



Emmanuel's story



Emmanuel's family came to this country from Africa. He lives in the London borough of Southwark and attends a multi-ethnic primary school where over twenty languages are spoken.

At six, when in school Year 2, Emmanuel had some behaviour problems, consistently getting into trouble because of not listening to adults.

Playtimes were particularly difficult for him. He started his numeracy intervention programme in February 2008. At this time he was a long way behind his classmates in maths – he was assessed at National Curriculum level 1C, both by his teacher and on a standardised National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) test.

His *Every Child Counts* teacher, Doria, describes the progress he made over the course of a term's lessons.

'When coming to my room, Emmanuel would be quiet and have his head down, not looking at me. I would try to get a smile from him and get him to hold his head up, before we started a lesson. On one occasion I showed Emmanuel his face in a mirror, and straight away he changed his frown into a smile. This became a common feature when his demeanour was sad and it gave him huge enlightenment when the 'mirror' was mentioned.

Emmanuel gained a great deal of mathematical confidence from the programme. When initially assessed, he did not know the number combinations that make five, but over time became adept at understanding and remembering different ways of making numbers up to 20, and using that knowledge to complete both addition and subtraction calculations.

When he began his lessons, he didn't know the value of different coins. But he soon became a child who was willing to buy items from a play-shop to 20p and give simple change. Again, at the start he had very inconsistent skills when counting on in numbers other than ones. But through varied activities and opportunities such as music and movement, creative artwork, games, arrays and different questions, Emmanuel left the programme with a firm foundation of knowledge about counting in twos, fives and tens.

During the lessons Emmanuel would enjoy playing the games, listening and contributing appropriately and most of all showing great enthusiasm when he was being the 'Teacher', giving instructions or asking me questions.



Emmanuel also had good support from home, where his mum would ask how he was doing. When he took a game home, he could say who he had played it with and who had won. His homework was completed and returned on a regular basis.'

By the end of his intervention programme, Emmanuel was doing well in maths, both in his special lessons and in the classroom. He achieved a level 2C in his exit NfER test in April, and subsequently achieved a level 2A in this Year 2 SATs paper. Along with this came a marked improvement in his behaviour, with reports of 'incidents' much reduced. A short period of consistent one-to-one help had been enough to set him back on course as a successful mathematician – and also, just as important, as a successful learner.

