



From the Headmaster

Dear parents

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 sitting the 11+ entrance examination. Competition for places remains strong, with close to 400 candidates sitting our entrance examination in January. Offers will be sent to families this week and we look forward to welcoming many of the successful applicants to Colfe's in September.

The highlights of the term thus far have included assemblies in both senior and junior schools led by Old Colfeian Tom Gregory who talked with wisdom and insight about his solo cross channel swim in September 1988 when he was just an eleven year old Colfe's pupil. Junior School pupils were particularly impressed and in one or two cases disappointed (their parents possibly less so) to hear that modern health and safety regulations would stand in the way of any attempt to emulate Tom's achievement. Still on the subject of Old Colfeian achievement, we were delighted to hear of the success of two erstwhile members of the 1st XV rugby team: Matt Gallagher's playing contract with Saracens has been extended and Chris Harris has signed a two year deal with Newcastle Falcons.

ACADEMIC

Environmental philosopher and former Green Party councillor Dr Rupert Read gave the most recent John Glyn Society lecture. Pupils were enthralled by his talk which explored the serious consequences of climate change. Read a full review of the event by Ole (Y10), [here](#).

Universities: I was delighted to see that our annual Competitive Courses Evening in January was very well attended. This session gives students and parents who are preparing to apply for some of the most competitive courses in the country practical advice and insight into the process. Speakers were available to discuss applications to Oxford and Cambridge and my thanks goes to Mr Snell who gave an overview of applying for medicine.

UCAS: On a related theme, university applications have maintained the very positive trend of recent years. More than half of our applicants have received offers, conditional or unconditional, from all the universities to which they applied. The range of subjects is as wide as ever and the hit rate with the Russell Group universities, Oxford included, is once again very strong. Three pupils are currently holding offers for Medicine. Engineering has seen a welcome surge of interest at Colfe's, particularly amongst girls. Thanks, as ever, to Mr Snell and Mrs Cardnell for their tireless support of our candidates.

Competitive Mathematics: Having successfully won the regional phase of the competition this year, the senior Hans Woyda team triumphed again with a 44-40 win over a very strong team from Wellington College. Congratulations to Lara (Y13), Dan (Y12), Panos (Y11) and Isha (Y9). Their reward was a quarter final match against St Paul's in which Simone (Y13), Dan (Y12), Logan (Y11) and Ajan (Y9) secured another win of 40-36. The team will now attend the semi-final in the coming weeks.

Technology: Our first Technology Inspiration Day enabled pupils from Years 7 and 8 to hear from speakers from the Computer Science sector. Many thanks to Dr Joe Saunders, Visiting Senior Research Fellow at the University of Hertfordshire, who discussed his work in Artificial Intelligence; Penny Bailey, Managing Director of Bailey Solutions Ltd, who is keen to encourage more females into computing; and computer games developer and Managing Director of Avasophy Ltd, Keldon Alleyene. You can read further information about the day on our [website](#). Computer Science will become available as a GCSE option for Year 10 pupils in September 2019.



JUNIOR SCHOOL

A highlight of the Key Stage 2 calendar is the Young Voices concert. 41 pupils from Years 3-6 joined the 8,000 strong choir at the O2 for an evening of music, singing and an interactive dance in the whole arena. Trips for younger pupils have included the Tower of London (Year 1) and the Discovery Story Centre (Nursery). As part of the Junior School's ongoing exploration of the school's values, pupils enjoyed an afternoon of 'Kindfulness' activities. All children from Nursery-Year 6 recorded acts of kindness on a yellow leaf and hung it on the new 'School Values Tree', which can be found in the Junior School Atrium next to the KS1 Hall. Roebucks was once again transformed into a Parisian café for the annual French breakfast event. Year 11 pupils became waiters and waitresses and took orders from Year 5 pupils in French to (mutually) support their language learning.

ART, DRAMA & MUSIC

Argentinian pianists Fabian and Paula Chávez performed at the second Music Recital, as part of Colfe's ongoing partnership with Trinity Laban Conservatoire. Despite suffering from a genetic disorder that has left them blind, the twin sisters played an exciting programme of music by Ravel, Debussy and Poulenc. The sisters have also been involved in unique research to help visually-impaired musicians find the best ways to read musical scores, making their performance even more fascinating. Parents, pupils and staff were invited to see GCSE music pupils perform a selection of solos and ensembles at the Spring Platform Concert. Many thanks to the enthusiastic audience who came along to support pupils in preparation for their coursework submission. The House Music competition was yet again wonderfully entertaining, with musicians from every year group working together in ensembles co-ordinated by Sixth Form musical directors – a testament to the strength of Colfe's school's house system. Congratulations to Beardwood who took first place with their ensemble performance of *Africa* by Toto directed by Y12 students Eleanor and Felix. Laurie (Y10) also won for Beardwood with his performance of *Let Her Go* by Passenger. Thanks to Mr Holmes and his colleagues for all that they do to promote and develop music at Colfe's.

Following last year's success at the National Youth Theatre auditions, 17 pupils participated in this year's assessment. Five pupils also auditioned for the technical workshop and a two more will be auditioning for the National Youth Music Theatre. Theatre company Frantic Assembly returned again to host a collaborative physical theatre session for Year 10 pupils and A-level Drama students. Years 11, 12 and 13 Drama students travelled to Shakespeare's Globe for an Elizabethan theatre workshop and tour. Visiting artist Meryl Ward hosted a session with Year 13 A-level students to support their preparation for University interviews as well as looking at a range of mixed media and experimental approaches. Year 12 A-level artists explored the concept of using words within their work in an interactive workshop delivered by undergraduate students as part of our ongoing relationship with Goldsmiths. Photography club is proving to be a popular choice for pupils in Years 7-9, who have been enjoying making pinhole cameras and developing their images in the darkroom. There will be further opportunities for the pupils across the Senior School to explore the use of digital and darkroom techniques as the year progresses.

SPORT

We have seen strong sports performances from pupils across the board this half term. In swimming, Colfe's was represented by a number of pupils in the Kent Swimming Championships. Held over three weekends, Nathan (Y10) won gold in the 200m butterfly and Henry (Y7) achieved three bronze medals for 1500m, 800m and 400m. Personal bests were achieved by Blythe (Y10), Elspeth (Y10), Nathan (Y10), Amie (Y8), Zach (Y8), Jacob (Y8), Henry (Y7) and Leo (Y6). 30 pupils from Years 11-13 competed in this year's upper school House Swimming competition. The results were incredibly close with Norton coming first by one swim – accumulating an impressive 5,499 lengths and raising £2,688 for Macmillan Cancer Support.

Following our continued success in Water Polo, we have entered a number of competitions this term. Our teams are currently competing in the London Schools and English Schools Water Polo Tournaments and are training hard to improve their skills and the U12 team were triumphant in a game against City of London captained by Jakab (Y7).

In girls' sport the U15 Cricket team played exceptionally well in the Lady Taverners Indoor Cricket Tournament winning a place at the County Finals while the U13 team narrowly missed out despite their strong performance. The U14s A-C Netball teams played well in matches against JAGS, with the A and C teams both victorious. Similarly, the U13s A-E teams gave strong performances against Bancroft's School.

In boys' sport the U15 football team have continued their fantastic start to the season and remain unbeaten. The U12 football teams got their season off to a flying start winning all of their fixtures at The Cedars School.



OUTDOOR PURSUITS & TRIPS

A-level Modern Language students visited Barcelona, which included an opportunity to see the iconic Sagrada Familia and attend a Gaudí architecture tour as well as sampling the delights the Boqueria Food Market. As part of their History studies, Year 9 pupils visited the Imperial War Museum to view the Holocaust Exhibition which provided a unique and emotional insight into the darkest aspect of Nazi Germany. Theatre trips this half term have included *School of Rock* for Year 7 at the Gillian Lynne Theatre and *The Unreturning* for Year 10 GCSE pupils at Theatre Royal.

The Combined Cadet Force (CCF) have had a busy half term. Twelve cadets visited RAF Halton to take part in the Royal Air Squadron Trophy (SE Region) competition for the first time, involving a number of practical exercises and a RAF general knowledge quiz. Cadets from Year 10 attended a Leadership Cadre in Folkestone, where they explored the theory and qualities of good leaders, before putting these into practice through a series of challenging command tasks. Over the half term break, the squadron will deploy to the Cinque Ports Training Area for the February Field Training Exercise, with cadets being trained and tested in a number of skills such as fieldcraft, navigation, leadership and first aid.

Upcoming Outdoor Pursuits trips include the Year 8 trip to Snowdonia in March, giving pupils the opportunity to build on the experiences and skills they learned in the Lake District in Year 7 and the Year 9 trip to Boughton Woods.

INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENTS

- Oskar (Y7) has been selected to play a solo viola piece at the British Suzuki Institute's 40th anniversary concert at the Purcell Room, London
- Necati (Y9) was awarded National Winner of the Amateur Boxing Alliance Schools Championships 2019 – he is now ranked number one in the UK for his age and weight class
- Nathan (Y10) has been accepted for 12 events at this year's Kent Swimming Championships including 1500m free, 800m free, 400m free and 200m fly
- Christian (Y12) made his debut for the Saracens U18 team against Bath earlier this month. He then played against Bristol in the final game of the U18 academy league scoring two tries
- Primo (Y13) participated in a London Schools Symphony Orchestra (LSSO) course that culminated with a performance of a mixed programme of Wagner and Strauss at the Barbican Centre under the baton of internationally renowned conductor Ryan Wigglesworth
- Ben (Y10), Max (Y8), Jack (Y7) and Thomas (Y7) have joined the Beckenham Water Polo Club and been involved in Kent selection

If you have news of any out-of-school achievements for your son or daughter please let us know by emailing our Communications Team at comms@colfes.com.

NOTICES

The Fireworks display – although delayed from November – was, finally, a great success and the efforts of the PAFA team has raised over £1,200 for the school. Many thanks again to PAFA for their continued hard work.

If your son or daughter wishes to change from school to packed lunches, or if you wish to stop using the school coach service, please remember that you need to give half a term's notice. Please email pkeogh@colfes.com in the Bursary Office. Wishing you all a restful half-term break and I look forward to seeing pupils back at school on Monday 25 February.

Best wishes

Richard Russell
Headmaster