



# 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, 13<sup>th</sup> December 2024

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

Please find below information and updates from this week.

### **End of term arrangements -**

On the final day of term, Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December, students will be dismissed at 12.25pm. 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 **must** 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](mailto:office@shsg.org).

### **Start of Spring Term - Thursday 6th January 2025**

The Spring Term will start on 6th January 2025. Students will be expected in school at the usual start time of 8:30am. It is important to note that we will be returning on a **week B** and therefore students need to be prepared for their **week B** lessons.

### **The Sunday Times Schools Guide 2025**



We are delighted to be named in The Sunday Times top 10 schools for academic excellence.

Congratulations to students and staff!

This reflects the hard work and commitment of everyone in the SHSG family and resonates with Ofsted's comment in July that 'Pupils flourish and excel at Southend High School for Girls.'

### **Christmas Dinner and Christmas Jumper Day**

On Thursday, 12<sup>th</sup> December, we had our best Christmas Lunch and Christmas Jumper day yet! Over 600 students and staff enjoyed celebrating with a traditional roast Christmas dinner. The kitchen staff prepared 33 turkeys, more than 700 pigs in blankets, over 160Kgs of roast potatoes, ten vegetable wellingtons and 20 Yule logs alongside other vegetables and puddings. There were even 15Kgs of Brussels sprouts consumed! The kitchen staff also did a marvellous job decorating the tables in the gym and the canteen and creating a fantastic SHSG family atmosphere. Christmas lights, decorated trees, and even a medley of Christmas songs were played for all to enjoy. Students liked being served by senior staff, which is one of our unique Christmas traditions.

It was also Christmas jumper day. We saw a fantastic range of jumpers, from traditional winter scenes to Santas and reindeer to festive stormtroopers on a host of Star Wars-themed jumpers. Students wearing Christmas jumpers were able to donate to the HARP Homeless charity. So far, we have raised over £430. This remains open





on parent pay until next week, and therefore, if you have not already had a chance to donate, you can still do so by selecting the appropriate parent pay item.





### **Bayo Alaba MP shares tips with SHSG students about how to make it in politics**



Southend High School for Girls welcomed one of Southend's newest Members of Parliament, Bayo Alaba MP, to visit on Friday to meet sixth form politics students – including a few budding future politicians. The Southend East and Rochford MP spoke to Year 12 and Year 13 students about his career and shared advice about getting ahead in the politics world.

He also asked the students questions, ranging from what it's like dealing with government whips to his plans for local housing. He rounded up the visit by interviewing three students who run a student-led social sciences magazine. Student journalist Zac Cooper, Year 13, said: *"It was great to hear an MP really dedicated to regenerating the city centre. He had a clear plan for what he wants Southend to look like."* Sophie Potton, Year 13, said, *"he had a humble and knowledgeable approach and gave a lot of valuable advice to students interested in politics."*

Asked how to enter politics, Mr Alaba said, *"Students should remember it's not a sprint; it's a marathon. Don't be in a hurry; it's important to bring the best version of yourself into politics, coming in with life experience."*

This was the second meeting for students with the MP, who recently welcomed SHSG students to Parliament for a tour and visit to Prime Minister's Questions. The school has also just celebrated its first old girls' entry into Parliament. Pam Cox, ex-SHSG student, recently entered Parliament as Colchester's newest MP. Jason Carey, Headteacher, said, 'on behalf of Southend High School for Girls students and staff, I would like to thank Bayo for spending time in his very busy schedule with us today. He is a real inspiration, and I hope our sixth-form students listening to him will be inspired to stand for Parliament in the future.'

Bayo Alaba MP said *"It's been inspiring coming to this school and to meet the next generation and to ask truthful, honest and probing questions – just as hard as I get asked in parliament! Good to meet the next generation of voters, community activists and politicians. Part of my job is to help the next generation to have the confidence to effect change within their communities and to know how they can effect change and play a part."*

Head student Zahra-Marie said, *"it was an amazing opportunity to meet our local MP and learn more about his values and ideas. He spoke about the importance of culture and even got involved in our school culture by hanging a bauble on our Christmas tree!"*

### **Winter Concerts**

This week, students across Years 7-13 participated in two nights of Winter Concerts hosted by the Music and Drama Departments. SHSG Orchestra opened each night with selections from Bizet's *Carmen Suite* and the festive classic Sleigh Ride. Each year, Year 7 form groups are invited to perform original Christmas songs composed in workshops led by Sixth Formers, and it was delightful to hear such a variety of performance styles and subjects ranging from reflections on family life to Christmas gnomes. Other notable performances included Novem Consort, who sang unaccompanied works by Thomas Tallis, Billie Eilish and a Bulgarian traditional song *Kaval Sviri*. String Quartet, Highly Strung, performed the first movement of Fanny Hensel's String Quartet in Eb contrasted with a contemporary folk arrangement, *The Dromer*, by the Danish String Quartet. The Wind Band recreated the operatic rock classic Bohemian Rhapsody, while the Guitar Ensemble performed *Teenage Dirtbag* and *Teenage Kicks*.

A majestic addition to the concert this year was the return of Gospel Choir, whose formidable performance of *Blinded by Your Grace* directed by Gabriella in Year 11, moved the audience. Each night, the Drama department presented delightful festive theatre with devised scenes and dance, and we also saw a preview of the forthcoming school production *Frozen Jr.* featuring a young Anna and Elsa and the Snow Chorus dancing, all directed by Mrs Page with excellent costumes designed by Mrs Ladner.

To finish each concert, the Jazz Band performed a swing arrangement of *Santa Claus is Coming to Town*, which they will play in the final assembly of the term. Thank you to all the students, parents, and staff who came out to support these concerts, and well done to all the performers. I hope you were inspired by the music-making. We look forward to more students taking part in the performing arts in the new term. Happy Christmas!

### **House Charity Christmas Hamper Appeal**

Throughout December, students in Years 7-9 have been busy donating items and decorating Christmas Hampers in aid of local charity *Kids Inspire*. *Kids Inspire* provides mental health and trauma recovery support for children, young people, and their families. Each year during the festive season, the charity runs a hamper appeal, delivering food and other items to families in need in the local area. Tutor groups in Years 7,8, and 9 participated in a House competition to create the best hamper to be donated. Congratulations to winners 8 Hera and their Form Tutor, Mrs Francis! On Tuesday, 10th December, Mrs Leman, Mrs Brierley and students filled the minibus with many hampers and travelled to Great Baddow to drop off the hampers at the Kids Inspire Headquarters. Well done to all the students who contributed to this appeal. It is wonderful to think that through our students' hard work and generosity, SHSG donations will make a real difference to so many in the local community this Christmas.

### **Carol Service**

We are delighted to invite the SHSG community to attend our annual Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols **on Tuesday, 17th December**, at Holy Church, Southchurch, from 7-8 pm. The service will feature the Chamber Choir alongside guests and readers. Entry is free but must arrive at 6:30 pm for a good seat. Warm refreshments will be served at the end of the service.

We look forward to a warm and well-attended evening and some spirited carol singing.

### **Winter fair**

In recent years, the Southend High School for Girls Winter Fair has quickly become a popular tradition here at school. This event is completely organised and executed by the Middle School Prefect Team, with all the proceeds raised to charity. The nominated charity this year is Southend Mind. This year is set to be the biggest fair to date. There will be an extensive array of stalls, including games for students to play, festive treats and gifts available for purchase. This is a massive undertaking for the Middle School Prefect Team, and I would like to sincerely thank them all for their hard work and determination in making this the best Winter Fair possible. The Winter Fair will take place during **lunchtime on Tuesday 17th December**. The promotional poster is attached to the end of this letter.

### **Diamond achievement certificates**

This week, I have had the honour and privilege of celebrating the successes of the Year 11 students. The Year 11 cohort is consistently breaking records as they approach their GCSEs, and the Year 11 Celebration Assembly was yet another example of this. An unprecedented number of awards and certificates were handed out, the likes of which I have never seen. Again, I congratulate Year 11 for their consistently positive attitudes towards school and their education. The highest achievement certificate we have here at SHSG is the Diamond Certificate. To obtain this award, students need to acquire 300 achievement points. This is no mean feat. This is the first time I have seen one of these awarded, such is the level of challenge. It was, therefore, a moment of significant pride that I got to hand out five of these awards to Year 11 students. I congratulate Jess, Nova, Moyin, Priyanka, and Mayar for their herculean effort and success.



### **Degree Apprenticeship success!**

Huge congratulations to Mohammed A (13CSP) for being selected for a prestigious degree apprenticeship at Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu. Mohammed went through a highly rigorous selection process for this competitive position, and was selected from thousands of applicants. He will now start a full-time permanent role at the consultancy firm, alongside a fully funded masters degree in accountancy and finance. We are delighted for him!

### **World HIV/Aids day**

Thanks to students, parents and staff who supported World HIV/Aids Day this year. SHSG raised £165 pounds!



### **PE fixtures for next week:**

These fixtures may be subject to change, and all details are posted on the respective PE extra-curricular Microsoft Teams page. If your child still needs to be added to their year group page, please ask them to speak to a member of the PE department. Thank you.

Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> December: Regional Biathlon at Whitgift School

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> December: U13 Basketball away v Cecil Jones

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December: Dry Ski slope trip

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December: U15 Basketball away v Woodlands

Please be aware that for safeguarding reasons we cannot accommodate spectators on site for matches. Many schools apply this policy so please check with the opposing school directly.

The PE department would like to say congratulations to all the students that have attended training and represented the school this term. We would also like to thank you all our SHSG families for your support and we wish you all a very merry Christmas!

### **National Schools' Diving finals**

Last weekend students from SHSG competed at the National Schools' Diving finals in Birmingham. They achieved some fantastic results:

Kara came 15<sup>th</sup> in the female junior comp (Years 7&8)

Fran came 4<sup>th</sup> in the intermediate comp (Years 9&10)

Sadie same 8<sup>th</sup> in the seniors (Years 11,12&13)

Congratulations to you all.



### **Sports Team of the Year**

This week's celebration assemblies saw our Year 11s celebrate being awarded 'Team of the Year' for their Essex Cup and regional qualification. It has been a pleasure to see their performance journeys and to see these students turn into incredible players. We are excited for the upcoming regional tournament in February!



### ***Sports Captain of the Year***

Congratulations to Freya for her well-earned recognition of being awarded 'Sports Captain of the Year' in this week's celebration assembly! Freya has truly embodied what it means to be a leader both on and off the court. As captain of the under-15 and under-16 netball teams last year, Freya led by example demonstrating both her technical skills and her ability to inspire and motivate those around her. Well done Freya L!



### ***Award for Excellence in PE***

Congratulations to Shiloh O who was awarded for Excellence in PE. Shiloh has had an extremely successful year breaking both SHSG and ESAA records, consequently having to have the whole of the national score system adapted for her personal best! Shiloh competed for Great Britain Under 18s in Slovakia in the summer in the medley relay team. Her anchor leg was described as sensational and was regarded as a significant factor in the team bringing home the Bronze medal. Well done Shiloh O!

### ***Year 8 Netball***

On Wednesday, our Year 8 netball team played well against Thorpe Hall in the borough league. The match was extremely tight throughout and a very exciting one to watch. The team developed throughout, listening to coaching advice and implementing it effectively, but unfortunately, we just missed out by one turn over with a score of 11-12.

### ***National Schools' Biathlon championships***

Good luck to Zoe W in Year 10 who is competing in the regional round of the National Schools' Biathlon championships at Whitgift School on Saturday.

### ***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 [Christmas Reading Times 2024](#). 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.

### ***Careers - Choices Magazine***

Choices magazine is created by 'Amazing Apprenticeships and is designed specifically to inform parents and carers about apprenticeship opportunities. The December edition is now [available here](#).

### ***SHSG Parents' Association Winter Concerts raffles***

Congratulations to the following winners of the SHSG PA Winter Concerts raffles:

#### Monday 9<sup>th</sup> December

- 1<sup>st</sup> Prize – Iqra R, 11ATH
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize – Nora P
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize – Erin S, 7APH



## Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> December

1<sup>st</sup> Prize – Moliya C, 7HRA  
2<sup>nd</sup> Prize – Emily K, 7APH  
3<sup>rd</sup> Prize – Aoife D, 12NTR

Additional prizes not collected on the night are as follows:

- Esther L, 7ART
- Kacy LL, 7HRM (bottle of wine)
- Zoe Doherty, Staff

Unclaimed prizes can be collected at Reception. N.B. alcoholic prizes must be collected by parents. Thank you to all parents, guardians and carers for your continued support.

### ***Mental Health & Wellbeing at SHSG***

At SHSG, we often talk about how to look after our health in lessons and in tutor time. 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)

### ***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 lovely weekend!

Yours faithfully,



Jason Carey  
Headteacher



Molly R - Year 12





Bella G – Year 12







Priyanshi B – Year 8





# WINTER FAIR

TUESDAY 17TH DECEMBER  
IN THE HALL - 12:25

## ACTIVITIES:

- \* BAKE SALE
- \* CANDY CANE MESSAGES
- \* PHOTO BOOTH
- \* GUESS HOW MANY BAUBLES IN A JAR
- \* GLITTER TATTOOS
- \* STOCKING TOSS
- \* CHRISTMAS PING PONG
- \* PIN THE NOSE ON RUDOLPH
- \* LUCKY DIP
- \* TOMBOLA
- \* CHRISTMAS DECORATION MAKING
- \* GUESS THE TEACHER FROM BABY PHOTOS

BRING 50PS AND £1'S  
all profits go to MIND charity



RUN BY THE  
YEAR 11  
PREFECT TEAM

ANY QUESTIONS  
EMAIL:  
20-PPUR@SHSG.ORG  
20-WLIG@SHSG.ORG  
20-MAKI@SHSG.ORG



**BAKE SALE**

bake any  
dessert (no  
nuts)