



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, 1st May 2026

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

As the summer term gains momentum, it has been a real joy to see our school buzzing with energy and creativity. This week's letter celebrates a wealth of achievements and opportunities across the school, from inspiring enrichment activities and academic exploration to performances, outreach work and preparations for key milestones. Our students continue to impress us with their enthusiasm and commitment, and I am delighted to share some highlights with you.

Whole School Production 2027!

Following an enthusiastic response from students, a wealth of imaginative musical nominations, and discussion among staff, we are thrilled to announce that the Whole School Production for 2027 will be...



Further details will be shared in due course, with auditions scheduled to take place in September. We very much look forward to seeing many of our students involved and celebrating what promises to be an exciting production together.

Year 13 Final Countdown!

Year 13 continue to approach these final days of intensive examination preparation with focus and determination. Today, Mr O'Brien briefed students on the final arrangements for their last day of school and the commencement of study leave. Mr Carey and Ms Boyson also led a helpful session on the UCAS Clearing process, ensuring that all students are fully informed and prepared for every eventuality on Results Day.

We are very much looking forward to celebrating with our Year 13 students at their End of Key Stage 5 Celebrations next Friday. Students are welcome to arrive in fancy dress between 8:30 and 9:00am, before enjoying a morning of festivities including breakfast in Scholars, yearbook signing, a Leavers' Assembly, and a programme of speeches and prizes. We will then send our wonderful Year 13s off into study leave around midday. We cannot wait to celebrate this important milestone with them.



World Challenge Launch Assemblies



All Key Stage 3 students have received the launch assembly for the 2028 World Challenge expedition to Vietnam. World Challenge is a life-changing opportunity for students to explore Vietnam with expert guides, while developing their life skills, confidence and independence. We're partnering with World Challenge to offer this 13-night trip, which complements school learning, in **July 2028**

Applications are now open, so please visit the [trip webpage](#) for the sign-up link, itinerary, travel dates, Covid-secure booking terms and trip cost, including examples of how past students have covered this themselves.

As part of the student development journey, students are encouraged to 'earn their place' and fundraise towards the expedition, developing valuable entrepreneurial and financial skills along the way.

Kim from World Challenge will host the 20-minute Zoom presentation on **5th May 2026 at 6pm**. To attend, please [register here](#).

Summer Reading Challenge Volunteering Opportunities 2026

Southend-on-Sea Libraries are inviting students aged 14 and above to volunteer at their local library during the summer holidays. Volunteers will help encourage children to take part in the annual Summer Reading Challenge and chat with them about the books they're reading. This is a great opportunity for students to gain valuable work experience within their community, while also developing new skills and building confidence. Students can apply online to volunteer [here](#), or visit their local library and ask to collect a form. The closing date is 1st June 2026.

Oxbridge Pathway Key Stage 4 club

The Oxbridge Pathway Key Stage 4 club met this week to explore how students can develop academic curiosity through meaningful super-curricular engagement. We discussed a wide range of webinars and summer school opportunities offered by Oxford and Cambridge colleges, and reflected on how these experiences can enrich students' academic profiles. We are extremely grateful to Miss Worth, who gave an inspiring and engaging account of her time studying at both Oxford and Cambridge. She shared her remarkable experiences of combining academic study with choir, musical theatre, summer balls and achieving a Blue in karate, providing students with a valuable and vivid first-hand insight into university life. The session also offered an opportunity to reflect on key learning points from the recent Emmanuel College, Cambridge workshop, following their visit in March.

All students currently in Years 9 and 10 are warmly invited to attend our next meeting on Tuesday 20th June at lunchtime in the Media Studio.

Science in Action: A Week of Discovery and Competition



This week, our Year 12 Science Captains hosted a fantastic Science Week, during which students from across the whole school took part in an exciting range of activities. These included the ever-popular egg drop challenge, the investigative mystery “Who killed Mr Carey?”, learning British Sign Language for key biological terms, and exploring how to programme a robot.

The week culminated in the epic annual SHSG Science Quiz, which saw some fiercely competitive (and good-humoured) teams battling it out.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all our Science Captains for their energy, creativity and hard work, as well as to Miss Dillon, Mr Dillon, Miss Logan, Mrs Ayles, Mr Clarkson-Hull, Mr James, Mr Wong, Mr Prior and Mr Highmore for their support throughout the week. Of course, none of this would have been possible without our outstanding technicians: Mr Phillips, Miss Hobbs, Mr Attack and Mrs Quayle. Thank you all for making Science Week such a success.

Years 10 – 13 Opening Doors to Linguistics and Forensic Science

On Thursday 30th April, approximately 45 students from Years 10 to 13 attended an online lunchtime lecture on forensic speech science, delivered by Jessica Wormald from the University of York. The session offered an engaging introduction to how speech and audio evidence can be analysed and applied within criminal investigations and the legal system. Students learned how forensic experts examine features such as voice quality, accent and speech patterns to compare speakers and interpret recordings. The lecture also addressed the challenges associated with working with audio evidence, particularly the growing impact of artificial intelligence, including AI-generated and manipulated speech. Overall, the session provided students with a valuable insight into a highly specialised field of forensic science, while also highlighting potential pathways for further study and careers in linguistics and related disciplines.

David Attenborough Week 5th - 8th May!

To mark the exceptional milestone of Sir David Attenborough’s 100th birthday on 8 May, the Geography Department will be hosting a week of celebratory events beginning on Tuesday 5 May.

A series of **lunchtime activities** will take place throughout the week in Room B4 and around the school, and we warmly invite students from all year groups to take part. Details of each day’s activities are outlined below:

- Tuesday 5th May - David Attenborough documentary and activities in B4
- Wednesday 6th May - Treasure Hunt of animals around school. Start in B4
- Thursday 7th May - David Attenborough documentary and activities in B4
- Friday 8th May - Teddy Bears’ picnic outside by the canteen/sports hall

There will also be some fun challenges alongside the events, including a “Guess the Teacher” David Attenborough mask featured in tutor slides, as well as additional stories and competitions promoted throughout the week on @shsg_instagram.

The celebrations will conclude with a Teddy Bears' Picnic finale on Friday 8 May. Students are encouraged to bring along an animal-themed teddy and enjoy a picnic with friends. Please remind students to organise their food, drinks, and blankets within their friendship groups in advance.

We look forward to a joyful week celebrating one of the world's most inspiring naturalists and hope many students will join us in taking part.

Primary liaison with the Maths Faculty

Over the past two terms, our Year 8 students have generously given up their lunchtimes to mentor and support pupils from two local primary schools (**Thorpedene Primary School** and **Chalkwell Hall Junior School**) in mathematics, and the impact has been truly impressive. The primary pupils eagerly looked forward to their weekly visits to SHSG, during which they built strong, positive relationships with their Year 8 Maths Angels.

Through this initiative, the pupils not only strengthened their mathematical understanding but also grew significantly in confidence and self-belief.

To mark the success of the programme, the Maths Angels planned and led an exciting treasure hunt around the school, which they organised with great enthusiasm. A huge thank you goes to all the Year 8 students involved, as well as to Mrs Pilkington and Miss Seco for their dedication in organising and supporting this wonderful initiative.

Celebrating Excellence in Reading: The Carnegie Medal Shadowing Scheme

We are delighted that the school has once again been invited to take part in the prestigious Carnegie Medal Shadowing Scheme, one of the most highly regarded national awards for children's and young people's literature. This year, the Carnegie book groups are led by our dedicated Year 10 Reading Mentors, with enthusiastic students from Years 7 to 10 working collaboratively to read, discuss and reflect on the shortlisted texts.

The two novels selected by our librarian, Mrs Skinner, *Ghost Lines* by Katya Balen and *Wolf Siren* by Beth O'Brien, provide rich opportunities for thoughtful discussion and critical engagement. Students begin the programme with an introduction from the authors themselves before meeting regularly to share insights, ideas and personal responses to the texts.

Participation in the Carnegie Shadowing Scheme nurtures a love of reading, develops confidence and leadership skills, and encourages students to engage deeply with challenging themes and high-quality contemporary fiction. It is a wonderful opportunity to be part of a national literary community, and one that our students value immensely.

SEND Coffee Morning

Please find attached a poster advertising a free SEND Coffee Morning hosted at The Community Space.

PE Fixtures Week Beginning Monday 4th May

These fixtures may be subject to change and all details are posted on the respective PE extra curricular Microsoft Teams page. If your child has not been added to their year group page, and needs to be, please ask them to speak to member of the PE department. Thank you.

- Tuesday 5th May: U13 Football New Schools' National Cup quarter final 2pm Home v Mark Rutherford School
- Wednesday 6th May: Junior Girls and Inter Girls Athletics Home v WHSG
- Thursday 7th May: Junior Girls and Inter Girls Athletics Away v FitzWimarc

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.

Mental Health & Wellbeing at SHSG

FREE
WEBINAR
FOR PARENTS/
CARERS
of secondary aged children to support
with mental health and wellbeing.
Provided by your Mental Health Support Team
@EssexMHST_and_SETcamhs

bit.ly/4ozRciL

Coming up
in May...

Understanding and
Supporting Anxiety
5th May 10 am

Understanding Autism
20th May 6:30 pm

Striving to provide the best care by the best people

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT TEAM
NHS
North East London
NHS Foundation Trust

Supporting Parents and Carers with Young People's Mental Health

We would like to draw parents' and carers' attention to a series of free online webinars taking place throughout May, delivered by the local Mental Health Support Team, aimed at supporting young people's mental health and wellbeing.

Upcoming sessions include Understanding and Supporting Anxiety and Understanding Autism, both of which offer practical guidance, reassurance and useful strategies to help families support secondary-aged children at home.

These sessions are open to all parents and carers, free of charge, with booking details available on the flyer below.

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://padlet.com)

[SHSG Mental Health Board \(padlet.com\)](https://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 restful weekend!

Yours faithfully,



Jason Carey
Headteacher



Free SEND Coffee Morning @ The Community Space

with parenting support sessions



with guests from
A SEND Inclusion Partner & A SEND Engagement Facilitator

Thursday 14th May 2026 - 10am-11.30am

Topics will include

Transition to secondary school	Choosing the right school	Differences of secondary schools
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Supporting your child Key questions to ask

Free to attend and no need to book

for more info contact
families@megacentrerayleigh.co.uk

78 EASTWOOD ROAD RAYLEIGH SS6 7JP

