

## NEWS RELEASE

28.10.19

### STEM backpacks for hundreds of school pupils

Hundreds of students from Lochgelly and Beath High Schools are preparing themselves for a bright future after being given colourful new drawstring kitbags from the team at the Fife Ethylene Plant (FEP).

Each of the packs contains a scientific calculator, a nine-piece geometry set with set square, compasses and protractor, a notebook and pen and a ruler.

They will help the youngsters as they embark on the next stage of their learning, and it is hoped they will stimulate the uptake of key STEM subjects – science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

S1 pupils at Lochgelly and Beath High Schools were presented with their bags by FEP staff and apprentices at school assemblies following the October break.

Daniel Scobbie (23), process operator and Callum White (19), machinery apprentice, helped to hand out the backpacks at Lochgelly, along with plant technician Greig Wilson, former deputy head boy at the school.

Greig said: "I was once sitting exactly where you are now, full of anticipation for what was coming next.

"As a technician, having the right tools is crucial to my job, so I hope these kitbags will also help the next generation of budding engineers or scientists at both Lochgelly and Beath.

"FEP has always been committed to growing and developing local talent and we want to



ensure that everyone has an equal chance to succeed.

“Studying STEM subjects can open up incredible careers. At FEP we all have exciting roles working with colleagues of many nationalities. We have the chance to work around the world and are well-rewarded for our contribution.”

A lively question and answer session about the plant and its workforce then took place.

Debbie Aitken, head teacher of Lochgelly High School, added: “These packs are a genuinely welcome contribution from the Fife Ethylene Plant which I am sure will be valued by our students.

“This will help our learners with our focus on developing their numeracy skills which are so important core skills for work in STEM industries and beyond.”

At Beath High School it was the turn of Dave Buckley, Process Scheduler, to speak to the budding engineers.

He said: “Taking STEM subjects can open up lots of different career paths for you.

“You probably don’t know what you want to do when you leave school, but if you are interested in these subjects it will give you a good choice when it comes to making a decision.”

The kitbags were given out by Liam Robertson (23), Instrument Technician and Blair Taylor (22), Analyser Technician, who are both former pupils at the school, along with Niamh Blanski, an Electrical Engineering apprentice.

Nicola Barker Harris, depute rector at Beath High School, added: “I hope that meeting the FEP team will inspire our pupils to see the very real opportunities and rewards that studying STEM subjects can bring.”

A major employer in Fife for over 30 years, FEP has over 270 employees and core contractors, with some 60% living within ten miles of the plant. Over a third of all employees joined the organisation as apprentices.



