AFTER SCHOOL CODING CLUB

So, your child has come back from school and is going on and on about robots, R2D2, BB8s, drones, and various other exciting new technology, with the clear message being, “Please can I join the After-School Coding Club?”

The simple answer is, Yes.

But please allow us to clarify WHAT the After School Coding Club is about?

Our aim is to empower your child with the necessary skills to create new technology, as against simply using it.

In a world that is becoming increasingly more driven by technology, which is invariably powered by code, it is essential your child knows how to code; not just for the sake of being able to create, but also to ensure he / she possesses the requisite skills and knowhow to get the best jobs, earn good money and thrive in the digital age that is coming. Being a doctor, Vet, Solicitor, Accountant, Teacher, are old world jobs that, in all honesty, computers and artificial intelligence will be able to provide in the very near future. Let’s work on your child’s creative abilities and for them to be the ones that CREATES or DESIGNS the products of the FUTURE.

SO, what will your child actually learn?

The coding club is not just about giving your child a worksheet to copy from in parrot fashion. Neither is it about playing games. It is all about learning the fundamentals of coding/programming.

We start with the basics….boohoo! Yes. We do not give them the cake to eat……we teach them all the necessary skills to make the cake, from the ingredients, the nutritional/taste information, the temperatures, the equipment/utensils they use, to the tricks of the trade to be more effective and efficient. In tech speak, we teach them how to use a computer, what components make up a computer, what it truly means to have robots, the hardware AND software, what is artificial intelligence REALLY?, how does the everyday world consume technology, how does entertainment come into the world of code ie computer games, virtual reality, robotics etc, and of course, how to code!

So, yes, there will be elements of creating a game, but they will need to understand the first steps of creating code. For example, what is a “variable”, “procedure”, “function”, “conditional” statements, “loop” statements etc.

Unfortunately, we have found that It is also essential they learn and understand the various functions of the keyboard, mouse and what a computer actually is. Our founder’s children (3, 5 and 8 years old in 2018) tells us that these skills are essentially missed in schools. Youngsters can use touch screens (tablets and iPads) yes, but they do not know how to use a mouse or keyboard, which are still ABSOLUTELY essential skills today and for the foreseeable future.
These key skills are needed for your child and this teaching process alone takes time. It is not something that can be sufficiently grasped in just one term’s worth of teaching. Patience is fast becoming an attribute that is being phased out, but in our opinion, is absolutely key to the champions of the future. Convenience is lovely, but someone designs and creates the convenience we enjoy today, whether that is the planes that basically fly themselves everywhere, to the driverless trains (and soon cars), to the automated helpers in all aspects of our lives. Convenience is the way of the future whether you want it or not. We want your children to have a sense of achievement through persistence and creation that will be incredibly rewarding for both you and your child.

Later on (during the course), your child will have the opportunity to engage with technology such as R2D2, BB8s, drones, virtual reality, and so much more to not only keep them engaged, but also to show them how their efforts are utilised in the real world.

Please note - before this can be introduced, we need to make sure the foundations have been laid for your children – i.e. teach them the basics and rudiments of coding.

As a result of us running an After-School Coding Club at your child’s school, the school may have an opportunity to get a visit from our I.D.E.A.S. Bus (a big bright yellow American school bus with lots of technology inside it) which provides your child with further opportunities to experience the different technologies coming and to find out about different career opportunities in the STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Mathematics) related industries. We want to seed in your children the opportunities available to them, whether male or female!

We currently have a finite resource to push this initiative, but with the help of your school plus others, the local community and society in general, we hope in the next five years, we will have these resources available to all schools, throughout the year, for free. To achieve this aim, we need your help, your school’s help and most importantly, we need your feedback to make sure we are actually achieving the aims we talk about. That means we WANT your input and feedback, good or bad, preferably constructive. Help us help your children. We are a not-for-profit social enterprise that cares about our children’s future. Help us help you and your children!

We thank you for your time and look forward to upskilling your child at our After-School Coding Club. Social enterprises should be the way forward. Businesses whose focus is about community! Their growth is fuelled by their effectiveness in their local communities and the local communities benefit from their growth.