



From the Headmaster

Dear Parents

The end of the longest term of the school year provides a welcome opportunity to reflect on some of the main events of recent weeks and earlier this term. In the cause of (relative) brevity I have inevitably omitted a number of highlights and important milestones, for which I apologise.

As I write, no fewer than 12 pupils in Year 13 are attending academic interviews at Oxford or Cambridge, having negotiated the exacting pre-selection criteria. This is the largest total from Colfe's for some years and comes despite widespread perception that both universities are seeking to expand their intake from state schools.

Oxbridge aside, I have been particularly impressed with the range of applications this year, not only to British universities but also to institutions elsewhere in the world. One of last year's School Captains, for example, has enrolled at the University of Chicago and another has started at Leuven University in Belgium. Yet another of last year's leavers chose to turn down her offer from Durham in favour of a high-level Wealth Management apprenticeship at Swiss investment bank UBS. Her apprenticeship was profiled in a [Sunday Times](#) article in September. I am grateful to Mr Snell, Assistant Director of Sixth Form and Mrs Bean, Head of Careers for their tireless support for all our applicants.

Despite general economic uncertainty and the desire of at least one major political party to abolish independent schools, I am delighted to report that the volume of applications to Colfe's continues to grow. I am particularly grateful to hundreds of pupils in both Junior and Senior schools who acted as tour guides on the Open Days this term and made such a favourable impression on record numbers of visitors: we had more than 1,700 visitors on site across the two events and positive feedback from families about our passionate and articulate pupil guides was a consistent message.

Younger pupils in the **Junior School** have enjoyed many different activities this term including an afternoon devoted to the school values. Each class discussed the connection between our school values and the wider environment and how the choices we make impact the world in which we live.

The Harvest Festival Assembly for children in EYFS and KS1 saw a visit from Lieutenant Entwisle from The Salvation Army and the parent workshop 'Bringing out the best in your children' proved to be extremely popular – focussing on motivating children to do their best and offering practical help to encourage children to follow instructions.

Once again the Junior School has captivated us all with their end of term Christmas productions in recent weeks. EYFS pupils impressed with their heartening performance of *The Nativity*. The KS2 Choir collaborated with the Senior School Chamber Choir in their beautiful and energetic performance of *Captain Noah and his Floating Zoo*. Years 3 and 4 performed *The Greatest Snowman* – an all singing, all dancing, sing-a-long musical and Y4 demonstrated their ever-improving musical skills from the String Scheme sessions at the Teatime Concert, as well as a first performance by the orchestra.

Meanwhile **top senior school Mathematicians** have commenced their progress through the early stage of the Hans Woyda Mathematics competition, getting off to a flying start with Ahan (Y9), Ole (Y11), Panos (Y12) and Arthur (Y13) winning 50 points to 41 against Allyn's. In the second round against JAGS, Eleanor (Y9), Lukas (Y11), Logan (Y12) and Dan (Y13) won 24 points to 13. Thereafter, in the third match against Dulwich College, Nico (Y9), Ole (Y11), Panos (Y12) and Arthur (Y13) finished with a draw at 45 points each. We now await other results from the group stage to find out if we will progress to the next stage of the competition.



COLFE'S

Newsletter

Well done for the second year running to the Colfe's **Book Quiz** teams who got through to the National Final of the **Kids' Lit Quiz**. Congratulations go to Amabel (Y7), Holly (Y8), Ned (Y8) and Shrey (Y7) who finished second, just one question behind a great team from Keswick School, in the final.

ART, DRAMA & MUSIC

The term got off to a loud and dramatic start in the **Music** department with the launch of the Y7 Instrumental and Vocal scheme. All pupils had the opportunity to try a range of woodwind, brass and string instruments. In a joint enterprise spanning at least three generations in November, choirs from the Junior and Senior School were joined by parents, grandparents and friends to perform *Captain Noah and His Floating Zoo* at St Alfege's Church in Greenwich. A busy term concluded with a Winter Concert celebrating instrumental music at Colfe's and our annual Carol Service at St Mary's Church, Lewisham, at which the Senior School vocal ensembles sang a programme of festive music including 'Ring the Bells' by composer Paul Fincham, who was present in the choir. The piece was originally commissioned by the London Philharmonic Choir and was performed in support of the homeless charity Crisis.

In **Art**, Years 10 and 12 visited the Tate Modern where they were especially inspired by the work of Olaf Eliason. Photography and Media Year 12 students visited the National Portrait Gallery to see the Taylor Wessing Portrait prize. Colfe's pupils exhibited at the SMAG Art exhibition at St Michael and All Angels, Blackheath. Students submitted 20 works including photography and screen printing and sold an impressive 16 pieces. The exhibition raised more than £3,000 and all proceeds went to local charities.

In **Drama**, 149 students across the Senior School took part in the LAMDA auditions with 95% achieving Merit or Distinction across all grades. In the medal grades, 100% of students achieved Merit or Distinction. Denny (Y11), Francesca (Y13) and Millie (Y11) all took part in the National Youth Theatre Acting Summer courses and are now full members, ready for castings and auditions within the company.

The main Senior School production last week was a memorable triumph. A *Chorus of Disapproval* brought out the best in our most talented actors including many in Year 11 who are simultaneously preparing for mock examinations next term. The production was supported by a particularly strong technical support team from our newly constituted Technical Theatre Club.

SPORT

The U13 girls' football team are through to the second round of the English Schools FA Cup competition having beaten Drapers' Academy 1-0. In Hockey, the U12 girls placed third in the Kent Tournament and the U13A finished fourth out of 16 schools at the Sevenoaks Hockey Tournament.

There has been a good start to the season in Netball, with three teams competing at U18 level, and great performances for our U15s, U14s, U13s and U12s (A-D team level) against Woldingham, Caterham and Bromley High. U16s qualified for the Kent Schools Netball Finals and our U12A team have only lost one game this season.

The U13 (Girls and Boys) and U15 (Girls and Boys) teams all qualified for the English Schools Cross Country regional finals. Colfe's was one of only two schools out of 30 to have all teams qualify. Special mention to Abi (Y7) who won the U13 girl's race. At the Greenwich Borough Cross Country Championships, Colfe's won 4 of the 8 trophies and had five race winners: U13 Girls Abigail (Y7), U14 Girls Emily (Y8), U14 Boys Max (Y8), U15 Girls Isabella (Y9), U16 girls Madeline (Y10).

The U15 boys' tennis team represented by Ben (Y11), Patrick (Y11), Will (Y10) and Josh (Y8) finished fourth in the regional finals of the AEGON Schools Tennis competition, narrowly missing out on 3rd place in a tensely fought tiebreaker, the match having finished with a draw. This is the furthest the school has reached in this competition – well done to all involved.

Congratulations also to the U13 mixed water polo team who won their first tournament, beating City of London School 7-3 and The London Oratory School 7-3. The U12 and U13 mixed swimming team have qualified for the A London League Final out of over 30 schools. Beating competition from Alleyn's, Trinity, Eltham College and St Dunstan's to name but a few. This puts Colfe's in the top six in London for the competition will take place in February.

OUTDOOR PURSUITS & TRIPS

The Outdoor Education Department started the year with Gold Award Duke of Edinburgh expeditions for Year 8 and a Sixth Form adventure day in Essex. Every pupil in Year 7 completed a week's course in the stunning Lake District National Park. Activities there included paddling across Derwentwater, climbing Shepherds Crag and underground caving.

In CCF, the Commanding Officer and Officer Commanding the Army section were put through their paces by Royal Army Physical Training Instructors at Woolwich Barracks to gain their Obstacle Course Supervisor's qualification. At the same time, a team of ten army cadets took part in the Royal Artillery's National Cadet Competition on Salisbury Plain Training Area including a series of competitive and informative stands, learning how STEM activities are employed in a forces environment.

RAF Cadets attended RAF Wittering for Air Experience Flying. The Squadron took over 50 cadets to Cinque Ports Training Area at half term for the Junior Cadre. We also had other cadets attend Military Leadership Courses, Cyberwarfare and the Army's STEM cadre.

INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENTS

- Abigail (Y7) represented London in the regional finals of the English Schools Cross Country competition.
- Bella (Y7) Performed in 'Eltham Lights' 2 and won the floor trophy in Gymnastics.
- Isobel (Y7) has earned a place on the England Hockey pathway team.
- Lily (Y7) has been selected for the Kent U16 Girls Water Polo Team.
- Year 7 pupils Logan, Thomas and Oscar have all earned places on the Kent County Rugby team.
- Myles (Y7) played in the semi-final football tournament with Blackheath Wanderers FC.
- Anisa (Y8), Xanthe (Y8), Grace (Y7) and Lucy (Y7) have been selected for U13 Kent County Netball Squads.
- Emily (Y8) took Silver at the 800m individual running event at the Kent Championships.
- Henry (Y8) competed at the Welsh Swimming Nationals, making a number of finals and achieving personal best times across many events.
- Ludwig (Y8) has passed his Grade 8 piano exam with distinction.
- Jack (Y9) continues his golfing success, achieving first place in both the Race to St George's North Kent Qualifier and the East Kent Qualifier; ultimately achieving first place in the final.
- Matthew (Y8) was selected to represent London in the Inter-Regional Triathlon Championships.
- Max (Y9) has been selected for U14 Kent Water Polo Team.
- Roshi (Y9) has been selected for the U15 Country Netball Squads.
- Alice (Y10) won the Silver Medal in the U15 Kent School County Fencing Tournament.
- Luca (Y10) was placed fourth in the country overall in the British Cycling UK National Downhill Series.
- Nathan (Y10) came first place in the 200m Butterfly and a third place in the 1500m Freestyle at the London Winter Swimming Championships.
- Necati (Y10) has been selected to represent the Repton Boxing Club in the National association boy's championships.
- Amelie (Y11) has achieved her Shotokan Karate black belt.
- Emma (Y13) walked the equivalent of a marathon in aid of Macmillan, raising over £1,000.
- Damil (Y13) has been awarded a Distinction for Grade 8 Acting.
- Emily (Y8) and Ava (Y8), Nell (Y9), Isla (Y9), Anneke (Y10), Amelie (Y11), Alice (Y12) and Lily (Y12) have been short listed for Kent County Hockey Squads.

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 PAFA Christmas Fair earlier this month was very successful raising more than £2,700, which will be split evenly between local charities For Jimmy and Little Village. Many thanks to the PAFA committee for their hard work and to all the parents for their donations and support on the day.

I'm afraid I must continue to draw your attention to the **congestion and parking** difficulties around the school at the beginning and end of the school day. Parents who drive their children to school should always park considerately and take care not to block the driveways of local residents. I regret to report that we have received complaints from Crown Court residents about a minority of parents using their private property for parking and turning. Please be especially careful when leaving your vehicle near the school.

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.

The spring term begins Tuesday 7 January – please remember that the Senior School is closed to pupils on Friday 10 January for the 11+ assessment, the Junior School is open as usual.

Wishing you a happy and restful festive break,

Best wishes

Richard Russell
Headmaster