Sir James Dyson donates £19m to his old school in Holt

Sir James Dyson has donated £19.7m to his former school, whose "generosity" helped pay for his education after his father died.

The cash will fund a building and centre for Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) education at Gresham's School in Holt, Norfolk.

The world's top engineer said it would inspire and educate more brilliant young minds.

He started at the school aged nine in 1956.

The co-educational, private day and boarding school was founded in 1506, and Sir James attended for six years.

Sir James's father, who was head of the classics department, died soon after he started the school.

The school expanded ten years later, offering ten girls' and ten boys' scholarships in day and board.

"The generosity of his school, meant I could continue there after his death," he said.

The STEAM centre will be named in the Dyson Building, which will be designated a Dyson and World's Innovation Elysian Trust.

Sir James said: "We are thrilled to be able to expand the school's education and STEAM facilities through this generous donation.

"We will work with all secondary schools to ensure that students are well-equipped with the latest technology and to ensure that they are able to develop their skills in technology and design.

"The donation will enable the school to expand its STEAM programme, which will provide students with the latest technology and resources, and will help ensure that they are well-prepared for the future.

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Sir James has been a supporter of education in the UK through his foundation, which raises funds for young people to attend top universities.

The Foundation was established in 2010 to assist the Dyson School, and £3m of the £19.7m will be donated to Gresham's School in Holt, which has an estimated value of £50bn.

Sir James, who invented the world's first bagless vacuum cleaner, was educated at Holt School, which he says helped to "open his mind".

The school has been educating boys since 1506 and has educated many famous alumni, including Sir Isaac Newton and Sir John Betjeman.