



# What can S7 do for you?

## Pursuing excellence through collaboration

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S 7 N E W S L E T T E R I S S U E 3

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### A Note from the Chair

- Do you have any news or a forthcoming event which would be of interest to S7 colleagues? Contact Sharon Kemp at [s7enquiries@gmail.com](mailto:s7enquiries@gmail.com) and we will add it to the next newsletter and the S7 website.
- The S7 newsletter will be published twice a year, in March and October.

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#### Now we are seven...

It has been another productive S7 year with the usual wide range of development and networking events taking place, but the most significant, indeed miraculous, news is that from next year S7 will be a consortium of seven rather than five colleges. The principals of S7 have agreed that Collyer's and Coulsdon Colleges should join the original 'famous five' Surrey Colleges for 2013-14. Collyer's is in fact in Sussex and Coulsdon is in the London Borough of Croydon (although it retains a Surrey postal address) so this means that S7 will no longer be a purely Surrey-based organisation.

Collyer's has been participating in S7 activities for some time

now, particularly the Leadership Programme. Coulsdon College, which has faced major difficulties in terms of performance recently, is to become part of a federation with Reigate College, which will eventually lead to a full-scale merger - at which point S7 will, alas, in effect become S6.

We are hoping that a consortium of seven colleges at least for a while will provide a wider range of perspectives and opportunities for sharing good practice than is possible with just five colleges who know each other pretty well. In particular Reigate are hoping that Coulsdon's membership of S7 will assist in helping Coulsdon staff improve the

quality of education of its students. It should be said that Coulsdon has many characteristics of an inner city college therefore is rather different from the rest of the Consortium.

In advance of all this happening I should remind you that we are holding our biennial teaching and learning conference for all teaching staff on 4th June and you can find further information below.

*David Adelman,  
Chair of S7*



### S7 Teaching & Learning Conference 4th June 2013

The next S7 Teaching & Learning Conference for all teaching staff in the five Surrey Colleges will be held at Royal Holloway, University of London, Egham, on Tuesday, 4th June 2013.

The two main speakers will be Dr Joe Harkin, Oxford Brookes University, presenting on learner voice and independent learning, and James Kewin, Deputy CEO of the Sixth Form College Association, looking at the sixth form college sector as a whole in the current volatile educational and financial climate. There will be a wide range of workshop sessions to choose from as well as subject meetings in which we hope to have exciting input from lecturers from Surrey University.



Registration will be open very shortly and can be found on [www.s7colleges.com](http://www.s7colleges.com).



## Senior Leadership Programme Feedback

In June 2012 ten delegates from all five S7 Colleges embarked on a new six-day Senior Leadership Programme, with four days spent off-site at a favourite training venue and two days workshadowing senior staff in their day-to-day roles, the final day taking place at the end of January 2013. Delegates were given the opportunity to explore subjects from leadership effectiveness to College finances, from assessing departmental performance to managing risk. The course leaders provided real life scenarios from their own experiences in senior management roles to help facilitate delegates' understanding of what to expect of the next step up.

The course was well received as can be seen below:

*"Refreshing to have the time to reflect on key issues in a positive and supportive setting."*

*"Really thought-provoking course which gave me great insight into the next step"*

*"Interesting – at times challenging – but good to meet, share ideas and confer with other senior managers."*

*"A really unique insight into the demands of a senior leadership role."*

*"Great opportunity to understand strategic planning in running a College."*

*"A fantastic course run by experienced senior managers that allows you to reflect on current practice and prepare you for the next step."*



## S7 Visits

If you have been considering visiting a peer department at one of the other S7 Colleges, but not sure whether it is for you, take a look at some recent feedback:

*"I found this a really useful process to be able to discuss and share examples of good practice between institutions. Maybe useful to schedule a similar meeting once a year where head of departments can meet and share examples of good practice."*

*Adam Lyons, Godalming College, June 2012*

*"This was a very useful day with an exceptional Head of Department. It was a relaxed and honest discussion of strategies we both employed for independent learning and effective teaching and highlighted areas where we could both lead initiatives. Material has been exchanged which is of use to both departments."*

*Matthieu Pinel, Strode's College, May 2012*

To arrange a visit simply email [s7enquiries@gmail.com](mailto:s7enquiries@gmail.com) with your name, College, department and the reason for your visit request.



## Charitable S7— visit to Nepal

by Jude Smit, Learning Support Manager, Esher College

At the End of March 2012 I returned to Nepal to continue work with a charity providing healthcare, water and education to over 50,000 people in Meghauli and its surrounding villages. I visited the health camps, which provide free medical care to remote villages, where they would otherwise not receive any medical intervention. I met people involved in finalising a current water project that will provide fresh water for 3000 people and observed the daily workings of the clinic. However, my main purpose was to provide training and support for behaviour management and the power of language and listening skills to a hostel for 50+ children aged between 5-17 and two kindergartens.



Although I have worked in education for many years as a Specialist Teacher, this was still quite an overwhelming task, as there were not only language barriers, but it was also necessary to thoroughly research cultural implications. I worked long days in 40 degree heat, often with a translator. I spent time at the hostel getting to know the staff and children, joining their daily and evening activities. It was an amazing and very humbling time; the work they do to provide support and care for children from a wide range of challenging circumstances is incredible. It was a real honour to be able to support such fantastic work and to be a part of projects which are 'managed and run by Nepalese for the benefit of the Nepalese people' (*quote from Clinic Nepal website*). I would like to thank Senior Management and colleagues at Esher College, who have been highly supportive of my work with Clinic Nepal and have helped to raise funds to buy equipment. It has been an amazing experience and I look forward to continuing my work with this fantastic organisation.

*Jude Smit*

## S7 Careers—A move from Reigate College to Esher College

by Dan Lodge, Assistant Principal (Student Services), Esher College



Esher College welcomed Dan Lodge as their new Assistant Principal (Student Services) from January. Dan moved to the college following over 8 years with Reigate College, during which he worked in a number of roles including curriculum and pastoral management, adult and higher education and staff development. Speaking of his new role Dan commented:

"I spent many happy years at Reigate College and was privileged to work with excellent colleagues and managers. During my time there I had a number of opportunities to broaden my understanding of how a top sixth form college operates. This cross-college experience was important in considering my next career step and I was delighted to secure a move to Esher

College to head up Student Services. Undoubtedly part of developing my skills and knowledge to make this move has been working closely with S7 colleagues and counterparts - completing the S7 Leadership Programme, visiting S7 colleges through the PGCE programme and representing Reigate College at regular S7 Consortium Staff Development Meetings.

I'm getting stuck in now to new challenges at Esher College with a team of colleagues who are very experienced and are great to work with!"

We welcome news items that would be of interest to our S7 colleagues so if you have anything to share please send an email to [s7enquiries@gmail.com](mailto:s7enquiries@gmail.com).

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## NQT/Trainee Teacher Training 2012-13

For some years now the S7 Consortium has taken a collective responsibility for the development of its currently qualifying and most recently qualified staff. Recognising that the first year in a new teaching post is a challenging one, the S7 Consortium brings together the beginner teachers in each of its colleges to share ideas, issues, concerns and solutions in a five day programme that runs from early Autumn to Spring. See the feedback below from one of the delegates from this year's programme:

*"I feel very privileged to be a part of the S7 network. The quality of training provided has been outstanding. I have particularly enjoyed the hands-on approach to training and session leaders have always been very expert and professional when answering any of our questions. There are numerous opportunities to meet other trainee teachers and NQTs to discuss everyday issues, which always provides an element of reassurance to the way we develop our teaching practice. Anyone considering employment in the sixth-form sector should consider joining an S7 college, as the benefits of being a part of this professional network are priceless."* Arran Holcombe, Woking

### S7 Student News



#### Surrey's Got Talent Final

On the evening of 22<sup>nd</sup> November students from the S7 Colleges joined together at Reigate College for a talent competition final. The audience was entertained by a variety of acts, including a pianist, recorder player, solo musician with Chinese guitar, comedian, singers, duets and a band.

Congratulations to the **Jungle Doctors** from Esher College who won the overall prize and we wish all participants well with the development of their talents.

#### Student Council Day 2013

The Student Unions and Councils from the S7 Colleges will be joining together at Godalming College on 3<sup>rd</sup> July for their annual S7 Student Council Day. This is always well-received by our students and produces lots of energy, camaraderie and excellent ideas for the future.

### A word from the S7 Manager

I have now been the S7 Manager for 4 years and it has been an extremely interesting and eye opening experience. Having been a Senior Manager in one of the Surrey Sixth Form Colleges for several years beforehand, I thought I knew all about S7, but there is so much more to it than I realised! It is hugely valued by staff at all levels in the colleges and the benefits financially, in terms of quality sharing and in support for each other are absolutely invaluable. We are constantly developing and because the courses are demand driven and mostly taught by our own staff, they are always relevant and sector specific. Previously I thought that all Sixth Form Colleges worked together, but having spoken at LSIS conferences for Principals from colleges across the country, I realise that they are amazed at what we do and can't quite believe how far we have come in terms of collaboration in the last ten years. We are now being emulated in other counties, and even countries, as a group in Canada has just cited us as their inspiration! S7 is designed to benefit all staff in our colleges, so please take the time to find out how we can help you.

*Anna Loveday*  
S7 Manager



We would like to thank the following colleagues for contributing to this issue of the S7 newsletter:

- ◆ Adam Lyons, Godalming
- ◆ Arran Holcombe, Woking
- ◆ Dan Lodge, Esher
- ◆ Jude Smit, Esher
- ◆ Matthieu Pinel, Strode's
- ◆ The delegates from the Senior Leadership Programme 2012 to 2013