



## DISCOVER THE **POWER** OF TIMES TABLES ROCK COMPETITIONS TO RE-ENERGISE STUDENTS' LOVE OF MATHS



**Fergal McNicholl - Year 5 and 6 teacher, Calpe School**

**Fact File**  
**School:** Calpe School  
**Ages:** 2-11 years  
**Where?** Southern Spain

Rock Stars users since 2020  
NumBots users since 2020

### **Students' Lack of Self-esteem and Confidence in Maths was Unbearable**

Students in Key Stage 2 at Calpe School in southern Spain were divided...

They were all learning their times tables in class by rehearsing and worksheets. But for half the class, this wasn't the right strategy...

"The children that really enjoyed maths were fine. But the children who weren't so confident at maths; it really didn't help them," reports Fergal McNicholl, Years 5 and 6 teacher.

These students were stuck. At risk of falling further behind in maths.

Instead of moving forwards through the curriculum, students were distracted. They were spending all their time and energy writing out all the times tables in order for

them to answer a simple calculation.

Students became dispirited and unengaged with maths.

“They were making mistakes too because nearly every other concept comes back to your times tables. When you know your times tables, then it just makes everything else easier,” Fergal sighs.

This was having an enormous impact on their confidence.

Every time they’d get something wrong, they’d be reluctant to do any more work. The less practice they had, the more mistakes they’d make. It was a vicious circle.

Fergal was having to spend more time teaching times tables in class which encroached on his time teaching the rest of the curriculum. “It was definitely having a knock-on effect.”

“It was degrading and demoralizing for them,” Fergal says.

Fergal and his colleagues couldn’t let this continue...

**“They just know them off top of their head!”**

## **Breaking the Cycle**

After hearing positive reviews from other schools, the decision to purchase Times Tables Rock Stars was unanimous.

“Everyone was very much on board with it. They could see as soon as we introduced it to the classroom, and you just see the engagement immediately. They wanted to do more, so they can earn more points,” Fergal says.

Students enjoy using Times Tables Rock Stars for at least 30 minutes throughout the week as part of their homework, freeing up invaluable teaching time during lessons.

The Rest of the World Rocks competition was a huge deal in Calpe School...

“You can see the excitement when their team won. They had that enthusiasm. That was lovely, you can see when children were enjoying it. One of our children got 13th in the competition!” Fergal beams proudly.

They also hold weekly competitions in school which has lit the fire in the students’ eagerness to play.

And win...

The students now don't have the laborious and time-consuming task of writing out their times tables to solve a maths problem.

Fergal has seen a massive jump in engagement from his students. And not necessarily those students who enjoyed maths before.

"The ones that struggled before, you can see just such a huge, huge, huge improvement. And then that feeds into their overall feeling more confident, so they can approach the questions with an open mind," Fergal smiles.

"They're not scared, there's not that fear anymore. Which just means it's more interactive, because of children wanting to contribute and give their ideas."

From playing Times Tables Rock Stars, Calpe School are now seeing a huge shift in attitude towards maths and this means...

"We can push them more, we can challenge them more, they can do more practice, more work gets done," Fergal says.

There's no stopping Calpe students now...

They're all making sure they're on top form for the next competition.

**"Just to see the excitement, the enjoyment.  
They want to do it. That's the best thing."**

## **It Works!**

**Accuracy:\***

**95%**

\*in last 30 days

**Average Daily Minutes  
Played:\***

**10 mins 15 secs**

\*in last 30 days

**We'd love to hear from you! If you would like to participate in a Showcase, then please email us at [support@mathscircle.com](mailto:support@mathscircle.com).**