

CHELMSFORD MP TOURS COLLEGE TO GREAT SUCCESS

Chelmsford College were delighted to welcome Chelmsford MP, Vicky Ford, to the College on Monday last week.

The visit provided the opportunity to update Vicky on recent successes including that Ofsted graded the College as "Good" this month. Vicky was elected Member of Parliament for Chelmsford in the last general election. A member of the Science and Technology Select Committee, Vicky also chairs the All-Party Parliamentary Groups for Information Communication and Technology and for Rare Diseases. Vicky also chairs the Conservative Backbench Policy Committee on Brexit.



A parade of Public Services students formally greeted Vicky on arrival and she took great care to stop and speak with as many students as possible. A tour of the College followed, including seeing students at work in the Library and Assessment Centre, Extended Learning students making pottery and cooking lunch, Business Studies students during a lecture and some Forensic Science students analysing a mock crime scene. The morning's visit

included taking part in a question and answer panel, answering a mixture of students' questions, from thoughts on Brexit, redevelopment of Chelmsford, Further and Higher Education funding to apprenticeships in science.

Senior Managers discussed key topics with Vicky over coffee and highlighted some interesting statistics. For example every year, Chelmsford College endeavours to support around 1400 students with resisting their English and Maths GCSEs after they've left school without the required grades of A* - C (equivalent to the reformed 4 - 9). In the UK, almost 45% of students leave school without their English and Maths GCSE qualifications. Chelmsford College helps approximately one third of these students who join Chelmsford College achieve A* - C English and mathematics GCSEs, which reflects the national rate for resits.

Chelmsford College is a medium-sized General Further Education College. It's a key part of, and serves Mid-Essex and the wider community. The College has approximately 3,500 students and is situated in an affluent area, with good transport links and easy access to the City.

As a result of the visit, Vicky has raised the College's feedback on lack of Construction Skills teachers with

ministers and with the Industry and Parliament Trust and highlighted that Erasmus+ funding is available for organisations in Chelmsford in 2018.

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Vicky Ford MP

Vicky Ford MP says "I was extremely impressed by Chelmsford College. The students, staff and facilities are top class. We should all be very proud to have so many dedicated, hard working and committed young people in Essex."

Andy Sparks, Principal of Chelmsford College says "It was great welcoming Vicky to the College. We really appreciated the chance to share our recent successes and discuss the challenges faced by Further Education. We enjoyed learning more about Vicky's role as Member of Parliament for Chelmsford and sincerely appreciated the time Vicky took to speak with individual students, taking a genuine interest in their lives and what matters to them."

Caroline Williams, Deputy Principal of Chelmsford College says "We are so proud of our students. The questions they asked in our panel session were extremely relevant and well-considered."

The College has many exciting initiatives planned for the future. For example, Hair and Beauty will be relocated to a new centre at Princes Road from September 2018 and curriculum managers regularly study and reflect on Local Market Intelligence in order to develop curriculum offers to anticipate future skills needs.

This year, two new apprenticeship programmes will be launched - in Software Development and training to

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A parade of Public Services students



Forensic Science mock crime scene



does. The College receives over 70% of its income from the Government, but funding has been cut (in real terms), year on year for the past few years. Chelmsford College, like other General FE colleges in the UK, does everything in its power to plan accordingly.

In Prime Minister Theresa May's speech on education at Derby College last Monday, she talked about how vital good schools and colleges are to a community and how, "Through education we can become a country where everyone, from every background, gains the skills they need to get a good job and live a happy and fulfilled life." The post-18 reform Theresa May has called for, to be Chaired by Philip Augar, will have implications for what happens when most students leave college rather than the age group Chelmsford College primarily serves.

Andy Sparks reflects "We know where we want to be in 2020. We have a new strategic plan, skilled staff, enthusiasm and commitment. One of our key priorities is to develop a culture where our learners and staff are able to excel through their uncompromising ambition for improvements in teaching, learning and assessment and outcomes for learners.

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The College is currently recruiting for staff and governors. If you'd like to join a winning team please visit www.chelmsford.ac.uk/our-college/team.asp



Seeing students at work



Business Studies students during a lecture

Inset: Student Sabrina with her ceramics

become a Laboratory Technician. A collaboration project outlining how Chelmsford College can potentially work more in partnership with Writtle University College is ongoing and Chelmsford College continues to work closely with employers and key partners to develop education and training offers.

Elaine Oddie, Chair of Governors for Chelmsford College recently said "The Governors and College Senior Leaders share high expectations for further improvements to the quality of learning and outcomes for students. We want Chelmsford College to enable everyone in mid-Essex to realise their full potential and progress to their chosen career."

Almost all learners at Chelmsford College progress into meaningful employment or further study and last year FE Week placed the College at the top of the national league tables for 16 to 18 progression. With a 95% pass rate for 16 to 18 year olds and a 97% pass rate for those aged 19 and over the College is proud of students' progress and dedicates a whole week to celebrating achievements in the Summer. The Ofsted report praised the College for the large majority of learners making good progress from their individual starting points.

National policy has a significant influence on the work the College