

Number sense

Many people seem almost proud to admit they 'can't do maths'. Assessment software can help identify areas of maths developmental delays.

Assessing numeracy – Jeanette Rimmer

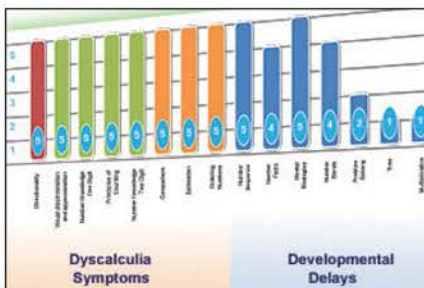
We use Jelly James' Dynamo Profiler to assess the number sense and proficiency of pupils who are struggling with maths in key stages 1 and 2.

The assessment tool identifies gaps in their learning as well as picking up on pupils with developmental dyscalculia. The resulting report for each child, which we can show parents, gives a clear indication of what help is needed and signposts us to appropriate interventions and resources.

Because we also have Jelly James' Dynamo Maths, I tailor children's individual settings in this program so they can start addressing these gaps in their knowledge straight away (see *Tried and tested, Special Children* 213).

We introduced Dynamo Profiler over a year ago when I became aware that some children seemed to have real problems in numeracy, and searched online for a suitable tool to help me establish what these were. We first screened children in July 2013 to identify the issues, and again in January this year to see how they were progressing. I screened the pupils for a third time in July so that I could pass the relevant information on to their next schools.

The assessment clearly shows the progress they've made. Some have come on in leaps and bounds and have advanced by three or four sublevels – in these cases, a few small issues were



The graphs make it clear where a child has a weakness



Pupils don't know they are being assessed and teachers find the assessment easy to administer

“The system clearly shows the progress they've made”

holding them back and now that they have mastered these, they are just flying.

Meanwhile three children have been diagnosed with dyscalculia. Previously in tests they were getting most things wrong. A year on, they are getting 50 per cent right and have made two levels of progress. That's down to the program pinpointing exactly where the problems lay so that we could resolve them.

The nice thing about Dynamo Profiler is that the children sit at a computer with their headphones on and think they are playing games. They certainly don't know that they are being assessed and consequently they don't suffer from nerves and tension, which might impact the results. From my point of view, the test itself is easy to administer.

In addition, the program is changing

how we teach maths in the school. Now that we can identify small groups of children with the same challenge, we are able to work together with them on the interactive whiteboard. Meanwhile, children can log into Dynamo Maths at home and keep working on specific units for homework.

We are really pleased with the information Dynamo Profiler gives us – as a tool to help children overcome problems with their maths, it has exceeded our expectations.

Dynamo Profiler for schools is £9.99 + VAT per pupil for a year.

www.dynamoprofiler.co.uk



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