

# Aspire

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CoLA SIXTH FORM NEWSLETTER



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for 'Generation Z'

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# Welcome

to the first edition of our exciting new Sixth Form newsletter, *Aspire*.

We hope this new publication reflects the ambition, enthusiasm and hard work I see from all our students and staff every day at CoLA.

It has been such an incredibly busy summer term, brimming with a range of events and exciting experiences for our diverse Sixth Form community to embrace.

We have seen some highly notable individual achievements, with Callum Bryson travelling to Vienna and Oliver Chesney performing above and beyond in the London Youth Games.

Reflecting on the last couple of months makes me smile - I am so proud of what our students have achieved.

Our biggest highlight is the new Sixth Form building which is coming along really well ahead of its opening this September! A building designed by students, for students, it really will be a landmark moment in our history and one which will transform our students' education.

May was crunch time for our Year 12s as they sat their first AS exams, with many students sitting the new linear specification exams.

It was a gruelling couple of weeks for them but Ms Boyle and I were overwhelmed with the strong sense of community that our Year 12s displayed, supporting each other through back-to-back exams and following our healthy eating tips from our 'Prepare to perform week.'

We ended the May term by saying farewell to our Year 13s in true style with an emotional, yet inspiring, leavers assembly led by Ms Snell, followed by a delightfully sunny barbecue in our new student voice-led playground.

I would like to say a special thanks to our outstanding student voice leaders Khaleah Edwards, Alex On, Fadel Archour, Niamh Tomlins, Ceri Johnson and Fawaz Atanda for all their dedication and hard work this year.

June was intense with the majority of the final A Level examinations for our Year 13s and our annual Year 12 Progression Day. Ms Gayle was the mastermind behind the biggest, smoothest and most impressive Progression Day we have ever hosted at CoLA.



A personal highlight was catching up with one of our alumni members, Tim Ekeh, who was Head Boy of our Sixth Form two years ago and is currently studying natural sciences at Cambridge University.

Part of our UCAS preparation that week included a whole year group trip to Greenwich University for their annual UCAS fair, thanks to Ms Ahmed.

July was our busiest month, with Year 12 students out on work experience placements and then our Year 13 prom. The theme was *The Great Gatsby*, and the prom was held at the Clarendon Hotel on Blackheath. It was a delightful evening full of dancing and glitter, we have included some photo highlights for your enjoyment.

We now come to the close of another incredible year in CoLA Sixth Form. Myself and my team are incredibly lucky to work with such creative, energetic and giving students.

We want to say thank you, goodbye and good luck to all our Year 13s as they head off to university and employment. The summer holidays will fly by for everyone, I'm sure, and then we will begin life in our new building.

**Abigail Blessing**, Director of Sixth Form

# Callum speaks out for 'Generation Z'

Callum Bryson delivered a rousing speech on journalism standards in front of more than 750 media innovators at the prestigious Global Editors Network summit in Vienna.

Callum, who studies Physics, Maths, Psychology and Chemistry at CoLA, was invited to the event to represent the so-called 'Generation Z' and shared his views on post-truth and virtual reality.

Journalists from all over the world had travelled to the event, with speakers including the editor of the Washington Post and the editor of BuzzFeed.

Callum, 16, had spent the preceding week on work experience at The Day, a daily news service for schools, colleges and homes. He discussed how the media can engage youngsters, and how the rise of click-bait was compromising journalistic values.



Callum said: "We live in a world where sections of the media feel that in order to appeal to a younger audience it must resort to clickbait, particularly in headlines.

"I wanted to make the point that young people do engage with news media and don't need their news simplified. News can be made easy to understand without being dumbed down. If we see a headline that is obviously clickbait, we will just ignore it.

"It was a great experience just to hear so many different opinions from so many big news outlets including the Guardian, Washington Post and BuzzFeed."

Rebecca Hemming, who organised the trip for Callum, said: "Opportunities like this come along once in a lifetime and all credit to Callum for rising to the occasion – and becoming an expert on Post truth and Virtual Reality!"



## Basketball girls crowned national champions

The highlight of the year for City of London Academy was our girls' basketball team's stunning triumph in the WEABL final to be crowned national champions.

The girls displayed incredible talent, resolve and determination to edge a nailbiting final 40-31 over rivals Charnwood College at the Leicester Arena.

It was an extraordinary feat for the girls; the WEABL is the premier junior female basketball competition in the United Kingdom, featuring the top U19 programmes in the country.

Ire Ozzy-Momodu was named MVP after finishing with eight points. She said: "It feels great, not that we didn't expect it. It was our team goal that we set this season and we've achieved it."

Head coach Jackson Gibbons added: "We have a big rivalry with Charnwood and I respect what they did

today so much. Their girls did themselves proud. I want them to go off and remember this for the rest of their lives. The unity they've had has just been amazing."



## Magnificent seven head Stateside

Seven City of London Academy students began the experience of a lifetime this summer as they flew to the USA to begin their sports scholarships.

The girls joined prestigious universities the length and breadth of the US, with Emerald Ekpiteta joining Niagara University in Buffalo, New York, Ire Ozzy-Momodu starting life at Robert Morris University in Pittsburgh, Cheyenne Scott joining Florida Tech and Toyosi Abiola joining Iona College, New York.



Ladun Akako departed for Barry University in Florida, Ibilola Oyedeji headed for Palm Beach Atlantic University and Kaleah Edwards moved to Wagner College, New York.

All seven girls were members of the team that won the WEABL final in March when they defeated Charnwood College 40-31 at the Leicester Arena. Three boys also headed Stateside, with Thai Sewai and Jonathan Komogum heading for prep school Taylormade Academy as they seek to earn scholarships next year.

Solomon Iluyomade joins Laramie Community College.

Meanwhile, our Year 8 girls defeated Southbank International School 23-14 – their first ever win courtesy of a brilliant all-round performance that tied the series at 1-1.

The Year 10 girls also triumphed against the same school, winning 32-26 with Semira Nas, Shalima Reid, Temi Omoyinmi and Tega Akpodiete all outstanding as the girls clinched the season series 2-0.

## Physicists join Professor Stephen Hawking

Year 13 physicists joined Professor Stephen Hawking as he received the Honorary Freedom of the City of London in recognition of his outstanding contribution to theoretical physics and cosmology.

Professor Hawking was presented with the City of London Corporation's highest award at a ceremony at Guildhall and delivered a keynote speech to guests, who included our students.

This is just one of the many opportunities we are able to offer to our students as part of the City of London Corporation.



## Leaders of tomorrow

Three CoLA girls spent four days on the Lord Mayor's Student Leadership Scheme.



Michelle Villamagua, Tashemia Glen and Veronica Gonzalez attended the scheme, which is designed to reflect the Lord Mayor's theme for the year - to educate, support and inspire.

The girls discovered how to learn from role models, how to build powerful networks of influence and use these networks to become leaders of the future.

Highlights included a speech from Dame Fiona Woolf DBE and a visit to the Old Bailey.

The scheme, at Mansion House, was enabled by the Transcontinental School Innovation Alliance and drew participants from India and across the UK.

# Turning to the future

Year 13 students turned their thoughts to university and life beyond City of London Academy at an inspirational Progression Day in June.

More than 50 external guests attended the event as students began the day with a welcome assembly and then moved on to workshops, taster sessions and networking.

Students attended a study skills workshop with Goldsmiths University, finance workshops with MyBnk, and received goal-setting and interview technique advice from Making the Leap.



There was also advice on applications to Oxbridge and Russell Group universities and a speed-networking session with representatives from industries including law, construction, professional services and retail, as well as the chance to talk to CoLA alumni.

The day ended with a range of university taster sessions, including Chemistry from Imperial College, Economics from Royal Holloway, Law and Finance from Westminster and Engineering from an industry expert.



The student leadership team also gave excellent personal farewell speeches.

## An emotional farewell

After two years in Sixth Form – and, for some, seven years at CoLA – our Year 13 students said goodbye on Leavers Day.

We sent them off in style, with video presentations, fun awards and reminiscences of their time at CoLA (including more than a few embarrassing photographs...)

Students went on to have a barbecue and enjoy some summer sunshine.

In the weeks since, they have been working and revising hard for their A Level exams - we wish them the best of luck in all of their examinations, and look forward to celebrating every success with them again at Results Day in August.



## Welcoming new faces

We were excited to welcome a new group of Year 12s - both internal and external students - to CoLA for our Welcome Day in July.

This has always been a really successful event and enables students to get to know the key members of staff they will be working with over the coming years and get a much clearer idea of the ethos of hard work and enthusiasm that we feel truly represents the City of London Academy.

We partnered up with Bright Futures to spend the morning running a series of team-building activities that all had a focus on the academic transition between GCSE and A Level, as well as enabling students to get to know some of the new faces in their year group.

We were really impressed with how friendly, polite and engaged the students were. And were entertained as always by the parade of hand-made hats and their models at the end of the activities.

Students then went around the main site to get to know the layout, collect their summer tasks and to speak to some of their potential teachers.

It was a pleasure to get to know the new Year 12s and we wish them the best of luck over the summer. We hope to see as many as possible on our Enrolment Days and joining us in our new Sixth Form in September.





## New dawn edges closer

Our new Sixth Form building is coming along smoothly and is on track to open this summer. We will be running staff tours on INSET day on September 4.

The purpose-built centre will have a transformational effect on our Sixth Form, with students learning in a university environment with flexible learning spaces.

This inspiring environment will prepare our students for the world of higher education and employment. Teaching spaces will be shared spaces, similar to a lecture class in college.

Storage will be available for new specification A Level coursework folders and textbooks only.



## Year 13 receive record number of university offers

More than 100 Year 13s applied to UK universities this year – 91 per cent of the year group - with a further three students making successful applications to US universities.

Students are still receiving final offers and picking their firm and insurance choices ahead of results day, but there have been an unusual number of unconditional offers from universities this year.

Of the 103 who applied, 22 students have received unconditional offers, with two even receiving two unconditional offers each (!) – this high number was unheard of in previous years.

Three students applied for Oxbridge, with one being invited to interviews at Cambridge.

Students also applied to a range of other Russell Group universities, including Warwick, Birmingham, Durham, Cardiff, Imperial, King's College, Manchester, UCL and Queen Mary, London.

Other universities have remained popular with the Year 13s. As students can make up to five applications each, it is possible to see what the most popular choices have been:

- Greenwich – 31 applications
- Brunel – 27 applications
- Hertfordshire – 21 applications
- De Montfort – 17 applications
- Queen Mary, London – 16 applications

One student also successfully sat admissions tests for Aberystwyth University, receiving a scholarship and a well-deserved unconditional offer.

Students have once again applied for a wide range of courses, with Economics and Accounting showing continued popularity, alongside such diverse courses as Biomedical Science, Zoology, Maths, Radiography, Midwifery, Computer Science, English Literature, Culinary Arts, Physics, Social Work, Psychology and Criminology, Law, Korean, Sports Science and Fashion Marketing.



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