



Newsletter 2

April 2009

Welcome to the second of termly newsletters for all those involved in *Every Child Counts* – schools, local authorities, funding partners and advisers.

Every Child Counts is now in the final term of the first year of its two year development phase. At the end of this term, the final cohort of children will complete their lessons and the 215 specialist Numbers Count teachers (who, across the school year 2008-9 will have taught over 2,500 individual children) will complete their training and become eligible for formal accreditation by Edge Hill University, which provides the national infrastructure of professional development and quality assurance for the programme.

Term 1 impact headlines

In the period September 2008 to January 2009, 802 children received the 1-1 specialist teacher 'Numbers Count' intervention that forms the core of *Every Child Counts*. 789 children completed the programme. Seven children left the school before completion, and six are still being taught.

The 789 children completing the programme were, on average, involved in the programme over a thirteen week period. Each received an average of 40 one to one lessons, or 20 hours of teaching. They moved from an initial average 'Number Age' of 5y8m on the Sandwell test of early numeracy to an average Number Age of 6y8m, making 12 months progress over three months of

teaching. They made an average gain of 14 standardised score points.

Children's confidence and attitudes towards mathematics were assessed through the use of a Numbers Count Attitude Survey on entry to and exit from the programme. In this survey, children are asked to use pictures of faces to rate their enjoyment of and ability at mathematics. The child's class teacher or a teaching assistant rates the child's attitude to and participation in whole-class mathematics sessions, and in group work in class. The child's parent rates the interest that the child shows in mathematics at home and the parent's own confidence in helping the child with mathematics. Attitudes to learning improved by 23% overall on this survey.

Sehaab's story



Sehaab began the Numbers Count programme last September at the age of 6y8m. She is learning English as an additional language, and has been identified by her school as having SEN. At

the beginning of Year 2, she had been placed in a lower set for mathematics and was working at National Curriculum level P8. Her Number Age was 4y8m, well behind her chronological age. When she was observed in class by the Numbers Count teacher, her independent skills and concentration were poor. Sehaab did not take an active part in lessons and lacked the confidence to 'have a go'.

From the start she enjoyed the Numbers Count sessions, and was soon able to talk when prompted about what she had done and to self-assess how well she had succeeded.

At the end of her programme, Sehaab had made a Number Age gain of 13 months, significantly narrowing the gap with her chronological age. Her class teacher observed that she was participating far more confidently in lessons and could apply her learning in real life contexts.

Maintaining the gains

The children involved in Numbers Count so far have made very good progress. What can we do to make sure that they maintain their gains through to the end of KS1 and beyond? This is a question that schools are beginning to look at, and these are some of the ideas they have come up with:

- ✚ Making sure that children go back into class into appropriately challenging work – not, for example, putting them back with a lower attaining group
- ✚ Flagging children on the school's tracking system, and tracking their progress half-termly
- ✚ Numbers Count teachers observing the children in class when members of their current cohort are absent
- ✚ Continuing to work with parents and carers on supporting the child's learning at home
- ✚ Arranging for the child to join a lunchtime maths club, playing maths games regularly with a number partner such as an older child or a volunteer.
- ✚ Having Numbers Count 'graduates' tutor Y1 children with their maths

- ✚ Providing further 'top-up' interventions if needed, using the Springboard and Wave 3 mathematics materials

Securing whole school impact

The Every Child Counts programme aims to ensure that the specialist skills of the Numbers Count teacher as an 'in house expert' can impact on teaching and learning across the school. At St Chrysostom's Primary School in Manchester, the head teacher sees the programme as a significant tool in the school's improvement plan. Following whole school staff meetings, Karen, the Numbers Count teacher, is already developing a coaching role, with all staff observing Numbers Count lessons using a structured observation focus designed to support application in their own class teaching. Using Ofsted criteria, the head teacher has assessed Karen's teaching as 'outstanding' and is determined to use this expertise to move satisfactory elements of class teaching to 'good' or better.

Average progress by the school's first cohort of children receiving Numbers Count showed a 14 month gain in number age and a 16 point gain in standardised score.

Next steps for Every Child Counts

In September 2009 the programme will enter the second year of development, drawing on the 'lessons learned' from the first year. In September, 21 local authority Teacher Leaders currently completing their first year of Masters-level training will each continue to support ten trained teachers and train a further 24 teachers in their own LA/consortium. Meanwhile, a 44 new teacher Leaders will begin their training year with Edge Hill University.

In 2009-10 Every Child Counts will also begin the process of populating its layers of intervention, drawing on the findings of the 2009 research review by Dr Ann Dowker into 'What Works for Children with mathematical difficulties' (DCSF publications, Ref 00086-2009BKT-EN).

www.everychildcountsuk.org