



EDUCATORS GUIDE

G D S T
CODING LEAGUE



FOREWORD FROM OUR FOUNDER...

W

hen I first began the Primary Coding League 2 years ago I would never have imagine the impact it has had and what it has become today. Primary Coding League has and always will be about positively impacting the lives and education of young people. Whether that be from our competitions and workshops to Primary Coding Clubs and Primary Coding Hubs, our after school and outreach arms respectively, it has always been about the children.

What started as an idea to perhaps bring together a couple of my local schools near my own where I was teaching at the time and fast forwarding to now where through all areas of our work Primary Coding League has benefitted literally thousands of young people worldwide.

So whether this is your first time or third time taking part and engaging with our work, thank you. Being able to support schools and offer something exciting for schools and their students means the world to all of us at Primary Coding League.

Charlie Mackenzie
Founder & Director





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HOW IT WORKS



HOW IT WORKS

BREAKING IT DOWN

In the most simple terms, Our Coding Leagues are just like any average sports league table, but for coding.
Let's look at it in a bit more detail...

1

Children work in **teams of up to 6 students.**

2

We will provide 2 challenges for both KS3 and KS4

3

Each challenge is **submitted on specific dates** and receives a **score out of 20** after being judged in 4 key areas.

4

The score for each challenge is added to the team's **overall score** which then determines their **current league position**. The higher the total, the higher the league position.



HOW IT WORKS

SCORING

In the GDST Coding League, when your teams submit a challenge they will be judged by our panel of expert volunteer judges who will give a total score out of 20 after being scored out of 5 in four key areas:

CODE

How well organised is the code? Is it effective? Does it achieve the desired result?

THEME

Does this match the theme and meet the “Must haves” of the project (more on those later)

CREATIVITY

How creative is the project? Do they use custom sounds or backdrops? Have they thought outside the box?

EXPERIENCE

What is the project like to interact with? Seamless? Clunky? Boring? Exciting?



HOW IT WORKS

CELEBRATING SUCCESS

We believe that children's progress and success should be celebrated! We like to do this in so many ways:



Putting the spotlight on you! For each challenge our volunteer judges will each select a **wildcard** entry from the submissions for the challenge. These may not be the highest scoring teams, but the projects that our judges feel stand out in the wildcard focus for each challenge.,



Prizes, Prizes Prizes! As always 1st, Place at the end of league will receive a prize for their school with certificates awarded to 2nd and third place.



HOW IT WORKS

COMPETITION RULES AND GUIDELINES

1. Overview

The Primary Coding League is a year-long coding competition designed for primary school pupils aged 8–11.

Schools compete in teams to complete a series of creative coding challenges across the academic year.

The league promotes the values of:

- Code – developing programming skills
- Create – encouraging creativity and innovation
- Collaborate – teamwork and problem solving

Teams earn points for each challenge, and their cumulative score determines their position on the league table.

2. Eligibility

Schools

- Open to primary schools or equivalent educational settings.
- Schools may register up to three teams.

Participants

- Pupils must typically be aged 8–11 (KS2 or equivalent).
- Each team may consist of up to 6 pupils.
- Teams may be mixed in age, gender, and ability.

Supervision

- Each team must have a teacher or adult supervisor responsible for submitting projects and ensuring fair participation.

3. Competition Format

Season

- The league runs throughout the academic year (typically September – July).

Challenges

- Teams complete six coding challenges across the year.

Each challenge:

- Has a specific theme or brief
- Requires teams to create a coding project
- Must be submitted by the challenge deadline



HOW IT WORKS

COMPETITION RULES AND GUIDELINES

Coding Platforms

Challenges may use accessible coding platforms such as:

- Scratch
- MakeCode
- Micro:bit
- Game or animation tools
- Other approved block-based coding environments

4. Submission Requirements

For each challenge teams must submit:

- The project file or link
- A short description of the project
- Team name and school name

Submissions must be:

- The original work of the team
- Completed within the challenge timeframe
- Appropriate for a school audience

5. Judging Criteria

Each project is scored across four categories, with a maximum total of 20 points per challenge.

Criteria	Description
Code	Quality and complexity of coding
Creativity	Original ideas and innovation
Theme	How well the project meets the challenge brief
Experience	Usability, gameplay, or interaction

Each category is typically scored out of 5 points.



HOW IT WORKS

COMPETITION RULES AND GUIDELINES

6. League Table

- Scores from each challenge contribute to a running league table.
- Teams earn points after every challenge.
- The team with the highest total points at the end of the season wins the league.

7. Fair Play & Conduct

All teams must:

- Submit their own original work
- Ensure all team members contribute
- Respect other participants and judges
- Follow safe and responsible digital practices

Teachers should guide students but the project must primarily be created by the pupils.

8. Deadlines

- Each challenge will have a clear submission deadline.

Late submissions may:

- *Receive reduced points, or*
- *Not be accepted (at organiser discretion).*

9. Prizes & Recognition

At the end of the competition:

- 1st, 2nd and 3rd place teams may receive prizes.

10. Organiser Decisions

- All judging decisions are final.

The Primary Coding League organisers reserve the right to:

- *Amend rules if necessary*
- *Disqualify entries that breach guidelines*
- *Modify timelines due to unforeseen circumstances*



***BEFORE YOU
BEGIN***



BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Before you can start coding and completing challenges, there are few steps that need to be completed before students can start coding.

TEAM REGISTRATION

This is one of the most important steps that you must do before the start of the competition. On the **GDST Coding League Site** there will be various links that give you access to resources and guides, as well as the link where students must register their School and Team Names. **They will only need to do this once.**

Please ask students to go to:

www.primarycodingleague.co.uk/gdstregistration

THE DEADLINE TO REGISTER SCHOOL AND TEAM NAMES IS:

20/04/26

FAILURE TO MEET THIS DEADLINE MAY RESULT IN STUDENT PROJECTS NOT BEING JUDGED.

IT AND ADMIN SETUP

It important that you complete a few other amdin tasks to ensure that you are ready:

- Check you have done all the check for software and hardware
- Have school permission and support
- Used our provided parent info letter to let parents know about the competition.



**KEEPING
EVERYONE
SAFE**



KEEPING EVERYONE SAFE

While all enrichment experiences are brilliant for the children and schools involved, it's incredibly important that everything is done properly and safely and Primary Coding League is no exception.

DATA PROTECTION

At Primary Coding League, we will only ever collect and hold relevant and necessary of schools and staff in accordance with our GDPR and Data Protection policies. **We will never request or hold personal and identifiable information of any children.**

SAFEGUARDING

At Primary Coding League, we want to ensure that all children are kept safe online when using the various different platforms for our challenges. We have strict guidelines for project submissions to ensure that children are not sharing personal information and are keeping everyone safe. More of this can be found in our **Competition Rules and Guidelines.**



THE CHALLENGES



THE CHALLENGES

Part of the excitement of Primary Coding League is not knowing what the challenges will be! However, so that educators feel more prepared and can be organised we have decided to provide the platform, release date, submission deadline and submission method for each challenge ahead of time to support you more.

KS3

CHALLENGE 1

Platform: MakeCode for Micro:Bit

Release Date: 14/04/26

Submission Deadline: 22/05/26

Submission Method: Via "My Portal"

CHALLENGE 2

Platform: Ohbot

Release Date: 01/06/26

Submission Deadline: 03/07/26

Submission Method: Email all projects to
ohbot@primarycodingleague.co.uk

FINAL LEAGUE RESULTS

Release Date: 06/07/26



THE CHALLENGES

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KS4

CHALLENGE 1

Platform: MakeCode Arcade

Release Date: 14/04/26

Submission Deadline: 22/05/26

Submission Method: Via "My Portal"

CHALLENGE 2

Platform: Ohbot

Release Date: 01/06/26

Submission Deadline: 03/07/26

Submission Method: Email all projects to
ohbot@primarycodingleague.co.uk

FINAL LEAGUE RESULTS

Release Date: 06/07/26



SOFTWARE AND HARDWARE



DELIVERING PCL IN YOUR SCHOOL

So you can ensure that your student will have the correct access to the free software the challenges for the GDST Coding League will use please see the links below:



<https://arcade.makecode.com>



<https://makecode.microbit.org>



<https://scratch.ohbot.co.uk>



**DELIVERING
PCL IN YOUR
SCHOOL**



DELIVERING PCL IN YOUR SCHOOL

Over the years as more and more schools have joined Primary Coding League, we've seen how such an important part it has become within school's enrichment offering

We provide whole host of support resources for both educators and students to support in the competition as whole and within each challenge.

While we think our resources are great, at the end of the day you know your setting best. None of these are mandatory to use, but rather there in case you need them as well as to help bring the whole school community together in cheering on your coding teams!



DELIVERING PCL IN YOUR SCHOOL

EDUCATOR AND STUDENT GUIDES

STUDENT CHALLENGE PACK



Our student challenge packs are exactly the resource your students need. guiding them through what they are hvsing to do, where to do it and how to submit.

Giving them the responsibility and taking the workload off from you.



DELIVERING PCL IN YOUR SCHOOL

CHALLENGE LAUNCHES

We want to make sure every score is able to access our challenges fairly. So in addition to challenges only using free online platforms and our student guides, we provide resources that are bespoke to each challenge.

CHALLENGE LAUNCH PRESENTATIONS

Each challenge will be provided with a challenge launch presentation that you can use in your team's first session working on the challenge!

They will include:

- Challenge details such as the task and things that must be included.
- A support activity that assist with teaching children about specific code mechanics that are required for the challenge
- Clear broken down stages so that children can see the journey of creating a fantastic project!



DELIVERING PCL IN YOUR SCHOOL

SUPPORT RESOURCES

We want students to feel supported and ensure everything is accessible to all students, so our student support resources will be great for this!

THE BLOCK BANK

Our ever popular Block Bank is back, but this time with an upgrade! We've now been able to secure licenses to use blocks from all of our favourite platforms allowing us to support your students on what blocks may be best to use in even more detail!

TEAM ROLE RESOURCES

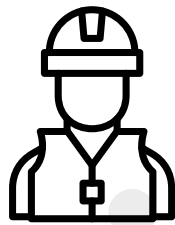
It's really important that within coding teams every student has a role to play in order for teams to be successful! That's why this year, we are introducing the new **PCL Team Roles** that you can use to support teams working together and all playing their part.



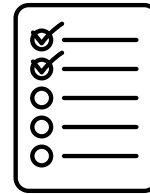
DELIVERING PCL IN YOUR SCHOOL

PCL TEAM ROLES

Our PCL team roles are a perfect way to support students in ensuring everyone has a part to play in creating projects through the competition.



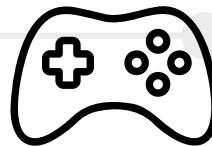
THE BUILDER



THE PLANNER



THE FIXER



THE PLAYER



THE IMPROVER



THE CHECKER

Team role descriptions and other related resources are provided in your competition support resources pack

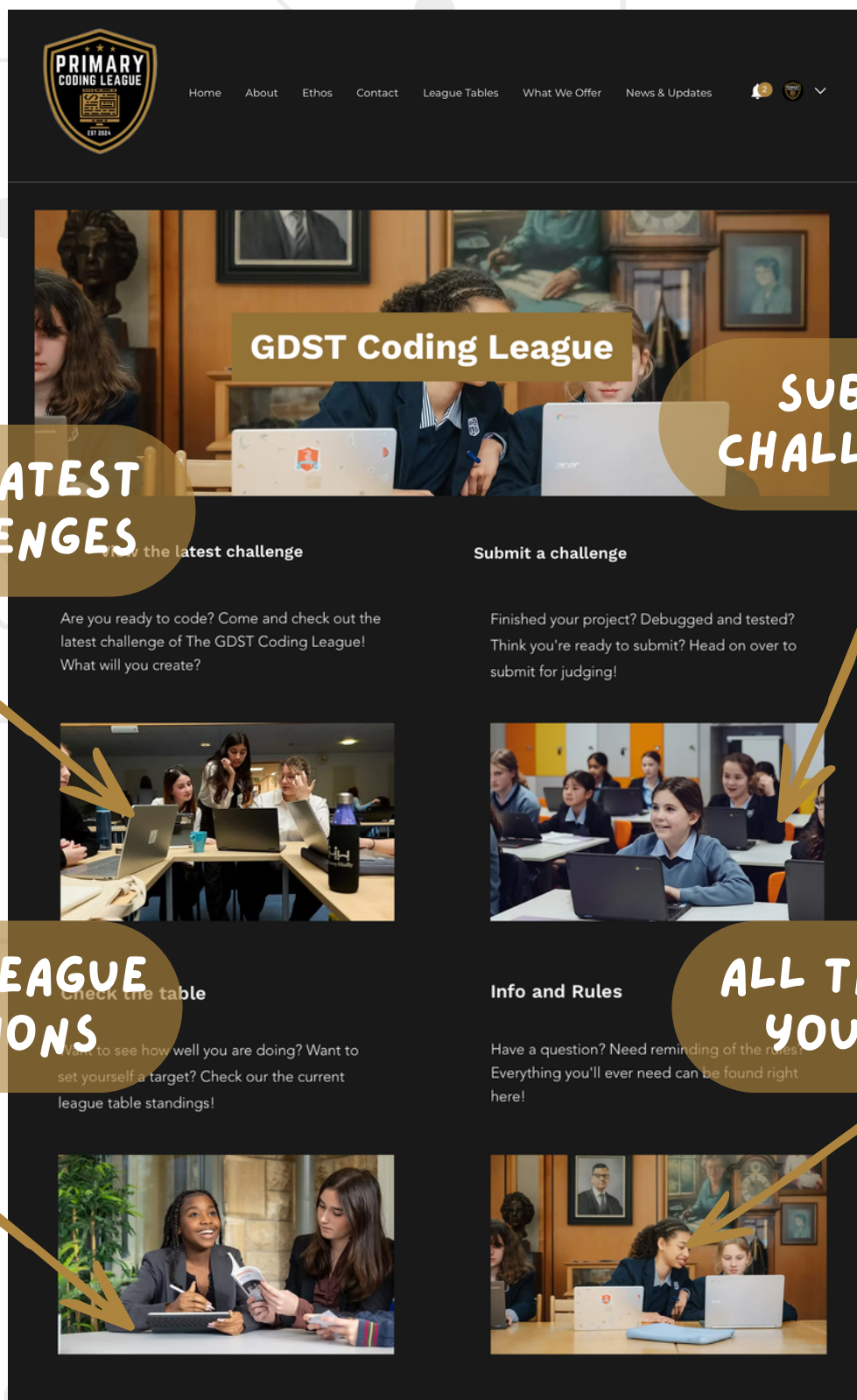


**YOUR
COMPETITION
PORTAL**



YOUR COMPETITION PORTAL

WHERE TO FIND EVERYTHING



VIEW LATEST CHALLENGES

SUBMIT CHALLENGES

CHECK LEAGUE POSITIONS

ALL THE INFO YOU NEED

WWW.PRIMARYCODINGLEAGUE.CO.UK/GDST

GDST

CODING LEAGUE

GETTING IN TOUCH

*HOW TO GET IN CONTACT IF YOU HAVE
QUESTIONS OR NEED A LITTLE HELP.*

email us:

gdst@primarycodingleague.co.uk