



Southend High School for Girls

AN ACADEMY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Southchurch Boulevard, Southend-on-Sea, SS2 4UZ
Headteacher: Mr J Carey MEd (Cantab), BA (Hons), LLE, NPQEL

18th March 2022

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

Please find below information and updates from this week.

British Sign Language 19th Anniversary

Today is an important day for the Deaf community in the UK. It marks the 19th anniversary of the date British Sign Language was first recognised as a language in its own right by the UK government. Please click [here](#) to find out more information on how SHSG are involved.

Science Week – House Competitions

House Teams of two students from each year group (Years 7 to 11) have been competing in the heats round of the House Science competition this week. The competition has been designed and run by the new Science Captain Team and the competing teams have had a lot of audience support each day. The results of each heat were:

- Heat 1 Artemis – 6, Aurora - 14
- Heat 2 Athene – 11, Hera - 6
- Heat 3 Aphrodite – 10, Hermes - 9

The winners progressing to the grand final next Monday are Aurora, Aphrodite, and Athene. Well done to the Science Captain team and to all the students taking part in the competition. Good luck to the House teams through to the final!

SHSG Young Actors Company performing 'Hunt' by Fionnuala Kennedy

Year 10 drama students will be performing the inaugural performance of *Hunt*. The performance will be 'promenade' in style as the play is based on a 'scavenger hunt'. This project is part of the National Theatre Connections programme, in which renowned playwrights write new plays for young casts and audiences. We hope you will be able to join us at one of our performances, which will take place on Tuesday 29th March (5pm and 7pm) and Wednesday 30th March (4.30pm and 7pm). Tickets for visitors are available on ParentPay and will be free for students and staff.

Prince Charming

On Friday 18th March we welcomed members from *Break the Cycle* to give an interactive scenario-based assembly to Year 8. The session was called '*Prince Charming*' and was focused on how to spot signs of unhealthy relationships by following a group of characters navigate new relationships in the modern day. [Break the Cycle](#) supports anyone aged 13-19 in the Southend Borough that thinks they could be experiencing an unhealthy relationship and can be reached through their Instagram and Twitter platforms.

Mobile Phone Use

As we approach the last two weeks of term and will have had two terms' implementation of our mobile phone policy, I would like to give parents, staff and students an opportunity to review the policy and help us decide on any potential next steps. A copy of our Mobile Phone Policy can be found [here](#).

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We found during the Pandemic that online resources and the introduction of platforms such as SMHW and MS Teams were very beneficial for students and staff, and that parents had quick and easy access to information such as homework. This year, after consultation and a considerable amount of research, we made the decision to allow students to continue using their phones to be able to access and use the new platforms in school, especially as they can access information about their timetables, homework, rewards and so on.

There are many advantages to having access to phones to support learning and an eminently sensible argument that young people should be taught how to use phones sensibly and appropriately rather than simply banning them. However, there is also a strong argument that young people should be encouraged to reduce screen time, spend more time talking to each other, and not to allow phones in school.

We always intended to review our approach and would welcome your feedback. The form can be found [here](#).

Online Safety Webinar for SHSG Parents - Thursday 31st March starting at 8.00pm.

We are pleased to offer the opportunity for parents of SHSG students to attend an online safety webinar on Thursday 31st March from 8.00pm-9.30pm. The webinar will be delivered by 'The 2 Johns', retired police detectives who now deliver bespoke child exploitation training to professionals, parents and children. You may have seen either one of 'The 2 Johns' present at numerous key events in relation to the Online Child Sexual Exploitation of Children (OCSE). They have given interviews for BBC Breakfast TV, BBC Radio 4, Channel 4 TV and numerous other local radio stations and have presented in schools across the UK. The session will cover:

- the most up to date risks of using the internet and social media apps
- tips and suggestions on how to reduce these risks to keep your children safe online
- signposting to further resources and information
- advice on how to get help your child if things go wrong

'The 2 Johns' will be at SHSG in person all day on Thursday 31st March. Students and staff will be taking part in online safety workshops in school throughout the day, followed by the virtual parent event in the evening.

We believe it is essential to work together with parents to help keep our students safe online. We strongly recommend that you attend the safeguarding webinar. See what other parents across the UK are saying who have attended the webinar with 'The 2 Johns' [here](#).

The zoom code required to join the session is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85412887273> and full joining instructions will be sent to parents in a separate letter next week.

Cyber Explorers at SHSG Computer Science

The Computer Science department, headed by Mr Highmore, are committed to giving our students the skills for the future and are pleased to announce that KS3 students will be enrolled in the Cyber Explorer programme.

Cyber Explorers, an initiative led by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), showcases how the skills being taught in class are linked to real world situations, through an immersive, gamified learning experience. Cyber Explorers uncover how digital, computing and cyber security skills are integral to successful career paths.

More information can be found on <https://www.cyberexplorers.co.uk> We would ask that Parents please read the privacy notice [here](#) and contact mhighmore@shsg.org if you have any queries about the activity.

SHSG Rugby

Year 12 student, Isabelle, is one of our Physical Education Captains and won a Jack Petchey award in February 2022. She was nominated by Mrs Buscombe as she has done such a brilliant job of promoting rugby in school and gives up a lot of her own time to run the sessions, as well as encouraging SHSG students to get involved with external clubs. The money that she has been awarded will now be used to invest some more equipment so we can prepare for some competitive fixtures next season. We asked Izzy to share with parents about what she has achieved in school and her links on the Saracens 'Empower Her' project:

'As a school captain and passionate sportswoman, I decided to run the school rugby club. Rugby is an inclusive club for students in years 7-10. I have been running the club this year for both Tag rugby and rugby Union. As a coach my main goal is to increase participation in girl's rugby and create opportunities for students to develop a love and enjoyment for rugby and sport in general. At the start of this academic year there were 3-5 students attending rugby club, but through different techniques I now have a club of 20 enthusiastic girls and hope for this to continue to grow. I have been involved in the 'Empower Her' project with Saracens RFU; this project aims to give girls like myself the tools to empower the younger generations to break down stereotypes and boundaries to increase participation in rugby. My mentor in this project is Katie Barnes (Saracens first team player). She has supported me to achieve my goals of inspiring many new people to try rugby and become a role model to the younger years. Through going into year 9 PE lessons and leading the sessions in rugby, I was able to build up the number of people coming to the club at lunchtime and spark an interest for some of them to join clubs outside of school. The girls fully engaged in the PE lessons and it was great to see them enjoying a sport and want to learn more about it. If anyone is interested in getting involved then please check the PE extra-curricular timetable to see when our sessions are.'

Year 12 Preparation for Law – Aliyah K

This week, Year 12 students enjoyed their second Law Workshop with Jeremy, a practising barrister and Rob a practising solicitor. The sessions have been informative and inspirational. We thought that parents would be interested to read Aliyah's feedback:

As an aspiring barrister, I had the pleasure of attending this session. Jeremy and Rob presented the differences between the roles of a solicitor and a barrister. Jeremy explained that being a barrister entails advocating for clients who may be facing one of the most difficult days of their lives in court. Solicitors act as advisors and researchers for their clients. I find it fascinating that each lawyer in the United Kingdom is a member of a chamber, and that in order to join a chamber, you must first complete a pupillage. Jeremy will offer workshops for year 12 students every half-term to assist them in achieving their ambitions of pursuing post 18 pathways in Law. The abilities needed to be a lawyer, such as advocacy and public speaking, as well as how to make a convincing case against an opponent, will be covered in these sessions. My peers and I would want to express our gratitude to Jeremy and Rob for taking the time to meet with us in order to assist us in achieving our goals.

Winners of the Creative Writing Group's Last Line Competition

The entries for the Creative Writing Group's *Last Line* Competition have now been judged, and we are delighted to announce that Elodie P from 8F was the winner with her story *'The Trip of a Lifetime'*. Dana A from 11F was the first runner-up, and Ava W was second runner-up. Our three winners will be presented with certificates and small prizes. The students had to write a story that finished with the line, *'As they drifted out to sea, seeing their gaze reflected in the water'*. As ever, the standard of entry was very high with impressive use of language. The winners, plus the many other worthy entries, will be featured on our English blog. Well done to everyone who entered.

Miniature Art

Some beautiful paintings have been created by all year groups. Mrs Stewart thanks her classes for the enormous effort required to make these tiny paintings; if students would like the chance to have a painting displayed in the art gallery, they should select their favourite famous art piece and recreate it! It should be no bigger than 3 by 5cms please. Sculptures also accepted! Bring to Studio 1 before the Easter holiday. Photographs are available on our [SHSG Instagram page](#).

SHSG Parents' Association Reminder

The Parents' Association will be holding an Easter raffle on Wednesday 30th March 2022. The prizes are:

- 1st prize – two tickets to Rock of Ages at the Cliffs Pavilion
- 2nd prize – a Katie Loxton handbag/backpack from Quinn's
- 3rd prize – a £50 Danielle's school wear and uniform gift card
- 4th prize – a Cadbury's Easter Egg from Waitrose

Tickets cost £2 and can be purchased from the school bank or on ParentPay (tickets will need to be collected from the school bank if purchased on ParentPay). All contributions support SHSG Parents' Association. Thank you for your continued support.

Key Dates

The calendar on our website is regularly updated and contains key dates of activities and events that are taking place in school. A full list can be found [here](#).

Wishing you a good weekend.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jason Carey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J' and a long, sweeping underline.

Jason Carey
Headteacher