

THE BASIC CONCEPTS PROGRAMME



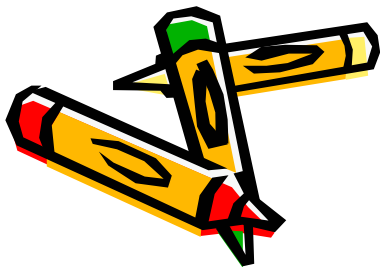
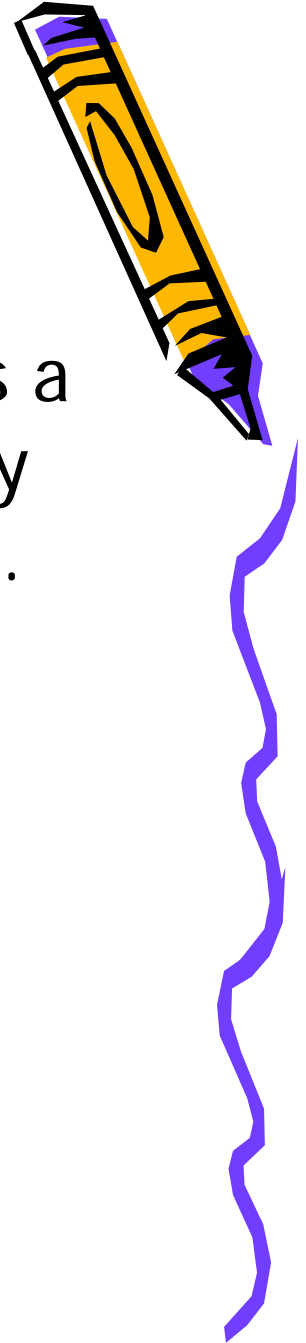
in

METRO CENTRAL EDUCATION DISTRICT

An Intervention of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy (2006-2016)

BACKGROUND

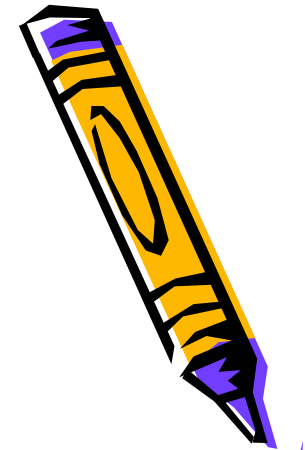
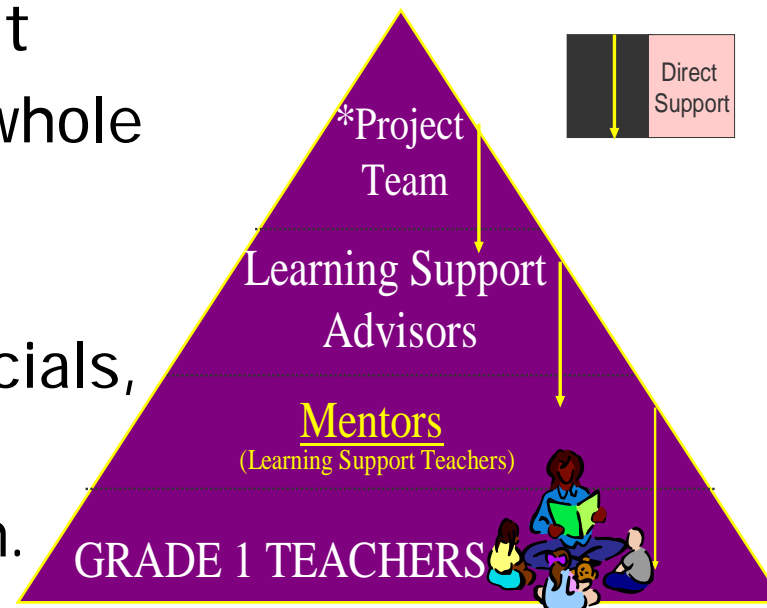
- The Literacy and Numeracy Strategy is a coordinated plan to improve the literacy and numeracy achievements of learners.
- It includes the following interventions:
 - *a preschool programme*
 - *teacher development*
 - *changes to classroom practice*
 - *learning and teaching support materials*



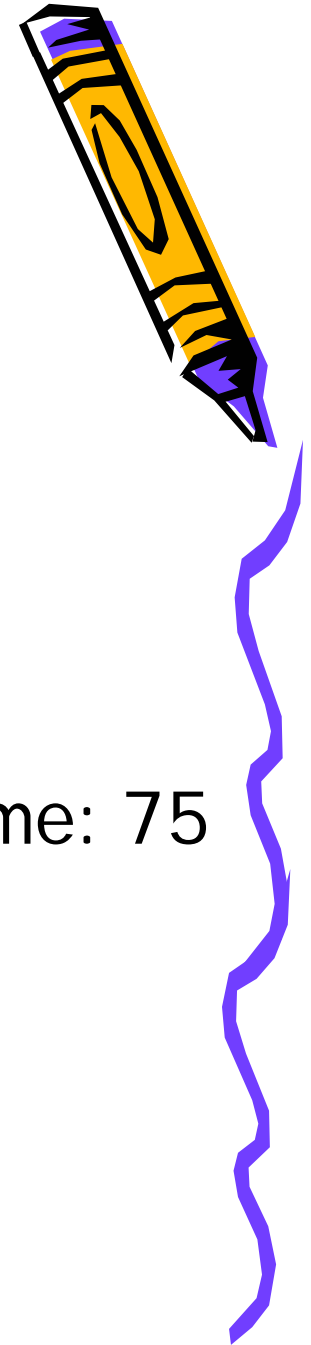
DESCRIPTION

- The programme is implemented by Grade 1 teachers in mainstream classes with small groups of learners who experience barriers towards learning.
- Grade R teachers implement the programme with their whole class.
- The teacher-mediators are supported by District Officials, Learning Support Teachers as well as the Project Team.

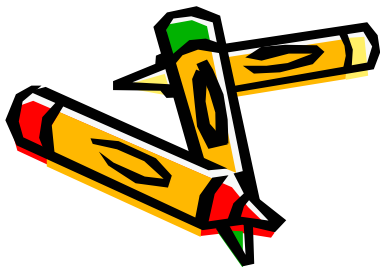
SUPPORTING THE BCP IN GRADE 1 CLASSES



STATISTICS

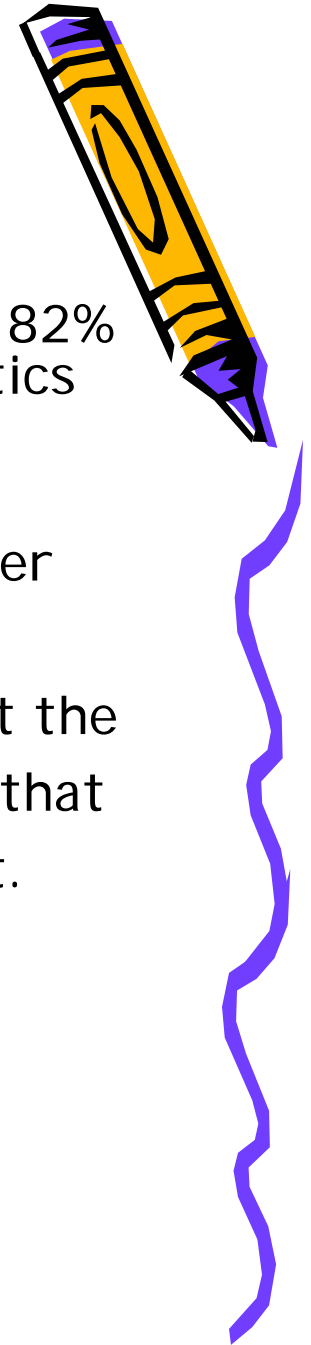


- Learning support teachers trained: 53
- Grade R teachers trained: 41
- Grade 1 teachers trained: 126
- Number of schools involved in the programme: 75

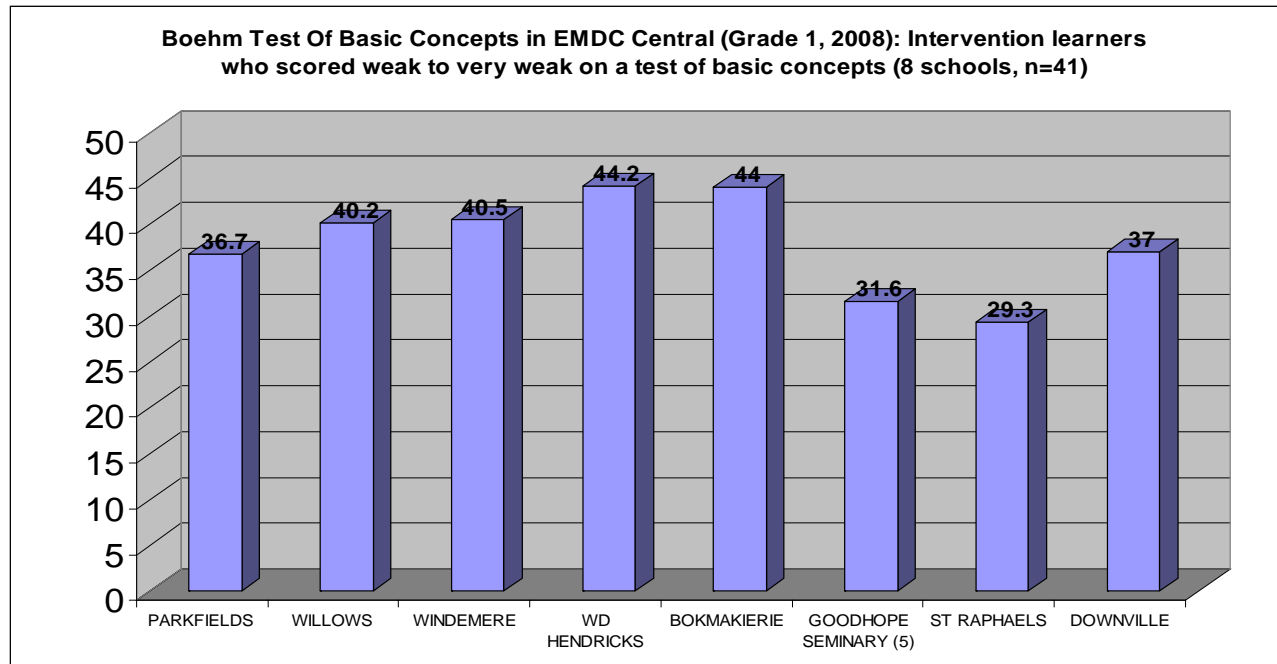
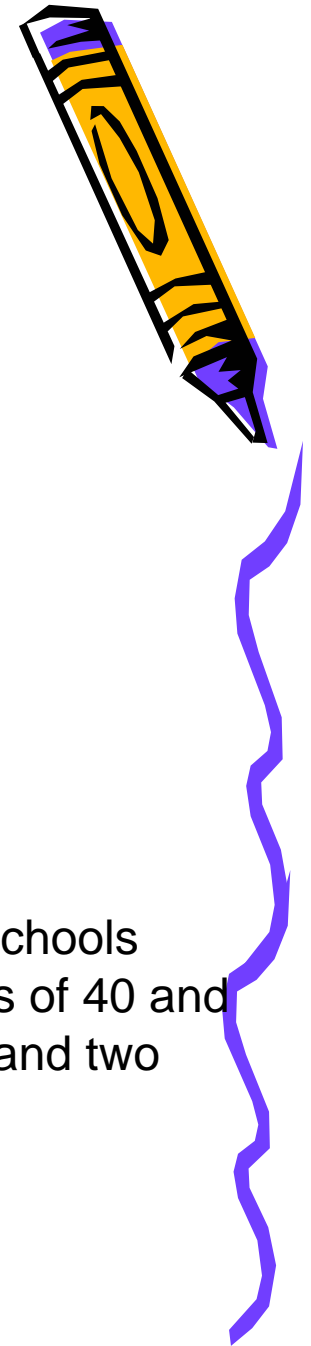


IMPORTANT ASPECTS

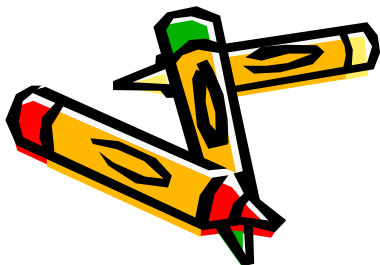
- It corresponds to the National Curriculum Statement – 82% of Grade R and 96% of Grade 1 Language and Mathematics outcomes.
- Aimed to address some of the concerns raised with other meta-cognitive programmes for younger learners, by
 - i) limiting the length of the programme, ii) ensuring that the teaching model was easy to implement, and iii) ensuring that the content is directly relevant to the teaching context.
- Well suited to learners who come from disadvantaged backgrounds and who have deficits in knowledge and conceptual vocabulary.



RESULTS: Grade 1 (2008)

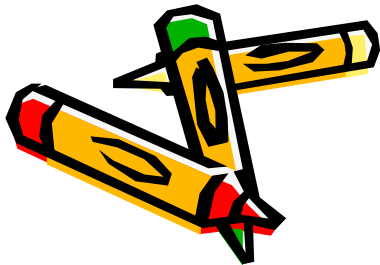
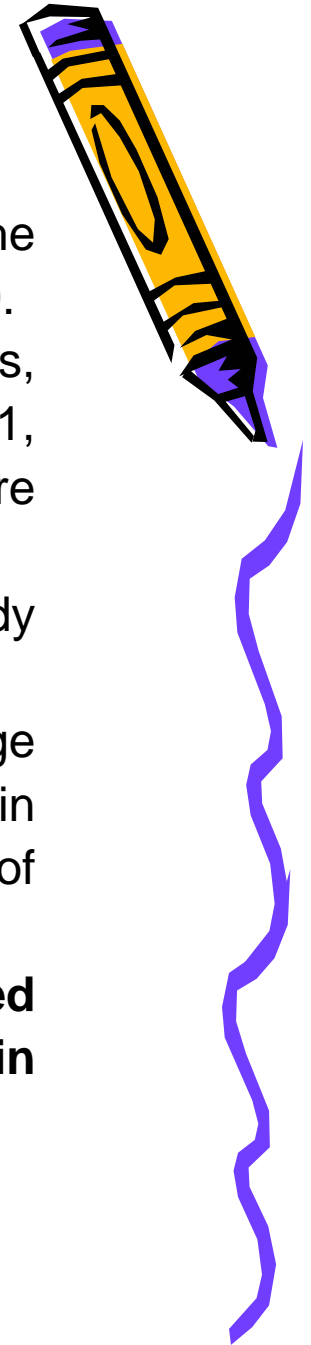


A representative sample (20.5%) of intervention learners from 8 project schools were assessed at the end of the year. Four schools attained mean scores of 40 and above (strong), two schools attained mean scores of 36 & 37 (average), and two schools attained mean scores of 29 & 31 (weak to very weak).



RESULTS: Grade 1 (2009)

- A representative sample (20.4%) of learners who participated in the BCP in 2008 were assessed during the first term of Grade 1 in 2009.
- The mean scores of learners from four schools (Vanguard, Willows, Heideveld 1 & 2) were within the range of preparedness for Grade 1, while learners from two of the schools (Belthorn and Primrose) were on average not found to be school prepared.
- The results indicate that the majority of learners were school ready (96 out of 143 learners).
- These scores are encouraging when one considers that the average Grade 1 learner assessed in 2008 (942 learners from 25 schools in Metro Central) was not found to be school prepared (mean score of 14.7).
- **The results suggest that the Grade R learners who participated in the BCP were reasonably-to-well-prepared for learning in Grade 1.**



CHALLENGES

- A small number of teachers have not implemented the programme.
- Teachers tend to start to implement the programme late in the first term (after completing the baseline assessments) and so do not complete the programme.
- The programme has often not been implemented consistently and intensively enough.
- Some teachers experience difficulties with differentiated teaching and groupwork – this may also be related to the size of their classes and a lack of class control and behaviour management skills.
- Some teachers are overwhelmed and confused by the demands made by different constituencies (principal, HODs, departmental officials, external organizations).
- Some teachers need more support, encouragement and mentoring than can be provided.
- The support visits by the Learning Support Teachers have often not been frequent enough.



CONCLUSION

- The project is still in process and will continue to extend into Grade R and Grade 1 classes as well as train new Learning Support Teachers over the next two years (2011).
- The focus on the Basic Concepts Programme the most important intervention of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy in Metropole Central has started to influence the teaching-learning discourse and practice.
- The preliminary results of the effects of the programme on learners are promising and suggest that improvements in literacy and numeracy performance of learners are achievable.

