

15th January 2018

Dear Parents Carers

How we teach Maths at West Borough - Maths Mastery

Many of you will have had a brief introduction to Maths mastery last year before your child's class assembly. For those of you that couldn't attend, you may have heard the phrase **Maths Mastery** used by your child.

Over the years, methods of teaching and learning in mathematics change; the most current style of teaching is based on a **mastery approach** that was introduced with the new National Curriculum in 2014 and is based on a model used in Shanghai, China.

Despite the changes in approach, effective teaching will always include good questioning, progression in the curriculum and an understanding of your individual children. There may, however, be some changes in what your child's Maths Journey book looks like and some of the methods and strategies they use.

A **mastery approach** has an emphasis on children having **fluency** in essential skills such as number bonds and times tables; and a deep understanding of a mathematical concept before moving on to another topic.

The key features of the mastery approach are:

- ❖ The whole class works together on the same topic.

The emphasis is now on keeping the class together doing the same learning on a specific topic until each skill has been mastered:

- ❖ Speedy teacher intervention to prevent gaps

The teacher will have a **ping pong style** which means the teacher will talk for a short amount of time, then the children will do a short amount of learning, then this is repeated throughout the lesson. This allows the teacher to identify very quickly, a child who might not understand and the teacher can intervene immediately to give them the extra support they might need. The teacher will also be able to see whether a child needs any extra help/input later that day, so that they are ready to start again with the rest of their class the next day.

- ❖ Challenge is provided by going deeper, not accelerating to the next topic or year group

Some children may master a concept or skill quicker than others. When this happens, your child will be given activities that allow them to use their higher order thinking skills. This means they may be asked to explain their answers, demonstrate their understanding by using equipment or pictorial representations, or they may even be asked to explain what they need to do to another child or the class.

- ❖ Focused, rigorous and thorough teaching

Within mastery the idea is to focus on one small step at a time in a lesson, with an emphasis on the mathematical structures involved and the best way to represent these through models and images. Each small step is important as it builds towards deep understanding of a concept. Encourage your child to show you their methods rather than showing them yours.

- ❖ There will be more time on teaching topics.

The same topic is likely to have the same focus until the class has mastered the concept, skill or procedure being taught. This is particularly the case for number and calculations. The smaller steps of progress and the extra time is for practice and achieving depth of understanding, therefore making the learning effective and sustained.

If you would like to find out more about Maths mastery, please visit the [NCETM](#) website or do not hesitate to talk to your child's teacher or myself.

Yours Sincerely

Miss Holliday

Maths Leader
Training Mastery Specialist Teacher