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THE LEADER

Engineering gets boost

By **Merryn Porter**

BUDDING engineers will get hands-on experience in their chosen field at a new design and engineering centre at Engadine High School.

Kaye Denham, the head of the school's technology and applied studies department, said the school offered engineering from years 9 to 12 and had invested heavily in students' learning.

The school's investment in the engineering course is already paying dividends. A number of former students were building successful careers in the industry which was suffering a shortage of workers.

The school has been involved in the F1 in Schools program for several years.

The program aims to change the perception of engineering, science and technology as careers through Formula One racing, with teams charged with designing and building a model racing car.

The school has fielded four teams since 2008. One of those, Rapid Motion, recently went to Abu Dhabi for the world titles of the F1 in Schools competition, where they came fourth overall, fifth in the engineering category and first for their team collaboration with a German team.

Motion Racing recently won the state title and will compete at the national titles in February.

Ms Denham said the school had been supportive of the technology and applied studies department, which takes in engineering, design and technology, and industrial technology, including metal and wood technology.

The school recently bought a \$28,000 router and a \$25,000 laser cutter.

Ms Denham said the school received support from Re-Engineering Australia, a body set up to entice more



Fast tracked: Megan Kirk, Chris Jenkins, Laura Kirk and Josh Crawford with the model car that will take them to the national titles of the F1 in Schools competition.

Picture: Jane Dyson

people into engineering careers, as well as companies and mentors who worked with students.

School principal Joanne Jarvis said the old engineering lab was in desperate need of a facelift.

"The design and technology part of the school is probably the most expensive to upgrade," she said.

Where design and technology was once about "developing skills for the future of manufacturing and trade" it was now about "innovations and creativity and solving problems".

She said schools generally had not kept up with the changes. Engadine High School had taken matters into its own hands, knocking down a wall between the old engineering lab and the computer lab.

The new space will be finished by the middle of 2013 to coincide with a spike in the number of students studying engineering.

"We had 27 students in year 9 doing engineering in 2012. I will need to run two classes in 2013 to keep up with demand," Ms Jarvis said.