



From the Headmaster

Dear Parents

The countdown to Christmas commenced last week with the Winter Concert in the senior school, featuring a wonderful range of performances from pupils of all ages. Henry Chapman (baritone) was on particularly good form, not only performing Elgar in the concert but also spearheading the entertainment on HMS Belfast the following evening at the Old Colfeians' annual dinner. The latter was the best such occasion we have had in recent years and I am particularly grateful to Russell Joyce, our Development Officer, who worked so hard with the Old Colfeian Society's committee to make the evening such a success. Reverting to Henry, his particular triumph on the evening was to render almost musical the utterly unpromising material of the Colfeian Sporting Song which the OCS President, Gregory Jones QC, had unearthed from the archives and instructed him to sing.

Other recent musical highlights have included the prep strings concert yesterday afternoon and we are all looking forward to the Carol service in St Mary's Lewisham on the 15th December which will feature choirs from all parts of the school.

Upper Sixth pupils are already receiving offers through UCAS, the majority having submitted their applications before half term. We seem to be doing well with the top universities and the most competitive courses, as has become customary in recent years. I am especially grateful to Mr Snell and Mrs Cardnell for the excellent advice that they have provided for candidates, many of whom now know what they have to achieve in August to reach their chosen destinations.

Mrs Cardnell is also responsible for our biennial Careers and Higher Education Convention which is scheduled for Wednesday 10th February next term. The success of this event depends heavily on support from parents and members of the wider Colfeian community. Please contact Mrs Cardnell (jcardnell@colfes.com) direct if you would be able to help: we want to ensure that all the major professions are well-represented, as has been the case in previous years. Please note that we also invite pupils from our five Lewisham partner schools in the state sector to this event, which may be of interest to the outreach departments of the major firms.

Our youngest Colfeians in the Nursery have had a busy week learning about another set of 3R's – reduce, reuse and recycle in a week dedicated to the subject of recycling. Meanwhile prep school mathematicians enjoyed a week dedicated to Maths, including trips to the Bank of England for Years 4 and 6. Over 90 Classicists in Year 8 visited the palace of King Cogidubnus in Fishbourne, home to some of the finest mosaics in the Roman world and a 2000 year old central heating system. Sixth Form philosophers attended the Philosophy of Religion Conference in London and chemists who took part in a series of university level lectures at the Institute of Education whilst politicians witnessed the workings of select committees at the

Houses of Parliament. Theatre trips included An Inspector Calls (Year 11) and The Snowchild (Year 2).

In Swimming, prep school pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 distinguished themselves in a recent gala with victory over St Dunstan's and Blackheath Prep. Noteworthy performances were reported on the part of Luca Thompson (Year 6) and Xavier Soo (Year 5). In the Senior school our swimmers in Years 7-10 also performed well against Trinity and City of London Freeman school with stand-out performances from Panos Philalithis, Denny Ashison, Ben Jarman, Katie Deveney, Blythe Jolley-Ellis, Elspeth Oliver, Sophia Kirkman and Christina Knyazeva, all of whom swam up an age group.

Senior school hockey has been an area of particular strength this term, with recent victories for the 1st XI over Langley Park (4-1) and for the U15s who defeated Blackheath High (3-0). Both U12 teams were also successful against Blackheath High with the A team winning 9-0 and the B team winning 8-0. Meanwhile the senior netball team achieved impressive victories over Benenden (11-4) and Walthamstow Hall (12-3) but just missed out on a place in the next round. Our U12 netballers enjoyed strong wins against Blackheath High whilst four teams took to the courts at Bromley High last week and came back with an impressive set of results, including a 19-3 victory. It was a pleasure to welcome England Netballer, Tamsin Greenway, who ran a master-class for pupils and staff in years 9-13 on the day she announced her retirement from the national game.

Prep school rugby teams in Year 3 had convincing wins over St Dunstan's and Year 6 defeated St Christopher's 20-10, the latter result representing a significant improvement over the corresponding fixture last year.

More generally, 69 of our pupils are currently playing at County, regional or national level in rugby, netball, cross-country or football. This fantastic statistic is complemented by an unprecedented level of involvement in school sport in all parts of the school: it is not unusual, for example, for all the boys or girls in the lower year groups of the senior school to be playing representative sport simultaneously. Many thanks to Mrs Rayes and to her colleagues for all that they continue to do to support school sport.

Other individual achievements in the last few weeks have included the following:

- Francesca Rameaux (Year 9) has appeared in the Wizard of Oz at the Bob Hope Theatre and took part in filming for a feature film based on a leading video game to be released next year.
- Thomas Jenkins (Year 12) has been cast in a movie based on a book called A Street Cat Named Bob - in cinemas worldwide next year.
- Tori Graham (Year 7) won a silver medal in Floor and Vault at the regional Neon Gymnastics competition last Sunday.
- Louis Richardson (Year 5) won the Encore Cup for the highest score awarded in Guitar at the Beckenham Festival. It is the third time running that Louis has won and so was awarded a plaque. He also came second in the Double Bass class and 2nd in the 11 years and under solo class.
- Amy Grant (Year 13) Emily Ireland (Year 13) and Former Colfeian (and last year's School Captain) Octavia Willoughby are preparing to climb Mount Kilimanjaro in the summer for charity.

With best wishes for the last two weeks of term,

Richard Russell
Headmaster