



## From the Headmaster

Dear Parents

The new school year has started in a very positive mood following our A-level exam results which hit a historic high with nearly one in five (16%) of all entries at the school graded A\* and an outstanding 84% graded A\*-B. These outstanding results projected more than 60% of leavers into Russell Group universities, including four to Oxford or Cambridge. The upward trajectory of recent years has been well and truly maintained. More than half of the GCSE grades awarded were A or A\* which stands to the credit of pupils and teachers alike. The highlight was the performance of Further Maths pupils, with 21 out of 24 achieving the top grade. In common with many independent schools, however, we have very serious concerns about the quality of assessment this year and we have submitted even more re-mark requests than usual.

Senior School pupils, and sixthformers in particular, have been hugely impressed by the all-new Stewart Building which opened its doors on the first day of term, on time and under budget: congratulations to Bursar, Julie Lerbeck, and Operations Director, Martin Scobie for their untiring oversight of the project over the last 15 months. This is our largest piece of site development since the construction of the Sports Hall and it has even exceeded our expectations. The building itself comprises the best sixth form facilities that I have ever seen, along with all-new teaching areas for Maths and Religion/Philosophy. Taken together with the completion of the Pre-Prep and Nursery in 2014, this phase of building marks the largest expansion of Colfe's since it moved to its present site 50 years ago. The Stewart Building will be formally opened next Thursday, prior to the Senior Prizegiving.

Congratulations to Year 11 linguists who completed the chocolate challenge over the break. Contrary to what the title might suggest, this entailed learning 400 additional words of French vocabulary. Three pupils achieved 99% and one managed full marks. Meanwhile sixth form pupils made progress with their EPQ (extended project qualification) in which Colfe's pupils scored an abundance of A and A\* grades last summer. The greatest value of the EPQ, however, is the opportunity that it provides to explore an aspect of a subject in depth and to develop the writing skills which will be of such importance in the future, most immediately in university assignments.

IT and Coding in the Prep School has enjoyed a welcome blast of publicity with an article in the autumn edition of *The Resident* [www.theresident.co.uk](http://www.theresident.co.uk). I am grateful to Colfe's parent, Chris Perry, for his expert input to this programme and to Mrs Blair who runs the club. Coding will also feature on the curriculum for the first time this year for our very youngest in the Pre-prep and Nursery. Educational visits for this term are already underway, starting with a (mobile-free) A-level English trip to the Barbican to see *Hamlet*. Lower 6th Art and Graphics students depart for Margate today at the beginning of the A-level course.



# COLFE'S

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## Newsletter

On a less academic note, Old Colfeians enjoyed a relaxed evening in a central London pub last night, expertly managed by our Development Officer, Russell Joyce. It was a pleasure to meet OCs from at least three generations in such convivial surroundings.

Colfe's own Combined Cadet Force Squadron (CCF Squadron) took cadets for their Duke of Edinburgh (DOE) awards to the army training centre in Capel Curig over the summer break. 40 pupils completed their gold practice expedition. Outdoor devotees may be interested to know that the route included the Devil's Kitchen and Mount Snowdon. Taken as a whole, we had 130 pupils participating in the DOE last year, a tribute to the commitment of Major Cherry and his colleagues. I look forward to seeing Year 7 parents next week for the Outdoor Pursuits evening at which we will introduce the forthcoming trip to the Lake District whilst Year 4 pupils in the Prep School are already preparing for their trip to Grangewaters in Thurrock.

Other summer activity included a highly successful rugby tour to Canada for boys in Year 11 and above. The team won all of their matches and enjoyed other activities, including whale watching and white water rafting. The preparation appears to have made a difference: we started the season on Saturday with a good win over St Olave's. Other teams were also victorious, including the U15s and the U13s A and B teams. Netball is also underway with strong performances from the seniors and the U16s at the Caterham tournament on Saturday. In the Prep school, following pre-season training, netball and rugby trials have now begun for Years 5 & 6 ready for our first netball fixture for the U9s against Farringtons on 22nd September and the U9s against St Dunstan's in rugby the following week.

Individual achievements over the summer have included:

- Jonty Logan (Year 12) who climbed the mountain Toubkal over 10 days in Morocco – the highest point in the Atlas Mountains and North Africa at approx. 4000 metres.
- Kane Foster (Y13) has contributed to a scientific research paper in the area of data analysis during a four week work experience placement at St George's teaching Hospital in Balham. The study is looking at drugs delivery and absorption in the body (pharmacokinetics) particularly for babies and young children.
- Luca Thurlow (Year 6) has represented GB at the International BMX racing World Championships at Zolder, Belgium, placing 31st in the world out of over 3,000 riders from 49 different countries.
- Andersen Lines (Year 9) fought in the London Youth Games this year, helping Bexley borough win Silver overall for boys in Judo.
- Georgia Noone (Year 11) has qualified for the British Riding Club National Championships in Lincoln – winning the qualifier and coming third overall. Georgia is off to Wales at the end of this month for a four-day event and is jumping at The Festival of the Horse in October.
- Emerson Willis (Year 4) who has taken part in a series of performances for the National Youth Ballet over the summer – performing at Sadler's Wells this Sunday in the NYB gala show.

Thanks, in conclusion, to prep and pre-prep parents who shop in Sainsbury's and remember to collect the Active Kids vouchers, these have now been cashed in for a range of new sports equipment: please keep collecting.

With best wishes for a great term ahead,

**Richard Russell**  
Headmaster