



From the Headmaster

Dear parents

Term began with news of our best-ever GCSE results, with 62% of pupils achieving A*/A (9-7). At A-level, 80% of pupils secured A*/B grades with 47% achieving the top grades of A*/A this year – almost twice the national average. 80% of our Year 13 leavers have begun courses at their first-choice universities this month and we wish them all the best in their future careers. We were delighted to see so many of our most recent leavers join us to celebrate Senior Prizegiving Ceremony in September, when Master Leatherseller Mike Bradly-Russell presented prizes to over 150 pupils from Year 10-13.

The happiness of pupils is central to everything we do at Colfe's and I am delighted to announce the launch of our new Senior School well-being programme, Eudaimonia. Professor A.C. Grayling came to the school last month to deliver an assembly on the concept of Eudaimonia as defined by the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle. The essential principle is that we can become happy by actively engaging in those things which make us happy and that we can become good by practising virtuous behaviour and engaging with what it means to be human. Find out more about Eudaimonia [here](#).

My thanks to the very large number of pupils who gave their time to help at our Whole School Open Morning in September, which was our busiest to date with over 1200 visitors on site across the morning. We received positive feedback from many families about the enthusiasm and pride our pupils take in the school. Our next Open Morning is on 10 November where all new Year 7 pupils will have the chance to act as tour guides with many pupil volunteers from other year groups.

Old Colfeian Olly Robbins (82-93) has been heavily profiled in the press recently. As a high-ranking civil servant and the Prime Minister's Europe Advisor, Olly is leading the Brexit negotiations on behalf of the UK Government. A Financial Times article over the weekend profiled him and his work, read the [full article](#). Fellow Old Colfeian – the film and documentary director – James Marsh (74-81), known for his academy award-winning film *Man on a Wire* as well as the multi-award winning Stephen Hawking biopic *The Theory of Everything*, has a new film out. *King of Thieves* is a British crime drama starring Michael Caine, Ray Winstone and Michael Gambon, based on the Hatton Garden safe deposit burglary of 2015.

JUNIOR SCHOOL

Pupils enjoyed a variety of activities during the first Shared Values Afternoon of the year. For the younger children this meant learning the meaning of new words; for others it was looking at ways they could improve their understanding and how they can be applied every day at school. The Senior School hall was filled with an enthusiastic and appreciative audience of parents for the Harvest Festival Assembly for children in Nursery up to Year 2. Well done to all the children for singing and speaking with such confidence. Trips this half term have included Bodiam Castle for Year 2, where pupils climbed battlements and tried on armour during their day. Year 4 had an enjoyable visit to Grangewater Outdoor Education Centre developing new skills in teamwork, leadership and resilience whilst participating in kayaking, sailing, climbing and raft building.

ACADEMIC

Year 13 students have been working on their UCAS applications and Monday was the deadline for priority applications, including all medical subjects and Oxford and Cambridge. A total of 21 students are in this highly competitive category, 14 for Oxbridge and seven for Medicine. More generally on UCAS it has been interesting to note an increase in the number of pupils who are considering high-level apprenticeships as an alternative to university and encouraging to see a rise in the number of pupils applying for Engineering, particularly girls.



COLFE'S

Newsletter

Dr Anders Sandberg was the first speaker of the year to address the John Glyn Society. Dr Sandberg holds a PhD in computational neuroscience from Stockholm University and is currently a James Martin Research Fellow at the Future of Humanity Institute at Oxford University. Discussing the future of humanity, he gave an inspiring lecture on what the human race could achieve with careful and ambitious decision-making. [Read the full review of his visit.](#)

The latest author to talk to Year 7 pupils about the art of creative writing was Margaret Bateson-Hill, creator of the popular Dragon Racer series. The author gave a fascinating insight into what inspires her storytelling during an illustrated talk for the whole year, followed by an interactive workshop with 20 pupils.

Year 9-13 were entertained with a lively presentation by Dr Colin Wright, who demonstrated numerical sequences and mathematical modelling through the medium of juggling. As a Doctor of Pure Mathematics (Cambridge University), Colin throws, drops and 'siteswaps' juggling balls into explanations about unexpected patterns and Pascal's Triangle. Mathematicians have also visited Bletchley Park to find out about war-time code breaking.

New Head of History, Ms Crummay, hosted the House History competition this half term; the use of buzzers, military hats, mystery pictures – not to mention a 'histo-remix' sounds round – made for an exciting atmosphere that ended in a joint victory between Prendergast and Bramley Houses.

Congratulations to Year 13 students Joe and Etienne who have been awarded prestigious Arkwright Engineering Scholarships, a fantastic opportunity that offers a range of relevant industry work experiences to those who have the potential to become future leaders in engineering.

ART, DRAMA & MUSIC

House Drama saw the Beardwood Theatre full to capacity with supportive parents, pupils and staff for a selection of musical theatre pieces. Beardwood House gave a lively performance of Calamity Jane, Bramley House a humorous version of Shrek, Norton House put on a fine production of Matilda and Prendergast House performed an innovative rhythmic version of Into the Woods. Congratulations to Norton House who took home the trophy and well done to every pupil, both on stage and behind the scenes. We are also celebrating another successful year of LAMDA (London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art) results. The examinations – which took place over the summer – saw over 94% of pupils achieving a Merit or Distinction. The Drama Department is now busy preparing for this year's Lower School musical Return to the Forbidden Planet from 4-6 December – tickets are available to [purchase now](#).

As part of our ongoing recital series with Trinity Laban Conservatoire, we were privileged to welcome postgraduate classical guitarist Alexander Roche to the school this week, to perform an exciting programme of music from Spain and South America, including Albeniz and Villa-Lobos, which was wonderfully received by our music scholars. Earlier in the half term, the String Quartet, Chamber Choir and Junior School Choir were invited to perform at 'A Celebration of Abraham Colfe' St Mary's Church, Lewisham – a beautiful tribute to our founder in recognition of the church's 1100th birthday.

In Art, Year 11 participated in a coursework day with printmaker Kirsten Baskett running a creative workshop for pupils. Both Year 10 and 11 have visited the Tate Modern in preparation for this year's GCSE projects – Year 11 also spent the day in Margate researching inspiration for their 'Structures' topic. Many thanks also to PAFA who kindly funded the purchase of ten SLR cameras for the Art Department. These have already been put to excellent use by Year 11, who are showing a great passion for photography. For those interested, a photography club will be available for Year 9 pupils after the half term break.

SPORT

The year has started on a high for our swimming teams. Pupils achieved excellent results in the first gala of the term against Dulwich College, Eltham College, Albyn's and St Dunstan's. Year 7 came first (beating Dulwich College), Year 8 and Year 9 second and Year 10 and Year 11, fourth.

Our mixed U15 team competed in their first water polo match of the term, which involved great teamwork and determination from all involved. Congratulations to players Ben (Y10) and Max (Y8) who have been selected to train with the Beckenham Water Polo Club.

The Cross Country club is gaining momentum in Year 7-10 – the Year 9 boys have qualified for the Regional Finals of the English Schools Cross Country and we competed yesterday in the borough championships with great success, leaving with four trophies.

There was a fantastic atmosphere as the Rugby First XV team, along with Second XV team, played Caterham School at the recent Friday Night Lights match at Blackheath Rugby Club. Despite Caterham proving to be victorious, they were well-fought matches with some fierce playing from our teams.

Year 12 students competed in the Bromley Schools Netball Tournament resulting in a mixture of wins, draws and losses, whilst squads performed exceptionally well in matches against Blackheath High and Woldingham School. The U13 Hockey team attended the Kent School Tournament and narrowly missed out in a place in the semi-finals.

OUTDOOR PURSUITS & TRIPS

Year 7 went on their annual Outdoor Pursuits trip to the Lake District in the beautiful Borrowdale Valley earlier this half term. This week-long trip gives pupils the chance to build friendships that last well beyond their time at Colfe's, as well as opportunities to participate in activities such as canoeing, rock climbing, mountain-walking and caving.

Year 12 students spent a day at Stubbers Adventure Centre where they participated in 4 x 4 driving, raft-building and leadership exercises that promoted teamwork, energy and communication.

As part of their Classical studies, Year 9 pupils visited Caerleon and Bath in the early part of half term to explore Roman remains. A further 25 pupils from Year 8-13 will be heading to Greece for a seven-day trip during the half term, with an itinerary which includes Athens' Acropolis, Delphi and Ancient Olympia.

CCF students are due to visit the Ypres Battlefields in Belgium next week. I am delighted to confirm the appointment of Captain (now Major) Russell Joyce as the new Commanding Officer of the CCF. This also provides an opportunity to express heartfelt thanks to Major Chris Cherry who stepped back up as interim Commander during the last two school terms.

INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENTS

- Dr Umesh Vijapura, teacher of Mathematics, was awarded the degree of Professor in Martial Arts Science
- Matthew (Y7) received the Jack Boericke Trophy – awarded to a young London-based triathlete for exceptional effort in triathlon
- Madeline (Y9) was selected for the U17 London Pulse Netball Team
- Justin (Y7) was selected to play for Tottenham Hotspurs U18 team
- Luca (Y9) secured fifth place in Great Britain in this year's Downhill Mountain Biking season
- Sophia (Y10) took part in the Ride of the Falling Leaves cycling 70km from Herne Hill Velodrome and finishing at the Dulwich Sports Club
- Primo (Y13) has become a member of the London Schools Symphony Orchestra
- Sophie (Y11) and Aloysius (Y7) both gained places at Trinity Laban Conservatoire Junior department
- Dan (Y12), Zac (Y13) and Laurie (Y10) completed the National Youth Theatre Summer School course
- Denny (Y10) performed a dramatic monologue on stage at London Fashion Week

NOTICES

If your son or daughter wishes to change from school to packed lunches, please remember that you need to give half a term's notice. To switch over from the start of the spring term 2019, notification is needed before 4 November 2018. Please email pkeogh@colfes.com in the Bursary Office.

Finally, I kindly remind all parents to drive and park considerately on the local roads surrounding the school. We have received a number of complaints from our neighbours in recent weeks about parents blocking their driveways or sitting for prolonged periods with their engines idling. It is extremely important for the school to be a considerate neighbour to local residents and this depends on your collective support.

Wishing you all a restful half term, I look forward to seeing pupils back at school on Monday 5 November.

Best wishes

Richard Russell
Headmaster