

13<sup>th</sup> September 2021

Dear students and parents (2A)

In this autumn newsletter, my first termly update of the new academic year, I hope first and foremost that you are keeping safe and well and have had a restful summer. As in my previous updates, I would like to share some information about key college activities but also look further ahead at our strategy for the future and how this will be changing the college estate and the student experience.

### **Results, enrolment and start of teaching**

Today we were delighted to welcome back on site our 2A students after the summer break and have our whole college community together for the start of teaching. I know we all hope that this year will be more straightforward than last year, when our students and staff responded so magnificently to the challenges of COVID-19. Collyer's continues to thrive due to having such a strong community and we should all be proud of the resilience and spirit of innovation displayed. Results in the summer were outstanding again and following a very smooth and well-organised enrolment of new students the college has grown further, cementing its reputation as one of the leading sixth form colleges in the country and the top state provider of A Levels across the whole of West Sussex. We are all really looking forward to the new term and I encourage students to make the most of the opportunities on offer, both within and outside of the classroom.

### **COVID-19 safety**

In terms of COVID-19 safety, it is important to stress that we should all still continue to be cautious and exercise personal responsibility. Our safety arrangements from the start of term are detailed in the FAQs and the Risk Assessment which are published in the [Latest Updates](#) section of the college website. Please make sure you read them carefully.

All students are onsite 100% of the time and the vast majority of college activities will be operating as usual. The main points to remember for all students, staff and visitors are:

- Face masks are not required anywhere onsite, but are strongly encouraged when in crowded indoor social areas – for example the canteen, the library and Reception
- Everyone is still encouraged to use hand sanitiser regularly
- Mass meetings will be limited to 50 until October half term
- Anyone with COVID-19 symptoms must self-isolate
- Students under 18 years and 6 months or who are double-jabbed no longer have to automatically self-isolate if they are a close contact of a positive case (whether onsite or within the household), however they should arrange to take a PCR test.

Thank you to students for supporting the mass testing that started last week and continues this week, with all students offered two tests onsite before continuing with twice weekly LFD tests at home. It is important that students keep up with the regular testing, for the safety of everyone in our community. Please ensure all test results are reported on MyProgress and the government website.

## **Communications with students and parents**

Last year was very challenging for all of us and to maintain clear communications with our students and parents we had to send frequent emails and social media updates. Hopefully as this new academic year settles in, we will be able to focus more on the regular updates our senior managers send at each specific time of year – these will be hosted as usual on the [Parents / Carers](#) section of the website. If we need to update students and parents about coronavirus-related matters such as new government guidance or changes to summer grading, these will continue to be hosted in the [Latest Updates](#) section of the website alongside the FAQs and the Risk Assessment.

## **Support for progression**

This term the main focus of tutorial time will be on progression after college – be it to university, apprenticeships, further study or the world of work. This summer, 90% of students progressed onto their first-choice university, so you can rest assured that our staff provide expert guidance to all our students. Students will also be using the [Unifrog](#) platform to research options for courses and university, a widely adopted and individually tailored guide to help make informed choices about future study as well as investigating career paths. We also have a wealth of useful [Progression Guidance](#) available online.

## **Car park, no smoking policy, safety on site and absence**

Our main car park on Hurst Road operates a barrier control system but does remain open until 09:30 each morning to enable drop off. At other times of day the car park is for visitors only and an exit ticket will be required from Reception, so it is better to pick up away from the college. Students wishing to park on site will need to apply for a permit at a cost of £165 per year. There are only a limited number of spaces available. Details of the criteria applied are outlined in Travel Assistance Guide in the [Student Finance](#) section of the college website. Permits are not issued to students who reside within a 10 mile distance from the college. To apply for a parking permit, students need to email Reception ([reception@collyers.ac.uk](mailto:reception@collyers.ac.uk)) to ascertain if they meet the criteria.

Collyer's is a no smoking campus. In our Code of Conduct it clearly states that students should not smoke in the college (including e-cigarettes) or elsewhere on the campus, or at its entrances. This also applies to the local roads and residential areas as we work to promote good relations with our neighbours. In the interests of safeguarding, students will also be expected to display their ID card and lanyard at college.

For information and to keep up to date with major activities and upcoming events, please go to the main college site, [www.collyers.ac.uk](http://www.collyers.ac.uk) and then select the Parents/Carers tab on the homepage. In this section a variety of useful guides to college life can be found, including on notifying us of a student absence and how to access the MyStudent parent portal. There are also other useful sections on this page such as 'Progression' and 'Support for Learning'. Finally, term dates for the next two years are available via the 'Academic' section of the website.

## **Longer-term plans**

In my last termly update I asked students and parents to support our constant focus on improvement by completing our annual satisfaction surveys. Thank you to everyone that responded and the overwhelmingly positive feedback that we received, especially on our response to COVID-19 and communication. There are of course points that we are keen to take forwards and address this year, and I look forward to discussing these with our new parent governors that have recently been appointed. We were also delighted to have such a high level of interest in the apprenticeships with the Guild of Mercers' Scholars. This is an annual opportunity which I will promote again in my summer term update.

We have an ambitious masterplan for the estate that will add additional teaching, study, social and catering spaces over the next 10 years leading up to our quincentenary in 2032. At the heart of the plan is a commitment to green spaces, sustainable construction and preserving the heritage and feeling of the campus. In my last update I shared a visual of the new 10 classroom teaching block that is progressing well, with designs virtually finalised and surveys completed. We aim to start construction work in April next year. As more students join us, it is also vital that we have sufficient social and catering space, so we are planning a large, new café that will serve as home for the RCU (student union) as well as being a pop-up art exhibition and performance space. The artist's impression below gives a sense of the design:



Our Heritage Committee continues to be busy, particularly as we are supporting the Old Collyerians' Association with planning for their centenary year in 2022, an incredible milestone. Careful research has been able to compile fascinating materials from our history, many of which are now showcased in the [Archives](#) section of our college website. This will be added to over time, with a visit planned to the National Archives next month – please do take a look. A student project group are developing a timeline of our history and editing video interviews of school and college alumni, both of which will be launched after Christmas. As our alumni organisation the OCA plan for a series of activities to celebrate their 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary next year, we will be completely rebuilding and updating their website for the spring term.

Finally, our Sustainability Committee continue to focus on raising awareness about the environment and improve our college estate as we follow the Climate Action Roadmap to become a leading college for sustainability. A new [Initiatives](#) page on the college website captures recent activity, including an inspirational INSET session and news of the new carbon literacy course for students that forms part of the successful bid by all colleges in Sussex for government funding on Green skills. We look forward to inviting students to consider joining this optional short course during the coming academic year.

I'm sure you'll agree that the next few years are exciting for all our community at Collyer's, and I look forward to providing more information in future updates.

Dan Lodge  
Principal