



# What can S7 do for you?

Pursuing excellence through collaboration

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S7 NEWSLETTER ISSUE 6

AUTUMN TERM 2014

## A Note from the Chair

We can look back on a highly successful year for the S7 Consortium. Among many highlights, the Support Staff conference at the College of Richard Collyer in Horsham stands out. The sun shone, the lunch was tasty and the response to a varied programme was overwhelmingly positive. For me, that summed up the value of sixth form college collaboration. We learn from each other, we share the same issues and, together, we work out a way to move forward. There are obvious challenges ahead, not least the government's blinkered attitude to education funding and incoherent approach to A level reform. However, as a consortium we can ride this tide and hold on to the values that make us such a successful sector. S7 activity for 2014/15 is already underway and to those of you signed up to the range of development programmes on offer, just enjoy!

*Dan Dean, Chair of S7 as of September 2014 and Principal of Esher College*



**Confirmed S7 courses for the remainder of 2014/15**  
(Courses may be added throughout the year—details can be found on the S7 website which is updated regularly)

|   |  |                |
|---|--|----------------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Dec 2014                  | Employment Law (Shared Parental Leave)           | Reigate        |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2014                  | New Heads of Department ½ day morning            | Godalming      |
| 10 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2014                 | New Heads of Department ½ day afternoon          | Godalming      |
| 21 <sup>st</sup> Jan 2015                 | Aspiring Heads of Department Training            | Woking         |
| 29 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2015                 | Senior Leadership Programme Day 5                | Gorse Hill     |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Feb 2015                  | Performance Management (Employment Law) Training | Reigate        |
| 11 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2015                 | Teachers' Toolkit Training Day 3                 | Collyer's      |
| 26 <sup>th</sup> /27 <sup>th</sup> Feb 15 | Leadership Programme Days 1 and 2                | Gorse Hill     |
| 16 <sup>th</sup> March 2015               | Teachers' Toolkit Training Day 4                 | Godalming      |
| 24 <sup>th</sup> March 2015               | Leadership Programme Day 3                       | Gorse Hill     |
| 22 <sup>nd</sup> April 2015               | Leadership Programme Day 4                       | Gorse Hill     |
| 28 <sup>th</sup> April 2015               | Teachers' Toolkit Day 5                          | Strode's       |
| 15 <sup>th</sup> June 2015                | Leadership Programme Day 5                       | Gorse Hill     |
| 8 <sup>th</sup> July 2015                 | Senior Managers' day                             | Gorse Hill     |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> June 2015                 | Teaching and Learning Conference                 | Royal Holloway |

- 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.

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## S7 SUPPORT STAFF CONFERENCE 2014: 7th JULY

The support staff of the S7 Colleges came together at the College of Richard Collyer, Horsham, on Monday, 7th July for their biennial conference.

The day began with a well-received and lively address from David Adelman, then Chair of the Consortium, who delivered a quiz related to the sixth form college sector that really got the audience thinking.



*“It was very relevant and interesting to hear about sixth form colleges, especially as I am fairly new to this industry.”*

Delegates were then able to attend two workshops of their choice, which included topics such as Curriculum Changes, Stress Management and Cost Cutting /Efficiencies, among others.



*“Good to share with others.” “Came away with some very good ideas.” “Very useful in my current role.”*

Following lunch, networking meetings were held between groups in similar roles, ranging from Admin to Careers, eLearning to Technicians. Some of these groups met for the first time and feedback suggested a real enthusiasm to meet again.

*“A very good session and enjoyable and useful to meet colleagues who do a similar job to me.”*

It is impossible to leave this article without drawing attention to the fantastic food that Collyer’s laid on that day, and to the hard work of the catering team and the support of the Collyer’s staff who contributed to the day’s success.



### Current S7 meeting groups:

- ◆ Principals
- ◆ Vice/Assistant Principals
- ◆ Staff Development Managers
- ◆ Student Services Managers
- ◆ Equality and Diversity
- ◆ BTEC Nominees’ Group
- ◆ Finance Directors
- ◆ Learning Support Managers
- ◆ Admissions
- ◆ Adult Education
- ◆ Attendance Officers
- ◆ Bursary Administrators
- ◆ Careers/Student Progression
- ◆ Clerks to Governors
- ◆ Counsellors (from 2015)
- ◆ ESOL Group
- ◆ Exam Officers
- ◆ IT Managers
- ◆ Learning Facilitators
- ◆ LRC Managers
- ◆ Marketing Group
- ◆ MIS Managers
- ◆ Personnel/HR Group
- ◆ Receptionists
- ◆ Student Liaison Officers

Subject meetings can also be arranged on a one-off basis when required.

### Exam Board Workshops

One of the many benefits of working together as a consortium is the ability to persuade outside agencies to do more for us, due to economies of scale. To this end we were able to ask for workshops from AQA on the new specifications last term and we have agreement from both OCR and Edexcel to do similar workshops for us this term.

Transitioning to the new A level system inevitably creates concerns for us as teachers and we hope that these workshops, along with a continued relationship with the major examination boards, will help to make this process as smooth as possible.



## S7 Achievements

### Roll of Sporting Excellence (ROSE) at Esher College

On Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> June Esher College hosted its third annual ROSE day to celebrate the achievements of their top athletes and support them in their chosen sports.

Esher College has over sixty students who perform to an exceptionally high level in sport. These talented students compete at county, national and even international level. The range of sports they excel at is truly impressive – from swimming basketball, rowing and hockey to more unusual sports and activities such as clay pigeon shooting and jump roping.



Pictured from left to right: Ella Widdop-Gray, Ed Sinclair and Calvin Hooper

Esher's ROSE day gave eighteen of their top athletes a chance to meet one another and this year they were lucky enough to have double Olympian swimmer Ed Sinclair come to talk about his experiences at the Sydney and Athens Olympics. He talked to the students honestly about his experiences and really engaged with them. Sports nutritionist, Libby Linford, gave students advice on nutrition during training and competition. There were lots of samples to try: from beetroot juice to chia seeds. Sport

psychologist Rebecca Symes gave a really interactive presentation on coping with injury and stress. The students went away more motivated than ever and armed with lots of fantastic advice to help them prepare for a summer of competition.

One of the ROSE students, Ella Widdop-Gray (pictured above with Ed Sinclair), is a high jumper, and said, "It has been such an interesting and informative day, and one that will highly influence my attitude to improving my sports performance."

Russell Tomlin, Head of PE and Sport at Esher College, said, "It has been a brilliant day and a fantastic opportunity to not only recognise and celebrate the high calibre of athletes we have here at Esher College, but also a day where students have been inspired and guided by professionals in the world of sport."

The students went away more motivated than ever and with lots of fantastic advice to help them prepare for a summer of competition.



## A very successful S7 Day—review of the Learning Facilitators' Training Day on 22nd October 2014, by Pippa Jeacock, Godalming College

I thought the S7 Training on the 22<sup>nd</sup> October, kindly hosted at Reigate College, was so valuable! The venue was ideal—we all received a very warm welcome and the lunch was delicious!

The content provided by each of the speakers was key and relevant to our roles within the seven colleges. It was extremely positive and helpful having a speaker, Robyn Steward, who expressed her own experiences as a student with a learning difference. It gave us all a great insight and Robyn provided really good advice and information on how we can support students effectively to enhance their on-going learning, opportunities and life skills. Robyn's talk was a huge inspiration and I personally learnt much from her.

Hearing more about Young Carers and encouraging colleges to promote a supportive environment for these young people is so vital! Many of my colleagues found this to be a hereto unconsidered area and we felt that it would be beneficial to include this in the Teaching & Learning Programme and also in the Tutorial Programme wherever possible.

It is important to exchange ideas and experiences of classroom strategies to help support our students, I feel it is crucial for us all to have the opportunity and time to meet everyone within S7, to communicate and feel unison with our ongoing work, and it is days such as this that enable us to do so.

All the presenters were excellent and provided such useful information and helpful tips in and outside of the classroom; reminding us that, after all, we are dealing with young human beings!

### S7 Courses Feedback

*"Overall, the best Inset I have taken part in, in 5 years"*

*"Good to meet colleagues"*

*"Good advice and lots of tips to deliver very good lessons"*

Taken from Grade One Lesson Training evaluations, July 2014

*"The best training I have attended and I have enjoyed the challenge of the activities"*

*"This has been so much more useful than a previous [external] Leadership Programme that I attended..."*

*"It has been very beneficial to run with a project that has SMT approval"*

Taken from Leadership Programme 2014 evaluations, Feb-Jun 2014

*"It was particularly useful for me to analyse my role within the College and make me think about my importance"*

*"Made you think a lot about what your role contributes to the College"*

*"Being analytical of myself and learning from other colleagues"*

Taken from Support Staff Leadership Programme evaluations, October 2014



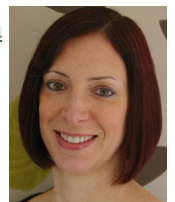
## A message from the S7 Manager

When I do presentations at the beginning of any course, I always start with explaining the benefits of S7 and why the Senior Management Teams of all seven colleges believe it is so beneficial to work as a consortium:

- ◆ Collaborating on major political issues gives us a much bigger voice than one college on its own.
- ◆ Organising our own professional development saves a huge amount of money, ensures that the training is bespoke to sixth form college education, is taught by current practitioners and thoroughly evaluated and modified as a result and, as we are able to be demand driven, our courses are always relevant to the current issues in education.
- ◆ Organising a Teaching and Learning Conference and a Support Staff Conference on alternate years at minimal cost to the colleges.
- ◆ Sharing the huge amount of excellent practice going on at all levels in our colleges, for the benefit of our staff and students.
- ◆ Enabling support, information sharing and confidence building by bringing together groups of staff with similar job descriptions to meet and, as a result, have regular email contact.
- ◆ Enabling departmental staff to visit their subject in another college on an informal basis to discuss whatever they wish to, can help to plan the future for their department or subject.
- ◆ Reflecting on each others' quality process provides us with a 'critical friend' to prepare us for outside inspection.

There are very few other consortia in sixth form education in the country that work as we do and we have been cited as an example both nationally and internationally.

We are here to help you in any way we can so if you are currently not involved in any S7 activities and would like to be, please speak to your line manager or contact Anna Loveday at [S7colleges@gmail.com](mailto:S7colleges@gmail.com) or Sharon Kemp at [s7enquiries@gmail.com](mailto:s7enquiries@gmail.com).



*Anna Loveday, S7 Consortium Manager*

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

- ◆ Russell Tomlin, Esher
- ◆ Pippa Jeacock, Godalming