



From the Headmaster

Dear Parents

The hectic activity of recent weeks is now drawing to a close and pupils of all ages are to be congratulated on a most successful Autumn Term. We began the academic year on a successful note, with a record percentage of A* grades at A Level and the opening of the Stewart Building in the senior school. Since September, we have witnessed success across the age range, not least in rugby and netball in which no fewer than 18 Colfe's pupils have played at County level or above.

UCAS offers continue to flood in and we wish our U6th pupils well with their applications for the most competitive courses. Despite the current disgruntlement within the medical profession about matters contractual, a total of eight pupils have applied for Medicine this year, which makes it the most popular choice of course. I was delighted to see a number of last year's leavers in school recently, talking positively about the choices they had made and their (mainly positive) experiences of the first term at university.

I am grateful to Mrs Hall in the Pre-prep and Nursery who directed a marathon of Christmas productions over two days last week. It was great to see so many proud parents and grandparents in attendance and a full photographic record of each performance will be circulated by a secure link in the near future. This means, incidentally, that it is not necessary for parents to make their own recordings of the events, which we would prefer you not to do. Mrs Higgs directed the equally successful Prep School production of Three Little Pigs which played to a capacity crowd in the senior school hall.

The annual Carol Service in St Mary's Lewisham featured choirs from all three sections of the school and incorporated the official inauguration of Father Steve Hall as the Colfe's School Chaplain. This is particularly appropriate, given that Steve is Abraham Colfe's successor, albeit somewhat distantly, as Vicar of St Mary's.

Further evidence of our strength in competitive mathematics came recently in the form of an emphatic victory over St Dunstan's College in the Hans Woyda competition. This followed our previous success against Allyn's and sees us through to the knock-out phase of the competition. Meanwhile David Battersby and Tom Jenkins (both L6th) made it through to the next round of the English Speaking Union Mace competition in debating.

It has been a busy term for PAFA, culminating in the annual Christmas Fayre last Friday attended by pupils from the Prep, Pre-Prep and Nursery. Many thanks to PAFA Chair, Helen West, and her colleagues for all that they continue to do to support the school. The event raised £2,240, which will be split between Save the Children and Demelza House. In the senior school, staff and pupils have raised an impressive £8,500 for charity so far this term which does not include the many House led charitable collections which included a contingent of pupils from Beardwood House travelling to St Martin-in-the-Fields to give essential items to The Connection, a charity which they have supported for the last four years.



COLFE'S

Newsletter

Recent individual pupil achievements include the following:

- Ruby Collins (Year 12) who has been selected as first bassoon in the 2016 LSSO (London Schools Symphony Orchestra). Ruby is one of the youngest ever to be chosen to play principal at the Barbican.
- Louis Richardson (Year 5) has been given a place in the National Children's Orchestra and will therefore attend their residential course in the summer.
- 14 year old Georga Halloumas (Year 10) competed in the U17 British Judo Championships in Sheffield - the only first year girl (born 2001) in her category to win a fight. Georga ended the highest ranked for her year.
- Denny Ashison (Year 7) has recorded national times for swimming in the U12 and U13 freestyle events at the National Arena Swimming League Gala at Crook Log in Bexley.
- Henry Harris (Year 12) achieved his 1st Degree black belt in Taekwon-do which he's been learning for over 5 years at Colfe's. Congratulations to Nikolas Charalambous (Year 10) Emanuele Spaczil (Year 10) Jago Spiers (Year 8) and Etienne McElfresh (Year 9) who also passed their gradings.

The end of term sees the departure of Mrs Olivia Hamidzadeh from the Maths department after seven and a half years, most recently as assistant head of department. Her mastery of A level Further Mathematics has made her a particular tower of strength within the department and we wish her well in her new role at Wilson's Grammar School. Mrs Alison Cobbin, pastoral deputy head, also leaves at the end of this term to take over as the Executive Head of the Dwight School in North London. Her promotion is richly deserved but we will miss her greatly. During her six years at Colfe's Mrs Cobbin has done a huge amount to develop our pastoral care, notably through the introduction of vertical tutoring in the senior school which has served to strengthen the house system and promote vertical integration of year groups in the senior school. Mrs Donna Graham, currently senior mistress at Forest School, will take over as deputy head in September. For the next two terms I will be working closely with Mrs Susan O'Leary, Mrs Jane German and Heads of House to guarantee the quality of our pastoral care in the senior school.

My best wishes for Christmas and New Year to all of our pupils and their families. I look forward to seeing pupils back in school on Thursday, 7th January.

Richard Russell
Headmaster