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Old meets new for school's green scheme

BY JESS CHILDS
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STUDENTS at a Peterchurch school are enjoying an innovative new facility in an old fashioned setting.

The Fairfield High School youngsters are putting a new wind-powered computer, sited in an old phone box in the school grounds, to good use since winning it in a competition.

The machine, which is driven by a small turbine on the hillside, was donated by computer supplier Research Machines (RM), which awarded 100 schools across the UK new computers depending on what they planned to use them for.

Headteacher Christopher Barker said: "The phone box is 100 years old, so that's rather nice as it's mixing old forms of communication with new. We got it from a local salvage yard through one of our parents.

"We bought some new land around 18 months ago and have been using it for a variety of things, including conservation. When this competition came up I thought it would fit in and the school council discussed it and came up with the phone box idea."

The phone box is the latest addi-

tion to a relaxation area in the grounds, where pupils can retreat to a non-denominational chapel site they helped to create, and will hopefully provide emotional as well as technological support.

Mr Barker added: "The children can come up here if they have a problem and use the computer to contact a counsellor, a friend or just do some internet research."

Pupils will also create their own stained glass window panels for the phone box, but hope to leave a few clear so the view of the school and countryside beyond is not obscured – and already have plenty of ideas for using the new PC.

Rebecca Watkins, 15, said: "It's great because you can communicate with the school from outside. If I was taking photos, I could upload them to the computer in the phone box and send them straight to the art department."

RM chief executive Tim Pearson said: "We are delighted to be able to offer the opportunity for the next generation to learn about renewable energy in a positive and constructive way.

"After all, they are the ones who will be responsible for halting climate change before it is too late."

► Headteacher Christopher Dixon receives a trophy from RM's Julie Dixon.

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