

Parsons Green Prep School, London

This co-ed prep school has won two recent awards for its outstanding provision in STEM for projects such as growing rocket seeds, which astronaut Tim Peake then took into space on his most recent mission.

Unusually for a prep, there are weekly STEM lessons which, says headteacher Tim Cannell, ‘allows us to take something we’ve been doing in science and maths and extend it more practically. So reception have been building towers and year 1s have learned how air bubbles in lemonade lift raisins, which has led to other experiments. Year 3s did a recent marble run and year 4s researched different bridges and evaluated how they could strengthen and develop them. Year 5s have been learning about the science of flight and year 6 have been focusing on accidental discoveries, such as saccharin.’

There’s a STEM ambassadors’ scheme, in which professionals from industry talk at the school – with previous guests including zoologists, climate change scientists, engineers, geologists and nuclear physicists. And there’s a weekly STEM challenge, with a prize, along with a STEM after-school club.

‘STEM links theory and practice in ways that help prepare students for their future, but more than that it teaches soft skills – resilience to try again if it hasn’t worked the first time, as well as determination and teamwork,’ says Cannell.

No wonder our [Good Schools Guide reviewer](#) found that this school ‘is well ahead of the curve at primary level in putting STEM subjects at the heart of the maths curriculum.’

