

STEM WEEK 2024 NEWSLETTER

Wow, what a week we have had at Southover! The children have been absolutely immersed in the wonderful world of STEM and we have been blown away by their spark, professionalism, resilience and enthusiasm.



We have welcomed visitors from Fizz Pop Science (aka Gooley Stuey), where the children have made slime, learnt about hair raising electrons and have made spinning coptors. Suzie from Inventors and Makers delivered an inspiring assembly to KS2 all about some pretty cool engineering jobs. Following that, she taught the Year 6 children how to make robots, powered by micro:bits, move using some clever coding.



STEM Innovation and Years 3&4 had great fun with leaf blowers and Jennie from Spark2 Education worked with every class; delivering an amazing bubbles workshop for KS1 and Reception and an immersive workshop on time for KS2.



We also welcomed Alice from The Observatory Science Centre, who brought in her MaterialWorks exhibits – 12 hands on exhibits which enabled the children to explore many aspects of materials. The Year 6 classes were lucky enough to take part in an exciting ‘fan boats’ workshop, run by Mike and Andrew (two fantastic STEM Ambassadors) where they created fan boats and raced them in a large tank!

As well as these visitors, we have been extremely lucky to have invited in a number of brilliant STEM parents of our children and family members of staff to deliver an array of wonderful workshops. We’ve made trebuchets with Raphael Munton, completed an incredible Escape the Room challenge and created movies in front of a green screen with Jake Harvey and Chris Bibb, learnt all about the Periodic Table with Marta Carvalho. There’s more – we’ve been part of a planet hunting workshop with Kate Land and her colleague Professor Robert Massey showed the year 6 how you can make a comet which involved dry ice. Mrs Woodley’s daughter, Phoebe, brought in some of her ‘magical minibeasts’ and delivered an exciting workshop which also included handling some of the minibeasts!



Srdjan Stevanic brought in a range of electronic equipment from Hanover Displays to share with the Year 6 children. The Year 3/4s went outside to build a Da Vinci bridge with Stan Cmakal. We’ve also taken part in a workshop from a team of engineers from Edwards Engineers, Emily Arnold, who inspired many of the children to become engineers themselves. Finally, Toby Hawkes talked to the Reception children about the magic of water!



To finish our week, the children visited Southover’s amazing STEM fair on Thursday, where they raced caterpillars, created graphite circuits, played with magnet mazes, played periodic table bingo, used microscopes to observe many different objects, tested their brains with maths puzzles and challenges, to name but a few of our hands-on STEM activities.



Within the classroom, the staff have added to the children's STEM experiences by delivering exciting and engaging lessons; the children have made ice cream, raced balloon cars, made marshmallow constellations, created volleyball launchers in teams using catapults and simple machines, used electrical circuitry to make light sabers, sent our Stomp Rockets high into the sky, experimented with apple oxidization and used simple coding to make Bee Bots move in different directions and much, much more!



A huge thank you to all our fantastic visitors who ran sessions – you have enriched the children's experiences of STEM and have helped us meet our aim of fostering future careers in STEM.

Thank you also to all the wonderful parents and carers who volunteered to help out at the STEM fair. Your support is enormously appreciated and you helped make the activities purposeful and engaging. We could not have done it without you! We'd also like to thank the parents who volunteered to support our Year 6 fan boats workshops – you were all an invaluable support.



Thank you also to the fantastic photography skills of Catherine Benson, who came into school each day to help us document the whole experience and has also created the slide show which accompanies this newsletter.

A week like we have just had would not have been possible without a generous donation from the Friends, as well as sponsorship from Hanover Displays and a donation from the Rotary Club – thank you.



Finally, a huge thank you to every single member of the Southover team, including governors, for approaching the week with such enthusiasm and positivity and for being such fantastic and supportive team players.

It has been an amazing, exciting and rewarding week. The buzz around the school has been electric and seeing and hearing the children's excitement has been a real joy.

Thank you,

Ruth Eke

Science Lead & Year 6 teacher.

