



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, 15th December 2023

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

Please find below information and updates from this week.

Arrangements for the last day of term reminder - Wednesday 20th December

On the final day of term, students will be dismissed at **12.25pm on Wednesday 20th December**. Please note that food will be available to purchase at break, but the canteen will not be providing lunch on this day.

Any students that are unable to go home until their bus arrives at 3.30pm will need to report to the library. Only Stephenson's buses will be collecting at 3.30pm. Ami Coaches and Maymist have confirmed that they will be collecting students at 12.30pm. Students staying in school will be supervised and will need to bring a packed lunch. Parents were asked to complete a form in my previous letters to indicate that their child will need to wait in school. If you did not complete the form and wish for your child to wait for the bus in school, please email office@shsg.org.

Progress Reports- Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12

Short Progress reports for these groups will be published today. For details of how to access these, please refer to the Parent Guide to using the Sims Parent App on the [parent section](#) of our website.

Year 11 A Level Subject Launch

This week students in Year 11 have been hearing more about new subjects they can study at A Level which they might not currently study, including: Sociology, Business Studies, Drama and Theatre Studies, Media Studies, Economics, Government and Politics, Religious Studies, Classics, Computer Science and Psychology. They heard from our Heads of Department about where these subjects can lead them, what enrichment opportunities are available in Sixth Form and what alumni have gone on to study after A Levels. Next Tuesday, they will have an opportunity to attend a Subject Fayre for all subjects, which will give them the opportunity to ask questions to A Level students. All our Year 11 students will then confirm their A level subject choices in a registration session in form time after their PPEs in January. We will then build our A Level timetable around these choices ready for September 2024.

Cursed Pen Awards Presented

The winner and runners up from this year's Cursed Pen were presented with their trophies last Friday. This year's magnificent trophies were made by Catie Black from the Art Department. Well done Catie, and I would also like to congratulate the winners again: Alexa S, Cerys B and Madison B. Their entries and all the other fantastic work can be read on the English Blog, [here](#). I would also like to invite you to read the runner up from the Cursed Poem competition, "A Love that won't Stay Dead" which I have included at the end of my letter.

Oxford University Computer Science Bebras Competition Successes

Recently, students in Years 8,9,10 and 12 took part in the annual national Bebras Computational Thinking Competition. I am pleased to report that 57 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 2024.

Congratulations to all those students who took part, and a reminder that CS open house is on Monday lunchtimes in IT1 so that students can prepare OUCC competition.



Peer Support Mentors

At Southend High for Girls, we believe in the power of human connections and interactions. In order to support our younger students through their time at SHSG, a group of Year 12 students have trained to become peer support mentors. They can be identified by their "I've got time to talk" badge. These students are passionate about their peers' wellbeing and want to take a proactive role in supporting them. Should a student wish to get support from one of our peer support mentors, they can talk to their PSO.



Psychology in Action Conference – student write up

On Monday 11th December the Year 13 psychology students visited the Emmanuel Centre in London for a Psychology in Action conference. We had five talks from a variety of speakers based on topics we are currently studying. Some of my highlights included Jason Rihel from University College London, who is researching the functions of sleep using zebrafish. He spoke to us about his research into why we need to sleep to rest our nervous system, which is linked to our topic of biopsychology. Our second talk was delivered by Lasana Harris from University College London. He uses neuroscience to understand what makes humans unique and how we interact differently with non-human entities such as AI. We were introduced to the term 'Anthropomorphism, which is our ability to view anything as human. This demonstrated to us how our emotions interact with objects and how we can attribute humanity to non-human entities. It was interesting to see how we assign emotions and intentions to objects that do not have a conscience. We were spoken to by a psychiatrist, Veronica O'Keane from Trinity College in Dublin. She spoke to us about how our memory links with different psychosis disorders and how they affect our perception of reality, bringing together our topics of psychopathology and memory. The conference helped to enrich our learning and knowledge of psychology and was a great opportunity to hear from expert in the field of psychology research. We even managed to get one of our students on stage during a talk from Nate Rae from South Bank University on the irrational brain. Overall, the talks were fascinating and the centre itself was a lovely venue.

Written by Sophie M (Psychology Subject Captain)



House Christmas Events – SHSG Christmas TV and LipSync Battle

This week the House Captains hosted two very special and highly anticipated Christmas charity events – SHSG TV and the LipSync battle. Both events were a total sellout, with all proceeds from ticket sales going to local charities HARP and Little Havens. Highlights from the SHSG TV screening on Tuesday included: SHSG does Love Actually, House Christmas Bake Off, and a visit to SHSG from the Grinch! On Wednesday students were treated to a number of showstopping student and staff acts battling it out to be crowned LipSync champions 2023. The standard was extremely high this year, and the result will be announced at the end of term. Well done to everyone involved and a special thank you to our incredible House Captains for making the final charity events of the year such a huge success.

Christmas Dinner

On Thursday 14th December over 500 students joined together to enjoy a wonderful Christmas Dinner. Students pulled crackers, wore Christmas hats and the brave ones risked a few Brussel sprouts! As ever, I am thankful to the canteen staff for the fantastic food and to my colleagues in SLT and our Head of Year team for serving all the dinners.

House Assemblies and House Captains

The SHSG Sixth Form House Captains do a magnificent job running House assemblies, leading and organising a range of competitions and school events and raising money for charity. In November, students in Year 12 were invited to apply to become our new House Captains, as our current Captains in Year 13 are at the end of their time in the role. For the last two weeks, Year 12 students who applied and were shortlisted for new House Captain positions have been giving presentations in House Assemblies as part of the selection process. Congratulations to the following students who were successful and will make up our new House Captain Team:

Millie, Charley, Esther (Aphrodite)
Jacob, Maddie, Freya (Artemis)
Ellen, Toni, Imogen (Hera),
Bolu, Madeleine, Ella (Hermes),
Tilly, Alice, Ruby (Aurora) and
Hannah, Tom, Piper (Athene).

Well done to all of you. The official House Captain handover will take place in January 2024.

Languages PPE speaking exams

Over the last two weeks Year 13 A level students and Year 11 students have completed their PPE speaking exams, which constitutes 25 % of their overall grade. Teachers across all languages have heard some very good quality work from many of our students who have now been given two opportunities to practise their skills in a very high stakes, high pressure situation; this reflects conditions that will be identical to their real examinations in the Summer. Well done to everyone. The MFL team are looking forward to even bigger and better things in May.

Reading for pleasure

Behind many a good film there is often a great book! Lots of the films that are on TV or streaming over the festive period are based on classic texts. Our Librarian, Mrs Skinner has asked that we share the following document from the School Library Association <https://www.shsg.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Xmas-TV-23-final.pdf>. At SHSG we highly encourage students to read for pleasure and recommend that where possible, students visit the school library to borrow a book to read during free time over the holidays.

Geography Bauble Competition

The Geography department tasked students to create a Christmas ornament made from recycled or sustainable products. We have had 26 wonderful entries submitted to us and they are now proudly displayed on the B-block Christmas tree. They range from birds of paradise to pinecones and corkscrews! If you would like to vote for a winner, please select your favourite entry here: <https://forms.office.com/e/G9e5NdtTCv> The winner will be announced in next week's letter and awarded with a Geography badge and house points!

Netball Festival

Last Friday, a group of senior students attended a local primary schools' netball festival at Alleyn Court school. The students umpired the matches all day and demonstrated their leadership skills and netball knowledge by coaching and helping the year 5 and 6 students. It was a lovely festive event. Poppy, Isis, Lucy, Liana-Mae, Scarlett and Lulu were fantastic ambassadors and role models for SHSG.



U14 Essex Cup Basketball match

The team had a tough game on Wednesday away at Woodlands, losing by just 8 points. We will find out in January if we have reached the semi-finals.



Focal Point Gallery – Year 12 entries

“Storm warning - what does climate change mean to coastal communities ? ”

This was the brief from Focal Point gallery in Southend to which Year 12 responded with entries including these.

Successful students will have their work displayed both in Southend and in Newlyn Gallery Cornwall at the start of the new year.



Annual service of commemoration

On Sunday 28th January, four of our Year 12 students (Ella F, Alfie D, Camilla M and Millie A) will be representing Southend High School for Girls at Southend City Council’s annual service of commemoration at the Civic Centre in Southend. The service will involve contributions from a Holocaust survivor, and music will be performed by Southend Boys’ and Girls’ Choir. Our students will be talking about the importance of commemoration at a time when freedoms can increasingly be seen to be under threat, and in particular the role of young people in ensuring that lessons from the Holocaust continued to be learnt and remembered.

Information from Essex Police

Attached is a useful leaflet and letter to students, parents and carers that Essex Police are sharing regarding the prevention of street robbery and what to do if it happens.

Mental Health & Wellbeing at SHSG

In SHSG, we often talk about how to look after our health in lessons and in tutor time. We have recently explored the field of Positive Psychology and we found out that research has shown that being kind, generous with our time, spending time and money on experiences rather than material things are strong predictors of our future wellbeing. However, we also acknowledge that life can get pretty tough sometimes.

If you need support or information about how to cope with your emotions, you can visit the school website and look at [Mental Health & Wellbeing - Southend High School for Girls \(shsg.org\)](http://shsg.org).

There, you will find some articles, videos and useful links. The school has also put together a Padlet for Lower and Middle school and one for Sixth Form for you to browse. Please find the links below:

[Lower and Middle school SHSG Mental Health Board \(padlet.com\)](http://padlet.com)

[SHSG Mental Health Board \(padlet.com\)](http://padlet.com)

Careers information

Ms Casson has asked that I share the useful link to careers information below.

[South East Student Flyer \(canva.com\)](http://canva.com)

Screen Skills Discover Creative Careers Campaign

As part of ScreenSkills Discover! Creative Careers Campaign, Year 12 and 13 Media Studies students took part in an interesting online workshop hosted by Screenskills. It covered careers and opportunities in the television industry and was delivered by the Sky Discovery Workshop with Sky Studios Elstree. Students watched a back stage tour of the new Sky Studios in Hertfordshire. It is the size of four football pitches! All of the different ways to get into the different Sky apprenticeship and training schemes were outlined. Students were able to interact with the presenters and posed the following questions. There are some useful links included in the responses.

How hard is it to get the apprenticeship for Sky?

I think this depends on the apprenticeship. All apprenticeships are competitive in the media industry – but I would encourage you to apply as you could be the right person for the role!

How much do you get paid on an apprenticeship?

Again, this depends on the apprenticeship and the level of the programme. Don't forget your employer also pays for your education as well! A lot of apprenticeships also lead on to permanent roles with the company.

How long are apprenticeships and what is being a freelancer?

The length of the apprenticeship will be different depending on the level but at Sky they range from 12 months to 5 years. For more information about our apprenticeships – please go to <https://earlycareers.sky.com/>. If you are looking for wider information about apprenticeships have a look at <https://amazingapprenticeships.com/>.

The internship at Sky Studios Elstree is 12 months.

A freelancer is someone who works for themselves – so if you were looking to work on a film or TV show as a crew member you would most likely work as a freelancer.

For more information about what life is like as a Freelancer – please see this [free e-learning module](#) from ScreenSkills. There are also lots of other learning modules on how to get into the industry, what the different roles are and how to start your career.

Do you offer runner roles in production?

Our Future Talent internship at Sky Studios Elstree offers studio runner positions with the aim that you would work on site with the productions, this can lead to opportunities to work on set with the productions, but this does depend on the productions themselves. There are lots of other runner roles out there as this tends to be the most common entry level role – for more information about how to get runner work have a look at the [ScreenSkills Job Profile for Runner](#).

Year 5 Launchpads and Familiarisation Sessions

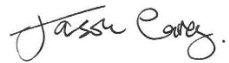
SHSG will be running the extremely popular 11+ Launchpads and Familiarisation Sessions again this year. Due to the popularity of these sessions, places are limited and subject to availability. I have attached the flyer to the end of this letter for your information. Please feel free to share this with friends and family that have a child in Year 5 and may be interested in applying for the SHSG September 2025 intake.

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

A Love that won't Stay Dead

By Arike Shokanmbi

On Hallows' Eve,
Your resting place awakes,
Not as final as you expected.

Your body electrified with raw mania,
Craving for flesh,
Driven mad by restlessness,
And an error to be corrected.

Hands creeping from graves,
Hair stained by forget.
You missed him throughout,
He left you for dead.

Grey face of wonder,
Join your undead fellows;
With your eyes shot with red,
Your hungry teeth of yellow.

New born babe of death,
Your new teeth are stained red.
As you stumble your way through the frantic streets,
People you know drop dead.

Teeth sunk into skulls,
Unraveling thick noodles of bleeding nerves, They're no longer themselves,
Through this macabre transformation.

As you stalk the streets,
You have no remorse,
Whatever they had before,
It would melt into the sludge of this curse

Following a horde,
Back to your old school,
You come to a close;
Where your beloved was so cruel.

You see him now,
Corner of your eye.
Does he still remember you?
Does he even try?

You trudge behind him -
You know exactly where he'd go -
To the place where two weeks,
Suddenly seems so long ago.

He was the frost of October air,

Conversations across the balcony,
Strawberry chapstick and pumpkin spice,
The sight of his presence of that cursed motel...

Almost makes you feel nice.

Had he learnt anything?

Your undead heart seemed to skip a beat,
You felt deja vu as their lips met,
You could just taste your revenge, near unfathomably sweet.

What a delicious meal...

Feet dragging you in;
Your hunger insatiable,
Primal anger starting to win.

You see the tears stream down her eyes,
The fear on his faces
They grab onto one another,
Looking as if they wouldn't be anywhere but each others embrace.

You think for a moment,
Empathy surging through...
A love so true...
Should surely be worth saving.

Then he pushes her away,
Leaves her to the dust -
Or you in this case -
Sprinting away in horror.

You jump towards him,
Rage fully unleashed,
Revenge attained,
Self hatred ceased.

Remnants of his corpse as permanent as his screams,
You cringe thinking he was your hopes and dreams,
You glance at the girl he left you for,
Hearing government planes roar.

On All Hallows Day
A town laid to rest,
Largely more final than you'd expected.

Your body dragged away by officials,
No longer even thinking about flesh,
Yet driven mad by heartbreak,
However, an error has been corrected.



Southend High School for Girls

AN ACADEMY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Southend High School for Girls Launchpad 2024!

The SHSG Launchpad is a series of events aimed at providing ambitious Year 5 children with a flavour of SHSG grammar school life. Each event will provide a taster of the subjects and topics that students engage in each day here at SHSG. They will also provide an opportunity to become familiar with some of the skills that your daughter will need to demonstrate in the 11+. The Launchpad starts as a series of Saturday schools followed by four after school 11+ familiarisation sessions. Sign up for the Saturday schools that your daughter would like to attend and/or the 11+ familiarisation sessions. Information how to book can be found at the bottom of this flyer.

Launchpad Saturday schools – 9.30am - 12.30pm

Teachers and Sixth Form Students invite you to join them in the following sessions:

	6th January 2024 – Be a Magician with the SHSG Mathematics faculty! Patterns and Problem Solving: Be there or be squared... An exciting opportunity to go beyond classroom learning and see the beauty, power and creativity of mathematics. You will learn how maths can be applied to understand magic, how through simple rules and algorithms the most magnificent of patterns can be created and how to apply and develop problem-solving skills to a wide range of activities.
	13th January 2024 - Express Yourself! The Creative and Performing Arts faculty invite you to take part in a morning of creative expression trying your hand at Art, Music, Drama and Technology. The sessions will be active and hands on, giving you the opportunity to explore the full range of creative facilities that we have at SHSG.
	10th February 2024 – Wanted: Adventurers to settle new lands! As climate change makes previously uninhabited islands in the Arctic Circle habitable ... Be part of the Humanities and Social Sciences faculties as you create your new society! Do we need religion? Do we need money? Do we need laws? Where should we live? How can we be sustainable? Come and work with us to design the perfect place to live.
	20th April 2024 - The SHSG Spirit! The problem with being such an old school is all the ghosts... Join the SHSG English faculty for a morning of creative storytelling, featuring live theatre, puns, mystery, creative writing and, yes, ghosts! Friendly ones, of course, with exciting stories to tell. It's just a shame they're so forgetful.
	11th May 2024 – Raise the bar! Athletics and fitness workshops with the Physical Education faculty. The session will incorporate several different athletic disciplines that cover both track and field events, as well as some fun, fitness-based activities.
	8th June 2024 – Lost in translation! Travel the solar system with your own friendly alien, whilst learning basic introductions and descriptions in Spanish and German; then harness your spirit of adventure to help you tackle a range of activities that will get you using the language that you have learned.
	22nd June 2024 – Mission to Space! Let our Biology, Chemistry and Physics departments help you to investigate moon rock, balloon rockets and creatures from outer space in an action-packed morning of practical experiments!

Launchpad - 11+ Familiarisation Sessions

SHSG will also be running the extremely popular 11+ familiarisation sessions again this year. These consist of a meeting (**parents only**) to talk through the 11+ process followed by two Maths and two English sessions for students.

- **Tuesday 7th May 2024 (6pm)** – Parents' 11+ familiarisation meeting (parents only)
- **Monday 13th May 2024, Wednesday 15th May 2024, Monday 20th May 2024 and Wednesday 22nd May 2024, 4pm-5pm** - 2 x Maths and 2 x English sessions.

Due to the popularity of these sessions, places are limited and subject to availability. There is an administration fee of £10 per Saturday School session and £30 in total for the four 11+ familiarisation sessions.

To apply for a place on the Launchpad sessions and/or the 11+ familiarisation sessions, please go to our website www.shsg.org/year-5-launchpad and enter the password **SHSG2025!** Places will be free to children who qualify for Pupil Premium funding. Information can also be found on the website page. If your child does not qualify for Pupil Premium, but require financial assistance, support may be available. Please contact us at office@shsg.org.