

Letter from Peter C, 18

Open letter from Peter C, Chatham & Clarendon Grammar School, Ramsgate

Dear Brian,

When I saw you recently, you asked me why I still do Maths in Motion after nearly 10 years so I thought I would write something out for you that would explain how I feel. Well, for a start, it's always been a fun maths challenge for me, something I've always enjoyed doing. I've been invested into it both casually and competitively throughout this time and it has been like nothing else we do in school because it is NEVER boring! On the casual scene, I do Maths in Motion to have fun with my friends once or twice a week. Despite my school running it mostly as a maths club, it is exceedingly social. In Year 7 when I joined Chatham House as it was then, I chose to team up with somebody that I didn't know, Aaron. Since then (I'm now in Year 12) we've become great friends, both in and out of school. Apart from our friendship, there are a lot of small groups of friends coming along to 'MIM Club' each week. Yes, we have a laugh together while we are working on our cars and yes we talk to each other about what we are doing, but the Club really is a place where it doesn't matter how old you are because we all help each other. We are always mindful of the underlying reasons why we all go but it shows that learning and working together doesn't always have to be formal and sometimes lacklustre.

On the competitive side of things, even though it can get intense at times, MIM Challenge is a very enjoyable experience all round, all year. And yes, despite it being run as a maths club, it does really pump you up just as much as any sport. Preparing your own car, competing for grid positions with your friends and then working together to set up the best pit team strategy is amazing. There is nothing like it, and then finally comes the race itself to lift it still further. In the race, you find yourself praying that your friends and the other drivers spin, crash or run out of fuel so that you can take a higher finishing position – you just can't help it! It's simple - the higher you finish in the race the more points you get. The other side of all this is that you can sit there towards the front end of the race with a big grin on your face knowing that your other friends want to overtake you and hopefully won't. Each race is different so you never know what's going to happen. Each week you hope to gain more points so that at the end of the season, when the prizes are handed out, you can hopefully pick up the school's Championship Trophy in March/April.

But then (about May/June) the Maths in Motion Challenge World Final, something that I have been lucky enough to participate in twice, is looming. That's pressure of a different kind and you create it! Nothing but nothing that happens in this school gets close to it!

Throughout my years, Maths in Motion has changed from a CD ROM program to a Cloud based program but it has continued to improve every time the programmers update it. It has kept me interested in Maths and Science when sometimes what we have been doing in class has been a real turn off and it has given me a sense of belonging and teamwork. I get real pleasure from helping the younger members of our Club and real pleasure from testing myself against the software – it's win, win! The Y7s also love to have a go against us and sometimes even win!

So Brian, that's why I do Maths in Motion and why I have done it from the age of 9 at my primary school right up to the age of 18. I just want to add that when I finish school next year I know I will really miss Club nights as they have developed me as a person in a way that just would not have happened in my general school life. Finally, I would like to wish you and the team the best of luck in the future and just take a moment to say thank you for the hours of fun and enjoyment you have given me and lots of other young people trying to work out what they want to do with their lives.

Yours sincerely,

Peter C

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