



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

31st January 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are writing to inform you of an important and exciting proposal: Southend High School for Girls (SHSG) is planning to join Alpha Multi-Academy Trust (MAT). This decision is driven by one clear priority—ensuring the very best educational provision for our students, both now and in the future.

SHSG is already an outstanding school. In July 2024, Ofsted reaffirmed this, awarding us 'Outstanding' in all areas. Inspectors praised our "highly ambitious curriculum" and recognised that "pupils flourish and excel" due to the "exceptional support and encouragement" from staff. This year, we also achieved our best-ever academic results, a testament to the dedication of our students and teachers. Given this strong foundation, now is the ideal time to build on our success and secure SHSG's future as part of Alpha MAT.

Why Alpha MAT?

Colchester County High School for Girls, a founding member of Alpha MAT, shares our ethos as a high-performing, selective girls' grammar school. Like SHSG, Alpha MAT schools are committed to academic excellence, personal growth, and a broad, enriching curriculum.

We have explored several multi-academy trusts over the years. Our initial conversations began when the UK government's Schools White Paper, titled "*Opportunity for All: Strong Schools with Great Teachers for Your Child*", was published on 28 March 2022. In this White Paper, the government set out its ambition for all schools to either be in a strong multi-academy trust (MAT) or in the process of joining one by 2030. Although this requirement was eventually dropped, school funding became increasingly challenging and the idea of shared services and access to guaranteed funding pots through a MAT seemed eminently sensible to continue our MAT exploration.

After careful consideration, Alpha MAT stood out as the right choice—a small, high-performing trust that aligns with SHSG's values while allowing us to retain our identity, autonomy, and high standards.

What are the benefits for SHSG?

Joining Alpha MAT will provide SHSG with:

- **Greater financial security**, ensuring access to essential funding for school improvements that standalone academies cannot access. School budgets are becoming increasingly challenging to manage and leave very little, if anything at all, to save for school development projects to improve the learning environment. All schools in a MAT have guaranteed access to the School Condition Allocation (SCA) to support capital improvement projects, including essential building maintenance, repair, and refurbishments. This is not the case for a stand-alone academy.



- **Operational efficiencies**, freeing up school leaders to focus on teaching and learning. SHSG’s finance, HR, IT and health and safety teams, for example, would be part of the MATs infrastructure. One example is having access and direct support for cybersecurity systems.
- **A powerful network of schools**, enabling collaboration between subject leaders, pastoral teams, and safeguarding professionals to share expertise and drive best practice.
- **Enhanced professional development**, helping us retain and attract the best teachers and support staff.
- **New student opportunities**, such as the Alpha Aerospace Careers Programme, Oxbridge and medics programmes, and other shared projects which broaden our young people’s horizons and aspirations.

What will change?

On a day-to-day basis, very little. SHSG will keep its name, uniform, traditions, and unique identity. The Headteacher, trustees, and senior leadership team will continue to shape our school’s vision and strategy. SHSG teachers will not be expected to leave to teach at the other MAT schools.


We are currently engaging with staff, students, parents, and other stakeholders and welcome your engagement. We encourage you to share your thoughts by completing the questionnaire [‘here’](#). You can also email questions directly to parentMATengagement@shsg.org. After receiving your responses, we will put together an FAQ document answering all questions.

In our July 2024 Ofsted report, the lead inspector highlighted a student’s insightful summary of SHSG’s ethos in supporting their aspirations: *“The school will literally help you do anything you want to do.”* This core belief, combined with our dedication to single-sex selective education and cherished traditions—such as the school birthday—defines SHSG. Joining Alpha MAT will further strengthen and enhance our values and unique character.

We anticipate joining Alpha MAT on **1 April 2025**, marking the beginning of an exciting new chapter for SHSG. Thank you for your continued support—we look forward to working together to ensure SHSG remains a centre of excellence for generations to come.

A link to the Alpha trust website can be found [‘here’](#).

Yours faithfully,



Jason Carey
Headteacher
Southend High School for Girls



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Southend High School for Girls

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