



COLLYER'S

Founded in 1532



College Strategic Plan 2023-26

Introduction

Collyer's is one of the leading sixth form colleges in the country and the first choice for A Levels across the whole of West Sussex. Founded nearly 500 years ago in 1532 by a London merchant and Mercer named Richard Collyer, we have a strong sense of history, an inclusive college community and a strongly aspirational culture. Our students achieve exceptional results every year – amongst the very top in West Sussex for state providers.

As we move closer to our quincentennial year in 2032, we continue to plan for the development of our college against a complex landscape, but with a clear identity as an institution:

An international college, with an outstanding national reputation, founded in the local community.

Proud to be one of the Mercers' Associated Schools and Colleges, our approach to planning strategically for the future is simple but powerful – *innovate, grow, preserve*. Innovation will be evident in everything we do, for whilst we are firmly rooted in our heritage, we are also a forward-looking institution. We will grow each year to meet the ever-increasing demand as the premier choice for sixth form study in the region. We will always preserve our history, our environment and the unique qualities that make up our community, assuring a legacy for future generations.

This three-year strategic plan will take the college through the next part of its journey to its 500th anniversary. It is an ambitious plan and one that reflects a complex future with significant challenges but also exciting opportunities. With an open and positive outlook, we work closely with local schools and fellow sixth form colleges in the region but also engage across other sectors at a national level. We face the future together with confidence and at the heart of our college culture will always be a clear focus on our agreed mission:

Community, Opportunity, Achievement



Dan Lodge
Principal



Mission, vision and values

Mission

Community, Opportunity, Achievement

Vision

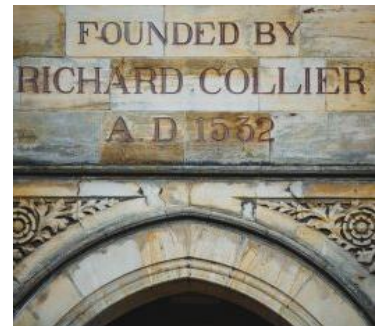
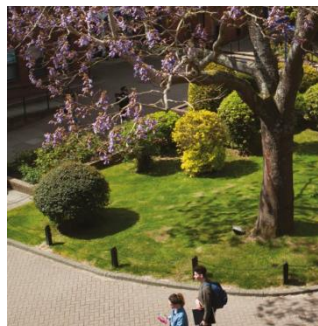
Proud of our past and ambitious for our future, Collyer's will:

- Remain the top state provider of A Levels in West Sussex
- Provide a relevant range of high quality vocational and technical courses
- Offer excellent progression guidance as a pathway to university, further education and work
- Develop skills for the future that meet local needs
- Embrace an innovative culture and pioneer new technologies
- Focus on sustainability and the wellbeing of all our community
- Invest in our estate to grow and further develop our safe, accessible and attractive campus
- Build strong relationships with partners and the local community

Values

Collyer's was founded by the London merchant and Mercer Richard Collyer in 1532. In his will, he outlined a very modern vision for the new school – one that resonates still now with our community and will for the next 500 years. He wanted above all to invest in his local community and create opportunity, ensuring all eligible students could benefit from outstanding achievement and the power of education for social mobility (*'noon to be refused likely to learn'*). These timeless and powerful ideals drive the core values for our modern sixth form college.

Inclusivity	Collyer's welcomes all who will benefit from the outstanding education we provide, we celebrate diversity and encourage mutual respect, upholding fairness for all
Aspiration	Our expert staff are ambitious for every student's future and focused on the breadth of opportunities for progression
Care	We are a friendly and supportive community, looking after one another and protecting our environment, growing as kind and actively engaged members of society
Individuality	Our college has a professional and innovative climate that challenges everyone to be creative, self-motivated and resilient



Strategic landscape

Academisation

At Collyer's we already work very closely with our partner schools both in Horsham and across the county. This partnership work is primarily focused on progression into our post-16 provision, but alongside this we liaise on teaching, learning and support as well. Within Horsham, all of the 11-18 providers have signed a memorandum of understanding to form a soft federation. This enhanced collaboration benefits all of us, starting with a major joint INSET day in spring 2023. Whilst the recent Opportunity for All white paper has now been shelved, momentum nationally towards further academisation continues. 80% of secondary schools are now in MATs and half of sixth form colleges have academised, the possibility of working in a more formal partnership structure together with schools in our town is an increasingly live discussion.

Strategic driver:

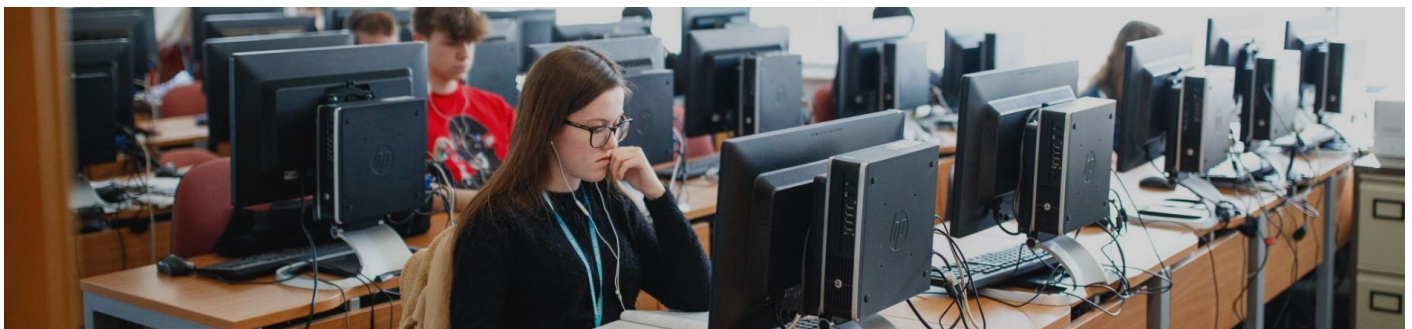
- Explore the possibility of forming a Multi-Academy Trust with local partner schools for the benefit of local young people

Skills agenda

With the passing of the Skills for Jobs bill in 2022, the government has now set out formally the expectation that colleges (GFEs but also stand-alone sixth form colleges such as Collyer's) must take responsibility for addressing skills gaps amongst local young people. Colleges are accountable to their funding agency the ESFA for working with the Local Skills Improvement Plan – in our case defined by the Sussex Chamber of Commerce – and developing and reviewing strategies for delivering the skills required by local employers. Ofsted will inspect our response as part of their enhanced Education Inspection Framework. Traditional sixth form colleges like Collyer's will add additional courses through their adult education provision as well as further enhancing skills development for post-16 students in core courses and enrichment.

Strategic driver:

- Work with the Horsham District Council, WSCC and the Sussex Chamber of Commerce to identify and respond to skills gaps in line with our identity and context



Strategic landscape

Government funding

Covid-19 and the subsequent Ukraine conflict have contributed to an already challenging funding landscape for post-16 providers. The very high inflationary situation currently means that modest increases in funding per student each year do not keep pace with rising costs including pay awards for staff. Collyer's has continued to maintain its Outstanding financial health status through careful financial management, but cost efficiencies will be needed if central funding does not match increases in our cost base. Alongside this the importance of growing alternative revenue streams such as lettings, programmes for international students and adult education has become ever greater. Finally, following the recent reclassification by the ONS of colleges back into the public sector, capital funding for building projects has become even more complex than before.

Strategic driver:

- Manage our cost base carefully to ensure efficient operations whilst exploring additional revenue generating activities that align with our mission

Local and regional demographics

This year we saw the first evidence of what will be a continued period of sustained demographic growth in new Year 12 students each year for the next 5-6 years. Partly linked to housebuilding locally and across the county, forecasts from West Sussex County Council outline a potential increase of between 3-5% per year in applications, although issues with water neutrality may delay this growth. With a founding principle of '*noon to be refused likely to learn*' and as one of the leading sixth form colleges in the country, we are committed to growing our college to be able to offer all eligible applicants access to a top class education. This means additional building in the coming years. A new 10-classroom teaching block opened in summer 2023 to add to a brand new café finished in autumn 2022. Further state-of-the-art teaching and learning spaces form part of our agreed estates masterplan.

Strategic driver:

- Grow the college capacity by planning for innovative new learning spaces that are well-designed and sustainable



Strategic landscape

Curriculum reform

The pace of curriculum reform never appears to slow, with each year an announcement from the government about a new initiative. The review of vocational education was stalled by Covid-19 and its reach in terms of defunding BTEC courses eventually appeared to have had a minimal impact on our provision at Collyer's, with just one or two specific courses needing to be reconsidered. However very recent announcements in January 2023 have made clear that technical provision in the form of T Levels remains a central government priority and that a wider range of BTEC courses are very likely to be defunded. With a new Prime Minister has also come renewed talk of a possible baccalaureate and even some form of continued Maths education to the age of 18, but clarity on this will come after next year's election.

Strategic driver:

- Maintain a watching brief on government agenda to review our curriculum offer, ensuring it continues to meet local need

Cost of living crisis

All our community has been impacted by the cost of living crisis over the last year as inflation has eroded spending power and caused a range of costs to increase beyond household incomes. Families based further from Horsham have found travel costs to college to be a greater consideration than before and it is clear that recruitment of new staff is now being impacted by public sector pay not keeping pace with private sector in the current economic situation. The latter issue, combined with proposed pay awards being below inflation and not being funded by central government, have led to the first industrial action we have experienced for several years. A shortage of rental properties locally and increase in rents has also had an impact on affordability.

Strategic driver:

- Consider how to maintain confidence in our community in the face of economic challenges from the cost of living crisis



Strategic landscape

Environmental, social, governance

All educational institutions are necessarily rooted in their broader societal responsibilities and have a core purpose to work with young people as they develop as citizens. At Collyer's, supporting key issues forms a core part of our vision. Increasingly societal issues are being embraced by the private sector as well and there is an enhanced appreciation that an institution's community opinions and coverage on social media can affect reputation. Finally, in adopting the AoC Code of Good Governance we are expected to focus on issues such as sustainability alongside a broader range of responsibilities.

Strategic driver:

- Engage as a whole community with key societal issues, considering our role and responsibilities as an educational institution

Mental health

Pre-pandemic the mental health situation for young people nationally was already presenting challenges for colleges. Covid-19 has exacerbated this situation, with repeated lockdowns and periods of blended learning having an impact on student wellbeing particularly due to a lack of assessment experience with external exams. There remains also a clear lack of capacity in local mental health provision, although the local council, county council and local schools have worked increasingly closely on student wellbeing recently. In recognition of the challenges, central government have introduced enhanced expectations of schools and colleges through the creating of a new designated mental health lead role.

Strategic driver:

- Engage our whole community in promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing as we continue to emerge from the challenges of the pandemic



Strategic Aim 1 - Curriculum

A contemporary, rounded education that meets the needs of students in a modern world, ensuring students achieve their very best

Objectives

- 1.1 Maintain our position as a top state provider of A Level in West Sussex and within the top three sixth form colleges nationally by value added
- 1.2 Remain the A-Level specialists of West Sussex with the broadest choice of subjects delivered with expertise, alongside key vocational and technical qualifications
- 1.3 Provide a contemporary education via a challenging and inspiring curriculum that motivates students and develops personal attributes for success in a modern world
- 1.4 Attract and retain the most able professionals who exhibit energy, reflection and innovation
- 1.5 Collaborate with local and regional employers to meet their skills needs, alongside provision for all students of excellent careers advice and high quality work experience

Key performance indicators

- Regional and national raw results and Level 3 and Alps value added analysis
- All students achieve ambitious university and other progression pathways
- Student, staff and parent feedback
- Staff retention, staff CPD record, and student feedback and outcomes
- Breadth and quality of employer links and collaborations



Strategic Aim 2 - Pastoral

Inclusive, holistic and responsive pastoral provision, which supports personal development for all, empowering students to realise their potential

Objectives

- 2.1 Promote an inclusive culture in which diversity is celebrated, where inequality is addressed and where all members of our community are treated with respect
- 2.2 Deliver a comprehensive and collaborative support provision, which prioritises safety whilst equipping students with resourcefulness to overcome barriers to learning and wellbeing
- 2.3 Provide relevant and responsive pastoral tutoring, ensuring intervention supports and challenges the development of effective studentship and self-management for all students
- 2.4 Inspire holistic personal development, building aspiration and community engagement through an extensive enrichment programme and exciting extra-curricular opportunities
- 2.5 Ensure expert careers education, information, advice and guidance including meaningful engagement with employers and H.E. providers to support student progression goals

Key performance indicators

- Student, staff and parent/carer feedback
- Attendance, retention and intervention data
- Safeguarding and student finance reports
- Collyer's 360 data
- Destinations and HESA statistics



Strategic Aim 3 - Business & Operations

Business and operations activity that grows for the future and develops opportunities that benefit all our community

Objectives

- 3.1 Increase the number of domestic students to 2,500 at enumeration in 2026
- 3.2 Expand business development in line with college growth, including international students, lettings, café, sponsorship and new ideas
- 3.3 Improve the estate, effectively managing new facilities and improvements, successfully applying for CIF bids
- 3.4 Improve cyber security and data management to keep up to date with external threats and legislation
- 3.5 Complete workforce planning and preparation for future college changes to identity to develop a professional community that is fit for purpose

Key performance indicators

- Increase the number of domestic students to 2,500 at enumeration in 2026
- Expand business development in line with college growth
- Secure two successful CIF bids totalling minimum £0.5M by 2026
- Develop and agree a new People Strategy by 2024



Strategic Aim 4 - Community

A college founded strongly in its local community that is ambitious for the future by growing and thriving financially in a sustainable way

Objectives

- 4.1 Continue to celebrate our heritage and major milestones in our journey to 500
- 4.2 Develop our campus with new buildings to allow for growth in student numbers
- 4.3 Forge strong partnerships locally with schools and other key stakeholders
- 4.4 Enhance our sustainability through green development of our estate
- 4.5 Assure a financially secure future for the college

Key performance indicators

- Planning and running a major celebratory heritage event in 2026
- Developing two further buildings to add capacity for 3,000 students, one to be completed by 2026
- Agreeing a strong collaborative approach with local schools, actively considering formation of a Multi-Academy Trust
- Successful progress towards carbon neutrality by 2030, securing leading college status by 2026
- ESFA Financial Health Grade of at least good





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