

Primary Engineer at Southlands High School A Specialist Technology College.

As a Specialist Technology College we have developed over the years a range of activities to professionally develop our own staff, the teaching staff at our local primary schools – and of course develop the enthusiasm of local children for Design and Technology. We are in regular contact with our primary schools and meet at an annual celebration lunch to discuss the future aspects of our primary liaison development, evaluate past events and determine areas for development and support.

We have been part of the Primary Engineer project from its very beginning being the first Regional Centre in 2005. This has introduced several different dimensions to our liaison work. Through Primary Engineer we have hosted 4 training events bringing secondary schools from across the region to our school to take part in two day courses with Primary Engineer. The secondaries then work with their primary schools and their 'winning' teams have returned to us to take part in the regional final in 2006, it is worth mentioning that Lancashire won both the Key Stage1 and 2 Challenges that year!

In the first phase of Primary Engineer at Southlands in 2005/6 we worked with our direct feeder primary schools. We employed a member of staff to work in the Primaries on a part-time basis to support the work initiated by our own Design and Technology department who delivered the course to the primary teachers over 4 twilight sessions. This built a framework of support and dialogue that has seen the confidence, outcomes and enjoyment of the subject being confidently delivered. In the second phase we worked with primaries from within our catchment area but from the wider community.

We recently piloted the Primary Engineer – 'Bringing Structures and Mechanisms to Life – Computer Control' course, first with our 1st phase primaries and then providing a venue for Primary Engineer to work with local secondaries to enable them to work with their primaries. We are also planning to work closely with Darwen Vale High School and Primary Engineer to develop a Special School Primary Engineer Challenge for 2007/8.

Tom Cubbon
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