

Visit to Merchant Taylors' School

January 2017

On 25 January, a group of eighteen ACU3A members visited Merchant Taylors' School, Near Rickmansworth, to tour the Design Technology facilities and learn about the way in which this independent school for boys (between 11 and 16 years) steers its young charges towards rewarding professional careers.

Although the school offers the very widest range of academic subjects in its curriculum (English, Mathematics, Physics, Biology, Classics, Computing, IT Systems, Modern Languages, Music, Art and Design) it was the extensive modern workshops in wood, metal and plastics - including 3D printing – that were the most visible evidence of the extremely high standard of teaching for boys with a practical bent, many of whom go on to study engineering at university at the end of their time at Merchant Taylors.

The bright and spacious workshops were housed in a brand new building with every conceivable engineering facility, some of which had been donated by generous benefactors. One workshop contained no fewer than ten top-of-the range 3D printers for manufacturing that 'widget' not available from conventional sources. Quite clearly, the standard of design technology teaching was limited only by the student's own imagination.

We were also introduced to an art teacher who showed us the many facets of coursework for students planning a future more closely aligned with design for the arts, focusing on the development of each student's individual skills. Some examples of their work were dotted around the building.

Thank you to Colin for organising such an interesting visit on the greyest, foggiest and most dismal of days. It was certainly a real treat for us to see such fantastic facilities in place and it must be a wonderful education for the boys. With fees of £19,500 per annum, doubtless the boys' parents believe it is worth every penny to give their offspring such a wonderful springboard to their future career.

Janet Cato

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