

MATHS · ADULT REFERENCE

# Calculation Policy — Decision Guide

For Maths Leads choosing or writing a policy

## What a calculation policy is

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## Why this matters more than people think

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## The major published approaches



Approach	Strengths	Considerations
Adopted commercial scheme	Saves planning time; whole-school consistency from day 1	Subscription cost; reliance on external structure
School-developed approach	Tailored to your cohort; teacher ownership	High initial workload; requires strong subject leader
Hybrid	Use a scheme as backbone, adapt locally	Best of both — but takes time to settle
School-developed (own policy)	Tailored to your context	Time-intensive to build; needs strong leadership
Mastery vs traditional approaches	Mastery: depth + reasoning emphasis	Traditional: more familiar; faster initial progress
Mixed approaches	Best-of-each	Risks inconsistency

The CPA approach (Concrete-Pictorial-Abstract)

What a calculation policy looks like in practice



**Implementation — first 6 months**

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**Common implementation problems**

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**Maths Lead's calculation policy implementation checklist**

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| ■ Confirm policy decision with head and budget agreed          | ■ Book CPD for all staff (1-2 days minimum)                       |
| ■ Order manipulatives if not already in stock                  | ■ Print the calculation policy; ensure every classroom has a copy |
| ■ Plan first 6 months of weekly drop-ins                       | ■ Brief parents (one-page leaflet)                                |
| ■ Monitor weekly in first half-term                            | ■ First review at half-term — what's working?                     |
| ■ Liaise with TAs — they often need more support than teachers | ■ Track end-of-year fluency data                                  |
| ■ Review against previous year's data at end of Y1             |   |

