



(Image credit: Elliot Nichol Photo)

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North East youngsters have a blast at Space Camp

Pupils from schools across the North East have had a taste of out-of-this-world career prospects, thanks to a unique event.

Around 60 young people from years six and 12 spent their half term at Northumbria University, discovering the very real opportunities available in the fast-growing UK space industry.

Organised by international aerospace giant, Lockheed Martin and global

communications company, Viasat, the students were able to listen to experts already working in the space industry, as well as being involved in a range of practical workshops and projects.



(Image: Elliot Nichol Photo)



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The event was hosted at Northumbria University which is already working

closely with Lockheed Martin UK Space and the UK Space Agency on NESST – the [North East Space Skills and Technology Centre](#).

The £50m facility will provide in-demand skills provision to power the space sector workforce of the future and drive world-leading research and technology development.

Ten-year-olds from Newcastle’s St John’s Primary School, Cheviot Primary School, St Teresa’s Roman Catholic School and St Lawrence Primary School were joined by youngsters from Wardley Primary School, Kibblesworth Academy, Washington’s Oxclose Primary School and Broadway Junior School in Sunderland.

The pupils were involved in everything from making – and launching – rockets to learning about the prospects of colonisation on Mars to robot workshops.



(Image: Elliot Nichol Photo)



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Ten-year-old Eva Noorkhalid from St Teresa's said Space Camp had been an amazing experience.

"I am really interested in science and space and we have learned about it in a really fun way," she said.

Her words were echoed by 16-year-old Patrick Hoggins from St Cuthbert's Catholic High School for Boys.

"We've done so much and it's been really interesting," he said.

"You wouldn't really think there was so much opportunity to work in space but this is a fantastic way to find out all of the different things you can do."

Ben Shaw, Head of Operations and Capture with Lockheed Martin, launched the week and emphasised the importance of the event.

"The North East Space Skills and Technology Centre - or NESST- is a £50 million investment between the UK Space Agency, Northumbria University and Lockheed Martin," he said.

"But this facility is only part of the story. Without the development of a talent pipeline we will not have the students taking STEM subjects at higher

education.

“Space Camp is part of the narrative which encourages students to develop their science identify and their pathway to a STEM career; hopefully into the growing space sector.”

Delivery of Space Camp at Northumbria was supported by the University’s NUSTEM group. [NUSTEM](#) was established in 2014 with the aim of engaging more children and young people in the STEM subjects of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

The group’s work seeks to inspire future generations of scientists and engineers, and redress the balance of female students and under-represented groups studying STEM subjects in universities.

Over the last decade the group has worked with over 160,000 primary and secondary school pupils along with their families and teachers to foster an enjoyment of STEM subjects in children and young people, with the aim of encouraging more to consider careers in STEM.

[Professor John Woodward](#), Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International) at Northumbria University, said that “Space Camp speaks to everything we do at Northumbria University to drive social mobility.”

“Our ambition is to ignite aspiration, remove barriers for the communities that we serve and offer routes for young people from all backgrounds to access and succeed in higher education.”

“Through the development of our North East Space Skills and Technology Centre we are working with local schools and industry partners to further our commitment to promoting STEM careers by delivering programmes such as Space Camp – opportunities that simply didn’t exist in the region when I was at school.”

On the final day the year 12 groups gave a presentation to a panel on how to deal with the problem of space debris, which included MP for Cramlington and Killingworth, Emma Foody.

“It was amazing to see the work these young people did and how much they

realise the importance of STEM subjects,” she said.

“I was so impressed, all of the presentations were absolutely fantastic.”

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Northumbria is a research-intensive university that unlocks potential for all, changing lives regionally, nationally and internationally.

Two thirds of Northumbria's undergraduate students come from the North East region and go into employment in the region when they graduate, demonstrating Northumbria's significant contribution to social mobility and levelling up in the North East of England.

Find out more about us at www.northumbria.ac.uk

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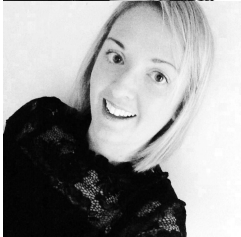


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