



Inspiring the next generation

KMF (Precision Sheet Metal) is working with local schools to help inspire the next generation of engineers. The Newcastle under Lyme sub-contract sheet-metal specialist is funding and supporting teams of 9- to 11-year-olds who are building electric cars as part of the IET Formula Goblin Project (organised by the Greenpower Education Trust).

This initiative by KMF is an extension of its *Young Engineer of the Year Awards*, which are being supported by the National Apprenticeship Scheme and are currently under way across North Staffordshire (with 20 High Schools taking part).

Gareth Higgins, KMF's managing director, says: "With the IET Formula Goblin Project, we are hoping to encourage even younger students to consider engineering as a career option. We have two schools involved at the moment, but we are also actively looking to support other teams from the Newcastle under Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent areas. We are happy to purchase the car kits for the schools."

The first school to benefit from KMF's support was Our Lady and St Werburgh Catholic Primary School, whose team of 16 Year Six children (and one teacher) recently used the company's apprentice workshop to

build an electric vehicle (from the Goblin kit), before taking it out to test it against other schools up and down the country.

The build time for the Goblin kit car is about 15hr, with the children having to design their own body-work. During their time at the KMF factory, the children were supported by apprentice trainers Steve Dalton and Nigel Tomkinson, plus third-year apprentice Zachary Peacock and maintenance engineer Glyn Preston.

Following this experience, KMF has bought a second car kit and presented it to St Joseph's College in Trent Vale, Stoke on Trent, which will be making a similar visit to KMF in the near future to build their car. The Formula 24 car kit is aimed at the 11-16 age group.

Jenny Conlon, KMF's training centre manager, says: "We hope to be able to help a number of schools to take part in this challenge by purchasing the kits for them and offering our time and expertise to help them complete the build. If any school in the Newcastle under Lyme/Stoke on Trent area wants to talk to us about funding of the kit, they can contact me by e-mail at j.conlon@kmf.co.uk."

More information on the overall project can be found at www.greenpower.co.uk.