

## Cambridge University Wireless Society – Science Week School Visits 2006



As last year, Cambridge University Wireless Society (CUWS) made visits to Cambridge primary schools during Science Week 2006, to promote science and technology through Amateur Radio. Thanks to the RSGB's DVD and a series of hands-on activities, about 200 pupils had fun learning about Amateur Radio. On the Thursday of Science Week (16th March), CUWS visited St Philip's Primary, followed by St Matthew's Primary on the Friday. In both cases three Year 5/6 classes were involved. We were particularly pleased to return

to St Matthew's after the success of our visit last year, and many of the children were delighted to see us again! It was encouraging to see what an impression we had made.

A new APRS-based activity was introduced this year, which proved very popular. One of our members was dispatched with a GPS receiver and a handheld, configured to transmit his position automatically every few seconds. This signal was picked up back in the (warm!) classroom, where the children tracked his progress on a satellite image displayed on a laptop.

At the same time they could talk to him on VHF, sending greetings messages and giving him directions, as well as requests that he run rather than walk because he was moving too slowly on the map!

Another activity involved speaking into a microphone and sending words in Morse, using an oscilloscope to look at how the two types of signals differ. We were also able to set up an antenna in both schools (which the pupils immediately pointed out was just a fishing pole!) and although in the first school a technical issue was experienced with the rig (caused by a loose screw rattling around inside), this was fixed by the next day and we made a number of contacts as G6UW/P. We were particularly pleased to contact a school in Scotland which was also hosting an Amateur Radio demonstration as part of Science Week, allowing pupils at both ends to pass messages to each other.



We presented a set of Amateur Radio books to St Philip's (St Matthew's having received a set last year) and left posters and leaflets at both schools as a reminder of our visit. The pupils were all genuinely fascinated by the demonstrations and many were very keen to get involved in the hobby; it would be great to see them working towards the foundation licence in the future.

CUWS would like to thank the RSGB for the brilliant resources they provided, the staff at both schools for all their help, and all the pupils who participated for making it such fun!

**Thomas Heritage, M0TJH, Secretary, Cambridge University Wireless Society**