



From the Headmaster

Dear Parents

Welcome back to all for 2017.

It has been a busy start to the New Year and new term, with mock examinations for Year 11 and Year 13 students and a record number of applicants – including our own Junior School Pupils – sitting the 11+ entrance examination. Competition for places remains strong, with 310 external candidates competing for just 70 places. This month has also seen an impressive array of university offers for our Year 13 students. The range of institutions, including Oxford, Cambridge, Russell Group Universities and others – to study subjects as diverse as Economics, Law, Biology and Anthropology as well as Music, TV and Film Set Design and Computer and 3D Animation – reflects the true diversity of Colfe's, a school that nurtures and promotes talent in all forms and not just academic achievement alone.

And on the subject of academic aspiration, I was delighted to hear that our parents' Monday evening Latin course is currently oversubscribed. Many thanks to our new Classicist Henry Cullen for the organisation of the course. I look forward to hearing of your progress.

Junior School

The focus for younger Colfeians at the start of this term has been on our core school value of resilience: for Year 6 in Key Stage 2 this formed part of their strategy for completing the 11+ entrance examination; and for pupils in EYFS and Key Stage 1 the emphasis was on new year's resolutions and how to do our best to try to keep those promises throughout 2017.

Nursery parents have been invited this term – for the first time – to record milestones and significant events in their children's lives in 'wow' books, (to help track milestones and development at home) which will be announced during the popular 'stay and play' mornings with parents. The scheme encourages parents to share in the pupils' work and achievements during their visit.

Year 3 took a Geography field trip last week to Lee, as part of their studies on settlements and the local area; and the geographical theme continued this week when we welcomed back the Freshwater Theatre Company to run workshops on volcanoes and earthquakes for Year 6.

Sixth Form

The Year 12 post A-level programme is now underway supporting students in their ambitions once they have left Colfe's. The beginning of term saw the launch of the UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) programme with 'focus and forum' lessons. The aim of these lessons is to encourage Year 12 students to think about the courses and universities they may wish to apply to and we were delighted to welcome Moj Taylor from PUSH (a leading independent guide to UK universities) last week to discuss the range of options available to students – including degrees and apprenticeships.

Trips

More than 40 senior school skiers travelled to Serre Chevalier during the Christmas break and 30 Year 7 linguists spent three days visiting the French and German Christmas Markets in Lille and Aachen. The latter was a chance to interact with locals in their native tongue – the highlight of which was a guided trip to Aachen's 9th Century cathedral.

Study trips so far this term have included a Year 9 visit to the Imperial War Museum to enhance their understanding of the events surrounding life in Nazi Germany and the Holocaust; Year 12 Classical Civilisation pupils had the opportunity to look more in depth at Greek architecture and sculpture at the British Museum; and Sixth Form English Literature students visited the Harold Pinter Theatre in the West End to see the production of *Nice Fish*. CCF cadets in Years 9 and 10 took part in a weekend Leadership Cadre at St Martins Plain in Folkestone as part of their service training.

Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)

Colfe's engineers have taken part in two competitions this term. Four of our scientists from the Robotics Club entered the first Lego League East competition at Queen Mary University against twelve teams from across the country. Well done to the team – Oliver May (Year 11), Joe Igoe (Year 10), Arthur White (Year 9) and Oliver Crockett (Year 8). And this week, twelve scientists in Year 8 took part in the regional round of the Faraday Challenge – a national competition involving 70 schools across the country, run in conjunction with the Institute of Engineering and Technology. The competition gives pupils the opportunity to research, design and make prototype solutions to real-life engineering problems. Well done to everyone who took part and to Matthew Hillmer for coordinating both of these events.

English

The Year 7 Reading Around the World challenge – which aims to introduce students to new authors and books from different parts of the world – was concluded this week with the announcement of the overall and individual winners of the competition. Well done to Bramley and 7F (Best House and Form respectively) and to An-Nhi Huynh who was awarded a prize for reading and reviewing the most books (27 in total).

Public speaking and Debating

Our debaters have had a busy start to the term taking part in the ESU (English Schools Union) Mace Public Speaking Competition, the SOAS Schools and the Oxford Schools competitions and the ICYD (International Competition for Young Debaters). Colfe's pupils performed strongly in all these events, particularly as many of them were pitched against more experienced and older competitors.

A special mention to the teams that took part in the ESU Mace Public Speaking competition alongside St. Dunstan's, Christ the King Sixth Form and St. Ursula's Convent School last week. Colfe's won in two of the three individual categories – Dan Kelly (Year 10) won Best Speaker and Louis Richardson (Year 9) was Best Questioner. Well done to all the teams, from Year 8 to Year 13, and thanks to Chris Dunsmore for organising and supporting all these events.

Art

I enjoyed seeing many of you at the Interim Art Show this week, showcasing the work of our Year 12 and Year 13 Fine Art and Graphic Communications students. This midway point in the year gives students a chance to display and review their work and receive valuable feedback for the examinations ahead.

Sport

The recent cold weather has unfortunately slowed up our sporting fixtures so far this term. U12 and U13 A Rugby teams nonetheless braved the elements, winning both their fixtures against Bonus Pastor School. In Netball, every girl in the Senior School (Years 7-13) took part in a week long block fixture against Bancroft School, with further block fixtures also taking place this weekend against Reigate Grammar School in netball and The Kings School, Canterbury in football. In Hockey, our Year 9 girls beat Langley Park Girls 2-0.

In Futsal (a fast-paced version of five-a-side football originating in South America), Colfe's won the highly competitive Sevenoaks U18 tournament against Tonbridge, Kings Canterbury, Worth, Brighton College and Sevenoaks School. Well done to the eight-strong squad from Years 12-13.



COLFE'S

Newsletter

Well done to swimmers who took part in the House Gala (Years 3-6) with Pegasus House the overall winners, and to swimmers from Years 4-6 who put in a strong set of performances during a triangular swimming gala against Eltham College and Bickley Park. Colfe's pupils took first place over all with a special mention to Jack Murphy, Josh Wright (Year 5), William McAuliffe and Leo Walker (Year 4) who all swam up a year.

Charities

Our commitment to charitable fundraising continues with 60 Colfeians taking part in a swim-a-thon to raise money for Water Aid this half term. The event was initiated by Year 7 pupil Alexios Philalthis after an inspiring Geography lesson where he first learnt of the charity. Alexios was joined by pupils from Years 3-9 who worked together to swim an incredible 5181 lengths in total, raising more than £2000 for the charity. Well done to all who took part.

Other individual achievements include:

- Bassoonist Ruby Collins (Year 13) has been offered a scholarship to the Guildhall School of Music and Drama – one of the world's leading music conservatoires.
- Georga Halloumas (Year 11) has been selected for the 2017 National England Judo Squad after a very successful year.
- Nathan Chapman (Year 7) has qualified for the National Schools Biathlon and has been selected to be part of the England Talent Program for GB Pentathlon.
- Tilly Manuel (Year 7) has cut off her own hair, to donate to children who have lost theirs through cancer. Tilly has raised over £500 for Cancer Research so far <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/TillyM2016>

General Notices

Please be aware that we have updated our policy on mobile phone use at school for pupils in the Senior School. Mobile phones should not be used during school hours by pupils – they may be kept discreetly on-person (e.g. in blazer pockets) and can only be used in lessons when instructed by a teacher. Any deliberate misuse of mobile phones will lead to confiscation.

And finally, the remodelling of the entrance to the school has now been fully completed – on budget and only slightly over time due to a delay in the delivery of stone slabs from India. I'm sure you will agree that it has enhanced the appearance of the front of the school and helps to facilitate the ease of traffic flow at peak times.

Best wishes

Richard Russell
Headmaster