

'Children are born ready, able and eager to learn. They actively reach out to interact with other people and in the world around them.'

– Development Matters, 2012



At Holy Trinity C of E Primary Academy, we follow the NCETM Mastering Number programme to help children develop strong number sense and confidence in mathematics from an early age.

In KS1, children take part in short daily sessions designed to build fluency with number facts, counting and calculation strategies through practical activities, discussion and mathematical thinking.

In KS2, the programme continues to strengthen pupils' understanding of number, multiplication and division facts and mental calculation strategies to support confidence and success across the wider maths curriculum. Mastering Number helps children develop flexibility, accuracy and efficiency in maths while encouraging positive attitudes and enjoyment in learning.

Fluency through the Mastering Number Programme

We teach fluency lessons because secure number fluency underpins all successful mathematics learning. From Reception onwards, pupils take part in dedicated fluency sessions taught through the NCETM Mastering Number Programme. This ensures a clear, consistent and carefully sequenced approach to developing number sense from the earliest stages.

Fluency means pupils can work accurately and efficiently with number facts and methods, which allows them to focus on reasoning and problem-solving rather than struggling with basic calculations. When key facts and strategies are secure, pupils experience reduced cognitive load and can explain their thinking, make connections and apply learning to unfamiliar problems with confidence. This also supports positive attitudes to maths and builds resilience.

Without fluency, pupils often struggle with reasoning and problem-solving because too much of their thinking is taken up with recalling facts or carrying out simple procedures. Research around working memory shows that automaticity is essential for deeper understanding, which strongly aligns with the Teaching for Mastery approach and the National Curriculum.

Fluency lessons through Mastering Number develop both procedural fluency and conceptual understanding:

Pupils learn how to carry out calculations accurately and efficiently.

They also understand why the mathematics works, allowing them to apply their knowledge flexibly across different contexts.

Fluency sessions are not about rote learning. They involve discussion, representation and explanation so pupils can confidently use their understanding when reasoning and solving problems. The Teaching for Mastery and Oracy approaches used in daily maths lessons are consistently applied during fluency sessions.

The key number skills taught through Mastering Number are assessed at the end of every year. These assessments provide valuable information about what pupils have securely understood and where further support may be needed. Teachers use this information to identify gaps early and plan targeted interventions, ensuring pupils are supported to keep up and build strong foundations for future learning.

Check out some of the reasoning behind the programme below:

<https://www.ncetm.org.uk/teaching-for-mastery/mastery-explained/> - The reasoning behind why we chose this approach at Holy Trinity

<https://www.ncetm.org.uk/teaching-for-mastery/impact-stories/impact-stories-supporting-teaching-for-mastery/> - Impact stories

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QnElt_L92FA - Seeing the impact of Mastering Number



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