

Success story

Lord Lawson of Beamish Community School, Gateshead

School Profile

Number of pupils	1500
EAL	tbc
Free School Meals	tbc

Lord Lawson of Beamish Community School is a comprehensive school in the town of Birtley in the Gateshead area of Tyne and Wear. First opened to pupils in the early 1970s, it was rebuilt on the same site in 2007. A specialist Arts College and 'Leading Edge' school, Lord Lawson has been deemed an 'outstanding' school by Ofsted. The majority of the 1,500 pupils come from the Birtley area of Gateshead, and their attainment on entry is slightly higher than the national average.

For the past two years, the school have been using Renaissance Learning's Accelerated Maths program to raise standards of numeracy amongst pupils in Years 7 and 8. Two classes in Year 8 have been using the program for two years, and four classes in Years 7 started using it this year.

Since the introduction of Accelerated Maths the pupils have become much more focused, and have even achieved two fine grades higher than had been expected. Philip Welch, Maths Co-ordinator at Lord Lawson School, has also noticed other improvements in the pupils using the program, such as a better sense of attainment and a greater enjoyment of the subject - not something you hear in most maths classrooms. He also notes that the pupils have a greater understanding of their own ability.

Similarly, teachers at the school have also benefited from the introduction of Accelerated Maths in terms of greater attainment, a greater understanding of pupils' ability and faster intervention of problem areas highlighted by the reports that are automatically generated by the program. Philip also notes that lessons are more focused as the work is more appropriate - and more meaningful to the pupils - and the overall pace of work has also increased.

Although the school have only been using Accelerated Maths for a relatively short period of time, Philip believes that the improvements in numeracy it engenders

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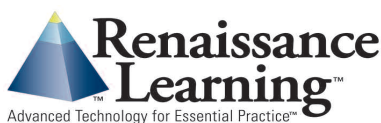
Lord Lawson of Beamish Community School, Gateshead *continued...*

amongst pupils will have a positive effect on other areas of the curriculum - such as science and geography.

Whilst pupils at the school are positive about the impact Accelerated Maths has had, Philip notes that parents are especially keen and have noticed huge improvements, and feel they have a more active role in their children's mathematical education.

Philip summarises his view of Accelerated Maths by saying: *"Mathematics is often a subject with an almost Pavlovian negative reaction; Accelerated Maths challenges pupils' preconceptions towards the subject. It motivates, excites and enriches pupils' numerical education, allowing them to strive to achieve all they can in the subject. The instant feedback that pupils receive is incomparable with any other learning tool on the market. I believe that Accelerated Maths has literally transformed the way in which we teach mathematics at Lord Lawson, and our relationship with Renaissance Learning is set to go from strength to strength along with the success of our pupils' achievements."*

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