“Numicon has become part of what I do when teaching maths. It has become an integral part of the maths lessons because it works!”

Emma Gower  
Maths Co-ordinator,  
Chandlings Manor School, Oxon

SATs results from Infant & Junior School Cohorts

With Numicon 2013
0% 15% 33% 66% 83% 100%
Level 4+ Level 5+  

With Numicon 2012
0% 15% 33% 66% 83% 100%
Level 4+ Level 5+  

With Numicon 2011
0% 15% 33% 66% 83% 100%
Level 4+ Level 5+  

It all started with one question... ‘Why?’

“In the mid-1990s Dr Tony Wing and I voiced the question many other teachers were asking – why do so many children find maths hard when they succeed in other subjects? We looked at how we were teaching and realised that we had been underestimating the difficulties children have understanding abstract ideas without pictures to help them. So we set up a school-based Teacher Development Agency (TDA) research project, to see what impact structured images (Numicon Shapes and Cuisenaire rods) would have. We found that children made remarkable progress and teachers’ subject knowledge and maths pedagogy improved as they adopted the approach.”

Romey Tacon  
Former Head Teacher, a consultant and co-author of Numicon

Raising standards in maths at Bordesley Green Primary School

Bordesley Green Primary School in Birmingham has been highlighted by Ofsted for their good practice and high standards of mathematics attainment. Numicon is used by all year groups and all abilities, including more able children, for intervention and in investigations.

Here are some of the elements that the inspectors highlighted as good practice in their mathematics teaching.

“Bordesley Green Primary School has been highly successful in raising standards in mathematics. This improvement has been driven by:

• observing and listening to pupils and so developing a deep understanding of how they are thinking and their misconceptions.
• detailed records of progress, including how pupils use and apply mathematics
• well-planned interventions when misconceptions arise, led and often delivered at senior level, with monitoring over time to check pupils’ continuing success
• a consistent approach to developing skills in number
• a clear commitment by the whole school community to raise pupils’ attainment.”

From HMI Raising standards in primary mathematics: Bordesley Green Primary School, January 2013

Claire Calderbank  
Maths Subject Leader,  
Canon Evans Church of England Infant School, Bedworth

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