

SCHOOL'S TV STATION GETS BLAIR BACKING

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Prime Minister Tony Blair launched a groundbreaking school television project yesterday, which, he heard, could produce a new generation of celebrity chefs or oscar-winning film directors.

Ferryhill Business and Enterprise College, which is in his Sedgefield constituency, in County Durham, is the first school in the country to have its own television station - Ferryhill Life.

The channel will be viewed on 11 plasma screens around the college site, in a similar way to parent station, the life channel, which is shown in 900 UK medical centres.

Pupils will be able to make their own programmes based on projects in and outside the classroom from cookery demonstrations to sports clubs. Between the students' films, clips will be shown offering advice and information about health, bullying, careers opportunities and local activities. Mr Blair said he hoped the channel would give pupils a forum to showcase work, and get useful advice and support. He said: "young people today have a lot of material possessions, but they are also faced with a lot of pressure. The advice offered by the channel should support them with this."

Assistant Headteacher Ann Furniss said: "The channel gives our students the opportunity to share their work with each other. Who knows, it could produce the next Jamie Oliver or an oscar winner of the future."

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