

The Shared Learning Newsletter

Number 7

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Time flies, when parents and children learn to tell the time at Ackton Pastures Primary School!

Maths Year 2000

The need to develop children's numeracy skills is now a national priority. This is not a new idea; it has been emphasised in official reports for many decades. Recent research has shown that twenty per cent of adults currently have problems with numeracy. In order to raise awareness and improve maths skills for all, the DfEE is launching 'Maths Year 2000', which promotes a 'can-do' attitude towards maths and working with figures. This new initiative is designed to underpin the government's 'National Numeracy Strategy', which began with the introduction of the daily maths lesson in all primary schools in September.

As David Blunkett recently said: *'Maths forms a very important part of our daily lives; we are surrounded by figures all the time – from counting our change at the shops to working out the score on a computer game! Maths does matter and poor numeracy has been found to be more of a problem than poor literacy in staying in employment. During the year, we will be working with businesses, schools and other organisations to show how important maths is to everyday life and how it can be fun too!'*

Numeracy in Share

We believe that Share is already incorporating these objectives in both the KS1 and KS2 Sharebooks through the many enjoyable numeracy activities. These allow parents and children to work together at home, giving them greater confidence and independence in numeracy and at the same time helping them to develop a 'feel' for number work.

Games such as 'Add 10 miles' in Sharebook 3, using Number Squares and Number Lines, enable children to develop and practise mental and oral mathematical skills, while an activity such as 'Number facts' in Sharebook 1 is designed to encourage children to learn number bonds.

The Share shop in Plasfelin Infant School was fun to make and use!



Similarly, at KS2, the activity 'Gary the Greengrocer' in Junior Sharebook 3 enables children to practise mental mathematics. The activity is based on real-life situations and uses a modern approach to algebra. In Junior Sharebook 4, 'Lag the loft' is a practical activity involving the collection and use of data, the calculation of areas and volumes and the use of money.

Maths games developed

Billinge Chapel End Primary school in St Helens recently held a KS1 maths workshop in which Share parents developed and laminated maths games with the KS1 Tutor, Trish Nuttall. The parents then played these games both with their own children and with others, adapting and altering the rules to make them as simple as possible. These games are now also being used in the classroom.



Maths game developed by Share parents

With the present focus on numeracy, it's good to know that we have a scheme which fulfils the expectations and wishes of David Blunkett and the DfEE!

Have you discovered Share?

At Haddon Primary School in Nottingham, one Share mum, Kate Farnsworth, has elected to complete the Share study unit entitled 'Research skills' and is carrying out an investigation into 'Home and school working together', an area of education in which she is very interested. She is using the Share *Discovery* book to help her plan, carry out and present her evidence and findings. Kate will achieve two credits at Level 2 or 3, awarded by the Open College Network.



Share mums from Haddon Primary School.

Kate opted to do the Research Unit after completing all the Share accreditation units at Level 2, which she gained as a result of helping her child with reading, writing and maths. She also decided to study 'A' level Psychology at the local FE college at the same time and has found that the Share Research Unit can be used for one of her 'A' level modules.

As to her future career, Kate is not sure which direction to take; she may go into teacher training, or pursue a career in psychology, but as she says: *'Share gives you such a good start and a wide variety of possible paths to follow.'*

At the present time she is busy collecting her evidence and reading numerous source materials, before committing pen to paper and would like to thank Mrs Biscoe, the Headteacher, who has given her a lot of help and encouragement. We wish her luck in completing this unit!



Kate works on her research topic.



Sharing



A Share parent, Helen Orgill, from Southfields Infant School in Leicester, has recently become a Parent Governor. At one of the governors' meetings, she showed examples of Share work and gave the presentation illustrated above.

We have just heard

around the country

g with the governors!



Literacy and numeracy in Caerphilly

In Caerphilly, the Governor Support Unit organised a one-day convention for school governors which attracted 150 participants. The theme for the day was 'Literacy and numeracy' and presentations were made by the advisory service which outlined the work they are carrying out to improve teaching and learning in these areas. Priority was given to those programmes which encouraged parental participation in children's education. Consequently, Share was given a high profile and a large display of work, carried out last year in the pilot schools, was mounted. The success of Share is very evident – this year, twelve further primary schools and one comprehensive school are coming on board, at both KS1 and KS2. All the governors present at the convention were able to appreciate the positive contribution of Share to both literacy and numeracy and they were all most interested in the parental accreditation, especially after learning that during last year forty-one parents had been successful in gaining qualifications last year.

Share is
suitable for
inclusion in a
New
Opportunities
Fund Bid

that we have been successful in gaining
funding to develop
Share at KS3!

Share in a poem

Parents from Plasfelin Infant School in Caerphilly have been busy writing poems to let us know what they think about Share. Mos Clarke, who carries out Share activities with her son Arran, sent us the following poem:

*Today is Wednesday and it's time
for Share,
We meet once a week and we're
always there.
We've made new friends and the
teachers are great,
They never grumble, even when
we're late.
Some tasks are a challenge, we
really must say,
But it all gets done by the end of
the day.
We help each other as much as
we can;
Especially the tasks that don't go
to plan.
Our children have learnt a lot
from it too,
And there's always plenty of
things to do.
We had an away-day the other
week,
Where lots of people got up to
speak.
The work that was finished
displayed by all;
Projects filled the tables and the
walls.
It goes to show that so many care;
Plenty turned up at the meeting
there.
We would like to thank you for
inventing Share;
It's nice to know that people care.
We need your help to show us the
way it's done;
To help our children and to make
it fun.
Let's hope it stays for years to
come.
Give the same chance to
everyone.*



How does Share work in Wakefield?

In 1997 and 1998 four schools and the Travellers Education Service started Share with Year 1 parents; in the following year, the number of schools increased to fourteen and one became a pilot school for KS2. The number of parents grew from 50 to 124 and the numbers achieving accreditation increased from 25 to 41. Workshop sessions were arranged during the year to provide schools with extra support and schools were visited by the Approved Trainers.

In **Pinders Primary School**, an inner city school, 50% of the pupils are from Asian families where the mother tongue is Punjabi. Share has been running successfully here for two years and parents have brought their children to the group meeting in order to help with the translation and understanding of the activities. The group has also been fortunate to have EMSS support. (While the group meets, the headteacher takes the Year 1 class for Mental Maths). Activities include: playing games, visiting the library or demonstrating an activity, such as 'Making sums from Smarties', which is copied or developed at home.

Helen Clarke, the class teacher, told us: *'The children get so excited about Share! Relationships with the parents have improved tremendously.'* She went on to say that she hoped that some parents would become voluntary workers with children in the early years and believed that Share is good training for NTA work.

Throstle Farm Junior & Infant School began Share in March with five parents, after Sue Pallett, the Nursery Teacher, visited classes with 'Badger' (a puppet),

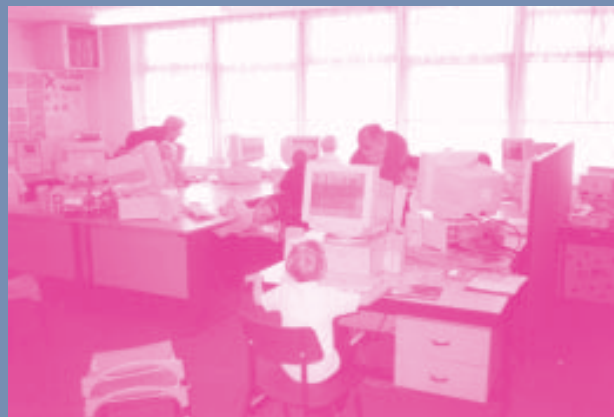
who talked to the children and gave out badger badges along with letters and samples of activities. Numbers soon rose to ten, as the Share parents recruited others. Share obviously has made a great impact as two of the parents in the Share group are preparing to get married and another parent has had a baby! The group consisted of parents of children across KS1 using the same Sharebook, which has led to excellent discussions on how to develop the activities for pupils of different ages, from nursery to Year 2. One parent told us: *'It has brought us closer together. We never seemed to have time before.'*

An evaluation and moderation day for all the participating schools took place in June and included teachers who planned to join the programme the following year. The moderation was carried out as a peer group exercise with everyone able to view each other's portfolios and so contribute to the process. This worked well and everybody gained more confidence in their understanding of the assessment procedures.

Students presented their work in portfolios, which included written evidence, illustrations and children's games. The External Moderator commented: *'[these] not only demonstrated the learning and skills of the students but were a testament to the quality of the teachers involved in the programme.'*

Mary Lewis, the External Moderator, felt that the feedback from parents involved in the programme was very positive and that staff believed that the children were benefiting in a variety of ways, especially from the improvement in parent/family relationships. She added that she was very pleased with the contact and communication that she had had with the course tutor, who had kept her informed of developments and invited her to a number of training events around the Share programme.

Mary then gave this summary of the Share project in Wakefield: *'This is a very successful programme and all who are connected with it should be congratulated on their commitment and enthusiasm.'*



The new computer suite in Ackton Pastures Primary School is used for Share.



An Ackton Pasture's mum shows her portfolio of work to Sue Beckett from CEDC.

The Shared Learning Newsletter is primarily for teachers and parents taking part in Share. It is also useful for agencies or individuals who wish to find out more about how Share works in practice. We welcome articles, examples of activities, photographs and comments for inclusion in the newsletter. It is published termly and information needs to be sent in eight weeks before the end of term. We look forward to hearing from you!

For further information, please contact:

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