5 Tips for setting up a STEM club

Are you looking to set up a STEM Club at your school? Here’s our top tips to make sure it goes smoothly!

1. **Be clear about the focus of your club**

   This is one of the very first things you need to decide.... Do you want to set up a cross-curricular club that encompasses all the STEM subjects or do you want your club to have a particular focus, for example robotics, coding or mathematics? Does your school have a specialism such as sport or performing arts that you might want to link in with? Or do you simply want to focus on the fun bits of STEM subjects to spark the student’s interest in the subjects? Whatever you choose, make sure there’s a focus for the club and plan your activities around this.

2. **Approach people with an interest**

   The best clubs have an enthusiastic individual to drive them forward, but don’t think you have to do all the work on your own. Approach other teachers to get their support and ideas. If you’re going to be running a science or technology based club then don’t forget to get the technicians involved in the club, as it could well end up leading to extra work for them. Older students may also be happy to be involved and help run the club if it’s for younger students. Don’t forget parents.... Who knows what they do for a living! Local companies may also be interested in being involved in providing expert visitors on particular subjects. Just don’t forget.... anyone from the outside needs to be DBS checked.
3. **Decide on a location – but don’t tie yourself to the obvious!**

This will often be a lab or a classroom due to the nature of the activity. But think bigger – how about moving your club outside or into the gym? Some activities such as drone flying (great for learning coding!) need more space. Or you can buy drone cages for using them in an enclosed space safely. Whatever you’re thinking make sure you’ve risk assessed the activity and use an appropriate space.

4. **Long term project or one off activities?**

Do you want to involve the students in projects and competitions that require them to work in groups over a period of weeks? Or are you looking to engage them in fun one off activities? There are certainly pros and cons for both approaches.

 Longer term projects such as the Greenpower Challenge or F1 in schools can instil a sense of commitment and perseverance whereas shorter and one off activities such as coding to navigate an obstacle course with a drone or using a MODI modular robotics kit to solve a particular real world challenge can be great for younger children and those not wanting to commit to a single long term project.

5. **You don’t have to go it alone**

Whether you have a very specific project in mind or are open to new ideas the chances are a project you want to try may have been done before by someone else. Speak with a specialist, like Technology Supplies, who can hone your thoughts, and point you in the right direction.

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