

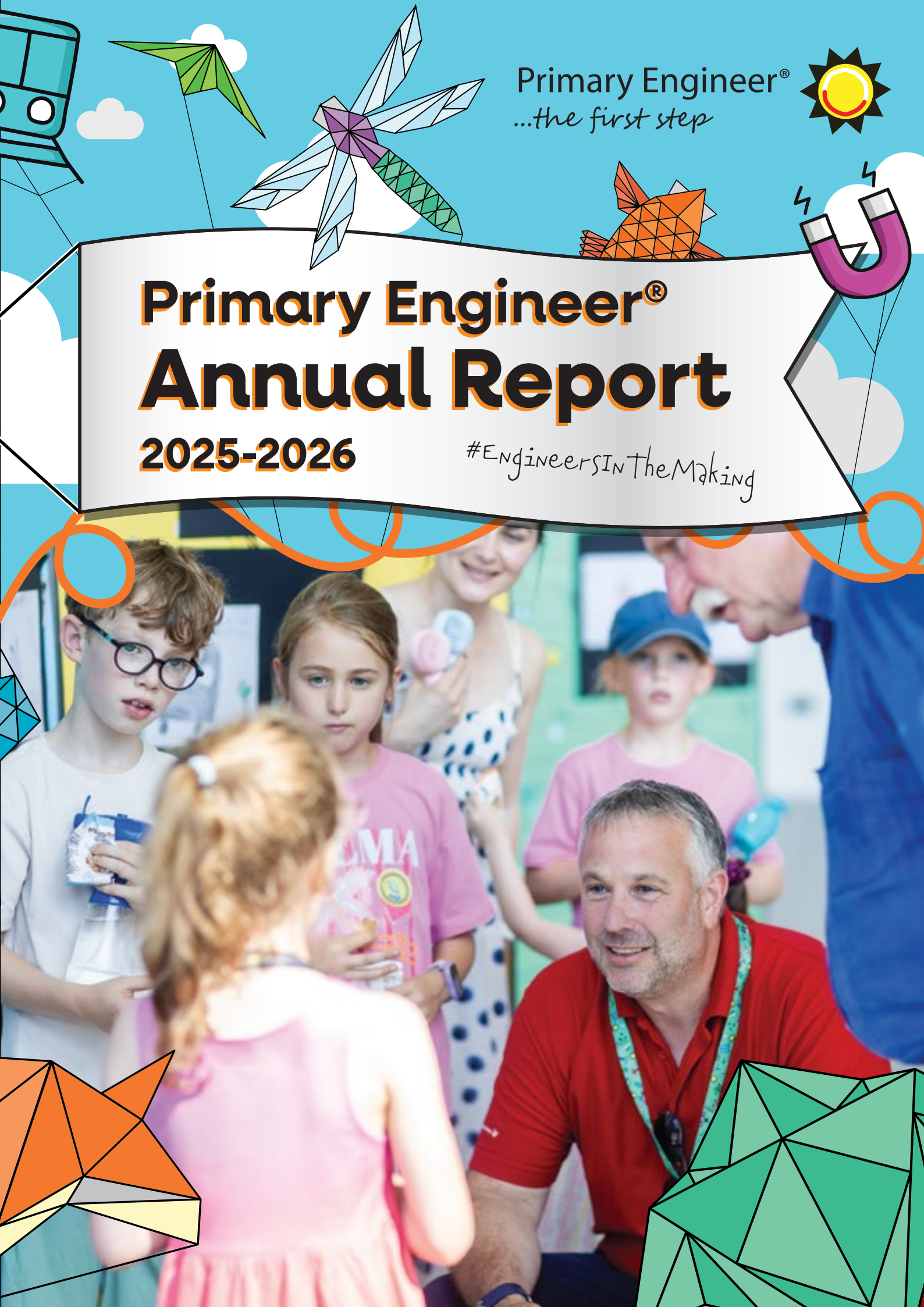
Primary Engineer®
...the first step



Primary Engineer® Annual Report

2025-2026

#EngineersInTheMaking



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Introduction from our CEO

In September 2025, Primary Engineer reached its 20-year milestone, which provides the perfect opportunity to reconnect back to our why!

Twenty years ago, we set out to help primary school pupils discover a love of learning and to give education a purpose that many pupils just starting out could not yet see. Engineering was the perfect vehicle: it connects every part of the curriculum, creates opportunities for hands-on applied learning, and demonstrates that engineering is all around us, and, importantly that engineers were not 'just' hard hats and overalls. Through it, we have been able to raise aspirations and inspire young people towards careers they may never otherwise have considered. We also happen to have a passion for engineering ourselves, so it worked rather well.

Two decades on, cumulatively many thousands of schools have engaged with our programmes, competitions, and qualifications. We see over 110,000 pupils annually take part in our activities, not through short, one-off engagements, but through experiences delivered within curriculum time. This equates to over 788,905 hours of engineering education being delivered across the UK every year.

When we look at those big numbers, it's easy to forget that behind them are individuals. For us, those individuals are central to everything we do, design, and strive to achieve. Everyone connected with Primary Engineer has a favourite story: a memorable 'If you were an engineer what would you do?' competition entry, a special moment at a celebration event, or in the classroom. These meaningful and sometimes life-changing moments show the inspiration and transformation that comes from placing engineering at the heart of learning.

I often talk about the ability of young children to become completely obsessed with a subject. That passion must start somewhere. We've attended events this year where primary pupils have spoken so enthusiastically about trains that engineers assumed they must have always been slightly obsessed. In reality, they became obsessed because the Primary Engineer Rail Programme, and rail engineers themselves, went into their school. That experience changed how they looked at the world and, in some cases, their ambitions for the future, and it is far from an isolated example.

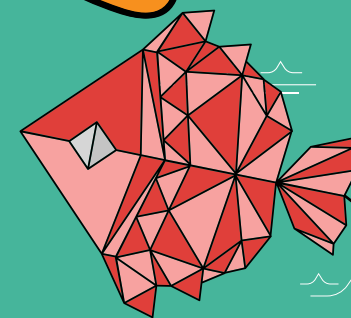
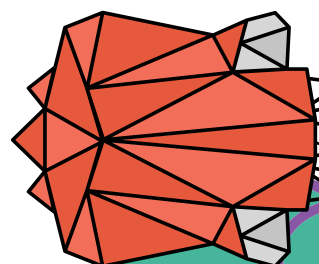
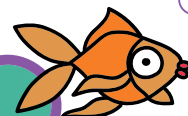
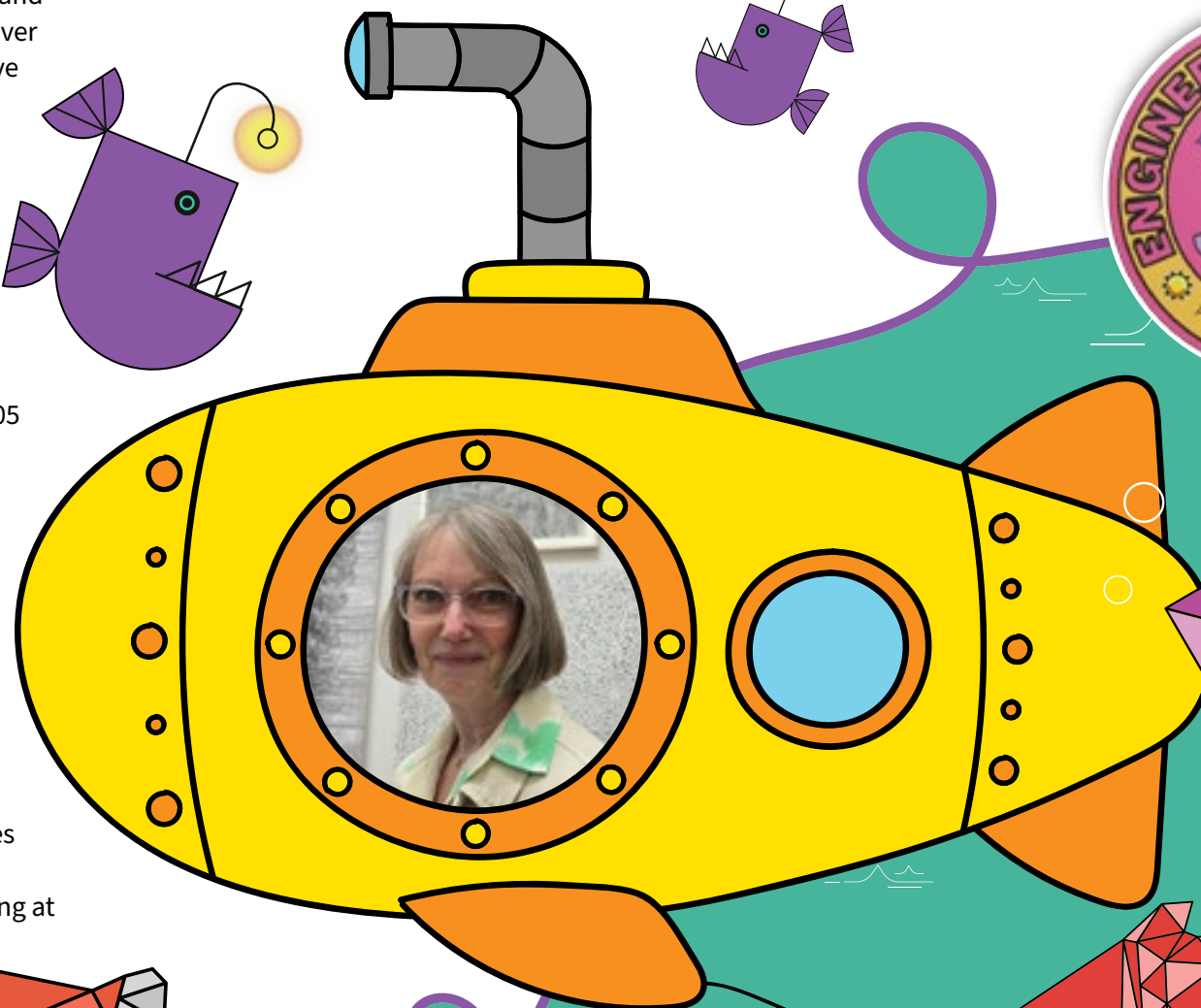
Alongside the 212 events we delivered this year, we have taken these stories onto national stages at Westminster Select Committees, in speeches, panel sessions, and podcasts. We attended New Scientist Live at the invitation of the RAF, took part in the Northern Ireland Science Festival at Ulster University, where Carl Robertshaw delivered a kite-inspired IMechE Annual Lecture, enjoyed the energy and ice cream at Rail Live 2026 with Porterbrook and Bauer Media, and made our final trip of the year to Farnborough International Airshow with NWAA and Composites UK.

As ever, everything we do, have achieved, and hope to achieve is only possible because of the dedication of everyone who works at Primary Engineer; our Advisory Board; the companies and organisations that support and fund us; the engineers who volunteer their time and expertise; the teachers who embrace what we offer; and, ultimately, the pupils who inspire us every day to do more.

**Susan Scurlock MBE, Founder & CEO
Primary Engineer®**

"Primary Engineer is really special. By connecting young people to real-world engineering challenges we nurture curiosity, encourage creativity and build confidence. Engineers are the ultimate curious problem solvers and Primary Engineer is inspiring and enabling young minds to see possibilities where others see challenges. At a time when society needs fresh thinking and diverse talent more than ever this helps shape the next generation of passionate innovators, engineers and leaders who will design a better future."

- Paula Cousins, Chief Strategy & Sustainability Officer at WEIR Group



Our Reach across the UK

Our approach reaches particular areas and communities to promote inclusivity and equality for all pupils

Primary Engineer®
...the first step



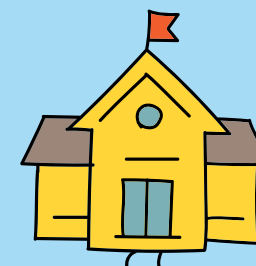
Gender Split (girl:boy)

52/48



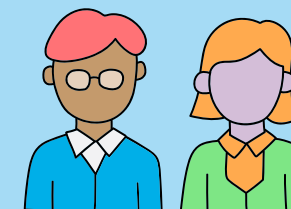
Total Pupils

111,550



Schools

2,007



Teachers

6,832

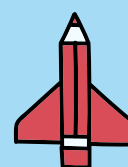
90

Teacher Training Sessions



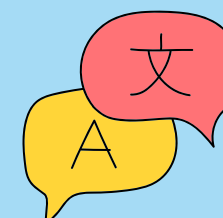
25

Award Ceremonies & Public Exhibitions



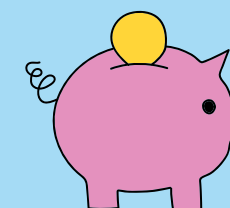
Pupils deemed other ethnic origin:

33%



Pupils whose first language is not English:

16%



% of schools engaged are in the third most deprived index (1-3):

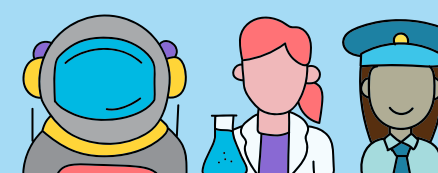
35%

based on IoD2019/WIMD2019/SIMD 2020v2/NIMDM2017



% of pupils eligible for free school meals:

32%



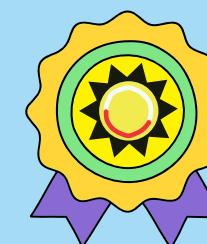
Engineers

2,050



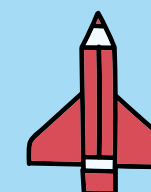
Pupil hours of engagement with engineering

788,905



Events

212



Leaders Award Regions

25

IF YOU WERE AN
ENGINEER
WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

#EngineersInTheMaking



Programmes

Our Programmes are designed to immerse pupils in the world of engineering from the very start. Each one provides a complete, hands-on experience, combining physical resources and tools for approximately 60 pupils across Lower Primary (Key Stage 1) and Upper Primary (Key Stage 2). At the heart of every programme is a practical engineering-themed project that brings learning to life, giving pupils the opportunity to build, test, problem-solve, and create in ways that traditional classroom learning simply can't replicate.

Each programme includes a comprehensive Career-Long Professional Learning (CLPL) training course for up to two teachers per school, equipping them with the confidence, skills, and understanding needed to embed engineering meaningfully into their classrooms. Supported by fully curriculum-mapped digital teaching resources, teachers are empowered to deliver engaging and impactful lessons long after the programme ends.

A powerful element of our Programmes is the connection to real engineers and industry professionals. These partnerships bring learning into the real world, giving pupils access to role models, hands-on support, and a genuine insight into engineering careers. The journey concludes with exciting opportunities to celebrate pupils' achievements, ensuring that the children's efforts and creativity are recognised and valued.

Each Programme is delivered through a diverse range of inspiring themes including Rail, Vehicles, Construction, Aviation, Horology, Deep Sea, Deep Space and Early Years Engineers for pre-school learners. This variety explores

career pathways in these different sectors, ensures there is something to feed every child's imagination, while consistently building core engineering skills such as curiosity, creative problem solving, and resilience from an early age.

Over the past year, we have seen **29,905 pupils**, **1,348 teachers**, and **337 engineers** come together through our Programmes, supported by **90 training events** and **over 270 in-person and in-school celebration events** across the UK. Together, this has resulted in an incredible **299,054 hours of classroom engagement with engineering**, time spent thinking like an Engineer, building confidence, and developing future-ready skills.

Pupils leave with a greater awareness of engineering careers and a deeper understanding of what it means to think like an engineer. Teachers report increased confidence delivering Maths, Science, Design & Technology, and engineering concepts within the classroom.

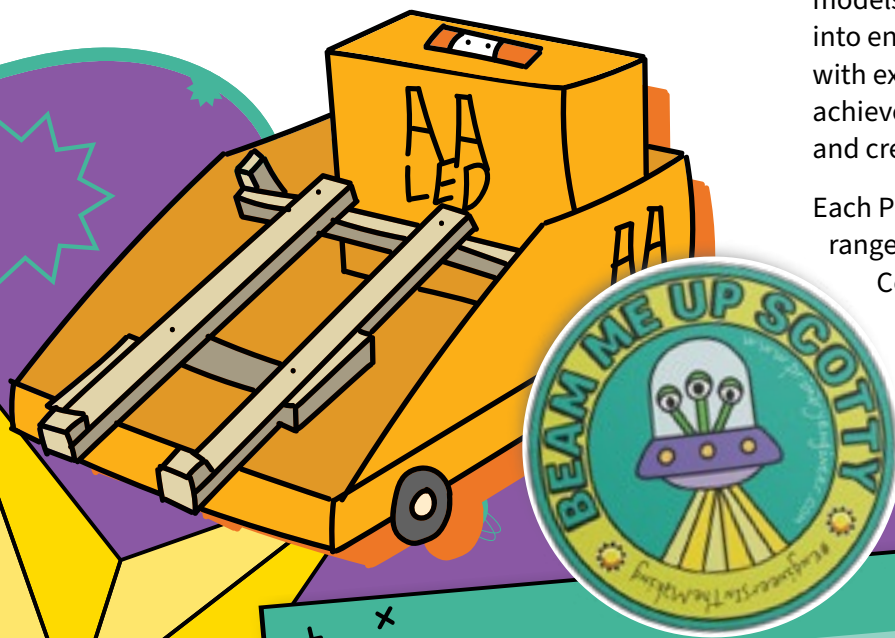


"Seeing a hall full of young girls getting stuck into constructing towers and trucks was just wonderful. The resilience they showed when it didn't quite go right, the excitement when it did. The look of utter delight on the faces of the girls that were chosen to go the celebration day and buzz of coming back to school having won a prize. I really feel that we are paving the way for the next generation of female engineers."

- Sara, teacher at Warwick Prep

Crucially, our programmes are helping to challenge long-standing stereotypes within the engineering profession. By engaging whole classes, we create inclusive environments where every pupil can thrive and achieve. Time and again, we see pupils who may struggle academically succeed in hands-on tasks, discover new strengths, and grow in confidence. We see collaborations flourish, leadership emerge, and classroom behaviour transformed through purposeful, practical learning.

Funded by industry, foundations, and government, our Primary Engineer® Programmes are provided at no cost to schools — removing barriers and ensuring equality of access for all pupils. They ignite curiosity, build essential skills, and open doors to future pathways, with thousands of schools already taking part annually across the UK. Learn more about them at www.primaryengineer.com/programmes/



"A child with ADHD asked his 11 support to leave him so that he could work with his partner. They solved problems together without adult support and their build was one chosen to go to the celebration event. Most of our most successful builds were made by children who struggle academically so the project really boosted their confidence. Was fantastic to see."

- Frances, teacher at St John's Catholic Primary School



Scan or click to watch the Silverstone Technology Cluster Primary Engineer Celebration Event



Competitions

IF YOU WERE an ENGINEER
What would you do?

'If you were an engineer, what would you do?' Leaders Award Competition invites pupils across The UK to look, ask why, and to challenge the norm, to identify the things that don't work and those that don't exist and, in the process, imagine a world made better through engineering. Open to everyone between the ages of 3-19, it places creativity, curiosity, and problem-solving at the heart of the learning experience.

Pupils are tasked to answer the competition question by interviewing an engineer, then identifying a problem close to home or worldwide that can be solved through an engineered solution which they then illustrate and annotate, finishing with a letter explaining why an engineer should choose to build it!

The opportunity to meet an engineer — either in the classroom or through our high-profile online live interview series, or our YouTube archive — gives them the opportunity to ask questions in the live interviews, hear personal stories, and see the real-world impact of engineering. These

12 Burnley Students prepped over 6,000 Pupil ideas for exhibitions!

"We were so not ready for one of our children to win the judges award I didn't quite have my iPad ready to take pictures! The child that won this award has had a bit of a tricky year and very rarely have we seen her beautiful smile. This event had her beaming from ear to ear, and everyday in school since she has found me to check in and we even held an assembly to show off our winners awards and she had a whole section just for her where she proudly showed off her trophy. At the start of the year she couldn't even sit in the hall amongst all the other children happily. This has been such a huge success far beyond the design itself and the winner, her confidence has absolutely sky rocketed and its so nice to see her natural smile back. Thank you Primary Engineer!"

- Emma, teacher at The Pilgrim School

moments are powerful. They open doors, spark ambition, and help pupils see themselves in careers they may never have considered. In the 2025-26 academic year, we delivered **18 live interviews**, reaching an audience of over **30,000 pupils** across the UK. A highlight for us included a special broadcast from the Elizabeth Tower in London, exploring the engineering behind Big Ben and the precision of horology, which saw members of our team filming from behind the clock faces of the world's most famous clock.

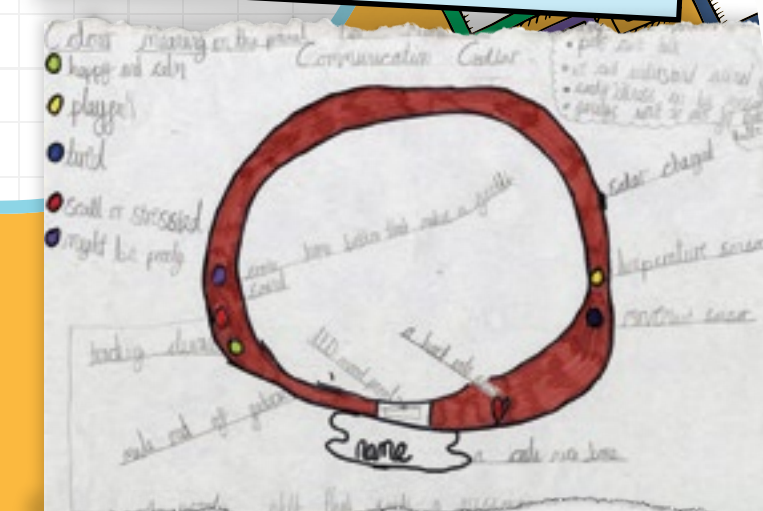
Every entry is read and graded by engineering professionals, with every pupil receiving a personalised named and graded certificate recognising their achievement. From tens of thousands of entries, the most innovative ideas are shortlisted and taken forward to exclusive judging days where the invited judges, formed from leading industry and engineering professionals, select the Winning and Highly Commended designs in each year group that will be celebrated at each of our 25 regional Award Ceremonies.



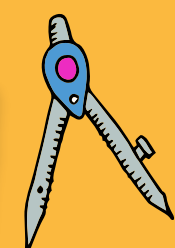
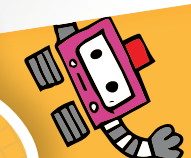
Holo Medic, Melody B, Year 10



Engineer judging days for the Leaders Award Competition



Pet Mood Communication Collar Iris M, Year 2



These events are the highlight of the journey, bringing together pupils, teachers, families, and industry to celebrate innovation and creativity. Shortlisted ideas are showcased in vibrant public exhibitions, and winners and highly commended pupils are recognised on stage in moments filled with pride, excitement, and lasting memories.

For some pupils, the journey goes even further. Each year, university and industry partners select standout ideas to take from a sheet of paper to a fully formed prototype. This year, 17 prototypes were unveiled, designed and built by teams of students, apprentices, and engineers working alongside the pupils who originated them. You will be able to learn more about this in the 'ProtoTeams' on page 16.

This year, we saw **78,096 pupils** and **5,331 teachers** take part from schools across the country, contributing **over 468,576 pupil hours of engineering engagement**. Additionally, **1,487 engineers** supported the journey, bringing ideas to life through **19 grading** and **25 judging days** and celebrating success at **25 regional award ceremonies** and **public exhibitions** nationwide.

We would like to thank the students from Burnley College, whose support behind the scenes made these events possible. Showcasing **over 6,000 pupil ideas** across the UK is no small task, and their dedication played a vital role in bringing these celebrations to life.

Now in its 14th year, the competition continues to grow in reach and impact—empowering young people to see themselves as engineers solving problems we can all identify with and some, we didn't know we needed! Ultimately, everyone involved leaves inspired and relieved that our future is in the hands of these Engineers in the Making! Discover more at www.leadersaward.com

Allergen Tracker, Olivia F, Primary 5



AI Aldo - Artificial Intelligence Scarecrow, Zunairah I-H, Year 2

2025-2026

78,096 Pupils

25 Regions

1,206 Schools

5,331 Teachers

1,487 Engineers

52% Girls

48% Boys

18 Online Interviews

47 Grading & Judging Days

25 Awards Events & Exhibitions

17 Prototeams

940

Winners & Highly Commended

ENGINEERS IN THE MAKING®

Scan or click to watch the Northern Powergrid video from our North East regional awards

Competitions

STATWARS[®] CLIMATE CHANGE CHALLENGE

3
PLEDGES

STATWARS: Climate Change Challenge is a national competition that brings data, creativity, and real-world problem solving together—connecting learning across science, mathematics, computing, engineering, English, and geography.

This year, we saw **1,140 pupils** from **38 schools** take part, using data they collected to address climate change and influence others through social agency.

Designed for pupils aged 8–14 (Key Stage 2 and 3), STATWARS empowers young people to take action on one of the most urgent challenges of our time: climate change. Using our carbon footprint calculator, pupils analyse their own environmental impact, transforming personal data into powerful insights. From there, they identify three meaningful pledges, practical changes they can make in their everyday lives and, crucially, how they can influence others to do the same.

The results are inspiring. Pupils communicate their ideas through posters, infographics, videos, and letters to their local MPs, developing not only technical understanding, but confidence, creativity, and a strong sense of social responsibility. This year, common themes included choosing to shop locally, walking or cycling to school, using public transport, and reducing energy consumption at home; small actions with big potential impact.

Every pupil who takes part receives a graded certificate recognising their achievement, while winning schools share up to £5,000 of eco-prizes, helping to further embed sustainable thinking within their communities.

Delivered across the UK in the 2025–26 academic year, STATWARS was made possible with the support of Anglia Ruskin University. Together, we've brought data to life in the classroom, showing pupils how the skills they are learning directly connect to real careers and global challenges.

To deepen learning even further, our partners also created a series of engaging videos featuring data engineers, offering real insight into their roles and the decisions they make to reduce environmental impacts. These resources help pupils see how data-driven careers can shape a more sustainable future.

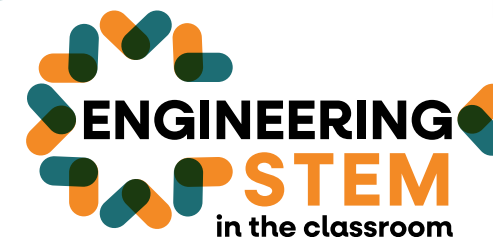
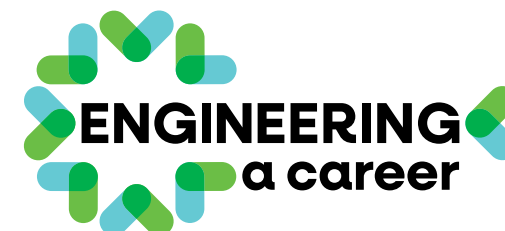
STATWARS inspires the next generation to think critically and make a difference through data. Discover more at

www.statwarscompetition.com

"I found the STATWARS Climate Change challenge to be an enriching learning experience which helped pupils to engage and develop life skills across multiple curricular areas such as science, mathematics, computing and geography."

— Grant, teacher at Crookfur Primary School

Qualifications



We expanded our qualifications for teachers, educators, and career advisors seeking more research-based professional development. They are designed to enable teachers and practitioners to further their understanding of the engineering sector, engineers' skill sets, and career pathways into the industry. The qualifications we offer are **Engineering STEM in the Classroom**, **Engineering Your Curriculum (PGCert)**, and **Engineering a Career** – all tailored to the specific requirements of both education and industry.

During 2025–26 academic year, we continued delivery of our **Engineering STEM in the Classroom** qualification in the Scottish Highlands and Islands as part of the SSE Green Skills Pathway with Young Enterprise and the Science Skills Academy, working with teachers and schools in the region throughout the project. The project culminated with a joint Circular Economy Challenge & Green Skills Pathway Showcase Event, incorporating a live online lesson of our STATWARS: Climate Change Challenge, reaching more teachers and pupils in rural areas.

Alongside this, we started our engagement with teachers and practitioners specifically in Argyle and Bute as part of the SSE Hydro Fund, which continues into the 2026/27 academic year.

Our **Engineering a Career Qualification** helps teachers recognise that every pupil can thrive in engineering, whatever their strengths. The programme supports teachers in identifying pupils' natural talents and linking them to suitable engineering careers. Through practical classroom activities, industry engagement, and site visits, teachers gain valuable insights, build local employer connections, and develop their confidence in guiding pupils towards relevant engineering pathways and future opportunities.

Engineering a Career continued during the 2025–26 academic year through support from Ford Philanthropy, allowing us to offer fully-funded places to teachers and career leads across the UK.

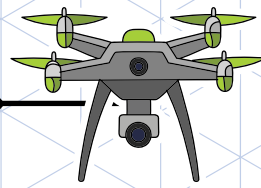
In total across all activities, we engaged with **63 Teachers** and **over 1,800 Pupils**, supported by **10 Engineers**.

Scan or click to watch the engineers who inspired these students

WIN



ProtoTeams



Each year, some of our university and industry partners form a Primary Engineer ProtoTeam and select an inspiring pupil entry from the 'If you were an engineer, what would you do?' Leaders Award Competition, originally displayed at our public exhibitions in the summer term.

Each idea is chosen by the ProtoTeam because it sparks their curiosity, solves a problem, or captures the brilliant originality of young engineering minds. What follows is extraordinary. Working closely with the pupil and their school, teams treat the pupil as the client, ensuring that the final prototype remains as true as possible to the original vision. Ideas begin as annotated pencil sketches on paper but quickly move into the world of computer-aided design, 3D printing, advanced manufacturing, and electronics, where they are brought to life as real, working prototypes.

The ProtoTeams themselves bring together a dynamic mix of university students, technicians, lecturers, apprentices, graduates, and professional engineers, combining fresh thinking with the technical expertise to tackle designs that are often as wonderfully simple as they are surprisingly

complex. Along the way, pupils gain a unique behind-the-scenes insight into engineering in action, while students and early-career engineers develop valuable real-world skills through live, creative problem-solving projects. Progress updates allow schools, partners, and the wider public to follow each build and celebrate the journey before the finished prototypes are unveiled at regional exhibitions and award ceremonies during the summer term. These are moments of real pride, where pupils see their ideas brought to life in front of family, teachers, engineers, and industry partners.

From here, the journey continues. Applications open for the Primary Engineer MacRobert Medal, celebrating the very best in innovation and public outreach.

This year, **17 ProtoTeams** were shortlisted, with the medallists announced at our ceremony in London on 16th November 2026.

Discover more at:
www.primaryengineer.com/primary-engineer-macrobert-medal/



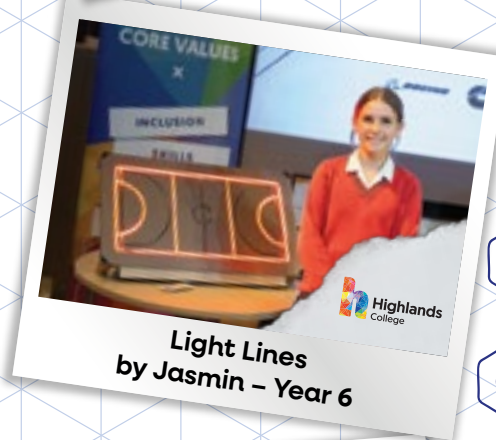
The Super Sucking Machine
by Ellis – Reception



Hearing Band Cochlear
by Samuel – Year 3



Hot Hands
by Hannah – Nursery



Light Lines
by Jasmin – Year 6



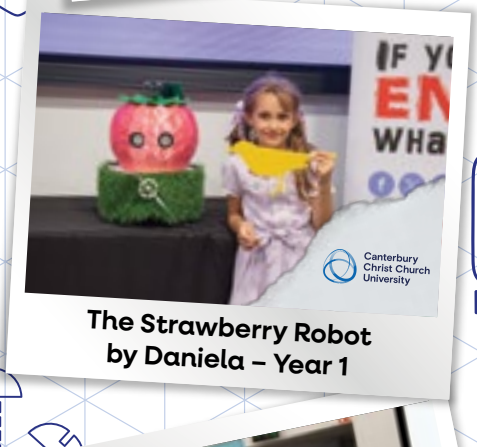
Wildfire Drone 3000
by Imogen – Year 2



UpClip
by Jacob – Year 10



Helpful Robot
by Evie – Reception



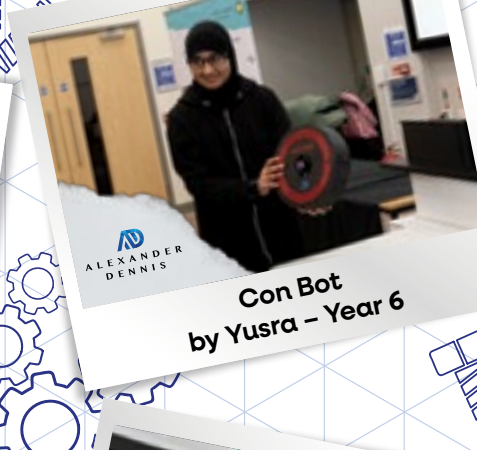
The Strawberry Robot
by Daniela – Year 1



The Marvellous Dog Heater
by James – P5



The Magnetic Car
by Issabella – Y2



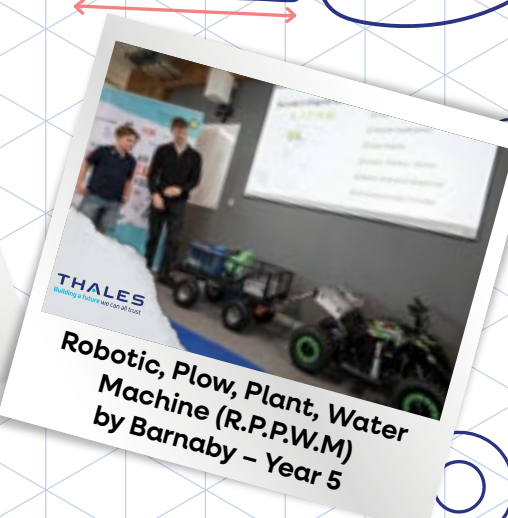
Con Bot
by Yusra – Year 6



Sea Boat Filter
by Mylah – Year 1



Spray
by Martha – Year 2



Robotic, Plow, Plant, Water
Machine (R.P.P.W.M)
by Barnaby – Year 5



Auto Dispensing Trowel
by Lilian – Year 13



Smart Follow Me Suitcase
by Maya – Year 4



The Dido Bots
by Georgie – Year 4



Primary Engineer MacRobert Medal

Nowhere is innovation more powerfully showcased than in the Primary Engineer MacRobert Medal. Evolving from our 'If you were an engineer, what would you do?' Leaders Award Competition, the Primary Engineer MacRobert Medal has taken on a life of its own, true innovation from the grassroots up, fuelled by the imagination of young people across the UK.

The Primary Engineer MacRobert Medal celebrates the creativity and innovation demonstrated by Primary Engineer ProtoTeams, who bring school pupils' ideas to life by developing them into working prototypes. ProtoTeams enter each year in a bid to win Gold, Silver or Bronze medals. Reflecting the spirit of the MacRobert Award, the medal recognises the creativity and ingenuity of the next generation of engineers.

Judging is led by senior figures from engineering, education, and government, reflecting the significance of the achievement. This year, our esteemed judging panel was chaired by **Paul Sheerin**, CEO of Scottish Engineering. The panel also included **Dr Becky Smithson**, Trustee at the MacRobert Trust; **Debbie Johnson**, Head of Innovation Talent and Skills at UK Research and Innovation; **Hannah Swales**, FOSTER Programme Manager at UK Atomic Energy Authority; **Professor Helen James OBE**, Chair of the Education and Skills Strategy Board at the IMechE; **Matthew Kleanthous**, UK Social Impact Manager at National

Grid; **Dr Ollie Folayan MBE (FREng CEng FICHEM)**, Chartered Chemical Engineer and Co-Founder of AFBE; **Paul Wright**, Merchandising and Supply Chain Director at Christopher Ward; **Paula Claytonsmyth**, Chief Executive at LCRIG; **Air Marshal Phil Osborn CBE**, Chairman at RAFCT; and **Zach Eaton-Rosen**, Senior Research Engineer at Google DeepMind the 2024 MacRobert Award winner.

In 2025, **17 prototypes** were developed and **9 awarded Medals** at a ceremony held at Drapers' Hall in London in front of an audience from across industry, education, and some very proud parents. The event also marked the second year of the public-voted Commendation Medal, with more than 2,500 votes cast—demonstrating the excitement and support behind these young innovators. In previous years, we have seen the winners of the vote scale dizzying heights of public recognition, and this year was no exception with Millie and her Rainbow Glasses being prominently featured on the BBC and ITV news channels.

The Primary Engineer MacRobert Medal continues in 2026, supported by The MacRobert Trust, WEIR Group, and Christopher Ward, with the next ceremony set for London in November 2026.

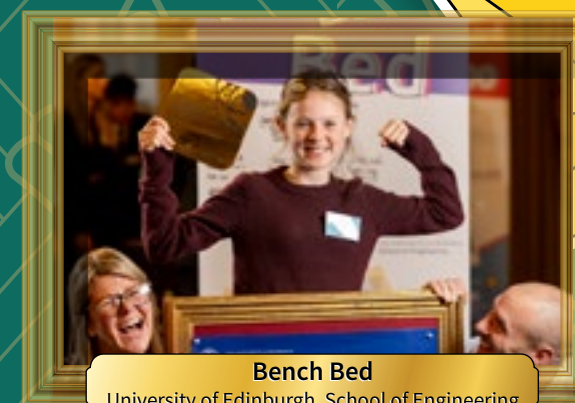
"The MacRobert Trust is proud to support the Primary Engineer MacRobert Medal, which exemplifies the spirit of innovation and collaboration in engineering. Inspiring young people to engage with real-world engineering challenges is essential to nurture the next generation of creative and skilled innovators. Through our partnership with Primary Engineer, we are honoured to encourage curiosity, critical thinking and ambition amongst young people. Engineering is at the heart of the future and addressing opportunities at an early age is so important."

- Gillian Currie, Chief Executive Officer at The MacRobert Trust

Our Award-Winning Prototypes



Rainbow Glasses
Thales Cheadle



Bench Bed
University of Edinburgh, School of Engineering



I CAN SWING
Thales Belfast



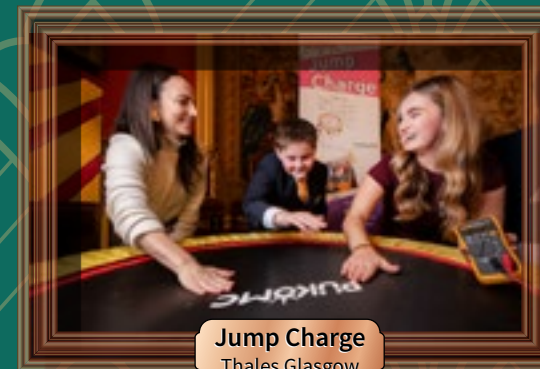
Attaching Suitcase
Civil Aviation Authority



Hummingbird 3000
Thales Crawley



4 Bin Swopper
University of Southampton



Jump Charge
Thales Glasgow



Heat Sensor
AVEVA



Focus Band
Thales Glasgow



New in 2025-26

Innovation sits at the heart of Primary Engineer, shaping our programmes, competitions, qualifications, and the engagement models we implement to bring engineering to as wide an audience as possible. In 2025-26, this commitment led to the launch of two brand-new programmes: **The Primary Engineer Kite Works Programme** and the **Primary Engineer Time Machines Programme**, both designed to inspire curiosity, creativity, and hands-on engineering from an early age.

The Primary Engineer Kite Works Programme invites pupils to design, build, and fly their own kites, turning classrooms into testing grounds for creativity and discovery. Learners explore the science behind flight, materials, and aerodynamics while developing essential skills in problem solving, design, and teamwork. Closely linked to careers in aviation and engineering, the programme brings learning to life through practical skills, iterative design, and a real-world relevance.

Teachers are fully supported throughout, receiving tools and components for up to 70 learners to build their own kite. Teachers receive a full day of hands-on training supported by curriculum-mapped digital resources to use in the classroom. This programme will see pupils take learning outside the classroom as they fly their kites! The aim of this programme is to provide an entry point for pupils to engage with aerospace and aviation and engineers from an early age and to inspire them towards careers in the sector.



The KITE Works Programme

From Fabric to Flight:
Discovering Engineering & Design



"one particular student really engaged with the practical build and got on so well he built 2 kites. He had much more positive engagement and was very enthused about engineering and the freedom he was given during the project"

- Louise, teacher at Omagh Academy



The Primary Engineer Time Machines Programme takes pupils on a journey into the intricate and fascinating world of horology and micro-engineering. Learners design and build their own functional "time machines," exploring concepts such as movement, gears, ratios, materials, and structure. Teachers are equipped with everything they need, empowering them to deliver engaging, high-impact learning experiences.

These new programmes demonstrate how engineering can unlock creativity, build confidence and open pathways to future careers.



"The children loved the concept of time machines and the history of clocks. They liked looking at the different designers of modern watches. This linked in perfectly to the maths unit of time we were studying at the time."

- Helaina, teacher at St Anne's RC Primary School



Making Headlines

This past year, the power of a great story has taken centre stage. From national television features to prime-time radio coverage, we've shared stories that inspire, challenge perceptions, and drive real change, and the media has taken notice. This section celebrates the growing recognition of our work, the strength of our partnerships, and the remarkable journeys of the young people we support.

From Classroom Idea to National Inspiration

What started as a moment of frustration turned into a story that captured national attention.

When 11-year-old Millie arrived at school in 2024 without her various coloured-lens glasses, an essential tool for managing her dyslexia, it sparked an idea. Rather than seeing it as a setback, she imagined a solution. That idea became her entry to the 'If you were an engineer, what would you do?' Leaders Award Competition.

From there, the journey accelerated. Millie's design was selected by the Thales Cheadle ProtoTeam, who worked alongside her to transform her concept into a fully functioning prototype. Unveiled in July 2025, her invention went on to win a Gold Medal at the Primary Engineer MacRobert Medal Awards just a few months later.

In 2026, Millie's story reached new heights—featured on BBC News North West, ITV Granada News, and ultimately appearing on BBC Breakfast News, inspiring audiences far beyond the classroom. Then came a moment few could have imagined: her story reached Sir Richard Branson. Having spoken openly about his own experiences with dyslexia, he sent Millie a personal message, praising her creativity, resilience, and entrepreneurial spirit.

It's been incredible to watch Millie's confidence grow alongside her success.

Read the full story:

<https://www.primaryengineer.com/rainbow-glasses-for-dyslexia/>



"Millie has loved every second of this experience and it has really motivated her. She has been really excited through the whole journey and she is so hopeful about the future. Her grandad was an Engineer and this is the sector she has always wanted to work in and her dreams have been made into a reality. Thank you so much for giving Millie this opportunity. I have loved to watch her confidence grow and become motivated and proud of herself."

- Sarah, parent of Millie



Scan or click to read BBC's article on Millie's Rainbow Glasses

Lights, Camera, Engineer!

Millie's story helped spark a wave of media coverage that carried on throughout the year. We kicked things off with a high-profile ITV Granada feature filmed at Thales in Cheadle, Greater Manchester, showcasing the ProtoTeam in action.

This quickly led to a follow-up BBC News North West interview, hosted at our Burnley headquarters, bringing together Millie, her family, and the Thales ProtoTeam who brought her idea to life.

The spotlight continued to grow. In May, ITV Anglia joined us in Stevenage to capture the energy and excitement of the Govia Thameslink Railway celebration event, highlighting the impact of industry partnerships and pupil engagement.

By June, BBC Radio Jersey covered our regional exhibition and award ceremony at Highlands College. Pupils, teachers, and industry partners shared their experiences live on air, capturing a powerful snapshot of local innovation and collaboration in action.



The Centre of the Universe for Engineering Education!

At the heart of it all is Burnley, where Primary Engineer has proudly been based for over a decade. From our home in a beautifully restored mill on the Leeds-Liverpool Canal, we are transforming the curriculum through our "STEM by Stealth" approach, embedding engineering into classrooms across the UK.

This year, we were honoured to be named a finalist at the Burnley Business Awards 2026, recognising both our national impact and our deep local roots.

Whilst our national reach continues to grow, Burnley remains at the centre of it all. Each year, competition entries make their way to our office in such volumes that we know the names of the posties! Truly, making Burnley the centre of the universe for engineering education in the UK, as the entries are prepared to be read, graded, and celebrated.

While our stories and impact are nationwide, our foundation remains firmly rooted in the community we call home. And if you're ever nearby, our kettle is always on!

Impact in Action

Real impact isn't found in big statistics alone. Beyond the numbers, across every programme, competition, and qualification we deliver, lie the life-changing moments of the individuals at the heart of our mission.

These are the breakthrough moments witnessed by educators as previously disengaged pupils completely transform, captivated by their teachers bringing engineering into their classrooms through our activity. Engineering has become relatable, personal and exciting. They are felt by the parents and guardians whose children, sparked by a classroom visit from a real engineer, suddenly see a place for themselves in the industry and "now" absolutely love trains, planes, automobiles and innovating. These moments culminate at our celebration events and awards, where we bring education and industry together to celebrate the boundary-pushing imagination of every young person.

Our case studies are far more than mere success stories; they are a living testament to how we collaboratively drive positive change for pupils, teachers, and communities alike.

By focusing on these stories, we can demonstrate the true power of collaboration. Through vital partnerships with industry, foundations, colleges, and universities, pupils are never simply inspired from a distance; they are invited directly into the creative process. Whether through engineers visiting classrooms to share real-world problem-solving, or university and industry ProtoTeams working alongside young engineers to build physical prototypes, we ensure that every child's idea is listened to, developed, and celebrated.

Together, these voices demonstrate the breadth of our impact: opening doors, challenging stereotypes, being wholly inclusive, and showing young people that engineering is something they can begin exploring today.

Read more of our case studies and discover the stories behind our impact at www.primaryengineer.com/category/case-studies/

🌀 "What made this partnership essential was alignment on outcomes: opening doors, demystifying STEM pathways, and giving students tangible experiences that build confidence and curiosity."

- Laura McEwen, MRO Senior Value Engineer at GE Aerospace in Prestwick

Events & Conferences

We are a recognisable and sought-after voice of engineering in Primary Schools across the UK and consequently find ourselves in places and palaces few would expect to find us! From Westminster Select Committees, where we gave evidence on skills and the development of engineering in schools, to exhibition halls, conference stages, awards dinners, and industry showcases across the UK, we continued to champion early engineering engagement where it matters most.

Beyond our own events, our presence at key industry gatherings helps strengthen our role within the UK engineering community. We connect engineering education with industry and ensure that conversations about skills, workforce development and future talent include the voices and potential of young people. Whether in rail, aviation, construction, manufacturing or emerging technologies, these moments place Primary Engineer at the centre of collaboration and change.

At Rail Live, the UK's largest rail exhibition, we once again partnered with Porterbrook and Bauer Media to bring 30 primary school pupils on site over two unforgettable days. As the only under 18's allowed on site, the pupils and teachers toured the exhibition site like VIPs, drawing attention wherever they went, and picking up one or two presents along the way!

Exhibitors were quick to share their part in the rail sector, while pupils took part in a timed challenge alongside industry leaders and government representatives.

We also exhibited at Farnborough International Airshow, engaging with government, primes, SMEs and sector leaders to demonstrate how we are shaping the future workforce early, inclusively and at scale. Reaching more than 111,000 pupils annually, our work shows how engineering pathways can begin in the classroom and grow into real careers. Farnborough also provided the perfect platform to launch our new Kite Works Programme, opening creative routes into aerospace and beyond. Together, these events show the breadth of where we are present and the ambition behind why: to make engineering visible, accessible, and exciting wherever future talent can be found.

♡ "A highlight of Rail LIVE 2026 has to be helping out at this year's Primary Engineer event... There were so many engaged children taking part. Especially brilliant to see so many girls at the event!"
- Eleanor Wills, Senior Business Case & Commercial Lead at GWR



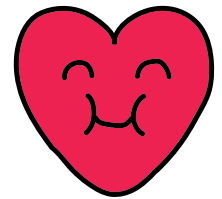
Our Impact



three out of four teachers delivered activities to an entire class or more



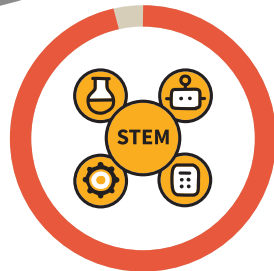
half of teachers taking part have no STEM teaching specialism



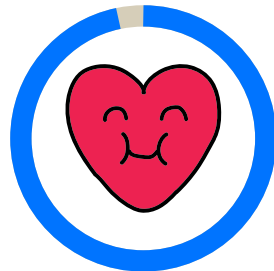
7 in 10 of pupils were better behaved in class



92%
of teachers report an increase in their understanding of engineering following training



96%
of teachers report that the projects are of high value to teaching STEM generally



97%
of teachers agree or strongly agree pupils have enjoyed taking part in the project



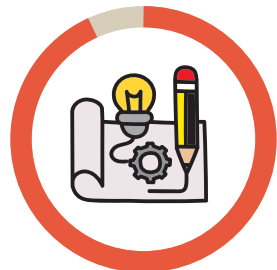
86%
of teachers are more comfortable talking to pupils about Engineering Careers



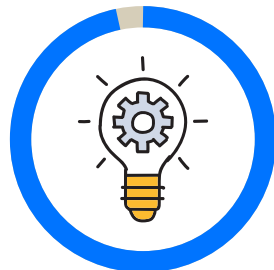
84%
of teachers agree or strongly agree to the value of careers-related learning in their school



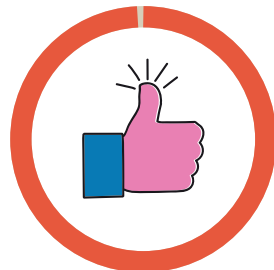
92%
of teachers were more confident with the subject of design and technology in the classroom



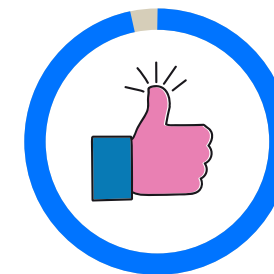
91%
of teachers agree or strongly agree they are more confident with the subject of engineering in the classroom



97%
of teachers observe a clear change in their pupil's perspective understanding the value of engineering



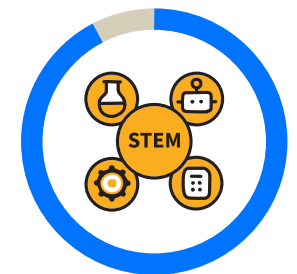
99%
nearly every teacher, would give an enthusiastic thumbs-up to taking part



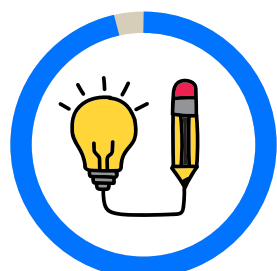
98%
of teachers reported their students had enjoyed learning about engineering



95%
of teachers reported that their students were curious about engineering



90%
of teachers reported that their students were inspired to learn more about Engineering and STEM



96%
of teachers would deliver our activities again



89%
of teachers have a better understanding of the diversity challenges



88%
of teachers agree or strongly agree that engineering is a career anyone can pursue



Testimonials

"Having had the privilege of joining the judges last year, I was incredibly inspired by the creativity, ingenuity and problem-solving demonstrated by young people from across the UK. The ideas and prototypes showcased a remarkable ability to think differently and tackle real-world challenges with fresh perspectives. As a business, collaboration and innovation is driven by curiosity, collaboration and the confidence to explore new possibilities. That's why we're proud to support the Primary Engineer MacRobert Medal, helping to celebrate and encourage the next generation of engineers, designers and innovators who will shape the future."

- Paul Wright, Supply Chain & Merchandising Director at Christopher Ward



"The awards were such a warm, welcoming place. For one of my children in particular, the support given and how the event made the child feel was unique and truly amazing."

- Joe, teacher at Blisworth Community Primary School

"I just want to take this opportunity to thank you for organising such an inspiring event for school children. I attended with my daughter Roshni, who was awarded highly commended for her invention. My husband and I were very impressed by the high standard of entries but also the effort you put into engaging the children. You are doing a great job in motivating and inspiring the future of tomorrow. Please pass on my compliments to all those involved."

- Sona, parent/carer



"All children were immersed in their learning, especially when building the vehicles. It piqued the interest of all children in the classroom, which is rare."

- Niki, teacher at Marsh Green Primary School

"I'm especially proud to support programmes like Primary Engineer that inspire young people to explore STEM and engineering careers. These initiatives not only spark curiosity today but also help cultivate the technical and problem-solving skills we'll rely on tomorrow, ensuring a talented pipeline for the future of engineering."

- Daniel Jones, Director MRO Operations at Boeing Defence UK

"The children were delighted to have made a working model which moved. One of the children who struggles with reading and writing was one of the most logical and practical team members who was able to trouble shoot effectively and with common sense to help his own team and others. It was lovely to see his confidence in this project help his self esteem to grow."

- Silvana, teacher at Kingsbury Green Primary School

"A highlight was seeing a particular child in my class who normally takes quite a passive role in group tasks taking the lead in processing the instructions, delegating to other pupils in the group and being able to support other groups too."

- Lauren, teacher at Marlborough Primary School



✿ ✿
 "Children thoroughly enjoyed receiving their graded certificates to see how well they did in the competition. They enjoyed meeting the engineer and trialling a problem she might encounter on a day-to-day basis."
 - M Bright, teacher at Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Primary School

✿
 "My favourite memory was when a boy who disengages from learning was problem solving and creating even before we'd shown the next steps and was then going around assisting others. Most engaged I've ever seen."
 - Patricia, teacher at St Anne's Catholic Primary School



✿
 "The children were really engaged with the project and it supported the opportunity to work collaboratively and with resilience. The engineer who attending to work with the children on the first day of the project was extremely supportive and the children were excited to see what they could produce as a result of his support. The project was well received with the parents engaging with the celebration event. The range of vehicles the children chose to design to fit their chassis was amazing. We had an open top double-decker London bus complete with seats for the passengers."
 - Gill, teacher at Beech Hill Community Primary School

✿
 "One of our shy girls excelled in the project, she has dyslexia and lacks confident. She represented us brilliantly and it was her design which was overall winner, she was thrilled, a huge boost"
 - Marie, teacher at Whitefield Primary School

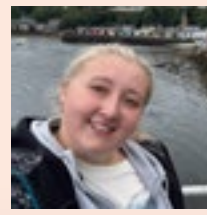
✿
 "Partnering with Primary Engineer is a genuine joy, not just because of the work you deliver, but also because of the professionalism and manner in which the partnership works. The whole team is so positive, engaging and supportive.. Ultimately make things easy for a partner."
 - Fraser Dunn, Site Lead at Peak International Group



Thanks to Our Supporters

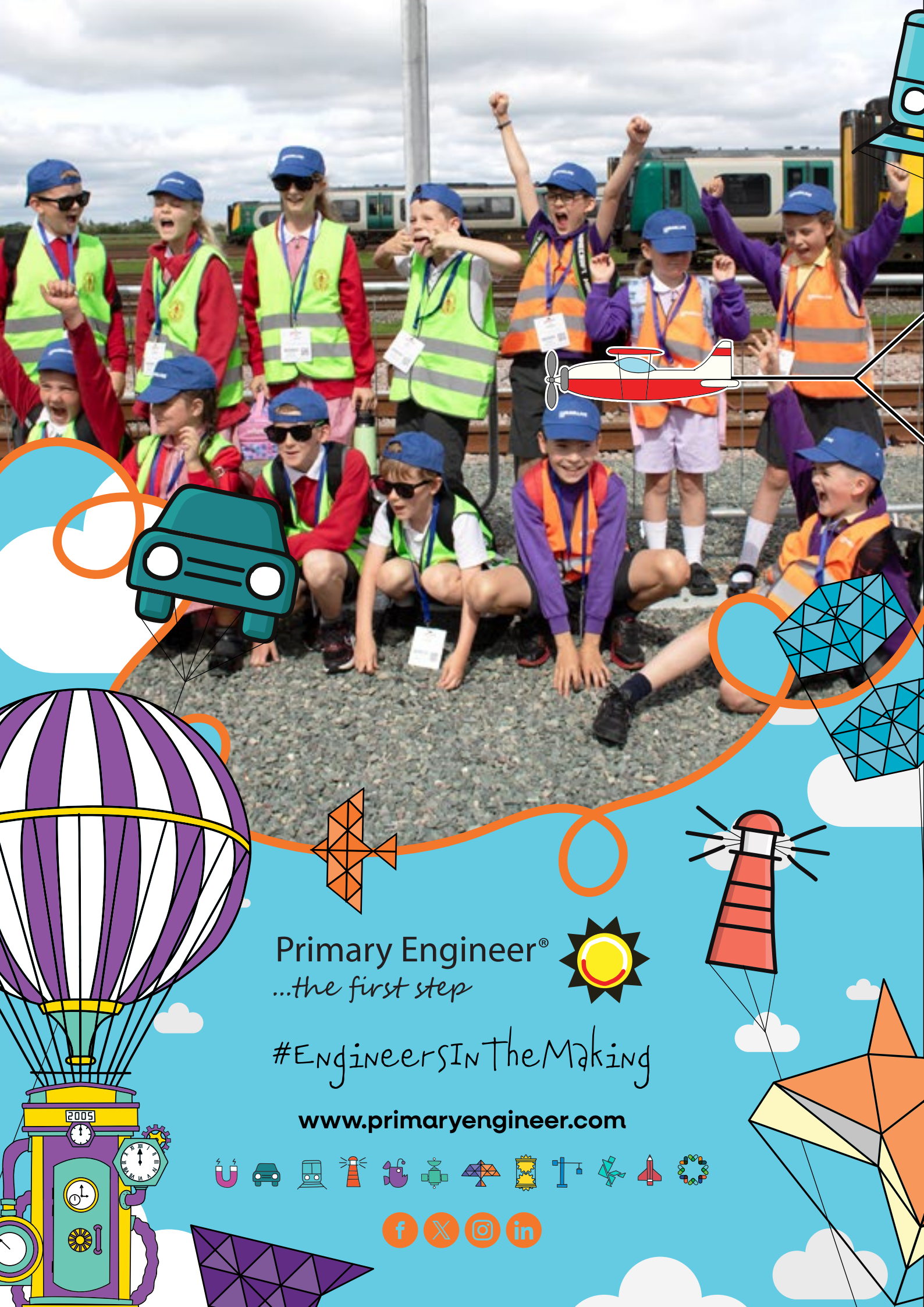


With special thanks to Makalya (Mak) Meadows, who, as part of her student placement from the University of Lancashire, worked with us to design this year's annual report. With our support, Mak did an outstanding job and made a valuable contribution to the final publication.



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Primary Engineer®
...the first step



#EngineersInTheMaking

www.primaryengineer.com

