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CONSTRUCTION VISIT BRINGS CLASSROOM LEARNING TO LIFE

Construction students from Stoke Newington School saw the realities of the industry for themselves as guests of MITIE at a site the company is re-furbishing in London's West End.

The 21 students from Year 10 are just a couple of months into their BTEC or diploma courses in construction-related qualifications and the visit was designed to show them the industry in action. It forms part of the Construction Careers Open House programme, funded by the City of London Corporation and managed by Inspire!, the education business partnership for Hackney. This initiative seeks to raise awareness of the wide range of construction-related careers that students can aspire to and to dispel the myth that only low or unskilled jobs are available.

MITIE, the strategic outsourcing and asset management company, is fitting out the five-storey commercial development at Clareville House, Oxendon Street, SW1 that will eventually house a nightclub, restaurant and offices. The students were able to see the work going on around them and meet a variety of skilled craftspeople and managerial staff. These included the contracts manager, commercial manager, site manager, project manager and the architect from Lifschutz, Davidson, Sandilands. The young people questioned them all closely about what a typical day involves, career routes and earning potential.

Andrew Dinham, a member of Stoke Newington's teaching staff, who accompanied the visit, said: "This is what it's all about. This really brings to life what we do with them in the classroom when we get back to school. There's no substitute for an opportunity like this to experience the real working environment in the industry."

Steve Argent, a contracts manager at MITIE, added: "We feel it's important to give something back to the communities that we work in, so were delighted to help these managers of the future to learn about the opportunities available in the industry. We were really enthused by their interest and these students have very exciting futures ahead."

The group was particularly taken with the hard hats and high visibility jackets they were required to wear whilst on site, so individuals were thrilled when Steve

Argent donated them so that they can go on using them for the rest of their course.

MITIE already has links with Inspire! and Stoke Newington School. Inspire! wrote the bid that resulted in MITIE locating its South East Skills Centre for Excellence in Construction at the Clissold Road School.

Construction Careers Open House concluded with a visit to EDAW (18 November), the landscape architects involved in the Olympic Park.

Around 120 students from five Hackney schools and colleges have been on visits as part of the programme.

Stuart Fraser, Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee, City of London Corporation, says, “As the City’s local authority, we have a responsibility to build bridges to areas neighbouring the Square Mile and raise awareness about the breadth of opportunity in construction careers. Through the Construction Careers Open House scheme, we aim to give young people an insight into the prospects that construction careers in the City hold by providing them with first-hand experience of some of the world’s most dynamic construction companies.”

Ends

Notes:

The City of London Corporation is the sole funder of the Construction Careers Open House programme, one of the City of London Corporation initiatives to help regenerate boroughs neighbouring the City. The scheme is delivered on the City of London Corporation’s behalf by Inspire!, the Education Business Partnership for Hackney.

The City of London Corporation is the “business authority for the business district” and supports the international financial services industry based in the UK, with its heart in the Square Mile. It provides local authority services for the Square Mile but also works across wider London and UK. See more on <http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/Corporation/>

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