



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

Friday, 21 October 2022

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

Please find below information and updates from this week.

The SHSG 109th School Birthday

We celebrated the 109th school birthday today and welcomed guests, including ex-headteachers of SHSG and some students from 1951! It was a fantastic day; I think that everyone will be exhausted from the range of activities.

Form tutor activities included an online 'Rogue Agent' Escape room; Year 11 engaged in a colour run (information and photos later in this letter); Year 13 performed a superb pantomime to all year groups; and the assembly, attended by our VIP guests, involved musical and poetry performances, and the singing of *Jerusalem* and *Happy Birthday!* In the birthday assembly, I spoke about the early days of the school and the move in 1913 to Boston Avenue.

Performers in the assembly included:

Layla Z in Year 7 - Nocturne in Eb Major, Frédéric Chopin

Chan H in Year 13 - Memory, from *Cats*, Andrew Lloyd Webber

Isobel W in Year 11 - One Perfect Moment, from *Bring it On*, Lin-Manuel Miranda

Angelina K – poetry recital of her own poem about the school birthday.

A huge thank you to Year 11 students, Evelyn G, Jenna T, Serai B, Isabella R and Tegan F, along with Mrs Roe and Mrs Francis for designing the School Birthday cake this year. The cake shows the bridge over the pond with me and some students as this is always used as a school photo opportunity. Some of the students have made themselves in sugar and are on the cake! The rainbow represents the SHSG house colours, and the owl is an iconic part of the school outside my office. Even the school therapy dog, Florence, makes an appearance. I am sure you will agree this is a wonderful design!



School pantomime

Part of the tradition of School Birthday is, of course, the Year 13 Pantomime. I would like to thank Gracie our Head Student and her team of Year 13s for writing, directing, and performing the 2022 SHSG panto – *Mamma Mia*. It was excellent!



Year 9 Battlefields Trip

Last week, 120 Year 9 students joined the History Department, Mrs Sanz and Mrs Bernier on a trip to Suffolk to visit First World War Huts and Trench reconstructions. They all had a brilliant time exploring the most realistic First World War trench reconstruction in the UK, handling decommissioned munitions, trying on uniforms, and learning military marching drills. They also gained a wealth of knowledge from the living history educators in authentic Great War kit, who really brought the trenches to life. The Zeitgeist team couldn't praise our students highly enough; everyone said what a pleasure it was to work with them, and that the day went far too quickly! The History Department would like to send a big thank you to all Year 9 students who attended the trip. We really hope you enjoyed the day.





BBC 100 Live Event

We were delighted to welcome the BBC into school on Thursday. As part of the celebrations of the BBC reaching 100, they are visiting schools around the country to share stories. As we have been running a BBC Young Reporters club for many years, we were selected to be part of the project and Young Reporters in Year 7 and Years 8-13 were invited to participate. The sessions were presented by BBC introducing and Asian network presenter, Jasmine Takhar, who led the discussion with BBC Essex journalist Jacob Ottoway and BBC sounds producer Rebecca Grisedale. They shared their stories of how they have overcome

difficulties to have fantastic careers with the BBC. They advised students that the best way to get on in life is to be 'authentically yourself' and aspire to be the best version of oneself. Rebecca and Jacob kindly took questions and gave careers advice to our aspiring journalists. At lunchtime the BBC Young Reporter club members interviewed the whole crew including the inspirational all female production team. Our students enjoyed the day and asked insightful, intelligent questions that impressed the producer.

If students would like to take part in the competition mentioned at the end of the presentation they can find out more here [BBC Young Reporter Competition 2022 - BBC Teach](#) and would be very welcome to join the BBC Young Reporters club that meets on Wednesday lunchtimes in the Media Studio.

Dare to Dream

In summer 2022 the entirety of Year 7 took part in a project called 'Dare to Dream' with internationally renowned harmonica player and composer Johnny Mars; alongside Chamber Choir, they sang and recorded the song with Johnny himself and it will shortly be released for you to purchase on Bandcamp. After half term you will receive a link to the song which we really hope you will consider downloading, as all proceeds will be split between Johnny and our school - it is really important that as many people purchase the song on Friday 4th November as this is 'Bandcamp Friday' where we will benefit from 100% of the proceeds from the platform, rather than paying any commission. Johnny is really passionate about the power of music to change a young person's life and hopes that this educational anthem might be recorded in schools around the country after the success with our own students – well done to everyone involved!

Literary Review

The English department has collated the best work from 2021-22 into the inaugural edition of the SHSG literary review. In addition, the Art department has provided illustrations for the Review. There is a link to it [here](#) and I would strongly urge you to have a look at some of the wonderful writing contained therein. I particularly enjoyed the Year 7 Creative Writing with outstanding contributions from Hana W, Clementine T, Leanne K and Sophie B, but all the students who were chosen to feature in the Review can be really proud of their work.

Cursed Pen Award 2022

The fourth annual Cursed Pen writing competition has now been launched. Students from all years have until midnight on Monday 31st October to email their creepy story to Mr McGarvey GMcGarvey@shsg.org to have a chance of receiving the prestigious *Cursed Pen Award*.

Technology Work Experience [Young Professionals](#)

Students interested in a career in the fast-paced industry of Technology can take part in this exciting opportunity over half term. It will take place on Wednesday 26th October, 9am-4pm via zoom and will receive a certificate of attendance for their Curriculum Vitae as well as exciting prize giveaways on the day. If students are interested in

hearing more about the different careers in the digital and technology industry, and want to engage with some top businesses during interactive workshops be sure to sign up [here](#).

Parent events

This week we welcomed into the school a large number of parents of Year 6 children who had been successful in the 11 plus. There was an evening presentation about the school's ethos, pastoral care and curriculum and daily tours where parents had a chance to see the school in action. It was a delight to take parents around the school so they could see SHSG in action, visiting classrooms with students working hard, engaged in their learning.

We also hosted the parents of Year 10s to an evening launching the study of GCSEs. This was particularly useful as a number of Year 12 students spoke about their experiences of Years 10 and 11 and shared a wide range of tips for success.

PE News – 1st place!

On Tuesday 18th October the Intermediate Girls' cross-country squad ran in the first round of the National team competition. There were some very impressive individual performances. Consequently, the team finished in first place and progressed on to the regional round in November.

Last week the Junior Girls completed their first round, finishing second and progressing to the next phase. In the afternoon we attended the annual Thorpe Hall relays competition and finished in medal position in year 7, 8, 10 and 11. Well done to all those that took part and thank you to Thorpe Hall for hosting such a popular event.



The Under 15 netball squad travelled to Woodlands School on Wednesday afternoon for a tough first round draw in the Schools' Magazine National cup. The players all battled hard until the final whistle, but the Woodlands side were too strong and ultimately took the win. Well done to the squad for not letting their heads drop at any stage. Good luck to Woodlands in the next round.



If any students have grown out of their athletics or cross-country spikes and you are able to donate them to the PE department, please could you drop them in at reception or the PE office. They will be used for athletes when competing for school if they do not have appropriate footwear. This would be very much appreciated. Thank you.

Student Achievement - Arsenal Champions League squad

Michelle A in Year 12 has been selected to be part of Arsenal Champions League squad and travelled with the Arsenal First Team to Lyon in France for Champions League match on Tuesday and Wednesday. Michelle's England U17s team topped their group winning all matches in the UEFA Women's U17 EURO qualifier in Estonia. Michelle played in all the 3 games and scored 2 goals with about 4 assists to help her team. Congratulations on this fantastic achievement!

Mock interviews for Year 10 Students

We are excited to announce that as part of our ongoing *Unifrog* careers provision we would like to host mock interviews for Year 10 students. All students follow a focused programme for careers in registration periods and as part of their Life Skills lessons. Year 10 students will shortly be guided on how to create a CV, how to research employment options and successfully complete a job application. We would like the culmination of this process to be a mock interview, but we need your help!

There are 180 students in Year 10, so we need to appeal to the wider school community and invite alumni, parents, friends, governors, and local business to support our students by offering to interview students and complete a short feedback form. We anticipate each interview and feedback process to take around 20 minutes. Interviews will be held on Thursday 20th and Friday 21st April 2023. We can offer a free school lunch and enormous sense of altruism! If you feel you are able to offer some time to do this (it doesn't have to be both days), please email careers@shsg.org letting Ms Casson know your availability and area of expertise/business.

Message from Mr Morgan, Head of Year 11

I would like to start by saying how extremely proud I am of Year 11. This is also a sentiment that is shared among the staff body. In what has been an intensive and challenging half term, the year group have truly risen to the challenge of Year 11. There isn't a day that goes by where I have not received positive feedback about a particular class, group(s) of students, and/or an individual student, regarding how impressively hardworking and diligent they have been in school this half term. They are a true credit to themselves, and the school and I would like to extend a heartfelt well done to Year 11 for their approach so far this year. Revision will be an important aspect of half term for Year 11, but it is also vital that they take some time for themselves to relax and enjoy themselves. I wish them all a productive and restful half term and look forward to seeing them bright eyed and bushy tailed, raring to go for the PPEs, which are due to start on the first day back.

I would also like to take a moment to sincerely thank Mrs Bowman and Mrs Poxon for their continued support with Year 11. It couldn't be done without them.

Year 11 Colour Run



Year 11 enjoyed their colour run as part of the School Birthday celebrations today. Head of Year 11, Mr Morgan galvanised the year group and the tutor team ready for an active and eventful end to the day. Well done to all the year group and thank you to the teachers for joining in!

Law workshops

Year 12 engaged in a law workshop led by a visiting barrister, Jeremy this week. It was very well attended by forty students that are interested in a career in Law. Thank you to Jeremy for giving up so much of your time again.

Mobile Phones

We have allowed phone use throughout the two years of the pandemic and last year to support students as we moved to Microsoft Teams, SMHW, and other online learning platforms.

It has been useful to see and test out a policy where phones are allowed. We did a lot of research around schools that allow mobile phones, and we surveyed students, staff, and parents about this policy.

It is evident that in lessons and under teacher supervision phones can be a useful learning and revision tool. For example, they allow easy access to resources on MS Teams, and students can check their homework and timetable. However, we are also conscious of the amount of time that young people spend on their phones. I am sure that this will echo parents' views. Therefore, I have made the decision that students may continue to use their phones when they ask a member of staff in a lesson, but that they will not be able to use them outside of lessons. In social time, we want our young people to be encouraged to talk to each other and to spend time away from screens. In fact, we are continuing our Oracy drive this year, encouraging students' participation and confidence in speaking and presenting in public.

Students will be given clear guidance about mobile phone usage on return to school and we have updated the relevant policies. The following points should give some clarity on basic expectations.

1. Phones must be switched off and out of sight while on school grounds.
2. During lessons, with the permission of the teacher, students will still be able to use their phone to support any learning activities.
3. If a student is using their phone outside of lessons and teacher permission (from 8am), the phone will be confiscated and handed to reception.
4. Anyone needing to leave a lesson to go to the toilet must put their phone on the teacher's desk.
5. Year 10 and Year 11 who use classrooms for independent study at lunchtime cannot use their phones at those times.
6. Sixth form students will be given information on return to school about using phones during study sessions.

There are strong arguments both for allowing and for banning phones in school. However, we feel that this approach gets the balance right between using phones productively and in supervised conditions and focusing on issues around physical and mental health to give students some respite from looking at screens.

SIMs Parent App

At Southend High School for Girls, we use SIMS Parent App to facilitate the communication of key information between home and school. Please find attached a user guide which we have put together that we hope you will find useful. You can also find a copy on the parent tab on the school website [here](#).

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 wonderful half term and we look forward to welcoming students back on Monday 31st October.

Yours faithfully,



Jason Carey
Headteacher