

## What is the Maths Champions programme?

Maths Champions, delivered by National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA) is an online professional development programme which settings have 12 months access to. The programme aims to improve maths attainment of children in an early years setting by training a Maths Champion and Deputy Maths Champion (MC and DMC) in key mathematical concepts and increasing staff confidence.

After completing a live induction and online training modules the MC will lead on completing a staff confidence and nursery environment audit and action plan to improve the mathematical learning environment and confidence of all staff. They will also lead on implementing 10 or more core activities with children that build on the key areas of maths learning. MC's will then be able to revisit their audits and review the outcomes of the core activities. Throughout the 12 months the MC and DMC will have access to ongoing one-to-one support from an Early Years Adviser, access to a large resource bank as well as regular webinars on arising topics.

## What are the main benefits of signing up to the Maths Champions programme?

Maths Champions is an online professional development programme, enabling settings to access this without the need to release staff to attend external training.

The programme contains a range of evidence based training, reflective tools, resources and support from an Early Years Adviser which can all be used to develop staff confidence across the setting.

Research has shown that children who attend a Maths Champions setting make up to three months additional progress in their maths and language development, with this increasing to a potential six months for disadvantaged children. (EEF 2023)

## Are there any costs if I sign up to the DfE/EEF funded programme?

DfE/EEF are currently funding places on the Maths Champions programme. Settings who meet the eligibility criteria and are allocated a place will receive this place free of charge.

## Is the fully funded programme only open to NDNA members?

Fully funded places are open to any setting that meets the eligibility criteria and is allocated a place, settings do not have to be an NDNA member.

## Typically how long does the programme last for?

Settings allocated a place on the Maths Champions programme will receive a live online induction followed by 12 months access to the programme platform. NDNA have created a completion timeline to support settings to access all elements of the programme across this timeframe and each setting will also have ongoing support from an allocated Early Years Adviser.

Settings can complete the programme sooner than this if they wish but enrolment on the programme will end after 12 months.

## Do I need extra members of staff to participate?

No, settings do not need extra members of staff to participate in the Maths Champions programme. Settings are required to nominate a MC and DMC in the setting (qualified to a minimum level 3) who will access the programme platform and lead on disseminating learning from the programme to the whole staff team, ensuring maximum impact. NDNA does not specify who takes on these roles, settings can decide who is in the best position to do this but Early Years Advisers can talk through some individual options with settings to help this decision making process if required.

## Do the Maths Champion and Deputy Maths Champion need to be supernumerary throughout the programme? How much time will they need to be in training?

No, the MC and DMC do not need to be supernumerary throughout the programme. They are required to attend a live online induction and complete the online training within the programme which consists of two mandatory courses focusing on supporting children's mathematical development and an optional coaching course to help them disseminate learning to staff. Each course takes approx. 2 – 2 ½ hours to complete and this can be paused and returned to so that it can be scheduled in around other commitments. The remainder of the programme consists of auditing practice and leading on supporting developing confidence which can be done within the everyday routine of the setting.

It is up to individual settings how much time they want to dedicate to the programme and this is often dependent on how much they want to achieve. All we ask is a commitment to completing the programme within 12 months.

## What if only one member of staff wants to be a Champion?

The role of the DMC is crucial to successful completion of the programme and to participate we do ask settings to allocate both roles. The idea is that the DMC works in partnership with the MC and as they also complete the training within the programme it means they can continue to work through the programme even if the MC were to leave the setting for any reason. This aids in retention on the programme.

## Are there any resources we need to have in place before the start of the programme?

No, settings are not required to have anything specific in place before starting the programme. The programme is designed to help increase staff knowledge and to reflect on what experiences and opportunities children are provided with. As a result, some settings do decide to purchase resources moving forward but they are not required to, this is a personal choice and wherever possible we encourage settings to look at cost saving ways they could do this.

## **We are a pack away setting and also don't have much outdoors space in our nursery – can we still take part?**

Yes. The programme helps settings to reflect on their individual setting environment with aim of helping them to see the potential they have to support maths and also consider what they might like to do in addition to things they already offer.

## **We are a term time only setting, can the programme be adapted to suit this?**

Regardless of when settings start Maths Champions they have a full 12 months access to the programme. There is a suggested timetable of completion but this can be adapted so that term time only settings can work the programme around their school holidays. Early Years Adviser can support you with this.

## **Our staff are worried about their maths abilities, will this programme help them?**

Maths anxiety can really affect a person's confidence and NDNA want this programme to break down barriers and help staff to develop their confidence and not see maths as something to be scared of, just as we don't want this for our children. Staffs' own maths ability will not be tested. This programme is designed to increase staff knowledge on how children learn maths in the early years and how they can use the different skills they have to support this effectively. By doing this, staff confidence in this area will increase as they feel empowered by what they know and can do.

## **Will Maths Champions only be useful for those members of staff who have passed their GCSE in maths?**

No, Maths Champions will be useful for all members of staff to support both knowledge and confidence in supporting children's maths learning.

## **Will it only be helpful to those who struggle with maths?**

No, Maths Champions will be helpful for all members of staff so that everyone has a shared understanding about what maths skills children develop in the early years and how they can support this.

## **Can parents get involved? Do resources help us to communicate with parents about what the programme is?**

We actively encourage settings to involve parents in the programme. Just as some staff may have anxieties about maths, many parents do too, so settings can be influential in supporting parents by sharing knowledge and resources with them to give them simple and effective ideas which they can use at home to support their child's maths learning.



## **I have more than one setting, can I sign up for funding for more than one of my nurseries?**

Yes, places are allocated to individual sites so applications can be made for each sight if there is more than one nursery. Each individual setting will be checked against the eligibility criteria in order to make a decision.

## **I have a nursery school, can I take part in this programme?**

Places are available to school based nurseries, academy nurseries, nursery schools and PVI settings. Settings must have a 3&4 year old provision to be eligible.

## **Do we get a certificate?**

The MC & DMC will be issued a certificate for each of the three courses completed within the programme containing their individual name.

On successful completion of all programme steps, including the evaluation, a whole setting certificate will be issued which will include the setting name and access to a dated Maths Champions logo which settings can use.

## **Are childminders able to apply?**

Unfortunately at this moment in time the funding is only available for nursery provision. However, NDNA are currently piloting the programme with a group of Childminders to see if there is potential for Maths Champions to support Childminders in the future.

## **When does it begin? When do I need to sign up by?**

The next round of Maths Champions delivery starts early in 2026 with start dates of February, March, April, May and June. Expressions of interest are open now. (SPH can share QR code to expression of interest)

NDNA will be running live online information sessions which settings will be invited to attend if they express an interest. This session provides more information about the programme and an opportunity for settings to ask any further questions they may have so they can make an informed decision about joining the programme.

To apply for a place following the information session, settings will be asked to complete a memorandum of understanding (MOU) form. If settings meet the eligibility criteria and are allocated a place, one of NDNA's Project Support Team members will be in touch to discuss induction and start date.