

# Collingwood College & Cordwalles Junior School

## Joint Family Learning K'NEX Activity



### Organisation

Collingwood College & Cordwalles Junior School, Surrey Heath Confederation of Schools

### Target Group(s)

Invited parents with children at both schools (KS2 and KS3)

### Context

Provide a fun family learning event for selected families with a view to developing stronger family relationships, learning a new skill and improving communication. The activity was planned and delivered in partnership with the Family Learning Programmes team and Planet K'NEX. K'NEX is a construction activity which consist of simple components that, when joined together, can create working models.

### Action planned

10 families were sent personalised letters inviting them to attend a special session on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2008.

The event was held during the school morning at Collingwood Secondary school and lasted approx 3hrs, with pupils being released from normal school lessons. Mums and Dads attended (some even taking time off work to be there) and there was 100% attendance from the families who had been personally invited. There were approximately 30 parents and young people in attendance, in total.

After an initial demonstration to show participants how the K'NEX materials work, the families were set a challenge to build various vehicles out of K'NEX using a variety of different types of motor, each challenge ended with a race. Each race had it's own additional task e.g. to carry a school text book or a fluffy toy animal! The final challenge involved each team building a simple computer controlled vehicle, which had to be programmed to complete a figure of eight course. The sessions were designed to be fun but based around; science, design, construction and introduction to ICT and control systems.

Time was given for the 'development' of designs and the importance communication and working together as a family team was also emphasised throughout.



### Outcomes and Impact

Schools reported anecdotally that feedback has been very positive, with many families sending in letters of thanks to the schools, expressing how much they had enjoyed the experience and valued the opportunity to spend time together as a family.

Schools also reported that they had seen more positive attitudes in class and that the event had been a huge confidence booster for pupils; they had thoroughly enjoyed spending quality time with their parent(s) working towards a specific outcome. There has been very positive feedback from parents who are looking forward to a follow up event (see below).

### Next Steps

After the overwhelming success of this initial event two further events are now being planned; a KS2 event (with a transition focus) and a progression event (KS3 & 4) for the families who attended the first event. Dates for both events are yet to be confirmed, the venue will be Collingwood College.

More details on these courses can be found at [www.planetknex.com](http://www.planetknex.com) or through the Confederation Project Manager [shc.pmanager@gmail.com](mailto:shc.pmanager@gmail.com)