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Surrey’s cyber sleuth students at work

15 July 2024

Cyber-curious students from Ash Manor School have been inspired to consider future careers in the sector after taking part in a special one-day workshop.

The event was hosted by Surrey County Council in collaboration with the **Surrey Cyber Security Cluster** (SCSC) and **SATRO Education Charity** as part of the **Inspire Surrey** pilot programme, and was held at the Hogs Back Hotel in Farnham.

The ‘Digital Detective Challenge’ was developed to harness the imagination of the students and encourage them to consider a future career in this exciting and fast-growing industry.

At the end of the day, almost all of the year 8 students taking part (28 out of 31) said they would now consider taking up a career in cyber – a resounding success for the day.

Matt Furniss, Surrey County Council’s Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth, said: *“Cyber security is a growing, highly innovative sector of huge importance to our regional economy. Events like this are fantastic to really capture the interest of enquiring young minds – the vital future leaders of this sector – and ensure cyber security’s continued growth and success in Surrey. I’m delighted the event was such a triumph for all participants.”*

Surrey is a world-leader in cyber security, as home to a large and growing number of security firms and consultancy agencies including BAE Systems, CGI and F5.

Two of the UK’s five Gold Standard Cyber Security Universities (Royal Holloway and University of Surrey) are also based in the county, helping to drive innovation in the sector.

Surrey County Council is further nurturing the sector and supporting growth through its involvement in the Surrey Cyber Security Cluster.

Mr S Coomber, Head of Computer Science at Ash Manor School, said:*“Events like this enable students to explore what it’s like to work in cyber security. By showcasing the breadth of opportunities available, we hope to empower students to make an informed decision about considering a career in the cyber sector.”*

Jane Sheridan from SATRO Education Charity, said: *“Today’s event was not just about solving puzzles; it was about igniting passion and curiosity for cyber careers among young minds. We wanted to provide students with a glimpse into the exciting world of cyber security while emphasizing the importance of critical thinking and problem-solving skills.”*

Hani Momeninia, Director of the SCSC, highlighted the significance of nurturing future talent in the cyber field. He said: *“As the cyber landscape continues to evolve, there is a growing demand for skilled professionals capable of defending us against emerging threats. Initiatives like this play a crucial role in inspiring and nurturing the next generation of cyber leaders. It’s been great to work with the Surrey Cyber Security Cluster and SATRO Education Charity to design and host an engaging event for our budding cyber professionals.”*

The event was one of a number of initiatives intended to inspire a range of audiences to consider a career in cyber by the Council’s Economy & Growth Team, in collaboration with the Surrey Cyber Security Cluster. Other events included a workshop for mums returning to work and a cyber careers fair at Brooklands Museum for secondary school students across the county.

Business Surrey, the Council’s new business initiative, is committed to supporting sectors, such as cyber security, with support to grow. Discover more at **www.businesssurrey.co.uk**.

Those businesses looking for support and advice with workforce needs can contact the team for free support at **www.businesssurrey.co.uk/advice-and-support/business-support-form**.

The Surrey Careers Hub also works to connect employers with schools and colleges to support young people to take their next best step. Find out how you can get involved at **https://www.businesssurrey.co.uk/workforce/careers-hub/**.

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