



On Saturday, 20th June, our STEM Club, AROE Apex, took part in the STEM On Track National Finals, where students proudly raced the kart that they had spent the past academic year designing and building.

As always, our students represented the school exceptionally well, demonstrating outstanding teamwork, resilience and professionalism throughout the day.

Before racing began, students had the opportunity to explore the STEM Fair, which featured an Alpine F1 car, a collection of classic cars, racing simulators, and a wide range of interactive activities delivered by Alpine F1 staff and professionals from across the engineering industry. It was a fantastic opportunity for students to learn more about careers in STEM while experiencing the excitement of motorsport.

Students also took part in the popular pit stop challenge, where they had to work together to complete a wheel change against the clock. After narrowly missing out at the Test Day by finishing second, the team returned determined to improve—and this time their hard work paid off as they secured 1st place. It was a fantastic achievement and a brilliant reflection of the teamwork, communication and determination they had developed throughout the programme.

Before heading to the track, our kart underwent its final scrutineering inspection, where it received excellent feedback for the quality of its construction. Students worked alongside engineering experts to make the final adjustments, showing real pride and dedication in ensuring the kart was ready to compete at the highest standard.

Then came the moment we had all been waiting for—the race.

Our kart made an incredible start, gaining four places before the first corner and quickly working its way into an impressive 4th place out of 24 teams. Unfortunately, during our first pit stop, damage to the rear axle meant the kart required repairs, costing us around ten minutes of race time. Despite this setback, the team remained calm and focused. Once the axle had been repaired, our remaining three drivers returned to the track determined to finish the race.

The confidence and race craft they had developed during their practice sessions at TeamSport really showed. They fought their way back through the field, climbing from last place to finish 15th and gaining an incredible nine positions during the remaining laps. Although we were naturally disappointed by the setback, it was inspiring to see our students display such determination, resilience and teamwork to achieve such a remarkable recovery.

At the end of the event, all the teams came together for the awards ceremony to celebrate the achievements of schools from across the country, as well as visiting teams from Hong Kong. It was a fantastic way to recognise the hard work and commitment shown by every student involved.

Looking back on the entire programme, I could not be prouder of our STEM Club. Over the past year, students have dedicated countless hours after school, particularly on Friday evenings, to designing, building and developing a fully functioning, competitive kart. Many of them started the programme with little or no experience of engineering or karting, yet they embraced every challenge with enthusiasm and determination. Along the way, they have developed valuable technical knowledge, problem-solving skills, teamwork and confidence that will benefit them long into the future.

A huge congratulations must also go to our four drivers, who represented the school brilliantly and showed tremendous progress in their racing ability throughout the programme. To compete so confidently against experienced teams, including grammar schools and sixth forms, is an achievement they should all be incredibly proud of.

Finally, thank all the staff who have supported our STEM Club throughout this journey. None of this would have been possible without your encouragement and commitment. In particular, a heartfelt thank you to Mr G Williams, Miss C Hamm, Miss H Ash, Mr J Leach and Miss K Steddon for giving up their time – including their weekend – to support our students during these events. Your dedication and encouragement have meant a great deal to every member of the STEM club.









