

Robo-skill: Engineers of tomorrow showcase robotic know-how

Rise of the robots in four Kent schools

04 May 2016

- Four schools in Kent have joined National Grid sponsored VEX Robotics programme
- Students recently showed off their new skills to National Grid visitors ahead of an upcoming tournament
- The VEX Robotics programme is designed to encourage interest in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) subjects

Students at four schools in Kent have shown off new engineering skills learned through a National Grid sponsored robotics initiative.

VEX Robotics is a fun new programme which is part of National Grid's UK-wide scheme to encourage budding young engineers to take an interest in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) subjects.

The four local schools taking part in the programme are Dane Court Grammar School, Castle Community College, Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys and Sandwich Technology School.

Each of the schools received special VEX Robotics kits from National Grid at the beginning of the school year. Representatives from National Grid, who work in the local area, recently visited each school to see how the students were getting on with the programme.

The students showed how they were developing teamwork, leadership and communication skills through the programme. They were also able to chat to the National Grid visitors about future career and training options, learning more about the employment and apprenticeship opportunities which the company offers to young people.

National Grid plans to host a mini VEX Robotics competition in the local area in July which will give students the chance to use their new skills and compete against each other. Participants will be set challenges to tackle in teams and will need to use their programming, communication and teamwork skills to win.

Bob Jones, Project Engineer at National Grid, said: "It was great to see how the students were developing their teamwork and understanding of engineering to improve the design, handling and performance of the robots in such a short amount of time since getting the kits."

He added: "The students were really keen to hear about how these skills are used in the work place, so it was great to be able to relate the Vex Robotics to actual jobs in engineering. It's very rewarding to be able to provide the students with an opportunity like this".

Graeme George, Subject Leader for Computer Science at Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys said: "Our students are developing vital STEM skills which will help them in their school work as well as their options beyond school. They can't wait to get to the club session each week and get working on their robots. The students have been truly inspired by this project and this simply would not have been possible without the help and support of National Grid."

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