



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 March 2024

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

Please find below information and updates from this week.

Parent questionnaire

Please find a link '[here](#)' to a parent questionnaire. In the summer term, school leaders, governors and students will engage in a strategic planning day. We gather the views of students and staff and reflect on areas that are going well and moving the school forward, and new ideas as well as areas to address. Your views as parents play an important part of this process. I would very much appreciate your completion of the questionnaire before we break up for the Easter holidays, ready for me to compile a report for the strategic planning day next term. There are free text boxes as well as the questions. There is a drop-down menu to select your child's year group. If you have more than one child at the school, you could either just complete the questionnaire once and tick one year group, or you are welcome to complete a separate questionnaire per child. Thank you!

Personal development at SHSG

You will find a link '[here](#)' to a booklet we have made showing all the personal development activities that took place last year. We are currently compiling this year's as well. Our personal development curriculum comprises six key areas which we identify as the 'core offer'. These include: the LifeSkills and careers curriculum, clubs, trips, character building experiences, oracy, and charity work. In addition, the latest edition of the **Gazette** has now been uploaded to our website and can be viewed '[here](#)'.

Year 8 Parents' Evening Thursday 21st March

A reminder that the Year 8 Parents' Evening is due to take place next Thursday from 4.00pm to 7.00pm. Details of how to make appointments have been shared in a letter sent out earlier this week on Wednesday 13th March. Please note that the appointment scheduling for parents will close at midday on Wednesday 20th March.

Year 10 Pre-Public Examinations (PPEs) Friday 15th March – Thursday 28th March

Please note that the Year 10 PPEs started today, Friday 15th March. A copy of the timetable is available on the website '[here](#)'. All information related to the PPEs is available on the Year 10 MS Team, including personalised learning checklists for all subjects and a list of key equipment needed for each subject. We wish Year 10 the very best of luck!

Use of changing rooms during PPEs

As Year 10 are taking their PPEs, students in other year groups will have no access to the changing rooms, the sports hall, and the fitness suite. On the days that students have a PE lesson or an extra-curricular club, students should attend school in their PE kit. At the start of lessons (or clubs) students should go to the gym, where they will be registered and taken to their learning area. Students will be outside in all weather and should dress accordingly. There will also be changes to the extracurricular timetable, which will be communicated through MS Teams pages to students.

Form tutors will have the PE lesson timetable and clubs' timetable and will therefore know when their students should be in PE kits. Should your child have any questions, please ask them to see a member of the PE department.

Normal changing arrangements will resume on Monday 15th April 2024.



Year 9 GCSE Options

Thank you to parents and carers of students in Year 9 for supporting their child in selecting their GCSE Options. The deadline for this is today, Friday 15th March. If you have not been able to use the SIMs platform to select your child's GCSE Options, they will be asked to do this during a registration next week.

The next stage of this process is that students will confirm their GCSE subjects and the priority order so the option blocks can be built around these choices. If there is oversubscription to subjects or subject combinations that are not possible, the priority order will be used to allocate students their reserve subject choice. Students will be notified of their subject choices by letter on Friday 26th April 2024

A visit to Parliament

On Wednesday 6th March, Jocelyn A, who is currently the Member of Youth Parliament for Southend, was invited to Parliament to present on the topic of universal free school meals. Please read below for what Jocelyn had to say about this experience:

'On Wednesday 6th March, I was invited to Parliament by the Minister of the State of Schools and Anna Firth MYP to present a pitch on Universal Free School Meals and to vocalise my argument for reasons why the project should be taken up UK-wide. As part of the Southend City Council, I am the Member of Youth Parliament for Southend representing the thoughts of all young people in the area and the project derived from discussions in the British Youth Parliament. The objective of the campaign initially was to replicate London's Free School Meal system in Southend, and for that to happen, there would need to be increased funding. Consequently, I based my project around it. In Parliament, the experience of a life of being an MP and presenting my Free School Meals project to the Minister of the State of Schools was amazing alongside representing SHSG doing this. Being able to work with other MPs to present the information that we have spent months working on was both relieving and exciting as more Government officials were able to hear about our ideas and make an impact. Consequently, we got positive feedback and further on down the line we hope to continue spreading the importance of Universal Free School Meals and see it in action!'



Year 12 Psychology guest lecture

On Friday 1st March 2024, the Year 12 psychology students had the opportunity to attend an online guest lecture with Prof Becky Milne from Portsmouth University. She has a wide array of experience in psychology and criminology but of particular interest to us was her experience working with the police in developing the Cognitive Interview to help make eyewitness' testimonies a more accurate form of evidence. Prof Milne has worked not only with police departments in the UK and Ireland but also around the world including Australia, New Zealand, and Singapore. She has been heavily influential in researching in this area, but also in writing policies, training the police and she has worked on several high-profile cases. The students enjoyed hearing about her first-hand experience in this field and it gave them a real insight into how important psychological research has been in aiding our understanding of human memory in the real world. Prof Milne was also able to provide some practical memory revision tips and she has passed on some related wider reading for students to engage with. We thank her very much for giving up her time and look forward hopefully to seeing her again in the future.

Charity Week

This 5-day event has once again been a roaring success, with the whole school community coming together and fundraising for Comic Relief, Southend HARP, Little Havens and Kids Inspire. Monday lunchtime signalled the start of what promised to be a hugely enjoyable week, as the Sponge the Teacher event kick-started the activities. Many thanks to all the teachers who braved the stocks on what was a particularly wet and cold lunchtime!

Entertainment continued throughout the week with teachers and students going head-to-head on Tuesday lunchtime for the Spill your Guts/Fill your Guts challenge. Thank you to all the teachers who took part. A special mention goes to Mr Shaikh for demonstrating nerves of steel! Wednesday provided a fiercely contested Family Feud Competition with House student teams up against one another, and the traditional finale that everyone had eagerly anticipated – the losing team getting custard pies in the face! Thoroughly enjoyed by all, the Talent Show was an excellent final event to round off an extremely successful week. Excellence and entertainment are promised every year and 2024 certainly did not disappoint with dance, song, a guitar solo and a guest appearance from Mrs Neill. Congratulations to all the acts who performed and especially the Sixth Form Head Student Team who were crowned overall Talent Show 2024 winners. Thank you to our amazing House Captains who have worked so hard to make the week such a success. The House Captains will be sharing photos from all the activities and announcing winners from the events in House assemblies starting next week.



Planet Action Photography Competition

To celebrate World Wildlife Day on 4th March 2024, Planet Action organised a photography competition.

The winners are:

Best photo – Bluebell J (Year 12)

Best global photo – Sitara S (Year 10)

Best British photo – Erin B (Year 9)

Winners will be awarded points and get awarded the prestigious geography badge via their Head of Year.

The judging panel of Key Planet Action members from Year 8 and 12 reached a decision from nearly 100 entries using a rigorous set of criteria. I have included the winning photographs at the end of this letter.

National Portrait Gallery trip

Year 12 had a purposeful and inspirational day at the National Portrait Gallery this week. They worked with an artist whose painting is part of the Windrush Exhibition, which was a wonderful opportunity.

They viewed the current display "Artists Reframe the Black Figure "and responded to what they saw to create their own piece at a masterclass for just our students. The results were impressive!



Careers information

Families may be interested to explore the current status of Southend on Sea's labour market. We would always encourage students to pursue qualifications and careers that they have a passion for, but this makes for very interesting reading about our local community and its unique demographic. The link is below.

[Southend-on-Sea Economy | Labour Market & Industries \(varbes.com\)](https://www.varbes.com)

Easter Holiday virtual work experience with KPMG for Year 11 and Sixth Form

This virtual work experience will take place during the Easter Holidays on Thursday 4th April from 10am - 4pm and will be a fantastic opportunity for students to pick up some incredible experience at a Big 4 Accounting Firm! The registration link can be found below.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/3T68P5M>

Attendance

We have noticed over recent weeks an increase in the number of students who are contacting home to say that they are not feeling well and require collection. I would like to remind students and parents that the correct procedure if a student feels unwell at school is for the student to alert a member of staff and report to reception. Students must not contact parents. Our pastoral team will work with the student to see if they are able to stay in school and then, if required, contact home regarding collection. Attendance at SHSG is excellent. From the start of the academic year to February half term, years 7-11 were present for 95.3% of the time; this contrasts with a national average of 91.5%. Let's try to keep our attendance figures high and only take time off school if you really are very unwell.

SHSG PA Easter Raffle

SHSG PA are holding an Easter raffle to be drawn on Wednesday 27th March. The prizes are:

- 1st prize – a Revelation wine crate
- 2nd prize – a bee marble cheese board
- 3rd prize – a scarf by Powder
- 4th prize – a Thorntons chocolate egg



Tickets cost £2 each and are available on ParentPay. Once purchased, raffle tickets will be automatically entered into the draw.

Tickets are available to purchase from Friday 1st March with ticket sales closing on the morning of Wednesday 27th March. The winning raffle tickets will be drawn the afternoon of 27th March. All contributions support SHSG Parents' Association. Thank you for your continued support.

Mental Health & Wellbeing at SHSG

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 \(shsg.org\)](https://www.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 \(padlet.com\)](https://www.padlet.com)

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

Clubs

The school has a range of activities and clubs to offer. The latest list of clubs and activities for this term can be found on our 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 restful weekend!

Yours faithfully,



Jason Carey
Headteacher



Winner – best photo
Bluebell J - Stonechat, west Dartmoor, July 2023



Winner – Best British wildlife category
Y - Erin B - Wallasea Island RSPB nature reserve on
23rd of February



Winner – best photo in global category
Y - Sitara S - South Africa, August 2023