

Liz Gibbs – mathematics guru and inspiration!

I can't begin to explain how great Liz is! A truly tremendous tutor and maths consultant whose energy is infectious and with her love of maths and quick and clever mind, you can't not be pulled along and then be thirsty for more! I've been fortunate to have Liz conduct CPD sessions after school specific for the school I was teaching in; I've had specific subject group lectures/training on the bar method and use of the fantastic numicon; I've also been fortunate to have one to one with Liz to deepen and broaden my subject knowledge. The later boosted my confidence and allowed me to be excited about teaching my class and their years learning, through mapping out study for a two-year class that would develop the novice and allow the advance to master and deepen understanding.

Honestly working with Liz created an array of in-depth knowledge which was inclusive for all the children I taught, this was backed by her insightful knowledge of copious resources (not all expensive by any means but very accessible and items that can be used throughout KS1 & 2 such as pattern blocks, two-sided counters and numicon), she really has a magical box of delights to teach maths with – I get excited about thinking about them all! All the resources she champions have the ability to be used in different ways across the math subjects, reinforcing not only my confidence with the resource, but more importantly allowing children who were confident with the concrete resources to use them effectively for different areas of maths and then make the links themselves. Using the most simplest of A4 paper as a concrete resource, I was tutored to teach the most exciting lessons with my kids, fractions, bar method and problem solving, decimals, place value, the list is endless not only that, the questioning skills my class developed through the mastery approach were phenomenal. My teaching maths wall is always plastered with the children's practical work and insights. Ooh one other thing with A4 paper... the kids creating their own human graphs after measuring the height of a collection of different balls thrown by a particular team – brilliant! The children talked about these human graphs for months and felt 'experts' in the field, always analysing graphs they later saw! This one memorable activity laid foundations for life for these kids and it was through Liz sharing her knowledge and guiding my teaching that it was possible.

Working with Liz allowed me to become confident in really discussing and pulling out children's thinking on a subject, allowing them to strengthen their understanding by considering alternatives and naturally explaining their thinking and knowledge to their peers and importantly *not* to rush on before I was confident ALL the children in my class had progressed and grasped the concepts.

Liz is a dynamic, deep thinking, sensitive (to adult's and children's cognition) and passionate about everyone's right to understand maths. I owe a huge amount to Liz and will forever celebrate how fortunate I am to have spent time under her diligent mentoring wing. It is a shame we cannot bottle Liz Gibbs as it would be a wonderful thing to share wider across the teaching profession. Suffolk are certainly lucky to have her, and so will anyone who is fortunate to spend time in her company. Can't thank you enough Liz and I will be forever in your debt. THANK YOU.