

## Case Study

# Teaching Resilience in Maths at Brisley Church of England Primary Academy

by

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Brisley Church of England Primary Academy, part of the Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust (DNEAT) is based in mid Norfolk.

We have three classes: Reception/Year 1 and Year 2 (Tawny Owls), Year 3 and Year 4 (Snowy Owls) and Year 5 and Year 6 (Barn Owls).

Pupils' learning is based around exciting topics and each class follows a two-year program, which ensures the requirements of the National Curriculum are taught, as well as a broad balance of enrichment.

I have worked with Whizz Education and the virtual tutor Maths-Whizz at a previous school, and I was keen to bring it to Brisley, as it performs well to get children to practice areas of the curriculum not currently being taught so different maths topics remain fresh in their minds.

It keeps skills simmering and knowledge up-to-date across the board. It's also a great assessment tool as progress and gaps are easy to identify. This feedback helps teachers understand which areas to focus on to develop further learning.

Maths-Whizz also pitches learning at the right level. It tests understanding and gets children to practice maths topics where they need extra support. We also have lots of motivated children at Brisley and they can really get ahead if they put in the time.

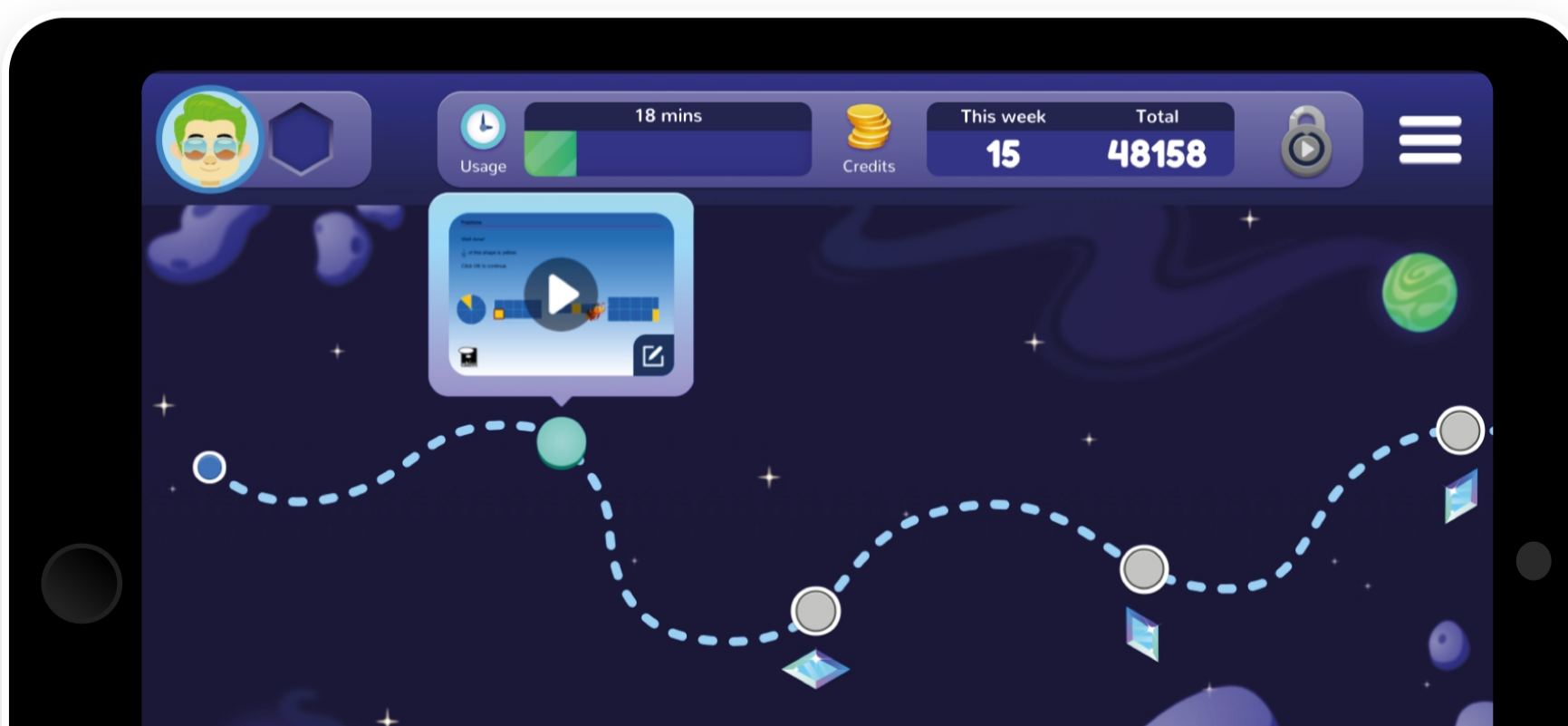


In my class, I often use Maths-Whizz as a pre-teach tool. So, for example, if we are due to work on fractions, I can set the Topic Access Functionality to cover fractions the week before. This makes progress in lessons much more rapid.

Children have access to Maths-Whizz at home through our school subscription. We encourage pupils to make three progressions per week. A progression is one successfully completed lesson. For parents during lockdown, Maths-Whizz has offered current curriculum teaching for children to access independently. It has been one less thing for them to worry about during the restrictions.

We find that the Maths-Whizz assessment orders children and generally confirms our teachers' assessments. Where it doesn't, we can step in to find out why. We've even been able to email screenshots of Maths-Whizz reports to parents so we can discuss where the learning gaps are and how to make more progress, although parents have accounts as part of the service.

Overall, attainment is related to the amount of time spent on the system. We get the best uptake where teachers encourage engagement. For example, we've introduced a leader board to help motivate our students. We highlight the pupil who's achieved the most progressions each week for each year group, and also identify who's the highest achiever in the school. Our pupils are competitive, so putting the leader board in the corridor and awarding certificates every week is really motivating. One of our year three girls has worked consistently hard at Maths-Whizz and has now become one of the top students in her year in maths. This is all due to her own efforts.



For children on the autism spectrum, Maths-Whizz is also helpful as its explanations are consistent. This supports understanding. It means these students can access learning they could not easily access before.

We recently surveyed the children to find out what they liked and didn't like about the Maths-Whizz tutor. Around one third loved everything about it, a third got on well with it and third found it challenging. This does really reflect how the system works; children must put in effort, and it ensures they practice on areas which they find more difficult. We address the need to put in effort by teaching resilience in everything we do at school. It's one of our core values. For example, we have a policy of 'challenge by choice' where we encourage children to pick up the right level of challenge for themselves, whatever task they are doing. This shouldn't be too difficult or too easy but just right. Maths-Whizz does this automatically finding the right learning level for students and so fits very well with our ethos.

The team at Whizz Education has been able to support us in various ways during the past year, from arranging a zoom training call for teachers to emailing ideas to encourage engagement. We've also been able to share Whizz Education's fun, summer maths challenge with parents as an extra activity for children over the holiday. We were also sent a framed certificate when we were named as a distinguished school for our students' progress using the solution.



The advice I'd offer to other schools considering implementing EdTech like Maths-Whizz, would be ensure it can be used anywhere. This level of flexible working has been so important in the past year as Maths-Whizz can be accessed on any device from either home or school.

I'd also suggest using Maths-Whizz as a teacher thoroughly before showing it to the students so that you are aware of the representations used. An effective way to do this is to buy into the teaching tools on Maths-Whizz.

Other IT tools I'd recommend would be investing in a visualiser for projecting data for others to see in the classroom, so children get real time feedback on their work in all subjects.

Overall, children make progress using Maths-Whizz where they put in the time. Therefore, encouraging effort and resilience for the slightly more challenging tasks is key. Our children have achieved this with the support of all our staff and parents and as a result, we are proud of the progress our students have made in maths, in one of the most challenging years ever experienced.

To find out how your teachers, students and school can benefit from working with Whizz Education, contact us by emailing [info@whizz.com](mailto:info@whizz.com)