



Our Ethos

The success of our school is built on two key characteristics: small classes and high-quality teaching. These foundations allow us to offer the kind of education that we think works best – an education tailored to each individual boy and girl in the school.

A good teacher working with a small class can get to know each pupil as an individual. They can identify their strengths and weaknesses, discover what motivates them, and figure out how best to help them progress.

We have great teachers at Colchester High School – teachers who can not only focus on each individual pupil, but who are also specialists in their subject. And we do not limit this specialist teaching to our older pupils; we provide it throughout the school so that even our nursery children benefit from expert teaching in subjects such as Music, French, ICT and PE.

The same two key characteristics explain why our pastoral care is so strong. We don't just get to know the academic aptitudes of our pupils, we get to know them as boys and girls with all their enthusiasms, fears and dreams. This allows us to provide an equally focused approach to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, ensuring that they develop the kind of personal qualities our society needs.

Our commitment to individualised education also extends beyond the curriculum. Here, our watchword is opportunity. We offer an exceptional and ever-changing array of clubs so that each of our children can identify and explore all of their talents.

This is a school where we make the very most of ourselves – our boys and girls, our teachers and support staff, and even our buildings and all the fantastic amenities in the local area. We take pride in turning all of this potential into success. That is our ethos.



Our School

Colchester High School is the only independent day school and nursery in Colchester to offer an all-through education to boys and girls aged 2½ to 16.

We were founded in 1882 by Ferdinand Gröne as a 'most desirable establishment for young ladies'. Gröne – or 'Groany' as he affectionately comes to be known by his pupils – will go on to spend 30 years at the school, fiercely committed to providing a 'sound English education'

By 1905 the school has quickly grown in size and reputation until it is considered to be the best in Colchester. The local authorities are so impressed that they try to take over the school, but Gröne resists – establishing the school's long-held commitment to independence.

Amid further expansion in 1910, it is decided to allow boys to attend the school. Over the course of the next 20 years, the school becomes an all-boys establishment.

Towards the end of the First World War, as the number of casualties soars, the school's new headmaster, Harold 'Hocker' Watkin, agrees to allow part of the site to be used as an annexe to the neighbouring hospital.

During the Second World War, sitting close to the strategically important port of Colchester and the city of London, Colchester High School sees its fair share of German planes during the Battle of Britain and Blitz. One is said to have roared past at little higher than tree-top level, and another is said to have strafed the school itself. Former pupils remember using an air raid shelter beneath the playground and carrying 'Mickey Mouse' gas masks with them at all times.

In 1972 a new headmaster, Tony Moore, arrives at the school following in the footsteps of previous heads Harold Wells, John Beales and Theodore Cook. Under Mr Moore, CHS expands rapidly, with 11 Wellesley Road added to the site in 1982 – the school's centenary year.

In 2005, Andrew Moore, who succeeded his father Tony as head and owner of the school, decides to place CHS in the care of Cognita, the largest independent schools business in the UK. A major round of investment quickly sees the addition of a new Performing Arts Wing, a new humanities department and a new science lab.

After a gap of some 70 years, girls are re-introduced to the school in 2006. Their numbers gradually grow and today the school has on average a 50:50 split of boys and girls in its Nursery and Prep classes.

In 2010, current Principal David Young takes over the leadership of the school which continues to go from strength to strength in its academic performance



Welcome from the Principal

We do things our own way at Colchester High School. We have our own traditions, our own characteristics, our own strengths, and our own – extremely high – standards.

You can see this individuality woven into the fabric of the school itself – with our warm, welcoming classrooms offering a safe learning environment filled with the kind of energy and shared endeavour that you might find in a happy family home.

You can see it in the way that our talented teachers not only bring a wealth of specialist knowledge to the classroom but also share their wider passions and skills with the school community. It's no coincidence, for example, that our academic strengths extend beyond the core subjects to take in unusual skills such as public speaking – it is a reflection of the individual qualities of our teaching staff.

Most of all, you can see this individuality in our boys and girls, who have the confidence, vitality and strength of character to pursue their own particular blend of talents and make the very most of themselves.

All of this stems from the fact that we are a small, close-knit school, where every individual matters. Everyone looks out for everyone else. And everyone takes pride in each other's achievements.

That's the Colchester High School way. It's a way that really binds our happy little school community together. And it's a way that gets results. Our motivated, hard-working, well-taught boys and girls thrive at the school, exceeding national expectations at every level, and achieving consistently high performance at 11+ and GCSE.

As you can see, I'm extremely proud of our school and I love nothing more than showing it off. Do please arrange to visit us – you'll be made very welcome.

David Young
Principal