

Local schools' art competition goes galactic

As Scottish space firm, Skyrora continue preparations to unveil the Black Arrow rocket in Penicuik later this month after transporting the rocket back to the UK an art competition has been launched.

Making the 10,000 mile journey from the Australian outback – where the rocket landed after its final flight almost 50 years ago – Black Arrow is currently the UK's only successful orbital launch.

The contest is run in partnership with local company, Bishop's Move and asks pupils to draw their own interpretation of space, with the winners invited to the removal firm's Penicuik site for the rocket's unveiling.

Schools taking part include Strathesk Primary School, Bilston Primary School, Cornbank Primary School, Cuiken Primary School, Mauricewood Primary School and Sacred Heart Primary School.

Daniel Smith, Director of Business Development at Skyrora, said: "When we decided to hold the event in Penicuik, we were really keen to involve the local schools in some way.

"Holding a competition seemed like a great way to not only invite some pupils along to the unveiling, but also as an opportunity to get youngsters talking and thinking about space – especially at such an exciting time for the UK space industry.

"We're all very excited to see what creations the pupils come

up with.”

As a member of the STEM Ambassador Programme, Skyrora visits schools across the country to teach students more about careers in science, technology, engineering and maths – often referred to as the ‘STEM’ subjects.

Committed to the importance of educating the younger generation, a team from Skyrora are preparing to travel to Wales later this year to help a group of 200 Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and Rangers to earn a specially designed space badge.

Daniel added: “The winners will be invited along on the day and it’s our hope that getting to experience such an important part of Britain’s space legacy will inspire some pupils to consider a future in STEM.”

Skyrora’s rapidly expanding Edinburgh-based team aims to capture its share of the fast-growing small satellite launch market and has already created two separate prototype engines, one of which is scheduled for testing at Cornwall Airport in Newquay later this year.

It is developing launch vehicle technology that builds on previous rocket systems with the aim of reducing the cost of launches thanks to proven technology and advanced engineering methods.

The firm draws on Britain’s launch heritage and aims to build a robust supply chain while creating new employment opportunities to inspire the next generation of talent.