



ahead school with a long tradition of academic strength, giving every opportunity for potential leaders'. The Daily Telegraph Guide describes Colchester Royal Grammar School as a 'first-rate academic school'.

## **Surrounding Area**

Colchester, England's oldest recorded town, is a lively, attractive centre of great historical interest, which has extensive Roman walls and a Norman castle and a broad and expanding industrial base. There is much cultural and sporting activity, a theatre, art galleries, museums, a leisure and sports centre which provides excellent facilities for sport and concerts, a Moot Hall, a Charter Hall (both halls are used for concerts and other events), a Leisure World, a county cricket ground, the home of Colchester United Football Club, and numerous good restaurants. Concerts of every kind and art exhibitions abound. The flourishing University of Essex, with which the school has various links, is three miles to the East. Though Colchester has no cathedral, it does boast a bishop! The annual Oyster Feast is nationally celebrated.

Colchester is fifteen miles from the East Coast, and there are frequent and fast trains to London (Liverpool Street) within fifty minutes, and to Ipswich and Norwich. Shopping facilities are very good, and include a pleasant central shopping precinct. Dedham and Constable country, river estuaries and attractive ports, villages and the Suffolk Heritage Coast are within easy reach. Proximity to the North Sea ports of Harwich and Felixstowe and the presence in the town of language schools (from which the school receives visitors of many nationalities) make Colchester well poised to play an important part in future EU developments.

## **The School Premises**

The school, which is half a mile from the town centre, stands amongst trees and delightful, mature gardens, which are open to all the pupils. There is a mixture of old and new buildings: a superb school hall, with a large stage, new PA and lighting systems, and pipe organ; gymnasium; heated outdoor swimming pool; restaurant; technology block. There are also a detached music block; a fine, well-stocked library; other specialist rooms; visual aids and reprographic facilities. Most classrooms have interactive whiteboard facilities. A classroom block, accommodating Classics and History, was opened in September 2000 and new Art studios were opened in April 2003. A large extension to our existing science block, built following the school's successful bid to gain Specialist Science status, was opened in September 2006 and contains modern, well-equipped science laboratories and preparation areas. The Sixth Form Common Room and the Dining Area have recently been extended and refurbished.

Four rooms serve as dedicated computer suites. This gives students local access to a full range of applications and, via a high-speed network, access to laser printers, an A4 colour scanner, the internet and networked software. In addition, there are computers in departmental areas and teaching rooms, with access to both the curricular and administrative networks and the internet. A satellite system has been installed, housed in the modern languages department.

In the past few years a large amount of redecoration has been carried out, as well as much refurbishment, remodelling and maintenance. A careers suite and a dedicated music and drama centre have been opened in recent years as part of the school's premises development programme.

The playing fields, which are about half a mile away, are pleasant and extensive, and include pitches for all our major games, hard and grass tennis courts and a large pavilion with changing rooms and showers.

## **Curriculum in Years 7 to 11**

A wide range of subjects is taught in Years 7 to 9, as follows: English, Mathematics, Science (as separate but co-ordinated sciences in Years 8 and 9), Information Technology, Latin, French, Geography, History, Religious and Social Studies, Music, Art, Technology, PE, Games. Citizenship is taught through these subjects and the tutorial programme. In Years 8 and 9 students also study German or Ancient Greek. In Years 10 and 11, all students take IGCSE courses in English and English Literature and GCSEs in Mathematics and French. Many students also study for GCSE Statistics. They also take either an IGCSE in Information and Communication Technology or a GCSE in Computing, and either IGCSEs in all three separate sciences or an IGCSE Double Award in co-ordinated sciences. Students, constrained only by the requirements of the National Curriculum, add to this a number of GCSEs from those subjects available in Years 7-9 and have a further compulsory syllabus consisting of Physical Education (including Games), Personal Development and RE. For the teaching of French and Mathematics, students are placed in one of four sets according to ability. There are carefully devised assessment and reporting systems. Extra-curricular opportunities exist to take GCSEs in Spanish, Physical Education, Astronomy or Geology, the latter two subjects in partnership with another local secondary school.

## **Tutorial and Teaching Groups**

Entrants in Year 7 are placed in one of three forms for the purposes of registration and tutorials. These forms are of mixed ability within the selective framework. In order to ease the transition from primary school, the forms also serve as teaching groups for most lessons. Three forms continue into Year 8, but are re-arranged according to pastoral needs. In Year 9 the year is divided into four teaching groups, to give smaller group sizes.

The students are placed in four forms in Years 10 and 11, according to option choices. They remain in the same form over the two years, usually with the same form tutor. These forms act as teaching groups for tutorial classes and some subjects, for instance English. The other teaching groups are determined by options.

In the sixth form the students are organised into separate tutor groups for the lower sixth and upper sixth. Teaching groups are determined by options.

## **Pastoral Curriculum**

A programme including personal development and vocational and educational elements is taught under the general direction of a member of staff who co-ordinates the pastoral curriculum.

## **The Sixth Form**

The school has a thriving sixth form. A free choice of AS and A-levels is offered from Art, Biology, Chemistry, Classical Civilisation, Computing, Economics, English, French, Further Mathematics, Geography, German, Greek, History, Latin, Mathematics, Music, PE, Physics, Religious Education, Spanish and Technology. Most students take General Studies in addition to four subjects. Critical Thinking is increasingly popular in Year 12. Some Economics students may have the opportunity to add Business Studies in Year 13.

Over recent years the reporting and monitoring system for the sixth form has been developed and improved. Great attention is paid to endeavouring to help each sixth former fulfil his or her academic potential.

There is a prefect system and sixth formers are encouraged in general to take responsibilities and involve themselves in the life of the school.

There are many sixth form initiatives and activities such as Young Enterprise and participation in local and national competitions relating to science, engineering, business, debating, mock trials, music and drama. A 'help in the community' sixth form group has been introduced, with much success.

### **Extracurricular Activities**

Extracurricular activities are a strength of the school. Music and sport are particularly well-based, and the school achieves great success in both spheres, as well as eliciting a high level of involvement from students. The school has a variety of orchestras, bands and choirs which perform regularly at concerts in school and the wider community. Many past pupils have distinguished themselves in the musical world.

In an era when team games struggle to survive in maintained schools, rugby, football, hockey and cricket remain an important part of the school's tradition, with extensive fixture lists for all age groups, and fixtures on Saturdays that include several independent schools. A broad range of minor and individual sports is also played.

Annual junior and senior dramatic productions are staged in a diversified programme. Lunch-time or after-school clubs include basketball, chess, Christian focus, computing, debating, fencing, foreign films, history, Italian, Spanish, and table tennis. The school is enthusiastic in its support of charities and regularly raises impressive amounts for several causes. Charity walks involving staff and students on the Great Wall of China and in India took place recently.

The school has achieved success in several national schools' competitions: winning The Times Spelling Bee, the Schools' Challenge Quiz, the BPW Public Speaking Competition, Geography World-Wise Quiz competition, The Top of the Bench Chemistry contest and the schools' croquet championship (an old boy, Robert Fulford, is a former world croquet champion); and reaching the finals of the following: the English Speaking Union schools' speaking competition, The Times chess championship, the schools' bridge championship, the schools' cricket six-a-side tournament, the schools' Capital Choices competition, the Letts' GCSE Challenge and the National Chamber Music for Schools competition. Former students have gone onto top-flight sporting success in e.g. the Varsity Boat Race and international sailing.

There is much involvement by staff and students in school visits and trips, at home and abroad, such as skiing trips, theatre visits, exchanges, trips to France, Germany, Greece and Italy, and Geography and Biology field courses.

### **Other Developments and Information**

The school is at an exciting stage. It aims to provide an all-round education second to none. An on-going programme of building and improvement has produced excellent facilities for music, art, drama and technology. The school's specialist focus for Maths, Science and Languages will improve the provision for those subjects without changing the school's desire to be seen as a specialist school for all subjects.

Including part-timers there are sixty-seven members of teaching staff, of whom twenty-seven are women.

Since 2003, the school has been part of the Colchester Teacher Training Consortium and aims to provide a supportive and stimulating environment for PGCE trainees.

Induction for new staff and continuing professional development are overseen by a Professional Tutor and the Deputy Head (Personnel), assisted by a staff development committee comprising members of the teaching and non-teaching staff. An effective system of performance management recognises the achievements of staff and promotes their continuing development.

Information is exchanged at a short weekly staff information meeting. Full staff meetings and meetings for the staff committee, heads of department, heads of year and year teams are held in accordance with a planned programme.

The school has used the Government's workforce remodelling initiative to ensure that teachers are as free as possible to concentrate on the core aspects of their work: planning stimulating lessons, assessing pupils' work and giving them the academic and pastoral support needed for them to be successful learners and fulfilled individuals.

A parents' association, named the Colchester Royal Grammar School Association, is active in fund-raising and putting on social events. It has purchased many facilities for the students, such as a laser cutter, grand piano, sound system for the school hall, payphone, lockers, audio-visual equipment, table tennis tables, resuscitation dummies and a kiln for the art block. It also supported the school in its bid for specialist status and helped finance the purchase of a minibus.

The Old Colcestrian Society is well supported and the school continues to strengthen its links with recent leavers.

### **Emphasis on the Individual**

The individual is regarded as the centre of all the school's activities, and the school aims for the highest standards of courtesy, conduct, industry, academic attainment and appearance, with an ideal of relaxed and mutually respectful relationships amongst all members of the school community. Individual initiative is both demonstrated and encouraged by an enthusiastic and dedicated staff who give much to the students and ask much of them.

Emphasis in pastoral care is placed on form tutors and heads of year, who have the considerable responsibility of fostering the academic and personal development of pupils in their charge. Links and communication between parents and staff are greatly encouraged.

### **The Work Environment**

The ability and attitude of the pupils, the quality of the buildings and grounds, and the overall ethos of the school combine to make Colchester Royal Grammar School a stimulating and rewarding environment in which to work and develop.

K. L. Jenkinson  
Headmaster  
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