

Primary school kids are cracking coding

A coding master is inspiring the next generation of technology whizz kids at New End Primary School.

You would be forgiven for thinking that teaching has raced on in the last decade or so, given the buzz around coding and technology at the school for students aged between three and 11.

It is not uncommon to see Year 1 and 2 students programming robots, Year 3 and 4 coding their own games and those in Year 5 and 6 making apps and websites and coding with HTML.

The move to make students tech-savvy at a young age is part of New End's vision of providing a broad and exciting curriculum that isn't afraid to stray from the beaten path.

As well as the usual national curriculum subjects, pupils learn philosophy and

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have the chance to act in Shakespeare plays in a real theatre. The school is just as keen to extend opportunities in computing.

Max Wainewright, who has written more than 20 books on coding for kids, works with every student at the Streatley Place for around an hour each week.

"I love teaching coding at New End," he said.

"What has been most satisfying is seeing the progress they have made.

"There have been massive improvements in their coding skills, and also in their use of technical language.

"We don't just want our pupils to consume technology – we want them to be active creators, too. So to be

successful creators they need to know how to make programs and apps – how to code.

"No one knows what kind of a role computers and robotics will play in the future, but it's certainly something we need to prepare pupils for. Starting younger gives them the chance to go that much further."

Mr Wainewright's expertise isn't limited to Hampstead primary schools: in the autumn term he was invited to discuss coding at number of schools in New York and Philadelphia.

He said: "Coding is a new subject to most US teachers and pupils and they were excited and enthusiastic about it.

"It was great to meet so many teachers and pupils who want to learn more about coding and hear about what we are doing at New End."

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