



## From the Headmaster

Dear Parents

It has been a busy start to the New Year with mock examinations for Year 11 and 13 pupils and a very high number of applicants attending the 11+ assessment day in January. Competition for places remains fierce, with candidates sitting the examination in the morning, followed by a newly introduced afternoon 'taster experience' which went down well with the candidates. Offers will be sent out to families this week and I look forward to welcoming the successful applicants to Colfe's in September.

Our Competitive Courses Evening in January was also well attended. The session gives students and parents who are preparing to apply for the most competitive university courses practical advice and insight into the process. Many thanks to Old Colfeians Maria Mobio (Cambridge) and Marcus Brockman (Oxford) for attending the session to share their advice.

This kind of support and preparation is paying dividends as we celebrate five Colfe's students gaining Oxbridge offers this year for across a range of subjects: Music, Geography, English, Natural Sciences and Mathematics. More generally, university applications have maintained the positive trend of recent years and we have seen no evidence of discrimination against our independently educated candidates, despite relentless press coverage which seeks to suggest otherwise. The most popular university choices are Manchester, Leeds and Nottingham, all of which are in the Russell Group. The diversity of the subject choices continues to reflect the range of our pupils' aspirations, from Medicine and Engineering to Scenic Arts and Musical Theatre. My thanks, as ever, to Mr Snell, Assistant Director of Sixth Form and Mrs Bean, Head of Careers for their tireless support of our students.

### JUNIOR SCHOOL

The Junior School Choir gave a superb performance singing in harmony with 8,000 other children at the Young Voices concert at the O2 last week, which has become an annual favourite amongst both staff and pupils.

Trips this term have included Year 3 visiting the French Institute for a workshop, Year 6 to the West End musical Matilda and Year 1 to the Museum of London to learn more about their Great Fire of London topic. The Junior School has also hosted a number of workshops including a Space Virtual Reality session for Year 2 where pupils learnt about the planets in the solar system through a virtual reality flight, an Indian Village workshop where Year 5 learnt about life in the small, rural community of Chembakolli in the Nilgiri Hills and an all-school maths workshop based around the play 'The Calculating Mr One'.

Pupils also attended an eco-workshop for Protect the Planet Day. Nursery children picked up litter from around the school grounds and made posters about helping to save the planet, while Year 5 and 6 had a lesson in up-cycling by creating notebooks from old maps and wallets from old juice cartons.

### ACADEMIC

A huge thank you to our most recent guest speaker at the John Glyn Society lecture series. Miatta Fahnbulleh, Chief Executive of the [New Economics Foundation](#) (and Colfe's parent), spoke to pupils on the twin challenges of climate change and inequality. This excellent and timely lecture was extremely well received, cutting straight to the heart of the concerns and interests of many of our pupils. We hope to be able to work with Ms Fahnbulleh again in the future. My thanks also go to Miss Symington for her creative and powerful promotion of the work of the Society.



# COLFE'S

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## Newsletter

After our success against Wellington and St Paul's last year, the Hans Woyda maths team had much to live up to. They performed consistently well throughout the competition but met tough opposition and lost narrowly in their final match against Caterham School. Congratulations to Dan (Y13), Logan (Y12), Isha (Y10) and Ahan (Y9).. I would like to congratulate all those who competed this year – Dan (Y13), Arthur (Y13), Logan (Y12), Panos (Y12), Ole (Y11), Lukas (Y11), Isha (Y10), Eleanor (Y9) and Nico (Y9). 120 students from Years 8-11 also took part in the National Intermediate Mathematical Challenge which comprises of a set of challenging maths questions. Results are currently pending but we expect progress to the next round.

At the annual Technology Inspiration Day guest speaker Dr Joseph Saunders, Visiting Senior Research Fellow, University of Hertfordshire, talked to Year 7 pupils about his work with artificial intelligence (AI). His team have worked to develop learning robots which are humanoid (like C3P0) or mechanoid (like R2D2). At the end of the lecture Dr Saunders answered some probing questions – from an enthralled audience – about the future of AI, including some on the topical technological and ethical concerns.

Congratulations to the Year 12 and 13 students who are through to the semi-finals of the [Student Investor Challenge](#), beating over 9,000 teams from schools around the UK and abroad. The competition encourages teams to invest virtual money in a set of stocks and other investment instruments.

### ART, DRAMA & MUSIC

The Music department hosted two recital evenings for GCSE and A-level pupils this half-term. There were some fantastic individual performances at both events, demonstrating technical control and innate musicality, all of which bodes well for the final recitals in March. Later this term, the senior choir will be visiting Fitzwilliam College Cambridge to sing Choral Evensong. Colfe's already has strong ties with Fitzwilliam and we are excited to develop this link further, offering pupils the opportunity to sing at dusk in the beautiful college chapel. The House Music competition on Wednesday was better attended than ever, with a wonderful variety of performances, particularly in the solo category. Our adjudicator, Professor Robert Saxon, had an extremely difficult task to choose between some truly excellent performances. He did so with great acumen (and humour) nonetheless.

Year 9 visited the Tate Modern exhibition by Korean artist Nam June Paik, whose visionary work embraces mass media and new technology reflecting how it has influenced art in the 21st century. Year 12 visited the V&A Museum to see photographer Tim Walker's exhibition, inspired by work from the archives. As part of our partnership with local schools Year 10 students from Conisborough College came to Colfe's for an arts workshop on how to use mixed media in their pieces.

Year 11 GCSE Drama students completed their performance examination in front of a packed Beardwood Theatre and visiting examiner. 120 Year 7 students went to see *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* at The Bridge Theatre which is now influencing their theatre evaluation studies. Pupils from Year 9 to Year 12 took part in auditions for the prestigious National Youth Theatre. We hope they follow the successes of the previous years where Colfe's has placed eight students onto the acting course and four onto the technical theatre course.

### SPORT

In the London Schools Cross Country Championships, the U15 girls' team took the Silver Medal just behind JAGS (out of 24 London Schools). The team was captained by Isabella (Y9) and included Emily (Y8), Emily (Y9), Mya (Y10), Scarlett (Y8) and Evie (Y9). The U12 girls' team placed fourth with Abigail (Y7) taking third place out of 140 competitors. Colfe's Boys U15 Team placed sixth out of 22 schools.

In netball, the U12 team has reached the quarter finals of the 'Sisters in Sport Netball Plate' competition having defeated St. Benedict's School. The U13 team reached the quarter finals of the Independent School cup but were narrowly defeated by Farnborough Hill. In hockey the U13 team first 11-a-side fixtures resulted in a 1-0 win against Bromley High School. The U12 C&D teams gave strong performances against JAGS coming away with a 0-0 draw and a 5-2 win. In football, U12s and U13 girls' teams have both reached the third round of the 'Sisters in Sport Football Plate' competitions with fixtures taking place this week to decide quarter final places.

Both U13 and U15 girls' cricket teams have progressed to the County Finals of The Lady Taverners' Indoor Cricket competition due to be played on the 11 March.

Boys' football was afflicted by the heavy rain in the early part of the term but recent victories for the 1st XI over St Dunstan's, Bancroft's and City of London bode well for the second half of term when we hope for better weather.



### OUTDOOR PURSUITS & TRIPS

Six RAF Cadets travelled to RAF Kenley to undertake the first step of their Progressive Flying Training Syllabus. Cadets were given a morning of ground school, followed by individual sessions in a Part-Task Trainer (a sophisticated simulator which replicates the experience of gliding) with instructors from 614 Volunteer Gliding Squadron.

CCF cadets also had the opportunity to visit 230 Squadron at RAF Benson. RAF and Army Air Corps cadets enjoyed flights in a Puma helicopter over the Oxfordshire countryside and Oxford Colleges, followed by visits to the Joint Helicopter Support Squadron (underslung loads), the Puma Deep Servicing Hub (engineering) and the National Police Air Service HQ.

Major Cherry delivered the Adair Young Leaders Cadre. Cadets were taught the history, evolution and theory of leadership from one of the world's foremost authorities on Leadership, John Adair, via his Action Centred Leadership Programme.

Over the half term break the CCF squadron will go to Normandy to commemorate the 75th anniversary of Operation Overlord. Cadets will visit key sites of Operation Overlord and Pegasus Bridge. Cadets will gain an understanding of the experiences of several former Colfeians who flew paratroopers behind enemy lines the night before D-Day.

### INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Abigail (Y7) came first place in the Under 13s Kent Cross Country Championship.
- Oskar (Y8) has retained his place in the National Children's Orchestra again this year, performing at prestigious venues with some of the most talented young musicians in the country.
- Io (Y9) will be competing nationally in diving this year competing in the 'Armada Cup' in Plymouth and the 'G Star' in Leeds.
- Evie (Y9) auditioned for Annie with the British Theatre Academy and will be playing the part of June.
- Luca (Y10) has signed a sponsorship deal with Green Snow Collective for the next two years supporting his British Cycling National MTB.
- Theo (Y10) is attending the cadet Cyberfirst Defender Course at the Defence School of Communications and Information Systems.
- Dan (Y13) achieved a merit in the British Mathematical Olympiad – the highest achievement in the competition the school has had.
- Olly Coates (OC 2019) has been called up to represent Eastern Counties Rugby U20 (Norfolk, Suffolk & Cambridgeshire).
- Matt Gallagher (OC 2013) has moved from Saracens to Munster and discovered (to my delight) that he is eligible to play for Ireland thanks to a maternal grandmother.

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

### NOTICES

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.

On a similar subject, may I remind parents of the dangers of idling outside the school to reduce localised air pollution. Under Regulation 98 of The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986, it is an offence to leave a vehicle engine running unnecessarily while that vehicle is stationary on a road. For further information visit: <https://idlingaction.london/>

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](mailto: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 24 February.

Best wishes

Richard Russell  
Headmaster