



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, 8th May 2026

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

It has been an exceptionally busy and rewarding week across the school, with a wide range of events and achievements reflecting the talent, commitment and character of our students. Highlights include Year 10's Interview Experience Day, the launch of the UCAS process for Year 12, and the celebration of our Year 11 and Year 13 students as they begin study leave. Alongside this, students have continued to excel in sport, the arts and wider enrichment opportunities.

I hope you enjoy reading about the many highlights from across our SHSG community.

Celebrating Year 11 and Year 13

Today and Wednesday, we have had the joy of celebrating two wonderful year groups as they begin study leave and prepare for the next exciting chapter of their journeys.

On Wednesday, our fabulous Year 11 students marked the end of Key Stage 4 in true SHSG style. They arrived wearing their brilliantly customised blazers, each one a unique canvas showcasing the remarkable artistic talent within the year group. From feathers and sequins to intricate hand-drawn designs, every blazer told a story, reflecting the individuality, creativity and pride of its owner.

After time spent in the Sixth Form Scholars' Café and signing shirts with friends, students came together for a joyful and moving celebration assembly. Each form group shared a farewell video; the creativity on display was outstanding and beautifully put together, capturing memories and friendships built over five memorable years. The assembly concluded with awards, plenty of laughter, a few tears and, of course, well-earned pizza.

A special mention must also go to the staff, whose surprise performance of the Spice Girls' Wannabe provided an unforgettable moment of fun and brought the house down, perfectly capturing the warmth and spirit of the occasion.

Today, we bid farewell to our fantastic Year 13 students. The school was awash with colour and costumes, from *Alice in Wonderland* characters to glitter trolls and *The Inbetweeners*, as students celebrated the end of their school journey in typically spirited fashion. After a final breakfast in Scholars', they enjoyed a heartfelt leavers' assembly filled with speeches, awards, yearbook signing, photo montages and a moving rendition of *Jerusalem*.

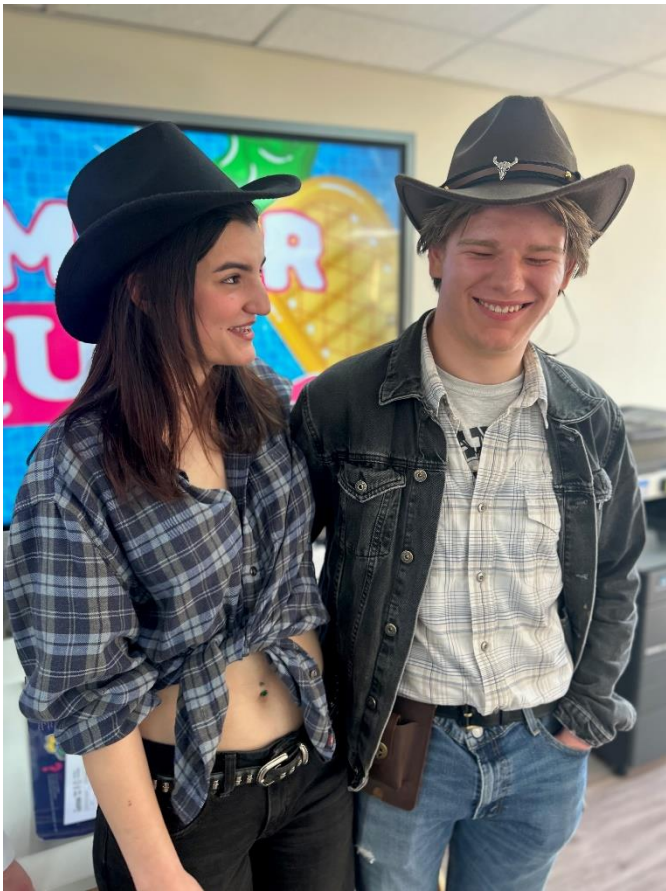
Both year groups take their next steps with our very best wishes. We are incredibly proud of all they have achieved and wish them every success in their upcoming examinations. We look forward to celebrating their successes in August, welcoming Year 11 back as Sixth Form students in September, and hearing where Year 13 go next as they embark on exciting new adventures at university, in apprenticeships or beyond.

Year 11 Celebration Day



Year 13 Leavers' Day





Year 10 Interview Experience Day

Today, our Year 10 students embraced their Interview Experience Day following several weeks of preparation in registration and Life Skills lessons. Smartly dressed and equipped with confident smiles and strong handshakes, they demonstrated their abilities in a formal interview setting.

We were delighted to welcome almost 30 members of our wider school community, including parents, governors and former students, who generously gave their time to support our pupils by acting as mock interviewers. Feedback has been extremely positive, with interviewers commending the high standard of students' CVs and application letters, as well as their confidence and maturity throughout the day.

Each interviewer was asked to select one standout candidate, a difficult decision given the quality of responses. We look forward to recognising those who 'got the job' in a forthcoming assembly, and we extend our sincere thanks to everyone who helped make this such a meaningful and motivating experience.

Looking ahead, Year 10 will also attend their Sixth Form launch assembly next week, where they will learn about the support in place to help them make informed and ambitious post-16 choices. Further details will follow in a letter from our Director of Sixth Form, Ms Boyson.

Sir David Attenborough turns 100!



This week the Geography Department has hosted a highly successful week of activities to celebrate the 100th birthday of the world-renowned naturalist and broadcaster, Sir David Attenborough.

Throughout the week, Key Stage 3 students enjoyed a series of documentaries linked to their current studies on biodiversity, oceans and climate change, alongside a lively game of "Attenbingo" : congratulations to all students who completed their grids!

Lunchtime activities also took place across the school, including wildlife-themed riddles and an Attenborough animal treasure hunt. Form groups also took part in a special registration-time challenge this week: a "Guess the Teacher in the David Attenborough Mask" quiz, which proved to be a great source of excitement and amusement across the school.

We are delighted to announce that Athene House were the clear winners, achieving an impressive total of 500 house points. Congratulations also go to Hermes House, who secured second place and earned 250 house points.

The celebrations concluded with a wonderful animal-themed teddy bears' picnic on the school field. In the sunshine, students gathered with friends to enjoy picnics together, while a life-sized David Attenborough made a special appearance to join in the festivities. It was fantastic to see so many students and staff coming together to celebrate such an important milestone in a fun, engaging and community-spirited way.

A sincere thank you goes to our geography captains Chessy D, Sasha H, Emily C, Maisie L & Annabel D who have gone above and beyond to organise the week and to all staff who supported the week's activities and joined the celebrations. It was a fitting and memorable way to mark 100 years of inspiring curiosity about the natural world.

Year 12 UCAS Launch and Summer University Residentials & Masterclasses

Next week, we will formally launch the UCAS process for all Year 12 students. We are pleased to be working in partnership with the University of Exeter, who will introduce UCAS during an online assembly on Monday morning. Later in the week, Ms Boyson will outline the school's timeline and processes for preparing an outstanding UCAS application.

Parents will also be invited to learn more about the UCAS application process, as well as student finance, at a webinar led in conjunction with the University of Exeter on Thursday 21 May (6.00–7.00pm). Further details will follow shortly in a letter from Mrs Neill, Head of Year 12.

In the meantime, we have been delighted to hear the good news that so many Year 12 students have secured places on prestigious summer university residentials. Congratulations to Paighton M (12JSH), Thomas Y (12JSH), Sitara S (12KMI), Scarla Lu M (12DSO), Lateefat O (12KMI) and Jocelyn A (12STF) on their acceptance onto the Oxford UNIQ programme. Well done also to Grace G (12PJS) for gaining a place on a University of Durham residential, and to Molos R (12DSO) for being accepted onto University College London's summer school.

We would also encourage eligible Year 12 students to consider the following upcoming opportunities:

- *Exeter Scholars*: an excellent opportunity to attend a fully-funded residential. Previous SHSG students have learnt a lot from these summer residentials and enjoyed them immensely. For Year 12 students, participation can result in a significantly reduced offer for the University of Exeter. For more details, please visit [the website](#) and encourage your children to apply before Friday 5th June
- *EmmPower*: Emmanuel College, Cambridge, has launched its annual summer residential for students interested in applying to Cambridge. More information [here](#). The closing date is Sunday 10th May 2026.
- *Sutton Trust Online*: students who meet widening participation criteria can apply for the Sutton Trust Online [summer school](#). Applications open on 13th May.
- *Cambridge University Subject Masterclasses*: open to all, these [online taster lectures](#) are delivered by Cambridge academics. They also offer subject-specific introductions to the application process. The cost is £15 per session, with a generous bursary scheme.

Be Bold Girls Ambassador



Last Wednesday, Priyanka P (12JSH) represented the programme *Be Bold Girls* as an ambassador at Be Bold Now London 2026, an annual gathering that brings together senior women from across industry to share, inspire and champion bold action.

Priyanka took to the stage to interview Bella Shepard, a graduate engineer with the McLaren Mastercard Formula 1 team, speaking in front of a room full of accomplished women leaders.

As the youngest person present, she conducted the conversation with confidence and curiosity, completely winning over the audience.

We are incredibly proud of this fantastic achievement!

Poetry by Heart - We Have a Finalist!



Following entries to a national competition, Gianna E (11ART) has secured a place in the live final at the Globe Theatre on Thursday 6 July. Congratulations, Gianna! This is a fantastic accomplishment and a testament to her outstanding skill in delivering poetry. We wish her every success in the final.

Summer Reading Challenge Volunteer Opportunity

Shoeburyness Library has asked us to share the following volunteering opportunity:

The library is currently seeking volunteers aged 14+ (young people and adults) to support the Summer Reading Challenge during the school summer holidays. Volunteers will listen to children talk about the books they have read and help to distribute stickers and rewards. Ideally, volunteers will be available for at least 10 days across the summer holiday period.

This is a rewarding opportunity to support younger readers and engage with the local community. Further information, including the role description and application details, can be found here:

[Summer Reading Challenge 2026 volunteer application | Instructions – Southend-on-Sea City Council](#)

Strong Performance from SHSG U13 Football Team in National Cup Quarter Final



This week our under 13 girls' football team were narrowly beaten 3–2 in the quarter final of the national 'New Schools' 9-a-side cup against Mark Rutherford School, Bedford. In a closely fought and tightly contested match, both sides competed well throughout, with the game balanced for long periods and chances created at both ends. Despite a strong performance and determined effort from the girls, Mark Rutherford School edged the contest by a single goal in an exciting encounter. An excellent cup run and we look forward to going again next season! Congratulations to all the squad on an excellent season!

Good luck to all our athletes competing at the Essex Track and Field Championships this weekend!

PE Fixtures – Week Beginning Monday 11th May

Please note that fixtures may be subject to change. Full details and any updates will be posted on the relevant PE extra-curricular Microsoft Teams pages. If your child has not yet been added to their year group page, please ask them to speak to a member of the PE department.

Tuesday 12th May:

- Junior and Intermediate Girls' Athletics – First Round of the National Cup (all day) at Blackshots, Thurrock
- A Level Physical Education Moderation Day

Please be aware that, for safeguarding reasons, we are unable to accommodate spectators on site for matches. As many schools operate similar policies, we recommend checking directly with the opposing school if required.

Year 11 PE Kit Donations and Returns

As Year 11 students approach the end of the academic year, donations of PE kit to support our spare kit cupboard for current and future students would be greatly appreciated. Contributions of school netball dresses and athletics vests that are no longer required are especially valuable, as these items can be loaned to students when needed.

In addition, any netball dresses or athletics vests at home that were not purchased via ParentPay should be returned to the PE department, as these items remain part of departmental kit for shared student use. Purchased items will have been individually added to ParentPay by a member of PE staff.

Thank you for the contributions to PE and school sport throughout Years 7–11. We wish all Year 11 students the very best in their examinations, and every success and happiness in the future.

Summer Reading Challenge

Please see attached to the end of this letter a poster regarding volunteers for the Summer Reading Challenge which will take place in libraries in Southend during the summer holidays.

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/mental-health).

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:

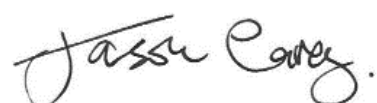
[Lower and Middle school SHSG Mental Health Board \(padlet.com\)](https://www.shsg.org/mental-health)

[SHSG Mental Health Board \(padlet.com\)](https://www.shsg.org/mental-health)

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

GAIN EXPERIENCE &
MEET NEW PEOPLE



SUMMER READING
CHALLENGE 2026

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



We are looking for volunteers aged 14+ to help children take part in the Summer Reading Challenge 2026 in libraries in Southend during the summer holidays

INTERESTED? AGED 14+?

APPLY NOW AT: www.southend.gov.uk/SRCVolunteer

If you are unable to apply online, please visit your local Southend Library to collect a form. For further information, email: librarydevelopment@southend.gov.uk

CLOSING DATE: 1ST JUNE

Apply early to secure the branch of your choice!

