

Greendown Community School

Greendown Community School in West Swindon is a community School with Maths, Computing and Sport as specialisms. It has 1070 pupils on role. The school is truly comprehensive with a huge range of abilities and social backgrounds. One of the main problems in the area is the low aspirations of pupils. As there is no university in the area, data on adult qualifications shows that parents are below the national average, this influences the motivation and aspirations of young people as they see their role models earning a reasonable wage without higher qualifications.

All of Year 9, a total of 190 pupils were involved in employer engagement activity.

The objective of the employer partnership was giving pupils an insight into civil engineering so they can make an informed choice for Key Stage 4 options.

The day is delivered by the business partner, npower and Learn by Design. Graduates and executives from npower attended the day. Pupils followed a carousel of five activities in the day:

1. Dragons Den -inventing a new gadget and giving a presentation on it and how it would be marketed
2. Making a catapult which can send a missile to a precise target
3. Use the information in an exhibition to answer quiz questions
4. Learn about the different ways electricity is produced, from nuclear to solar power and wind turbines
5. Problem solving, how to produce enough electricity for a town within a given budget.

Pupils were asked about their understanding of STEM subjects at the beginning of the day and again at the end to see if they had enough knowledge to make an informed decision about their option choices. Three months after the event pupils complete a questionnaire about the day to gauge if it had had any impact.

The benefit to the employer was to encourage a new generation of engineers and staff development. The ability of pupils choosing to take engineering has risen. Those taking this option are now Key Stage 3 level 6+. Pupils on the engineering diploma can access resources on the npower website. Greendown Community School assist npower in aligning the educational resources they provide with the Key Stage 4 curriculum for all STEM subjects.

Find out more: www.greendown.swindon.sch.uk and www.bydesign-group.co.uk and www.npower.com/education