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Tour helps promote industry to schools

HEADTEACHERS from 16 schools gathered together to visit Prospects College and Coryton Oil Refinery as part of an education scheme.

A group of 16 school chiefs as well as career advisers from Basildon, Billericay and Wickford, gained an insight into what engineering and manufacturing courses the college, based in Basildon, has to offer.

The tour was led by the South Essex Engineering and Manufacturing Academy. It included representatives of big employers such as Petroplus, Gardner Aerospace, Case New Holland and Selex Galileo.

As well as touring the skills training centre, in Crompton Road, the headteachers and business representatives visited the Petroplus Coryton Refinery, which produces 10 per cent of the

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fuel used in the country. Graham Lewis, managing director of the Prospects College Thames Gateway initiative, said: "Manufacturing and engineering need young people to satisfy the skills shortage in these important industrial sectors.

"The message students receive regarding their career prospects and the range of opportunities available is vital in achieving this."

Mark Pittman, managing director of Gardner Aerospace, based in Basildon, was one of those involved in the tour. He said: "Young people need to be informed of their career potential within engineering and manufacturing and the schools must play an important part in delivering this message."