July 2016

CoLA NEWS

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@CoLA_Southwark
Dear parents, pupils and members of our community,

As we head towards the summer holidays and the long sunshine days, I would like to share with you some of the highlights from a productive summer term.

In June we have had another successful OfSTED inspection which highlighted the great work we have done over the last five years to further drive and improve the standards of education in our Academy. Last year, our 5 A*-C GCSE including English and Mathematics rose to 68% compared with the national figure of 57% percent. Equally impressive has been the Academy’s rapid improvement from a base of 43% 5 years ago. We also saw our best ever A level results with a 100 percent A*-E pass rate including 44% A*-B and 71% A*-C. The inspection team commented positively on our “markedly improved sixth form provision”. They highlighted “behaviour and conduct of our pupils as a strength of the school” and identified best practice in how the “culture and ethos of the school encourages a sense of community”. They also described the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of the school as a strength. The inspection team recognised how we have been “strident in your actions to increase the accountability of staff for pupils’ all-round development including academic outcomes, which show a marked improvement”. They acknowledged the excellent work of the school. A full copy of the report has been shared with parents on parentpay and can be downloaded from the link on our website. I would like to thank our staff, students, parents and community for all their support through the inspection process.

Success, success and more success was on show at our School Prize Giving in July. Prizes were awarded by the Mayor of Southwark Kath Whittam, and there were many important visitors and guests from the City Livery Companies and Guilds. It was fantastic to celebrate the achievements of our students.

This term the City of London Academy (Southwark) has been nationally recognised for its exceptional 2015 GCSE performance by the Schools, Students and Teachers network (SSAT). We were one of only two schools in the South of England to win three national awards for its students’ achievements:

♦ Top 20 percent of non-selective schools for high average grades achieved
♦ Top 20 percent for progress made by pupils between their key stage 2 and 4 results
♦ Success in enabling pupils to fulfil their potential

Our students’ work in our Arts and Technologies Faculties were showcased beautifully this term. We have seen a fabulous production of the musical Bugsy Malone directed by Miss Smith and Miss Young, in which we got to see our students in full 1920s era costumes with Splurge guns. A great time was had by all. We have also seen our annual Art and Technology exhibition, which was held in the Academy’s main atrium and was a fantastic visual feast of our students’ work throughout the year.

We are in the process of building a new state-of-the-art Sixth Form centre on a site 400 metres from our main buildings, which is due to open in September 2017. This will provide our students with much needed purpose-built accommodation to lead the Academy into the next decade. We have successfully bid for £3.3m funding to fit out our new building, and which will provide our Sixth Form students with excellent facilities in which to learn. We are also building a new purpose-built and student designed Year 7 playground behind our main hall to provide additional play space for our pupils starting with us next term.

Thank you for all your support and help in making CoLA such an exceptional, aspirational, inclusive learning community in Southwark, and I wish you and your family a relaxing summer break. We look forward to welcoming our students back to CoLA at the start of the new term in September.

Richard Bannister, Principal
Elaine Davis looks back over the Academy Governing Body’s work this year

I am writing to our community about this year’s involvement of your School Governing Body in the Academy. As you know, both my colleague Bolatito Bello and I are Parent Governors, but our Governing Body is also made up of the Principal, Sponsor Governors from the City of London, and Staff Governors.

This year our Chair, William Fraser, retired after 10 years of service to the Academy. His input, help, support and commitment have been integral to the growth, success and development of CoLA, and we are grateful that Mr Fraser is remaining with us as a Governor. Our new Chair, who my colleagues and I have been fortunate enough to work with, is Mr Andrew McMurtrie. The City of London continues to help us to support, contribute to and maintain our Academy.

As Governors we are responsible for the smooth running of CoLA. We meet several times a year to discuss the business of the school, ranging from the curriculum and finance to the timetable of the school day. We do this voluntarily to ensure that our Academy is working at every level for the well-being, education and support of our students and staff. As Governors, we have link responsibilities for Faculties and Departments. I am personally responsible for English, CPD (Continuous Personal Development) and Appraisal. We work closely with the SLT (Senior Leadership Team) to make decisions on the way forward for our Academy. Then, after our visits, we write reports on and discuss our findings.

This has been an eventful year. We have expanded in size with extra places to help meet the needs of local people. We have embarked on a Multi-Academy Trust with our link primary school Redriff, and shortly will be opening a new primary school, Galleywall. We are also a year away from opening our new purpose-built Sixth Form in Verney Road. The Basketball Academy, amongst many other extra-curricular activities, is a great success. We would also like to thank Myra Swartz and our newly formed PTA for all their hard work.

You may also be aware that we recently had a visit from Ofsted. As a governing body we are proud of the Academy’s achievements which have been acknowledged by the report, and the confirmation that we are a good school on the brink of being outstanding.

I am, and I know I speak on behalf of the whole Governing Body, that we are privileged and passionate to be a part of such an inclusive and caring Academy. As a parent of a year 11 pupil I have been touched by the commitment of the Academy’s staff who have gone the extra mile to enable him to achieve to his potential. Breakfast, after-school and weekend revision sessions have been on offer throughout the year. As parent governor, I am also aware of the opportunities that pupils have been offered beyond the academic curriculum. Tours of the City, lunch with the Old Bailey judges, gliding, trips to New York, skiing in Italy, meeting the Lord Mayor are just a few examples of these.

I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the Governing Body to say a big thank you to the staff, teachers, and support staff which extends to all the people behind the scenes who help to run our Academy.

The Governors and I wish to congratulate Mr Marcus Huntley on becoming Head of School. We would also like to extend a special thank you to our Principal, Mr Richard Bannister, and all our staff for another successful year at CoLA. A special thank you to Year 11, too, for all their hard work and commitment with their GCSEs. Students and staff have achieved fine work and the outcomes will become clear in August. We believe that a thank you and applause should be sent to our whole school community including our parents; your continued support makes us stronger together.

This year has been very busy, and as Governors we look forward to working with the school to make all our students and whole school community even more successful year-on-year.

Elaine Davis, Parent Governor
A Year to Celebrate

CoLA has much to celebrate this year: our pupils are on track to achieve our best set of results, building on those that led to our three national awards from the SSAT for achievement in 2015. CoLA received three awards for our 2015 GCSE performance by the Schools, Students and Teachers network. That placed us in the top 20 percent of non-selective schools nationally for high average grades achieved by students, and the top 20 percent nationally for progress made by pupils. A third award was for the progress by disadvantaged pupils in the Academy. We were also delighted this year to have been reaccredited with our Inclusion Quality Mark (IQM) with Centre of Excellence status. And our GCSE results which put us in the top five percent of schools across England.

University Success

We have seen another year of record-breaking applications for university with 112 out of 127 students in year 13 applying for subjects ranging from Medicine to Real Estate, Music Production to Wildlife Conservation. Of particular note has been girls’ success in STEM subjects and nearly a quarter of our cohort putting in successful applications to Russell Group universities. This elite set includes Cambridge, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Imperial College London, Leeds, London School of Economics, Manchester, Newcastle, Oxford, Southampton, University College London and Warwick.

CoLA’s skilful debating team tested their flair for public speaking against the best in the country at the Debate Mate cup final. The tournament marked the climax of a nine-month Debate Mate after-school programme, in which over 50 pupils from Years 8 up to 10 learned the tricky art of communicating convincingly to a live audience. The weekly sessions were led by two Debate Mate mentors, who taught students to battle skilfully and strategically using words alone.

An elite team of 28 were eventually selected to pit their powers of persuasion against London schools, arguing and defending controversial topics including banning young people being famous and the right to vote for school headmasters.

Our teams did incredibly well, particularly considering that for most it was the first time they had ever debated. The year culminated in a mind-blowing Debate Mate Cup competition at the prestigious University of Westminster, where we debated with the elite and were exposed to some world class champions.

At the end of the season, we elected a President, a Secretary and a Treasurer to help lead and publicise the club next year.
New Sixth Form Site

Over the summer months we have been working with our architects and project manager on the build programme for our new Sixth Form centre at 399 Rotherhithe New Road. Following visits to Kew Bridge School and Goff’s School, we have been able to see and learn from two new state-of-the-art school builds. Many of their successful ideas have now been incorporated into our own plans which are currently out to consultation.

We plan to move our Sixth Form to the new site in September 2017.

CoLA Music Department hits the note with judges

The Incorporated Society of Musicians has just recognised City of London Academy (Southwark) for the quality of music education provided to students from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 5.

The Silver Certificate in Music rewards CoLA’s commitment to excellence in the provision of music education and our GCSE results which put COLA in the top 5 percent of schools in England.

“This recognises the hard work and perseverance of our students and staff in the area of music education. Congratulations on such an excellent achievement,” said Richard Bannister, CoLA Principal.

CoLA Head of Music Fran Holdich is now firmly set on winning a gold in next year’s round.

“I’m thrilled to receive this award from such a prestigious body. I’m proud to be working in a school that continues to support the Arts through the curriculum and extra-curricular programme.”

Proud CoLA mum with former pupil and a 1st Class Degree

Former student, Loretta popped in with mum after her graduation ceremony to show us her awards. She achieved a 1st for her degree in American Studies and received the award for best dissertation.
Year 6 Taster Day

CoLA opened its doors to the new cohort of Year Seven students for the annual Taster Day. 244 students were invited on the 30th June 2016 to experience a glimpse of secondary school life. All students participated in a range of lessons and tasted the culinary delights of the school canteen. In the evening the students were invited back with their parents to be addressed by the new Year 7 pastoral team and the Principal. Student feedback came across as positive and a great many transition worries were addressed and overcome.

News in Brief...

- We now have three part-time Cognitive Behaviour Therapist Counsellors working in the Academy alongside our part-time Education Psychologist. We are working with Bacon’s College on an NHS funded “Connect and Discover” initiative working with parents and students to support positive mental health.

- Year 9 students have prepared an English lesson to deliver to Redriff Primary school. The six students created an incredible lesson, taking responsibility for every part of the planning process. The opportunity not only benefited Year 6, but also provided CoLA students with important leadership skills and experience.

- Aqua Point, a business venture to introduce modern hygienic water fountains to the streets of London, was presented by Year 13 students to VIP judges at the Grocers Hall including Tim Campbell MBE – better known as winner of TV’s The Apprentice.

Leadership Networking Know-How

This year has seen lucrative opportunities for our leaders to network locally and internationally. We enjoyed hosting Wendy Parmley and her group of 16 visiting leaders from schools in India.

The quality of our teaching and management of our data especially impressed them.

We also hosted a visit from school leaders from Singapore, and we were most grateful to CoLA Hackney for hosting a visit from three of our senior team to observe and share best practice.

In addition, we hosted a visit from Singaporean teachers who worked with our Maths team to share best practice regarding our Maths Hub work, and what it means to be part of the UK academy programme.
Our student body took part in their very own EU Referendum, and having carefully considered the arguments presented, voted to “Remain” with 75 percent of the vote. This percentage matched the vote in Bermondsey and the national youth vote.

Pen friends: Jessica Underhill, Ellen Grealish and Jhanelle Coombs won this year’s Year 7 English poetry writing competition themed on London. Jessica won first prize, Ellen second, and Jhanelle third.
CoLA’s student body has elected their next Head Girl and Boy, Khaleah Edwards and Fadil Achour. We look forward to their time in office and wish the outgoing Rhiannon McLennon and Alei Wol the very best for their future.

This summer CoLA welcomed the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayor-ess, who inspired our year 7 and 8 pupils, as well as those visiting from Redriff Primary Academy.

As a reward for their commitment and hard-work representing CoLA, selected Year 7 Netball players were taken to watch England play Australia at the Copper Box Arena. They were accompanied by Miss Collison and Miss Webster.

Profit growth

Green-fingered students made a blooming success of their horticulture project, growing plants from seeds and seedlings, then selling them for a healthy return. The Spring into Growing project, run by CoLA’s ASC unit, saw students not only taking responsibility for watering and potting their plants, but pricing them for profit. Proceeds are funding a cinema trip.

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It’s not just the rich and famous moving in the right circles. CoLA’s students do too, if the recent work experience week is anything to go by.

Blue-chip employers including Transport for London, Ipsos mori, Museum of London, Toni & Guy, The Brokerage Citylink, Hailo, KPMG, Hitachi Rail Europe welcomed Year 10. Some were lucky enough to meet influential names including Catherine McGuiness, Deputy chairman of the City of London Corporation Policy Committee, Boris Johnson, and Crystal Palace’s best football players.

Students enjoyed the experience and many loved the increased independence they felt throughout the week,” said organiser Tamara Crosbie-Smith. “99% of our students had a placement and a huge majority of these placements were not only successful but employers said our students were a credit to the Academy, mature, responsible and very capable.”
**Maths Challenge**

CoLA struck gold, silver and bronze at this year’s UKMT Individual Maths Challenges – the Academy’s best ever medal performance in the fiercely contested competition.

The medal haul included six gold, 20 silver and 63 bronze in the junior and intermediate categories, with two outstanding pupils, Maz Rizwan Year 10 and Johan Poigui Year 9 taking part in the Olympiad-level UKMT Intermediate Pink Kangaroo maths challenge. Gold medals went to Mohamed Al-bassam Year 11 and Maz Rizwan. Also receiving gold were Johan Poigui, Kevin Tran and Michael Asiamah (all Year 8), and Yi Yi (Year 7).

Over 600,000 11-to-18-year-olds from more than 4,000 schools and colleges pitted their brains in this year’s UKMT Individual Maths Challenges. The competition features tough multi-choice question papers designed to get larger numbers of UK pupils stimulated by maths. There are three levels: Junior Challenge (IMC) for Years 7/8; Intermediate Challenge for years 9/10/11; and Senior Challenge for years 12/13.

“This year’s results are the best ever,” says Mr Adebayo, from CoLA’s Maths Department.

**Promoting British Values**

Our pupils are well accustomed to practicing and celebrating the culture and values of our nation and its institutions. We recognised the extraordinary contribution of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth to our nation and celebrated her reaching 90 this year. Pupils participated in a range of activities aimed at promoting their sense of Britishness, including a monarchy quiz, singing the national anthem and wearing Union Jack stickers. Pupils particularly enjoyed our royal cake sale, raising funds for cancer research.

Ms Webster, raised £2,000 for Cancer Research UK, in the lead up to her 2016 London Marathon run, with the support of staff and students.
Ancient Quit Rents Rite Remembered In Style

One of the City of London’s most ancient annual ceremonies, Quit Rents, was honored by CoLA’s Year 11. Pupils created a special flag to wave on a Thames Cruiser as part of the annual tradition - this year themed on the Magna Carta. Pupils, Damilola Adedeji, Nazifa Ahmed, Zion Mills, Mariam Saadeddin, Melissa Shala, Olivia Tamimu and Andy Tham, also attended a ceremony at the prestigious Guild Hall to mark the event, which dates back at least seven hundred years. Quit Rents represents paying nominal rent to the Queen for property held by the City of London Corporation.

Students TASTE FAST-TRACK RAIL CAREERS

Students got first-hand experience of driving trains and operating signaling equipment this term as part of Network Rail’s first ever Rail Week, designed to showcase career opportunities in the rail industry.

The doors to Network Rail’s Basingstoke campus were swung open to give nine CoLA students a real taste of life working on the railways, and the enormous variety of careers available in the rail industry. The students tested their skills on Network Rail’s driver simulators, signaling simulators and track equipment.

Science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) graduates and apprentices are in high demand across the rail industry.

Lisa Hall, Mathematics Curriculum Leader at the CoLA, says: "With increased accountability on schools about STEM subjects, it’s amazing that Network Rail has opened our students’ eyes and ears and given them hands-on experience of a wide-range of career opportunities available within their company, as well as educated them on safety in using the railway.

She added: "The students were buzzing from the day’s activities and we want to thank Network Rail for this pioneering project and hope other companies will also work with schools to give students these first hand experiences."

Network Rail is actively promoting career opportunities across the rail network currently available to young people. “It was fantastic to see the students getting stuck in to the activities. I think we’ve really opened their minds to the range of roles that go into running a railway,” said Lindsey Tien, Assistant Commercial Scheme Sponsor at Network Rail.
Media Stars

True Grit: These stunning promotional posters are the work of Year 13 Media students Amari Charles and Chantelle Donovan whose social realism films were shot on location around Bermondsey. ‘Robbed’ is produced by Amari and ‘Rent’ by Chantelle.

The Academy has continued to be a keen supporter of Geoffrey Bond’s Lord Mayor’s Cultural Scholarship programme. We currently have five pupils on placements at Keats House Museum, The London Metropolitan Archives, Ham House, Buckingham Palace/Marlborough House and the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Year 10s made their voices heard loud and clear as they competed in the Southwark regional finals of the Jack Petchey “Speak Out” Challenge.

Trinity Ashley and Samanta Jaruseviciute won high praise by judges and audience alike for their engaging speeches. Samanta spoke on the environment, and Trinity covered the ‘new definition of feminism’.

Trinity was awarded runner-op and Samanta finished a respectable fourth place. The competition was staged at Bacon’s College,

The Jack Petchey “Speak Out” Challenge is a competition and series of public speaking workshops, run alongside ‘The Speakers’ Trust’. The challenge starts with a day-long workshop, where students develop the three key areas of public speaking - structure, delivery, and content. Every student gives a speech on their chosen subject, and the most engaging are then delivered to the whole year group as part of the CoLA weekly assembly.
Uncle Sam welcomes CoLA students
A trip of a lifetime to New York and Washington DC is something many just dream about. But CoLA students did just that under the watchful eyes of Mr Misiri and Ms Fraser. Trip highlights included:
- 9/11 memorial
- The World Trade Centre
- Statue of Liberty
- Central Park
- New York subway
- Metropolitan Museum of Art
- Washington DC to stand where Dr Martin Luther King delivered his famous ‘I have a dream’ speech.

Ice try: students tried out the high-adrenalin winter sports of bobsleigh and skeleton during the inaugural British Bobsleigh and Skeleton City Push Track championships at the Honourable Artillery Club, London. CoLA was the only school invited to the prestigious event.

Year 12 Poetry Conference
CoLA’s Sixth Form literature students joined peers from all over the UK to hear the works of celebrated poets and academics at a prestigious University of London poetry conference. Writers including Simon Armitage, Patience Agbabi, Julia Copus, Luke Wright and Ian Duhig read their poems and discussed methods and ideas. The event took place at the Institute of Education, part of the University of London. Delighted CoLA students said, “We were excited to hear about the creative process of writing poetry and what the poets believe their role to be in today’s world.” Poet Luke Wright rounded off the successful day with an incredibly emotive poem on the state of politics today.

All Year 12, around 150 students, attended this year’s City of London Careers Fair at the Guildhall. This was a fantastic opportunity for them to all learn more about higher education, with stalls from a number of Russell Group and well-known universities, as well as about the range of apprenticeships and school leavers programmes that are also available to our students. More recently, our own recent Year 12 enjoyed their Progression Day involving Speed Interviews with representatives from a range of employers. Our current year 10 have participated in a week of work experience.

Speed Date Recruiting
Google, Ipsos Mori, Hitachi Rail Europe and Guys and St Thomas’ Foundation were eagerly wooed by Year 12s during speed dating-style mock interviews with blue-chip employers. Each student got a 15-minute interview slot and valuable feedback with prospective a prospective employer moving on to a further two employers and repeating the process. Students were able to act quickly on feedback resulting in slicker third interviews. Employers and students said the experience was invaluable.
Year 10 students made sure they didn’t miss the latest production of 'An Inspector Calls' at Richmond Theatre — a key text on the English syllabus.

“As the curtain lifted, an impressive set was revealed containing the Birlings' rather decadent dining room,” explained Georgina Wills. “The jubilant atmosphere didn’t last long as the formidable Inspector Goole arrived on the scene. The aim of the trip is to enrich students’ understanding of the GCSE syllabus play and help them prepare for exams.

Kingswood Residential

Moving to secondary school can be an anxious experience. CoLA’s Year 7 transition residential to Grosvenor House, Kingswood ensues our new students get every opportunity build friendships and strong pastoral links which are invaluable to smooth transition. Activities ranged from team building skills and problem solving to a sport. The students really enjoyed the whole programme.
English Department Roll of Honour

As the most successful English department in Southwark we wanted to take the opportunity to recognise some of the standout pupils this year. You really impressed us!

Year 7
Maya Adams - Phenomenal effort, exemplary writing and thinking
Matthew Chandler - Fantastic work ethic, his work is excellent
Shae Hassan - Exemplary focus and precision in presentation and writing
Alusine Kamara - Fantastic effort, excellent attitude, and incredible resilience
Teresa Luo - Excellent attitude, focus, presentation, thinking and writing
Nicole Holt-Restrepo - Excellent progress, assessments, resilience and receptiveness to feedback
Ellie Somm - Excellent attitude, beautiful presentation, fantastic effort all year
Sreety Jasmine - Absolutely faultless behaviour and concentration

Year 8
Thang Nguyen - Work rate and resilience has led to excellent progress
Amy Daniell - Excellent attitude, beautiful presentation, and fantastic effort
Suliaman Bangura - Hard work, resilience, never wavers in his work ethic
Aliyyah Lawal - Phenomenal effort, exemplary quality writing and thinking
Luis-Andres Romero Delgado - Significant progress, works to the very best of his ability - a pleasure watching him grow as an individual
Humu Olaiya - Excellent progress, behaviour and attitude to learning, keen to reach her potential, if not exceed it
Zalihe Hakan - Very high standard work, an incredibly diligent student committed to improving: an absolute pleasure to teach and a credit to this school
Nafisat Adeyemi - An amazing turnaround over the year. Excellent work rate has seen Nafisat make excellent progress
Melissa Tchanba-Cordel - For impeccable behaviour and effort, and always being willing to help
CoLA English Department Roll of Honour 2016

Year 9

Tatyana Mavanga: Works diligently every lesson. Exemplary classwork, has verbally contributed more and more during the last 2 years and gaining confidence. Always polite and conscientious. Happy to help others out

Morgan Barros: Exemplary manner in classroom: perfect manners and excellently considerate. Consistent effort paid in class and home learning

Kafayat Adasanya: Independently chose to read Wuthering Heights. This indicates the level of enthusiasm and commitment Kafayat displays towards English. Kafayat is very keen and will do anything to improve

Malik Sesay: Effort, focus and huge progress this year

Joseph Skelton: Joe’s behavior has been exemplary from day one. His work rate has made for excellent progress. He’s also kind hearted and charming

Georgia Herron: Resilience throughout the entire year, continuing to grow as an individual and demonstrating enthusiasm for each lesson

Shalima Reid: Always enthusiastic, loves answering questions in class and contributing to discussion and always works incredibly hard

Anderson Mejia: Commitments to all tasks in lessons, confirming the foundation for solid progress. Enthusiasm for activities and retention of skills

Isosa Erabour: 100 percent effort all of the time in homework, classwork and attitude and behaviour

Year 10

Mamusu Kamara: Has become an extremely hard working, conscientious student

Lilli Kite-Banks: Has been an absolute joy to teach. Her confidence in her own abilities has soared along with the quality of her work

Khairya Knight: Insightful and philosophical interpretation of texts, in particular epistemological readings of Macbeth

Tasnim Ahmed: All round amazing!

Noor Abu-Salem: Impressively dedicated to reaching her potential, always keen to improve even further; a mature attitude, insightful interpretations

David Stewart: A fantastic student who is diligent, conscientious and polite. Despite being in a challenging environment, he endeavours to exceed his targets and continues to achieve to the best of his ability

Deqa Ali: Always focused, works hard and does everything she is asked to do. She is so patient
Women in Mathematics Celebrated at CoLA

Ever heard of Einstein? Course you have. Ever heard of Emmy Noether? Chances are you’re scratching your head. But Emmy Noether was to 20th century algebra what Einstein was to 20th century physics. Yet in her time, because of sexist prejudice, she was unable to secure more than a casual teaching position at a university. And then, in 1933, the Nazis expelled her from Germany because she was Jewish and left-wing.

When Aditi Kar from Oxford University and Ellen Powell from Cambridge University came to CoLA to discuss maths, Emmy Noether was central to their lecture.

Today there are many talented young women, like Aditi and Ellen, with jobs in mathematical research. However, young women are still underrepresented in mathematics. Recent investigations suggest this is entirely because girls and young women often feel less confident about maths, and confidence is more important to success in maths than other subjects.

That's one reason why CoLA takes the trouble to teach students about the contribution of women in mathematics.

Serafina Cuomo from Birkbeck College, and June Barrow Green from the Open University, visited CoLA to lead a session on leading female mathematicians. June profiled the life and work of Sofia Kovalevskaya, the first woman in modern times to become professor of mathematics at a university, and led a session on women in code-breaking in the World Wars. Serafina, meanwhile, led on the way bits of mathematics like "Pythagoras’s theorem" have different meanings depending how you approach them.

All in all, it’s been an incredible year for visits by academic dignitaries. Tim Gowers, professor of mathematics at Cambridge University and a former winner of the Fields Medal (the equivalent for maths of the Nobel Prize, but awarded only once every four years), gave a lecture and led a classroom session on "What is Mathematical Proof?"

Tim Gowers believes ‘beyond-the-syllabus’ events at state schools, such as academic lectures, are important to social equality. Otherwise, access to real mathematics beyond exam boards’ "remember a formula, stick in the numbers" stuff, is restricted to students at elite schools.