Learning to speak robot

■ **NERALIE BAILEY**

PORT Pirie Regional Library's Coding Club, organised by Lucinda Broughton, is offering the Learn to Speak Robot activities to members this term.

The Commissioner for Children and Young People's Challenge is a free online resource for teaching children and young people important digital skills for the jobs of the future.

Learn to Speak Robot is a computational thinking challenge for school-aged students.

Computational thinking is the process of breaking down a problem into simple steps that a computer can understand.

It is the "thinking" used for coding and is fundamental to teaching children problem solving skills.

Learn to Speak Robot aligns with the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA)s Information and Communication Technology (ICT) learning continuum.

While Learn to Speak Robot is recommended for students from years two to eight, Ms Broughton said that all students can learn to problem solve.

"Most of the members of our Coding Club are already participating in the Challenge through their schools but there are opportunities to work on activities and get some help during Club time," she said.

Library Services Coordinator, Charmaine

David van Amstel, Samuel van Amstel, Carlo Senesi, Nicio Haupt and Natasha Senesi with Lucinda Broughton at the library's Coding Club meeting. **Picture: NERALIE BAILEY**

Burton said she was really excited to see what the students come up with.

"Lucinda has taken on the Coding Club as

this is one of her areas of interest and the kids have been meeting on Mondays during term," she said.

Students need to complete four computational thinking activities to have met the Challenge and there are hundreds of activities to choose from.

Ally Watson, CEO and Co-Founder at Code Like A Girl said that the future is technology.

Code Like A Girl is a social enterprise providing girls and women with the confidence, tools, knowledge and support to enter, and do well in the world of coding.

"Women are at risk of losing out on tomorrow's best job opportunities. The situation presents a unique opportunity for females to step up and take action," she said.

Every student completing the Challenge earns a personalised Certificate of Achievement.

Many South Australian libraries are choosing to run the Commissioner's Digital Challenge after school, or as part of their school holiday programs according to Ryneisha Bollard, Digital Communications Coordinator for the Commissioner's office.

"It's full of fun digital activities that can be scheduled for short sessions making it popular with their younger library members and library staff love it too," Ms Bollard said.