

28 September 2023

Lindsay Pamphilon
Chief Executive Officer & Principal

Dear Parent/carer

As we approach the end of week 4 of term, I want to introduce myself and give a few College updates, ensuring that your young person is prepared to make the best of their opportunities this term.

I presented two online 'Introduction to College life' sessions just before and at the start of term. For those of you who could attend I hope you found them useful. Adjustment to college life can be a steep learning curve for 16 and 17 year olds as well as their parents and carers! Expectations of adult behaviours mean that we will have less constant involvement with you, although we know that close communication benefits all of us.

I have also completed a College induction talk with students, and we discussed the importance of wearing lanyards, treating the College environment with respect, the rules around smoking and vaping, and other changes from school. In this first term students become more adult in their approach to their learning, taking responsibility for getting to classes on time, choosing to attend well, seeking support if needed, and working independently. Many students will have fixed deadlines for assignments they are already working to and this work builds to their final grade so it is really important that students do not fall behind in their first few weeks.

I've been really proud of students' behaviours and the strong friendships and College community activities I can see developing already - we really do have fantastic young people at the College already achieving remarkable things! Below I have included some key messages that I hope parents and carers will appreciate.

Attendance

We expect students to attend every lesson on their timetable, and if they are running late or absent they use the College systems to inform us. Students will have received a letter from me expressing concern if their attendance has already dropped under 90%, and they will have support and intervention meetings including parents and carers if a pattern of absence develops. I will be sending a letter out shortly to all students whose attendance is under 85%.

Police presence on campus

We have a close relationship with both Surrey and London Met Police and work collaboratively to improve relationships between young people and the police and maintain safety and security on campus. This term that includes 'A cuppa with a copper' and a football tournament between police, staff and students which we are very much looking forward to!

This week we hosted our first police search on site for this academic year. Our engagement with the police is part of an annual plan of activities that we carry out throughout the academic year with the aim of keeping everyone safe, reinforcing expectations of our students and to reduce anti-social behaviour.

GCSE resits - November

Students whose GCSE Maths or English results were 10 marks or less away from a grade 4 and would like to be entered for the November resit should contact our GCSE Programme Manager Mazie Lyn (room A013) mlyn@esc.ac.uk no later than 6 October. Resitting students must attend 100% of timetabled Maths/English lessons. In addition, students will need to attend a 1 hour resit preparation lesson every week until the exams to maintain their registration for these exams. Please watch out for communication from Elaine Gates, our Director of Skills for Life, for details.

Parents' evenings

Parents' evenings will take place the week of 6 November. Parents and carers of students under 18 will be invited to a virtual meeting with vocational tutors to discuss students' progress via a written 'progress review'. Please watch out for an email from curriculum administrators to book your slot - you can also request a face-to-face meeting if that would be helpful.

Careers

Last week we delivered classroom and group sessions to introduce new students to the **Careers and Work Experience Team**. All students were advised about the requirements and expectations around work experience, and also received a presentation on the College careers provision, which we encourage all students to take advantage of. Over the coming weeks, students will find posters located across the College where they can scan the QR Code to book a one-to-one appointment with a professional careers advisor at any point during their College journey.



Careers Video:

Preparing for a Careers appointment:
<https://youtu.be/ONKDYTVJrcY>

Our upcoming workshops and events for October are as follows:

- **UCAS Registration and Choices Workshops** for Level 3 Year 2 Students
- **CV Workshops**
- **Career Planning with your Apprenticeship Workshops**
- **Level 3 Year 2 Art & Design Practice** are visiting the **UCAS Creative Industries Career Showcase at Edexcel – 3 October**

- **HE Event, 30 October – Advising of OSC University College HE Courses**, with talks on Student Finance, Degree Apprenticeships and a Personal Statement Masterclass
- **Careers in Engineering Workshop** delivered by Lowery Ltd
- **Careers in Aviation Workshop** delivered by Virgin Atlantic
- **National T Level Week** - Discover more about T Levels and how they are a proactive way to both study and work. T Levels are a much quicker way of progressing through education and work
- **Love our Colleges Week** - The Love Our Colleges campaign is an opportunity to highlight the brilliant work that goes on in colleges, and the brilliant staff that make it all possible

Our Work Experience team are working hard to build strong working relationships with local businesses to support students with industry related work experience. Students have been advised to 'like' our **Work Experience Page** on the **OSC Connect App** for regular updates and opportunities.

Student Support and Wellbeing

Karen Richardson, our Assistant Principal for Student Support, would like to take this opportunity to update you on some of the Student Support activity scheduled to take place this term.

This year, East Surrey College is working with the YMCA to offer Counselling and other Wellbeing support. Counselling posters can be found around the campus. Students can self-refer by scanning the QR code or emailing ESCCounselling@ymcaeast Surrey.org.uk. The YMCA will be running a six-week **WAVES programme** (Wellbeing, Awareness & Voice for East Surrey) starting 2 October. WAVES is a youth group with a difference, it's an opportunity for young people to come together and talk about mental health with staff and other young people, explore coping strategies and develop resilience. [WAVES - YMCA East Surrey](#). The YMCA will also be coming into the College to deliver **WiSE project tutorials**. The WiSE project focuses on raising awareness, healthy relationships and supporting young people to keep themselves safe. In addition to the above, **CYP Haven** will be running mental health drop-in sessions every second Wednesday commencing 11 October. [Welcome to CYP Haven](#)

At John Ruskin College we continue to work with the Refugee Council; they will be onsite monthly from October. **Palace for Life** come in to JRC twice a week and offer mentoring and support to our students to help them understand life challenges and develop healthy relationships. Counselling is by referral to **Croydon Talking Therapies** [Croydon Talking Therapies](#) and **Kooth** [Kooth](#).

The YMCA is looking to run parent/carer workshops on TEAMS. They recognise parents/carers and young people do not always understand each other or communicate effectively. The workshops will touch on the teenage mind, interpreting the language they use and how best to communicate with them to make it a much more positive experience. Once we have confirmation, we will let you know when these are going to run and how to book.

The Wellbeing page on the College websites provides a range of useful contacts:

[Wellbeing Hub | East Surrey College | East Surrey College](#)
[Wellbeing Hub | John Ruskin College | John Ruskin College](#)

Exam Access arrangements

Please note, students who had Exam Access Arrangements for GCSEs e.g. extra time or a reader etc, and feel they continue to require them should speak to their maths, English and subject tutor who will advise the

ALS team. Exam Access Arrangements do not automatically roll over from school to college, the College will need to make a new application to the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). To help us with this process, can you please contact the previous school or college and ask for a copy of the evidence used. This is likely to be a Form 8, which must be signed, a File Note or medical letter. It is helpful if they can also provide a copy of the JCQ approval. This information is required to confirm the history of need. The College will need to meet the student and confirm that needs remain the same and this is the normal way of working. Please email information/evidence to EAA@OSC.ac.uk or send to the ALS team at the relevant campus.

Additional Learning Support

Students who require reasonable adjustments or assistance with their studies because of an identified learning difference should discuss this with their course tutor who can then make a referral to the Additional Learning Support team, if necessary. One of the team will arrange to meet the student and discuss their needs and support options.

Many thanks for supporting your young person's journey through further education; please do use the contacts and links above to access support or direct queries, concerns, and of course any compliments!

All the best.

Yours faithfully



Rebecca Taylor
Vice Principal Curriculum & Standards