



Dear students and parents

I hope everyone in our community had a restful Easter Break and would like to start off this summer term with some key updates about Collyer's and how we are approaching the future. As always the spring term was very busy for our students and our staff continue to be incredibly impressed with everyone's focus on their studies as they prepare for summer assessments and exams. Progress Review 2 and 3 have provided our community with information on how these preparations are going as have our recent contingency and mock exams. I would like to wish everyone all the best with their revision and am sure you will do yourselves proud with your results this summer.

As a sixth form college, every year we accept applications from prospective students who wish to join us in the autumn. This year has been busier than ever with applications up nearly 25% on last year – evidence of the growing demographics in this age group as well as our very strong reputation locally and across the region. Our admissions interviews are now all complete and we look forward to seeing our next cohort of new students at our Welcome Days on Monday 1st and Tuesday 2nd July, when the college will be closed as usual to current students. I have provided further detail later in this newsletter about our plans to expand our accommodation and facilities to cater to our growing student population.

Events



The last day of the spring term was Founder's Day when we remember the legacy that Richard Collyer left to us in his will and celebrate the time at Collyer's of our second year students with a Leavers' Event. This year's activities were very well organised by the Richard Collyer Union and key staff and included a whole range of things to get involved in taking place in different areas of the campus. Highlights included a multi-band live concert in the Café, photobooth and DJ in the Canteen and an inflatable obstacle course in the Sports Hall. In the Duckering Hall, students who had won awards for their participation in Collyer's 360 enrichment activities were treated to a student dance performance and choir.

Thank you and a huge well done to everyone involved in organising this year's event and I hope very much that students leaving this year will maintain contact with the college as Old Collyerians. Membership of our alumni organisation is free for the first five years and hundreds of students join each year when they leave Collyer's. A link to the OCA website is on the next page of this newsletter.

Heritage

In terms of heritage, another highlight for the College in March was the OCA Annual Reunion Dinner held in our Café. As always it was lovely to see a large group of OCs for this social event including students from the 1940s to the 2020s. The new OCA President Ruth Mitchell, who herself attended Collyer's in the late 1990s, spoke eloquently about the importance of our community past and present and the plans the OCA Committee have for the future, including new events for more recent past graduates to help them with networking and building their careers. The OCA are keen for all Old Collyerians of every generation to consider joining their alumni organisation. Please do feel free to share this newsletter with anyone you know who attended the school or college in the past.

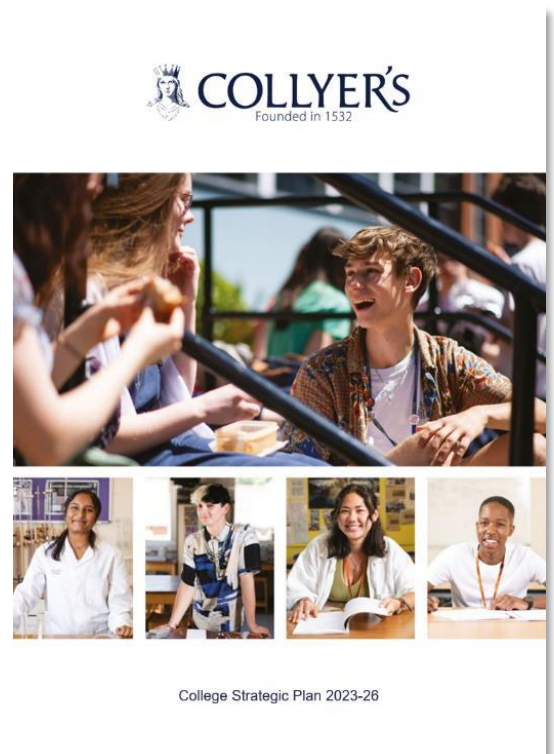


We are tremendously proud of our strong links to the Mercers' Company having been founded in 1532 by Richard Collyer, Mercer and merchant in the City of London. As the second oldest Mercers' Associated School after St. Paul's School, our heritage reaches back to the time of King Henry VIII and includes fascinating archives. Many of these are held by the Mercers' Company and are now available to see in person by Collyer's students at the impressive new Archive Facility at Mercers' Hall. Artefacts including the original deeds to the land that Collyer's was built on next to St. Mary's Church and a copy of Richard Collyer's will have now been returned from their temporary location in The National Archives. We will soon advertise a visit to the Archives Facility for interested students.

Partnerships

In our autumn term newsletter last year I shared the new College Strategic Plan 2023-26, which was agreed by Governing Body after a broad consultation with staff, governors, students, parents and range of key local stakeholders including partner schools and the district council. A link to the plan is in the image to the right. One of the most important objectives in our plan is to actively explore academisation as a path for the future of Collyer's and over the last year this has involved our community in very careful and detailed development of an application to form a new multi-academy trust.

When Richard Collyer founded Collyer's nearly 500 years ago to provide a legacy to his home town of Horsham, he did so with a very modern and timeless ambition to use the power of education to improve the lives of local young people. Now five centuries later we remain wholly committed to this aim and believe that working formally together with our local schools in one single, larger trust is the best way to have a greater, even more positive impact.



Since March 2023 we have been developing with a group of local schools the mission, vision and values for such a trust that will be called the Horsham Learning Alliance. We are delighted that The Forest School have agreed to be founding partners with us in this important joint project. Our strong and long-standing relationship with Forest has involved close collaboration in many ways, as it does with all our partner schools. Together we intend to submit our applications and, if successful, we will open formal public consultation in the summer or early autumn. A joint letter from the heads and chairs of both institutions will be sent to all our parents and carers today to announce this decision formally. Our hope is that, once formed, we will attract other primary and secondary schools in the local area to join the trust which will be all through, covering ages from early years to post-16 and preserving the individual culture and identity of our fantastic local schools.

Property

As I mentioned in my introduction, applications to Collyer's have grown this year to a new record high. We are delighted to have secured the interest of so many prospective students both locally and from across the region who are drawn to study at a college that is the first choice for A Levels in West Sussex. Our property strategy is a very live document and continually reviewed by senior leaders and governors. Above all we want to ensure we have enough space for our growing student body and at the same time invest in modern teaching accommodation, catering, social and study areas that befit an institution that is a stepping stone to university and adult life. Our newest addition to the estate, the Shelley Building, has been extremely well received by students, staff and visitors. It is now time to design and delivery our next building to give us the capacity to grow to 3,000 students. Our recruitment process for a new design team has proven extremely popular, attracting applications from nationally renowned architecture firms. By May we will have decided on which firm will take forward our ambition for a new Tech Centre that will house a range of science subjects as well as providing a 400 seat auditorium and additional catering and social space. An artist's impression and link to further information is on the next page.



In January I wrote to you all to share the news that we had discovered a small area of RAAC at the College impacting on three classrooms and promised that I would provide further updates. I am pleased to confirm that the Secretary of State for Education has now approved funds to remediate the area concerned. Work to remove the affected floor is planned to take place over this summer break and the intention is to replace with a new floor and classrooms as soon as possible after that. Once again I would like to offer my thanks to students and staff in subjects affected who have been very flexible and understanding whilst rehoused. For the duration of the works we have confirmed an order for two double mobile classrooms that will serve as very suitable temporary accommodation. They will be placed just behind the Graham Baird building and provide the additional capacity as well for extra students until we complete the Tech Centre in 2026.

Finally, we will soon start work on a new outdoor canopy and seating area which recently received planning permission as well as additional Café space and a completely refurbished social study area. These three projects are vital in maintaining the standard of public areas that students and staff are used to and will be completed in time for our new student arrivals in September.

Governance

We are fortunate to have an incredibly dedicated and experienced group of governors that form our Governing Body and guide the college in its future plans. An opportunity to join us as a new governor has arisen that would particularly suit someone with significant experience in education, marketing or finance. More information about our governance structure, the role and how to get in contact if interested can be found at the link below. Please do feel free to share with friends or family:

[Becoming a Governor](#)

I wish everyone a great summer term, all the best with your remaining studies this year and with your exams in due course.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D. Lodge". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D' and a long, sweeping underline.

Dan Lodge
Principal