW3 Maths Hub

Recommendations for practice

- **Protect coherence and use planning to build consistency:** Co-ordinate training between the two providers (AC+ and Maths Hub) and anchor planning in curriculum guidance, with a focus on lesson intent, key representations, and anticipated misconceptions, to build consistency.
- **Use programme resources effectively:** Plan implementation (i.e. year by year roll out) and associated requirements before launch. Adopt the components of the programme that will have the highest impact for the setting, including using assessments to guide learning.
- **Start small to encourage staff buy-in:** Address any questions that teachers may have about the curriculum and the mastery approach up-front. Start small to manage the initial workload spike, for example with low-stakes trials of specific models or manipulatives, and showcase early positive impact to boost confidence in the approach.
- **Capitalise on the community and the programmes' alignment:** Use the peer network to exchange practical strategies and troubleshoot challenges and as an active implementation tool, e.g. by applying peer advice in staff training sessions. Focus CPD on Talk Tasks in MMP lessons and combine it with Maths Hub insights on the positive development of mathematical communication – reinforcing the shared principles across both programmes.
- **Accelerate impact from early success:** Monitor where progress is being made and share improvements in practice and pupil outcomes internally. Plan for how these early gains can be built on, especially when rolling out to further year groups.

Appendix 1. Participating Schools

Blueberry Park Primary School

Website

School Type: **LA maintained**
Local Authority: **Liverpool**
Age range: **3–11**
Number of Pupils: **361**
FSM: **50.7%**
EAL: **24.0%**
Most recent Ofsted rating: **Good**
Maths Lead: **Joelle Harter then Sarah Ferns**
Continued on MMP after the project: **Yes**

Christ The King Catholic Primary School

Website

School Type: **LA maintained**
Local Authority: **Liverpool**
Age range: **4–11**
Number of Pupils: **413**
FSM: **11.4%**
EAL: **3.0%**
Most recent Ofsted rating: **Good**
Maths Lead: **Jennifer White**
Continued on MMP after the project: **Yes**

Our Lady of Walsingham Primary School

Website

School Type: **Academy**
Local Authority: **Sefton**
Age range: **3–11**
Number of Pupils: **201**
FSM: **46.8%**
EAL: **14.0%**
Most recent Ofsted rating: **Requires improvement***
Maths Lead: **Lynsey Allison**
Continued on MMP after the project: **Yes**

St Gregory's Catholic Primary School

Website

School Type: **LA maintained**
Local Authority: **Liverpool**
Age range: **3–11**
Number of Pupils: **243**
FSM: **47.2%**
EAL: **3.0%**
Most recent Ofsted rating: **Good**
Maths Lead: **Dan Foster**
Continued on MMP after the project: **No**

Alt Bridge School

Website

School Type: **LA maintained**
Local Authority: **Knowsley**
Age range: **11–19**
Number of Pupils: **325**
FSM: **67.3%**
EAL: **0.0%**
Most recent Ofsted rating: **Good**
Maths Lead: **Courtney Hughes**
Continued on MMP after the project: **Yes**

Key

FSM = Free School Meals
(an equivalent measure of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding)

National FSM Percentage **25.7%**

EAL = Pupils with English as an additional language

National EAL Percentage **21.4%**

Source: https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-pupils-and-their-characteristics/2024-25

*Previous school record prior to academy conversion

Appendix 2. Key Stage 2 SAT results

SATs results are included to provide background insight on the schools. The data's relevance to our research is limited as most of the schools were not using MMP with Year 5 pupils in 2023-24 or Year 6 pupils in 2024-25.

School	**SATS 2023**		**SATS 2024**		**SATS 2025**	
	Expected Standard	*Greater Depth*	*Expected Standard*	*Greater Depth*	*Expected Standard*	*Greater Depth*
Blueberry Park Primary School	58%	6%	57%	10%	59%	24%
Our Lady of Walsingham Primary School	50%	4%	37%	11%	50%	9%
St Gregory's Catholic Primary School	73%	3%	62%	10%	70%	7%
Christ The King Catholic Primary School	83%	24%	87%	33%	83%	37%
Alt Bridge School	Special School with secondary age pupils so no SATs results					

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