



19th January 2018

Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you for returning your surveys about Mathletics. The children were extremely enthusiastic about Mathletics (88% of the responses returned said that they enjoyed it quite a lot or even more), however a number of parents had genuine concerns about it. The concerns were:

Too much screen time.

Our solution: We would ask for parents to allow a recommended (but not enforced – if parents didn't want their children to have any screen time, we can make alternative arrangements.) session of approximately 20 min a week to follow up on the maths topic of the week. Children could then, in agreement with parents, spend a little more time in the 'Play' area of the website, or exploring other learning areas, if they chose to. Please bear in mind that the aim of Mathletics is to help children build their basic number skills, consolidate learning for children who are at the expected level and to challenge children who are above this level, whilst having fun at the same time. It is also worth noting that we did see significant improvement in rapid recall skills for the majority of children that took part.

The school/children not being anonymous enough. (first names were appearing with their class and of course there is only one Widecombe Primary School!)

Our solution: We addressed this immediately by having initials only coming up in the live play areas and we could further anonymise ourselves by having our school listed as 'A Dartmoor/Devon School.'

Make sure the competition is healthy and children aren't spending so much time on it that they are going to win!

Our solution: Whilst competition is a natural part of life, it does need to be healthy and not weighted, so that children who are naturally good at maths are always getting the points/certificates. We would ensure that children know that they have to select the right level of competition for them against whomever they are playing – otherwise the program defaults to an easy level. We would also ask parents to limit the maximum time spent on it after school, to ensure a level of fairness. Before launching Mathletics, we would also talk about how to be a good competitor!

We would still award certificates for points earned, but most importantly, certificates will be awarded for the children who we feel have used Mathletics to help them make progress against their targets/topic that has been set.

Friends have kindly agreed to fund Mathletics, but it would be under the above conditions, which we would stress to the children before our subscription started. We would like to start the subscription the week beginning 29th January and we would have it for a year and then review it again, in case it is not meeting our needs by the end of the school year.

If you would like to discuss any of these matters further, please come and talk to me (Sophie!) either after school on Monday, Tuesday or Thursday or on Thursday morning before school. Or email, or leave a message with Mrs Low and I can get back to you.

With best wishes for more Marvellous Maths

Sophie

PS watch this space... more workshops for parents coming soon...!