

# Today's truants are tomorrow's Trotters

BY MIKE TAIT

TRUANTING schoolchildren and troublesome youngsters who disrupt classes were yesterday identified as the country's future entrepreneurs.

A ground-breaking study claims to have found a link between tycoons such as Virgin boss Sir Richard Branson and Kwik-Fit founder Sir Tom Farmer and pupils who cause problems at school.

Now the men behind the research claim giving youngsters the chance to learn 'Del-boy Trotter-style trading skills' can lure them back to the classroom.

Until a year ago, 15-year-old Nicky Cranston regularly dodged classes and was expected to fail most of his exams.

Yesterday the fourth year pupil, who now has a 100 per cent attendance record, backed the pioneering project to teach 'Del-boy Trotter-style trading skills'.

good exam results – in fact, I want to stay on until sixth year and then go to college to do business studies. This has completely changed the whole way I think.'

Nicky is a pupil at Wester Hailes Education Centre in Edinburgh, which agreed to take part in the study. Self-made businessman Gavin Devereux, who hated his

**'This has changed the whole way I think'**

own school days in Fife, developed a mental test system to identify behaviour patterns common to the most successful entrepreneurs.

He persuaded 80 of Scotland's

same techniques to find third year pupils at Wester Hailes who showed the same characteristics – highly competitive spirit and a refusal to recognise other people's authority.

Teachers at the school confirmed many of the youngsters who fitted the bill were considered 'problem' kids.

They gave Mr Devereux the go-ahead to teach 13 of them entrepreneur skills in specially-tailored classes – which included buying a pallet of cheap household goods and selling them at Ingliston Sunday market for a substantial profit.

Mr Devereux, who runs a personal development consultancy called TTI Mindscreen in Leith, also encouraged youngsters to

