

NEWSLINE



North Primary School and Nursery
A Town Centre School with a Strong Community Ethos

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BIG BANG SPECIAL



Look at those faces - pure joy!

Seb says, "The months of hard work we put in to programming paid off."

Polly says, "Controlling the robot through the assault course was an exciting race against time."

Rhiain says, "Thank you to Mrs. Walker and Mr. Allen for teaching us and then guiding us to success."

Dylan says, "I hope our robot performs as well in Birmingham as it did at St. Helena's."

On Tuesday 31st January four year 6 pupils walked their way to St Helena School to take part in the regional VEX IQ Challenge. What is it? Only a worldwide robotics competition. Last September we were invited by Rapid Electronics to enter along with 2 other Colchester primary schools. We received the kit to make our robot. Suddenly the children became engineers. They used the design suggested for this year's challenge modifying when needed, to make it unique. The children then became programmers, quickly getting to grips with new software. All of this developed their teamwork and problem solving skills. Over the next months they practiced perfecting programming the robot to perform tasks on its own and sharpening their expertise using a remote control.

We met several times with the other schools during this time and all the children got to know each other well. It was great to watch them all helping out when things went wrong. We all ignored the fact on the day of the competition that we would be up against secondary schools!

The competition consisted of two parts, Robot Skills Challenge and Teamwork Challenge each attempt lasting just 1 minute. In part one Robot Skills, Seb and Dylan's programming abilities were put to the test as the robot had to perform autonomously scoring points. Polly and Rhiain were the engineers. North scored the most. We went top of the leader board. Polly and Rhian stepped up for part two, Driving Skills, using a remote controller to knock hex balls off and balance on a bridge in the middle of the field. The girls scored very well, North remained top of the leader board for the rest of that Challenge!

In Teamwork Challenge North had matches with other schools, not against them. The robots (or children with remote controls) worked together scoring for both teams. We were not at the top of this leader board! Everyone finished with an elimination match. We cheered for the other primary schools.

It was an exciting, rewarding, exhausting day. We all came away overjoyed. North walked away with a total of two trophies and the chance to compete in the National Competition at the NEC in Birmingham in March.

I was extremely proud of the children, they were a credit to our school. Well done!!

Mrs. Walker reporting

If you want to find out more about where they are going visit <http://www.thenec.co.uk/whats-on/the-big-bang-fair/>

