

-----**PRESS RELEASE**-----

Alta Raises Standards in Maths

World-Class Solution

The Northern Ireland Department of Education is deploying the Alta Schools System from Alta Systems to assist in raising standards in mathematics. Alta has been working with the Council for Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) to develop a world class solution to support the teaching of maths in schools for ages 5 to 14. The CCEA-Alta maths solution will be available from September to all schools through the Northern Ireland Classroom 2000 (C2K) schools network. Teachers using the system in Northern Ireland overwhelmingly confirm that it develops the mathematical skills of and has a significant impact on their pupils' ability.

Fits Schools Perfectly

The Alta system is tailored to the Northern Ireland mathematics curriculum so fits perfectly with school teaching plans. In an independent evaluation of the system Charlie Sproule, Manager of Assessment at CCEA commented on a recent survey, "We surveyed over 150 teachers who are using the system. The overwhelming majority 98% confirmed that this system developed mathematical skills and 80% said it had a significant impact on their pupils' ability. Combined with other evaluations we have carried out we have no doubts that this system will help our pupils to learn and improve their mathematical skills."

The Alta information system provides powerful diagnostic feedback to teachers and pupils. It marks pupils work immediately and gives pupils colour coded diagnostic profiles of their results. This informative approach allows teachers to help pupils build on their strengths and work on their weaknesses. A year 6 primary school teacher comments, "The fact that it was marked instantly really encouraged pupils to go through the questions. At the end after the feedback they were keen to correct their mistakes and improve their performance, which is fantastic."

Adapts to Each Pupil Individually

Bristling with innovative features the system encourages pupils to progress at their own pace and take responsibility for their own learning. The system adjusts automatically to each pupil by selecting each question based on that pupil's answers to previous questions. Pupils can replay exactly what they did, refer to model answers and, with their teachers' help, build on their strengths and work on their weaknesses. Teachers report that the colour coded diagnostic profile is extremely useful in conversations with parents. From the profile parents, like teachers, can see instantly where their children are having problems as well as the remedial actions that have been taken. The information builds up and moves with the pupil from class to class, teacher to teacher, school to school.

Example of Formative Assessment Record for Maths - Number

Mathematics - Number

Results 1-18 of 18

Show ? records per page.

	Date	Level	Type	Result	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	Detail
1.	13 Dec 2004	5	L	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	
2.	2 Dec 2004	4	L	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	
3.	29 Nov 2004	4	P	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	
4.	28 Oct 2004	4	L	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	
5.	6 Oct 2004	4	P	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	
6.	27 May 2004	4	P	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	
7.	21 Apr 2004	4	P	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	
8.	5 Feb 2004	4	A	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	
9.	12 Jan 2004	4	P	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	
10.	21 Nov 2003	4	A	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	
11.	14 Nov 2003	4	P	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	
12.	26 Sep 2003	3	A	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	
13.	30 May 2003	3	L	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	
14.	30 Apr 2003	3	P	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	
15.	27 Mar 2003	3	P	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	Well Done	

Colour Code Key

- Well Done (Dark Blue)
- Good (Light Blue)
- Uncertain (Yellow)
- At Risk (Orange)
- Alert (Red)

Historical Record

Level that Pupil is working at

Modes
P-Practice
A- Advanced
L- Confirm Level

Links to curriculum criteria

Diagnosis of strengths & difficulties
Read horizontally, and vertically for trends

Complete record and replay of each assessment

Jimmy Stewart, Director of C2k, says, “The Alta system is an excellent online support tool for pupils, teachers, parents and the education services in Northern Ireland. It delivers educationally reliable results, helps pupils improve their maths, teachers find it manageable to use, parents find it informative and over time it will help improve our standards in mathematics. This is a really effective way to use computers in the classroom, integrate them with teaching and support teachers. Through the C2k network it is available to all pupils and all schools.”

Professor Fred McBride Managing Director of Alta explains, “It is well known in education circles that a formative, continuous assessment approach is a much more effective way to improve learning than end of term or end of year exams. We have developed and refined the innovative ideas behind Alta over many years of research and produced the first practical solution for classroom based assessment. Previous attempts have failed because of the workload they required from teachers – Alta removes this burden yet produces very rich diagnostics. In collaboration with CCEA the system is in use in over 200 schools now, in some for more than five years. We are also working with education authorities in Scotland and in the Isle of Man and have attracted interest from international education players in the UK.”

“While the system was designed for schools we have strong interest from further education colleges and from parents interested in home use” added Professor McBride.

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About Alta Systems (NI) Ltd



Alta delivers Adaptive Learning Teaching & Assessment solutions. Alta improves learning outcomes by informing self-assessment and teaching. Diagnostic pupil profiles are built up over time and can be a combination of automated assessments and moderated teacher assessments. Alta's informative assessment products are based on a proven methodology that delivers improved pupil performance which has been validated and endorsed by educationalists and teachers.

An Alta solution is always tailored to a curriculum. Alta's maths products are deployed in classrooms in Northern Ireland, Scotland, England and Isle of Man where they are customised for each of these regions. Promoting self-assessment and formative assessment, the Alta systems are unique in providing diagnostic feedback of strengths and weaknesses for each learner. The combination of multi-instance questions, full replay and model answers provides stimulating and engaging experiences for learners that deliver personal performance improvements.

Alta has developed a complete rigorous end-to-end methodology for designing, writing and delivering and validating formative assessment systems. This methodology provides educationally reliable online assessment with diagnostic feedback and analysis to pupils, teachers and parents. The approach is not restricted to mathematics, is independent of subject matter and does not impose, but adapts to, classroom practices and teaching policies.

Alta Systems (NI) Ltd is locally owned by the management of the company and QUBIS. Alta Systems is an Invest NI client company.

For further information about Alta Systems and the Alta methodology please contact Dr Barry Hagan, Sales and Marketing Director. Tel: 028 9066 3122. M: 077 147 00066. e-mail barry.hagan@alta-systems.co.uk

About Classroom 2000 (C2k)

C2k is a regional Project operating under the auspices of the Education Technology Strategy Management Group of the Department of Education. It is funded by the Department, through the Western Education and Library Board, as part of its Education Technology Strategy, to deliver to schools high quality, sustainable infrastructure, connectivity and resources which meet strategic targets. The mission of C2k is to provide, for Northern Ireland's schools, a world class Learning Technology service and optimise its use throughout the Community.

About the Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA)

CCEA is the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment. CCEA places learners and those who have a concern for their educational and personal development at the forefront of its thinking.

CCEA's mission is:

"To enable the full potential of all learners to be achieved and recognised"

What we do

CCEA is a unique educational body in the UK, bringing together the three areas of curriculum, examinations and assessment.

- ***Advising Government*** – on what should be taught in Northern Ireland's schools and colleges.
- ***Monitoring Standards*** – ensuring that the qualifications and examinations offered by awarding bodies in Northern Ireland are of an appropriate quality and standard.
- ***Awarding Qualifications*** – as Northern Ireland's leading awarding body we offer a diverse range of qualifications, such as GCSEs, including the new GCSE Double Award specifications in vocational subjects, GCE A and AS levels, Entry Level Qualifications, and Graded Objectives in Modern Languages.

CCEA also offers a range of Awards and Certificates in Education, Training and Skills (ACETS) targeted at learners who want to get the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to hit the ground running in the world of work.