

Behind the Scenes at the Boolean Maths Hub Conference: An Undercover Report!



The Boolean Maths Hub Conference, renowned for its variety of workshops and inspirational speakers, promised to be a day of innovative learning and networking. **But what is it really like to be part of this annual event?** I decided to attend as just another delegate, blending in with teachers, leaders, and mathematics enthusiasts from all over, eager to find out if the event lived up to the hype.

In this undercover report, I'll take you through my experience and share my personal takeaways and the moments that truly made this conference stand out, **giving you a closer look at what makes the Boolean Maths Hub event so special.**

An Enriching Experience From start to finish, the event offered a wealth of insights, practical tools, and inspiring connections, making it one of the best conferences I've attended in a long time.

Keynote Speaker: Jay Timotheus was a standout highlight. His opening plenary set the tone for the day, engaging everyone with thought-provoking ideas and inspiring us to reconsider how we approach teaching maths. His key message—"Think with me, not for me"—resonated throughout the day and challenged us to reflect on our students' experiences of learning. His enthusiasm was contagious, and his ability to make complex ideas accessible was a real standout. Jay's perspective on how we can shift students' attention in maths and help them "see" the learning moment for themselves was eye-opening. One key takeaway was how we can build that "sense-making" moment in the classroom, a theme that came up repeatedly in the workshops as well.

Workshops and Sessions The conference offered a wide range of workshops, covering everything from Core Maths and SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) to AI in the classroom and Oracy. I particularly enjoyed the session on Reasoning and Oracy, led by Sarah Savage, which introduced the Onion method—a great strategy to help students build mathematical reasoning through structured talk. It was practical and insightful, showing how oracy can support the journey from novice to expert in maths.

Other highlights included Block Play—a fantastic session that reminded me of the importance of foundational maths in Early Years. Robin Taylor's enthusiasm was infectious as he demonstrated how engaging with simple objects like blocks can lay the groundwork for deeper mathematical thinking later on. As someone who is passionate about early education, revisiting these roots was truly a "wow" moment for me.

Networking The conference provided ample opportunities to meet like-minded educators. I reconnected with old colleagues and met new faces who had fresh, inspiring ideas. Sharing experiences with other teachers and hearing about their innovative classroom practices was both motivating and reassuring. It was evident that the conference attracted a wide range of professionals—from trainees to executive leaders—and this diversity in the delegate group fostered rich discussions and exchanges of ideas.

Resources and Tools One of the most valuable aspects of the conference was the abundance of resources provided. Whether it was strategies for Raising Attainment in KS2 (with Chris Barrett's workshop), insights into SEND practices, or Oak National Academy's tools, there was something for everyone. I especially appreciated the practical, easy-to-implement tools, such as the Algebra Tiles workshop, which gave me immediate ideas to bring back to the classroom. I also appreciated the AI in maths session, which was eye-opening and relevant, especially with the way AI is starting to impact education.

Reflection and Impact The structure of the day encouraged reflection, with plenty of time to think about how the new ideas could be implemented in our own schools. The balance of talking and doing—whether through interactive workshops or discussions—ensured that I left with not just new knowledge, but actionable plans to improve student outcomes back in my school.

Conclusion The Boolean Maths Hub Conference was a truly inspirational day. The diverse range of speakers, the opportunity to network, and the variety of workshops offered ensured that there was something for everyone. Whether you're a trainee teacher, a maths lead, or an executive leader, there were valuable takeaways. I'm excited to return to school with fresh ideas and renewed enthusiasm. If you get the chance to attend next year, don't hesitate—it's an opportunity not to be missed and if you don't believe me read the reflections from some attendees below.

Reflections from Attendees

"I attended this year's Boolean Conference for the first time as both an experienced primary maths lead and a new LLME. Firstly, the conference was well organised, and the choice of workshops were sent to us with a short synopsis of each one too. This meant I was able to select the workshop that best suited my interest and needs before arriving. Once there, I was greeted by the Boolean team and given a lovely goodie bag. The day opened with a guest speaker whose key messages were powerful and thought provoking. It was a great way to start the day. I attended workshops based around SEND, oracy and mastery. All 3 workshops were inspiring and supportive. The exhibitor stalls were interesting and helpful too. It really was a brilliant day. Socialising with other 'maths minded' people really made me feel part of an amazing network. I'm already looking forward to signing up for next year's conference."

Michelle Edwards, Whitehall Primary, Bristol

"Attending my first Boolean Maths Conference was an incredibly rewarding experience. The day was packed with insightful and practical workshops, each offering valuable strategies and fresh perspectives on improving maths education. Every session was engaging, leaving me with a wealth of ideas to take back to the classroom."

One of the biggest highlights was the networking. Being in a room full of like-minded educators who are passionate about maths and keen to raise standards was truly inspiring. The atmosphere was positive, collaborative, and full of energy—a great reminder of why we do what we do.

And of course, no conference review would be complete without mentioning the fantastic lunch. A well-fed mathematician is a happy mathematician, after all! I'll definitely be back next year."

Tom Flynn, St Mary's Primary, Bridgwater

And finally, from a secondary participant's perspective:

"It is always a highlight in the school calendar to see the Boolean Conference appear in January. This year was my third year in a row of attending and it never disappoints. The ability to network and speak with like-minded colleagues and experience the buzz in the room always invigorates my teaching and sets me up with a much-needed boost for the new year ahead. As a secondary colleague, I focused my workshops on SEND, engaging those in post-sixteen and establishing coherence in the curriculum. Each workshop offered a wealth of expertise and something I could take away and share with my department. However, I always find that it is the key note speaker, this year being Jay Timotheus, who lingers in my ear and shapes my next step in my reflections as a teacher and leader. His quote, 'In order to know something I must first come-to-know that. That involves some form of sense-making' will be sitting behind my pedagogy and pushing me forward this year."

Victoria Thompson, Huish Episcopi Academy