Guide to:
Calculation problems

maths Links

Explanation:

For multi-step calculation problems, break the question into clear labelled steps so you gain method marks even if you make an arithmetic slip. Check that all money values are in the same units (either all in pounds £ or all in pence p) before adding or subtracting.

In division word problems with remainders, read the context carefully to decide whether to **round up** (e.g. coaches, boxes, or packs needed so nobody is left behind) or **round down** (e.g. how many full items you can afford to buy).

Example 1: Cinema tickets cost **£8.50** for an adult and **£5.25** for a child. Work out the change from **£50** for 3 adults and 4 children.

Solution:

- **3 adults:** 3 × £8.50 = **£25.50**
- **4 children:** 4 × £5.25 = **£21.00**
- **Total cost:** £25.50 + £21.00 = **£46.50**
- **Change:** £50.00 − £46.50 = **Answer: £3.50**

Example 2: 175 students and **14 teachers** go on a school trip. Each coach holds **42 people**. How many coaches are needed?

Solution:

- **Total people:** 175 + 14 = **189 people**
- **Divide by 42:** 4 × 42 = 168 (remainder 21)
- 4 coaches only hold 168 people, leaving 21 people behind.
- Round up to cover everyone → **Answer: 5 coaches**

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