



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 2nd December 2022

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

Please find below information and updates from this week.

Christmas Carol Touring Production

On Wednesday afternoon, Quantum Theatre Company visited SHSG to perform their version of Charles Dickens' 'A Christmas Carol'. Year 10 watched during Periods 4 and 5 and then the actors repeated their performance after school for some of our Year 9 and 11 students. Everyone studies the novella as part of their English Literature GCSE and it was a fantastic opportunity to see the text brought to life on stage. The cast of only 3 members did a brilliant job of taking us back to Dickens' Victorian England and the condensed version, which stuck closely with the original text, brought the key ideas and themes to the fore. The performance was both highly entertaining and useful in consolidating the students' knowledge and understanding of the play. The English Department are looking forward to seeing how this opportunity impacts the students' essay writing skills in the future!

Year 11 Higher Project Qualification students

This week, Year 11 HPQ students have been presenting their reports to staff and students. The HPQ, Higher Project Qualification, is a student led process qualification. Students must design a research question, plan their research and develop an evaluative report themselves. Whilst they receive support from teachers who act as supervisors, students are not directed and must be self-motivated, organised and disciplined in monitoring and assessing their progress and in choosing, adapting and applying the methods that they are introduced to in class. This year's HPQ topics have included: 'measuring and assessing the intelligence of birds'; 'the impact of Brexit on the NHS'; 'whether TV and film no longer promote 'Black Love', and 'the potential of magnetic levitation trains to revolutionise the British railway industry.' All those who have presented should feel proud of their commitment and hard work to get to this point. We look forward now to reading the completed projects.

Year 11 Subject Fair

Year 11s enjoyed a very well organised and presented subject fair, run, and led by Sixth Form Captains. The event was held in the Assembly Hall where Captains from our full range of A Level courses presented information about their subjects. Year 11s were able to ask questions and see examples of high-quality work. The feedback from Year 11 was very positive.

Next half term, Year 11 students will take part in their second A Level taster day on Wednesday 18th January 2023. Students will be attending A Level pitched lessons in 5 subjects and use this to help them decide which A Level subjects they want to study next year. Towards the end of January 2023, Year 11 students will use all the information they have gathered from the A Level taster days, subject presentations, subject fair and Open Evening to select the subjects they want to study at A Level.

Oxbridge Interviews

We are delighted that so many Year 13 students have been invited to interview at Oxford and Cambridge this year. We wish all 16 students the best of luck with interviews, which begin on Monday. Students have enjoyed and benefited from specialised, external support from sessions with Oxbridge graduates and experts in fields such as medicine, law and classics to name just a few.



Head Student

This week, our new Head Student Team have taken part in a series of interview tasks to secure the prestigious role of Head Student. The interview process closely follows the types of interviews and tasks that students may have in their futures, including panel interviews and a presentation to a large audience. The applicants gave presentations to students in Years 7, 8 and 10 about a leader that inspired them. Leaders that students chose to speak about ranged from Nelson Mandela, Emma Watson, and Beyonce! All eight applicants were exceptional in all aspects of the process. We are pleased to announce the Head Student of SHSG for 2022/23 is Carissa B. We wish her and the team of Deputies and Senior Prefects the best of luck in their year in role. Congratulations!

Computer Science Bebras Competition Successes

Recently, all students in Key Stage 3 and Year 10 computer science GCSE took part in the annual national Bebras computational thinking competition. I am pleased to report that 97 students have been given a gold certificate meaning they are within the top 10% nationally and invited to participate in the next stage of the competition (OUCC) which Oxford University are running in January 2023.

Congratulations to all those students who took part, and more details about the OUCC next stage will be given by the computer science class teachers so that students can prepare for in the coming weeks

Christmas Non-Uniform Day Friday 9th December

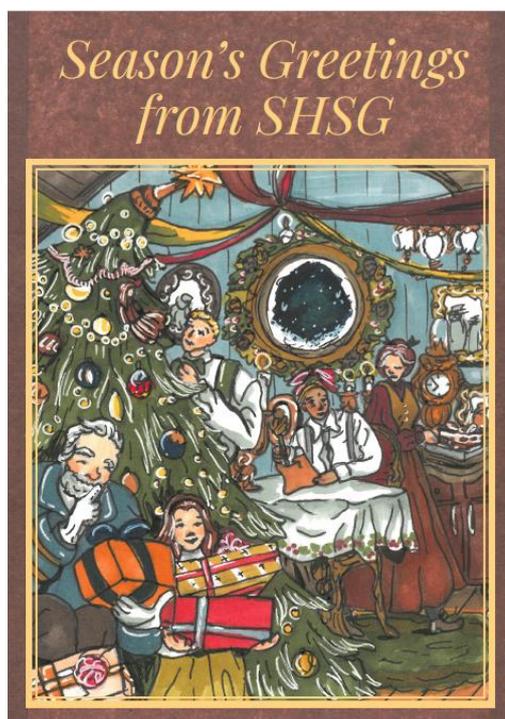
On Friday 9th December there will be a non-uniform day to raise money for two charities, Save the Children and Refuge Southend. Students are warmly encouraged to wear a Christmas Jumper if they have one. The donation for non-uniform is £2, via parent pay. As an alternative to financial donation, students can also bring in a contribution on the day for the Southend Foodbank, who are in need of tinned food, particularly meals such as chili or curries.

House Christmas Charity Events

Next week, we also have an array of fantastic House Christmas Charity events, including a Game Show version of 'Would I lie To You' (Teachers vs Students) in the Hall at lunch at 12:40pm on Thursday 9th December (tickets £1), and a Lip Sync Battle at lunch on Friday 10th December (tickets £2) at 12:40pm. Tickets for both can be purchased on ParentPay, and proceeds will go to HARP (Southend's homeless battle) and Haven's Hospice. A limited number of tickets are available so they will be sold on first come, first served basis. Physical tickets for the event will then be given to students on the morning of the event by Form Tutors.

Christmas card competition winner

A huge congratulations to Michelle C in Year 12 for winning the Christmas card competition. Michelle's design will be printed and sent out to the wider community.



Self-care bingo

As a way to continue to encourage students to engage with the *5 Ways to Wellbeing*, the Youth Health Champions are running a self-care activity this half term and are inviting students to take part in a self-care bingo. Students who have completed all the activities below will be entered in a draw to win a golden lunch pass for 2.

Draw a picture that makes you happy 	Follow a guided meditation on YouTube 	Go out for a walk 
Bake or cook something for someone. 	Read a book and recommend it to a friend. 	Write a to-do list 
Do some colouring 	Watch an old favourite film or tv show with family or friend. 	Write a list of self-care long term goals 

World HIV/AIDS Day

We have had an overwhelming response to the HIV/AIDS campaign with over £300 raised for the first time. Thank you for your continued support on this important issue. Fundraising will stop on the 5th December. Students that wish to buy a ribbon can still do so on ParentPay and collect from Ms Spilstead in the geography office.

Attendance and Punctuality

The vast majority of our students have an excellent attendance record. It is well known that attendance has a significant impact on student progress and the school expects all pupils to attend every day and arrive on time. As we approach the Christmas holidays, I encourage parents/carers to ensure that your child continues to attend school regularly throughout the remaining weeks of term. Please note that requests for leave of absence during term time will not be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances.

The DfE categorises attendance below 90% as persistently absent. To ensure the highest levels of attendance for our school community, when a pupil is in danger of becoming persistently absent, parent/carers will receive a letter informing them of their child's current level of attendance. Targets are then set during a 6-week monitoring period. Should there not be a significant improvement during that time, parent/carers are invited to the school for a supportive meeting, often involving the Local Authority's Attendance Officer, to discuss how we can work together to improve the student's attendance.

We understand that from time to time that students will fall ill; however, please remember that your child should only be kept at home if it is necessary. If you are concerned about your child's level of attendance, please get in touch with their Pastoral Support Officer.

Christmas Concerts consent reminder

A reminder the Christmas Concerts are taking place next week. Tickets are still available to purchase on ParentPay. If your child is taking part, please ensure that you check your emails and complete the online consent form.

Parents' Association Christmas Concert Raffles

The SHSG Parents' Association will be holding a raffle each night of the Christmas Concerts which take place on Tuesday 6th and Wednesday 7th December 2022. The first, second and third prizes are Christmas hampers provided by Year 7 students. Tickets cost £2 each and can be purchased on ParentPay up until 1pm on Tuesday 6th December

(tickets to be collected by students from the school bank). If you miss the cut-off time don't worry, tickets will be available on the nights.

There will be an additional raffle on the concert evenings with prizes including food and drink, beauty products and confectionary. All donations support the school and the Parents' Association thank you for your continued support.

Year 10 Virtual Parents' Consultation Evening

The Year 10 Parents' Consultation Evening will be taking place on Thursday 8th December. Please refer to the communication sent out this week on the 30th November which contains details on how to set up appointments.

Parent communication with school

As Headteacher of SHSG, it is my job to ensure that staff, as well as students, are safe, happy, and successful. Therefore, I kindly ask parents when contacting the school either via email or telephone to consider the nature and tone of the communication. At SHSG we are fortunate to have teachers who are experts in their subjects, are experienced practitioners, and are deeply committed to the school; this is also the case for support staff.

Our behaviour and rewards system is clear and was completed in consultation with students. Behaviour points are not up for negotiation. Some teachers are receiving lengthy emails arguing to have a behaviour point rescinded. Please be advised that we will not rescind behaviour points or detentions, nor respond to emails asking us to do this.

Furthermore, some staff have received phone calls from parents where the tone and language used has not been conducive to building the strong and purposeful home-school partnership and family ethos, of which we are so proud. Not all schools provide parents with the opportunity to email or phone staff directly. We value this relationship, but ask that communication is always respectful, solution focused and succinct. Thank you.

End of term

A reminder that the **last day of term is Friday 16th December and school will finish at 12:25pm**. We are waiting to hear back from the bus companies as to which buses will be able to collect at an earlier time and will communicate this with you next week. Please note that food will be available to purchase at break, but the canteen will not be providing lunch on this day. If your child is entitled to a free school meal and you would like the school to provide a packed lunch for them, we will be sending out a form next week for you to complete.

Christmas holiday – Free School Meals

We received notification from Southend Borough Council that they will be funding Free School Meal Vouchers for the Christmas holiday period. Please look out for these vouchers which have been emailed to you directly. You will receive a £30 voucher for each qualifying child along with the government issued Holiday Activity Vouchers. If you have any questions, or any difficulties in opening or accessing the vouchers, please contact Mrs Croysdill in the Finance Office who will be happy to assist.

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](#).

Have a lovely weekend.

Yours faithfully,



Jason Carey
Headteacher