

11th September 2023

Dear students and parents (2A)

In this autumn newsletter, my first termly update of the new academic year, I hope first of all that you've had an enjoyable and restful summer break and wish you all a warm welcome back to Collyer's. As you know, each term I write to all students and parents to provide information about key upcoming college activities, as well as looking 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

It was fantastic to welcome back to Collyer's all of our second year students for their first day of teaching today. There's always a real sense of anticipation in the air when the new year starts and I'd like to wish everyone all the best with settling back in and getting on with their sixth form studies again. Last year's cohort did incredibly well in their exams – with 61% high grades (A*-B) achieved at A Level and very strong results across vocational, technical and GCSE courses. I'm sure you'll be celebrating similarly excellent results when you finish your studies.

We've grown yet again this year with a record enrolment of new students, both because of our reputation and because of increased numbers in this age group. As the no.1 choice for A Levels in West Sussex and one of the leading sixth form colleges in the country, we offer an amazing educational experience that prepares young people really well for adult life – whatever their next steps after college. With this in mind, I encourage all students to make the most of all the incredible opportunities on offer, both within your chosen subjects and more broadly through our Collyer's 360 enrichment offer.

Communications with students and parents

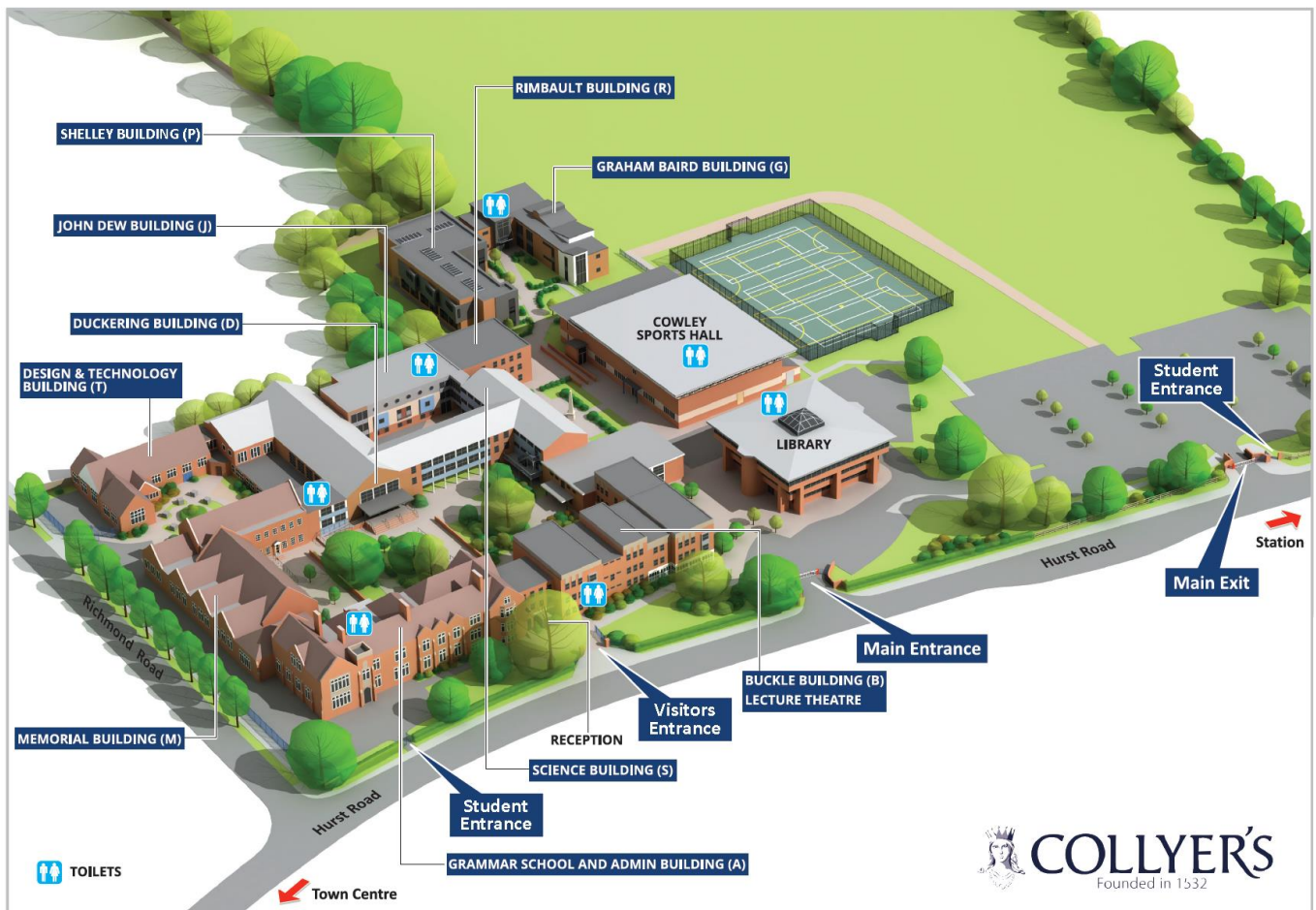
Please remember that regular updates are sent out at specific times of year via email by senior managers and hosted on the [Parents / Carers](#) section of the college website. As a sixth form college our students are independent learners and readying themselves for universities, apprenticeships and the world of work, so many regular communications are sent directly to students only via our weekly bulletin, tutorial emails, tutorial sessions and SharePoint. Finally, students can access information about their studies on MyProgress and parents can access similar information via MyStudent.

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, almost 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 via the SharePoint site.

Car park, no smoking and vaping policy, safety on site and absence

Over the summer we have made some quite significant changes to the college entrances and car park to further improve safety and the college experience for all our community. The main student entrance has been returned to its traditional location at the east side of the campus closest to the station which is right next to the crossing and opposite the alleyway to the park. This is convenient for the majority of our students who arrive at college from this direction. The visitors entrance in front of reception should not be used by students and will be closed at break and lunch times as well as the beginning and end of the college day. A second student entrance which is the one to use for cyclists is located to the west side of the campus.



The main car park has been updated with clear signage and a new one-way system. It is not possible for families or friends to drop off students by car inside the campus and we would be grateful if drop offs could be done away from the main entrances for safety reasons and to avoid congestion. Only visitors who are going to Reception may enter the car park and Reception staff will give instructions for leaving via the exit gate which is kept closed at all times during the college day. Students wishing to park on site will need to apply for a permit at a cost of £180 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.

Collyer's is a no smoking or vaping campus. In our Code of Conduct it clearly states that students should not smoke or vape anywhere around the college 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 wear their ID card and lanyard at college.

College estate

Over the last few years we have been adding to our college campus and improving existing buildings to ensure our facilities deliver a truly outstanding educational experience. The new Café has proven to be a huge hit with students and staff and brought a high-street style space for all our community to enjoy. In July we were able to open up the new Shelley Building to visitors at our Open Evening and this latest addition to our teaching and learning facilities has been getting rave reviews. Spacious, light and modern – it is testament to our commitment to deliver first rate accommodation for our students and staff. On 8th September we were delighted to welcome a large group of friends of the college to our opening ceremony, including our local MP Jeremy Quin who handled ceremonies and explained how important this building is for a fast-growing college.

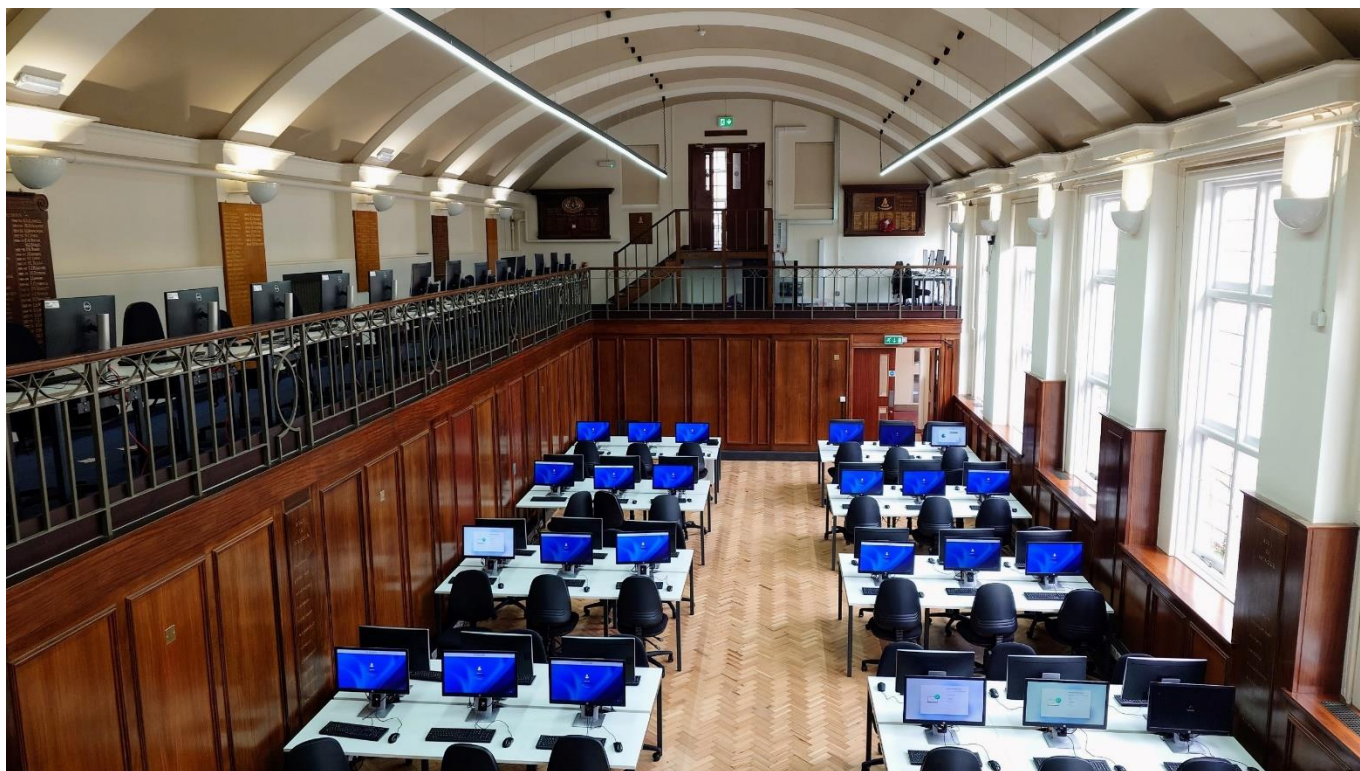
The summer has also been busy refurbishing and repurposing other spaces around the college. One of the most beautiful and historic rooms in the college – the Memorial Hall – has been returned to its full former glory through a complete floor to ceiling refurbishment and converted back into the Memorial Library. This now provides more space for students to study outside lessons in an environment that many universities would envy. At the same time we have relocated drama into a similarly historic space which is now purpose designed for the subject with brand-new technical equipment. Finally the relocation of T Level Childcare into the new Shelley Building has allowed us to create a bespoke welcome centre, office and meeting room for [Adult Education and Skills](#) right at the heart of where our evening lessons take place and next to the new Café. We look forward to welcoming even more adult students than last year to enjoy these fantastic facilities in the coming year.

In terms of other improvements to the estate, you'll notice we have a large amount of scaffolding up around a few of our main buildings. This work is to completely replace our flat roofs and is funded by a successful bid for nearly £0.5M of investment from the government. The project has progressed well over the summer and the scaffolding has been carefully set up to avoid any disruption. All the works are expected to be completed by November.

Shelley Building



Memorial Library



Drama Studio



Adult Education and Skills



Flat roof replacement



Parent satisfaction survey

I would like to thank all parents who completed our parent satisfaction survey last term. Alongside our surveys of students and staff as well as a wider range of consultation with key stakeholders, these surveys run every two years and provide our college with assurance about what is going well and suggestions for what we could do even better. Overall parent satisfaction continues to be very strong. Feedback on our pastoral support systems is even more positive than two years ago as are comments about our estate and all the fantastic new spaces we've added. Communications with parents reached an all-time high level of satisfaction when we last surveyed in spring 2021, in the midst of our response to Covid, and have now settled back to the usual positive levels we experience. Finally there were some very helpful individual comments which we will consider and take forward as we continue to improve the educational experience for students.

College Strategic Plan 2023-26



During the last academic year our community was engaged in reviewing our longer-term plans and developing a new [College Strategic Plan](#) to cover 2023-26. Discussions involved staff, governors, students, parents and range of key local stakeholders including partner schools and the district council. As a large and complex organisation and growing in size each year, it is vital for Collyer's that we have carefully considered plans for the future that will ensure we thrive and can continue to improve what we offer to our students and staff. We are confident that our new strategic plan delivers this. Included in the strategic objectives are a number of different focuses and I hope you find it interesting to understand how we are responding to an ever-changing landscape. Key to the next three years will be how we work even more closely with local schools and the way in which we are able to grow our capacity through new buildings. It is certainly an exciting time for Collyer's as we continue to go from strength to strength.

Finally, I wish you all a fantastic autumn term and look forward to providing more information in future updates.

Dan Lodge
Principal