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New school to get kids into work

Directors want to set up project along with business to prepare students for employment

PLANS are being hatched for a new school designed to get Portsmouth pupils prepared for jobs in science and engineering.

The 'studio' school would specialise in Stem subjects – science, technology, engineering and maths.

Teacher and businessman Tim Gallier and chartered electrical engineer Arthur Monks are behind plans for the 300-pupil school for 14 to 19-year-olds.

Pupils would be encouraged to take on work placements in the 'real world' and those over 16 would earn a wage working for at least two days a week.

The idea has been welcomed by businesses which struggle to find young local employees with the right skills.

And the government has given its blessing to the project. But now the team of business and education experts need a site and the backing of the Solent Local Enterprise Project,

by **ALINE NASSIF**

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which represents companies across the region.

Mr Gallier, who has more than 30 years' experience in technology sectors including British Aerospace and BT, teaches project management diplomas at Highbury College.

He said: 'We are appealing to the LEP to back us because there is an opportunity to create a talent pool suitable for hi-tech companies.'

'There are lots of schoolchildren in this city who have the talent and the desire to achieve in life, but get nowhere because the system or their families don't back them.'

'They deserve better. The studio school model engages them in the real world, and looks at their lives, their futures, their aspirations.'

'They'll learn everything they need to pass their GCSEs and more – they'll



WE MEAN BUSINESS Arthur Monks and Tim Gallier Picture: Sarah Standing (112080-8641)

develop skills that will make them highly desirable to local employers.'

Mr Gallier's long-term plan is for a network of four studio schools in Portsmouth, Fareham, Southampton and the Isle of Wight, as a source of employees for businesses.

He said: 'This city is in desperate need of a boost. Average wages in Portsmouth are £475 a week compared

with the south east average of £540.'

'The number of 16 to 18-year-olds not in education, employment or training is 11.1 per cent compared with 5.8 per cent across the south east. We believe the way to get our students back on track is by saying to them "you are part of our future and there are good jobs in it for you as well".'

Night of beauty and cakes is a big hit

A LADIES' night raised more than £1,500 for a charity holiday home.

Around 120 ladies attended the event at the Classique School of Dance, in Waterlooville, to indulge in pampering, shopping and cupcakes.



Pam Marshall organised the event

to raise money for Hannah's Holiday Home, the charity she set up in memory of her daughter Hannah, pictured, who lost her battle with cancer aged 10 in 2004. Mrs Marshall, from Waterlooville, said: 'We raised a staggering £1,572.'

'There were shoes, cupcakes, handbags, jewellery, a chocolate fountain, artwork, clothes galore, books, baby stall, nails and pamper treatments.'

'Everyone said what a great night they had and that there was something for everyone. The ladies from Classique School of Dance donated the venue free and all 27 traders donated a raffle prize.'

The money will pay for six families to enjoy a holiday at the home in the New Forest.

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Fire service survey sparks safety call

EIGHTY-ONE per cent of motorists rated their driving as 'above average' in a survey.

And one in five of the 205 respondents to a Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service questionnaire believe they are 'very good' drivers.

Motorists answered the survey at three motorway service stations in Hampshire as part of the service's support for the launch of the United Nations Decade of Action Day For Road Safety – a global initiative to reduce death and injury on the roads.

In total 83 per cent identified

tailgating as a major motorway driving hazard, followed by speed at 78 per cent.

Now Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service is calling for drivers to take more care on the roads.

Clyde Evans, community road safety manager, said: 'We need to encourage drivers to plan their route in advance, leave more time for their journeys, allowing time to take regular breaks, keep distractions to a minimum and overall, to be patient.'

'The survey showed that people's perceptions of their

driving skills are, on the whole, far better than they really are. When it comes to believe that they don't need any additional information or training to help them become better, safer drivers. Sadly, in our role as professional firefighters we are all too often called to road traffic collisions which are the result of errors made by the drivers involved.'

The next driver education event will be held on July 22 as part of National Road Safety Engagement Day on major routes throughout Hampshire.