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### **PARSONS GREEN PREP SCHOOL WINS PRESTIGIOUS ISA AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING PROVISION IN STEM**

On Friday 11 November 2016 at the Independent Schools Association's (ISA) annual headteachers' conference and awards dinner, Parsons Green Prep School won the award for Outstanding Provision in STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths).

The award was collected by headteacher Helen Stavert, who commented: 'We are thrilled to be recognised by the ISA with this award. Parsons Green Prep School is a huge advocate of STEM, which are key subjects for securing positive opportunities and career paths for future generations. Primary school is the perfect starting point to encourage children to explore and begin to understand and realise the links between these subjects and why we study them. We have had such an interesting last few months in terms of our STEM provision, ranging from growing rocket seeds which Tim Peake took into space to seeing our chess clubs go from strength to strength.'

The ISA judges commented: 'Parsons Green Prep was chosen as the winning school due to their real life application method of teaching STEM which fosters lifelong interest in STEM subjects. This has been encouraged through practical projects involving problem solving, critical thinking and creativity. One project incorporating these three key areas of STEM was their space project based upon the Tim Peake mission.'

The ISA Awards is an annual event which invites entries from the schools of over 380 ISA Member Heads in a range of categories, recognising achievement in academic and extra-curricular provision and community and outreach activities. Shortlisted schools are invited to attend the gala dinner, where winners are presented with their ISA Award. A range of additional awards are also available for Member schools for excellence in provision and also individual GCSE performance.

The awards cover categories ranging from IT innovation to healthy eating and international understanding. For the STEM award, the judges looked for evidence of outstanding provision in STEM disciplines. This might include innovative teaching methods, extra-curricular provision or engagement with the wider community. The shortlisted schools were Alton Convent School in Hampshire, Parsons Green Prep School in London and Hatherop Castle School in Gloucestershire.

Parsons Green Prep integrates STEM skills across the curriculum, with a view to inspiring and encouraging pupils to develop their enthusiasm and skills in these areas. Through STEM, pupils also develop a valuable set of skills including teamwork, independence, reasoning and critical and creative thinking.

STEM at PGP is promoted in a variety of ways. Each term we have whole school STEM-linked activities, including assemblies, curriculum-themed days, workshops and a weekly STEM after-school club. CREST activities (creativity in engineering, science and technology) are another way of inspiring our children and enriching our STEM-led curriculum. Designed by the British Science Association, our activities enable children to solve science, technology, engineering, and maths problems through practical investigation. Engineering is incorporated into the school curriculum through weekly STEM lessons throughout the school. These tasks encourage creativity, problem solving and teamwork.

STEM ambassadors are invited to the school to enhance the children's learning experience. These ambassadors come from a variety of backgrounds and include zoologists, climate change scientists, engineers of all disciplines, geologists, physicists, nuclear physicists and architects. Their enthusiasm and commitment help encourage young people to engage in STEM subjects and see the career possibilities that come from learning and linking STEM subjects.

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The above article can be found at <http://www.the-educator.org/parsons-green-prep-school-wins-prestigious-isa-award-outstanding-provision-stem/>