



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, 20th December 2024

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

Please find below information and updates from this week.

House Assemblies and House Captains

The SHSG Sixth Form House Captains do a magnificent job running House assemblies, leading and organising a range of competitions and school events and raising money for charity. In November, students in Year 12 were invited to apply to become our new House Captains, as our current Captains in Year 13 are at the end of their time in the role. In the last week of term, Year 12 students who applied and were shortlisted for new House Captain positions gave presentations in House Assemblies as part of the selection process. Congratulations to the following students who were successful and will make up our new House Captain Team:

		
Idahosa Osarieme	Maeve Dillon	Eloise Cook
Isabella Prinn	Eliza Duff	Dasola Olarewaju

		
Astrid Tait	Alice Traynor	Kitty Weller
Phyllicia Matovu	Lily Gillett	Adam Morley





The official House Captain handover will take place in House Assemblies next term. As 2024 draws to a close congratulations are for Hera House who are sitting at the top of the House Leaderboard with the highest number of House Points so far; Artemis are hot on their heels.



House Cup Leaderboard

HOUSE	POINTS TOTAL
1. HERA	26869
2. ARTEMIS	26489
3. HERMES	26109
4. AURORA	25849
5. APHRODITE	25169
6. ATHENE	24769



House Christmas Event - LipSync Battle

On Monday lunchtime this week, the House Captains hosted a special and highly anticipated Christmas charity event – the LipSync battle. The show was a total sellout, with all proceeds from ticket sales going to local charity HARP. Students were treated to several showstopping student and staff acts, battling to be crowned LipSync champions in 2024. The standard was extremely high this year, but in the end, it was the Geography Department who stole the show and took the title with their standout performance of East 17's classic Christmas number one 'Stay Another Day' combined with a fully choreographed version of 'Let it Go' from the hit musical 'Frozen'. Well done to everyone involved, and a special thank you to our incredible House Captains for making the final charity event of the year such a huge success.



Christmas Assemblies 2024

Today, we celebrated the end of the Autumn term with our Christmas Assemblies 2024. Our Sixth Form students were joined by Year 11 for the first of the two assemblies. They were treated to a programme of musical performances, original songs and some of our most important school traditions. Year 7 Artemis performed their winning song from the Year 7 Song for Christmas competition entitled “A Gonking Christmas (It’s the Gonks!)” helped by their music captains Ewan S and Seth C. Novem Consort performed a beautiful version of Kaval Sviri (a Bulgarian folk song) and the SHSG Jazz band played a rousing rendition of “Santa Claus is coming to town”. The second assembly, for years 7-10, added to the musical spectacular with a breathtaking performance of “Blinded by Your Grace” from the SHSG Gospel choir and Year 7 Aurora performed their Christmas song called “Jingle all the way-ay-ay” led by Cerys B.

Both assemblies included the traditional student leadership team handover, during which our outgoing student leadership team passed their badges and, in the case of the head students, the ‘secret book’ to the incoming team. Zahra-Marie C (outgoing Head Student) and Cerys B (incoming Head Student) were joined by Priyanka P (middle school Head Prefect) to deliver a Christmas reading. Christmas messages were given to each year’s group by their Head of Year, and each assembly ended with the new student leadership team inviting the whole assembly to join in singing “Jingle Bell Rock”, while Santa and his mischievous elves threw sweets at the audience! At times like these, our students' sheer depth and breadth of talent, skill, and enthusiasm come to the fore, and we are reminded of how lucky we all are to be a part of this great school.

Do you want to build a snowman?

All parents will have received a letter today via in-touch inviting them to purchase tickets for our major school production this year: Frozen Jr! The letter includes a link to the website where you can purchase tickets, which go on sale **Monday, December 23rd, 2024.**

You’ll love this fanciful and heartwarming stage adaptation of the top-grossing animated film of all time! Join Anna, Elsa, and all your favourite characters as they embark on an epic, ice-filled journey of self-discovery, camaraderie, and the real meaning of true love. Adapted for young performers, this musical includes favourite *Frozen* songs such as “Love Is an Open Door,” “Do You Want to Build a Snowman?” and “Let It Go,” as well as wonderful new songs from the Broadway production. With its empowering message of love and understanding, **Frozen JR.** will surely melt your heart!

Reading Update



Congratulations to Year 7 for their achievements in reading during their first term at SHSG. In reading lessons, students explored the fascinating story of the Trojan War. Year 7 has been captivated by the dramatic twists and moral dilemmas faced by Achilles, Hector and Helen, allowing them to reflect on how these ancient stories still resonate today. The use of drama and storytelling has helped deepen their understanding and appreciation of these texts while building on their vocabulary and literary analysis. We can't wait to start 'The Odyssey' with them next term!

Not only have Year 7 embraced their reading lessons with enthusiasm, but a record-breaking 57 students have already reached the fantastic milestone of becoming Reading Millionaires! This is a brilliant achievement for the first term and shows how dedicated and passionate our students are about reading. **In addition, 5 students have read over 2 million words each**, which deserves special recognition. These students (pictured below) are Srinithi (Artemis), Elettra (Athene), Malaika (Hera), Rania (Aurora) and Abhigna (Aphrodite). They have been awarded 500 House Points each, which go towards the House Cup totals.



The Reading Mentoring programme started in October and continues to be successful. Trained Year 10 Reading Mentors are paired with Years 7 and 8 students to support and enhance their reading skills. Sessions take place every Monday morning during registration time in the library. The older students listen to the younger students read and offer encouragement, strategies and feedback to help them overcome challenges and boost their confidence.

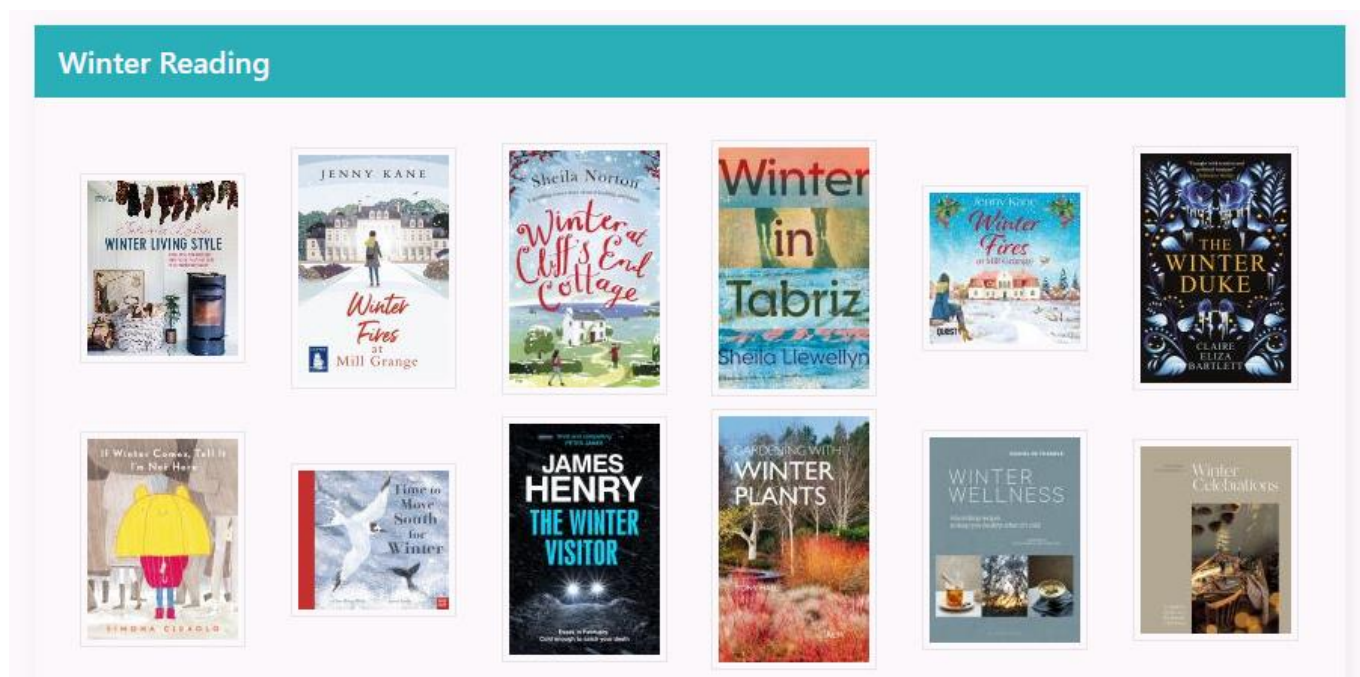
We are looking forward to several reading events coming up in 2025. In January, we will announce the winners of the school library's Design a House Bookmark Competition. This decision will be difficult as we have received many stunning entries from students in all six houses. In February, the Year 7 tutor groups will visit Waterstones bookshop in Southend with their Form Tutors, and the Year 10 reading mentors to choose a book. In March, we will celebrate World Book Day with various events and competitions, including a book fair.



In March, SHSG will again participate in the Yoto Carnegie Shadowing Programme. Students will join the exciting process of shadowing the Carnegie Literature Medals. This experience allows young readers to follow along with the official judging process as 'shadowers.' Shadowers read, discuss, and review books from the shortlist. Shadowers share their thoughts online and vote for their favourites in the Shadowers' Choice Awards. The winners of the judges' and shadowers' medals are revealed in June. With thousands of groups participating in

the UK and worldwide, shadowing engages thousands of young readers, sparking a love for literature and critical thinking.

For students searching for their next book to read over the winter break, Southend Libraries have published a selection of winter reading recommendations and their opening times for the Christmas period. A link to their website can be found below.



[Home | Southend Libraries](#)

Year 11 A Level Subject Selection

On Thursday, all Year 11s selected their A Level subjects in registration. This was the culmination of an array of activities designed to help students make informed choices, including presentations in class and in assembly from Heads of Department, two taster days, and a Subject Fair, which was held on Wednesday this week. In this, Year 11s had a chance to discuss the subjects with the Year 13 Subject Captains for each subject to help them make their final decisions. Thank you to all the Year 13 Subject Captains for being such friendly and enthusiastic ambassadors for your subjects.



Year 11 Students accepted onto Oxbridge Programme

We were delighted to find out this week that twenty Year 11 students have been accepted onto the 'Next Steps Essex' programme, which aims to support students in local schools to apply to Oxford and Cambridge. The programme consists of four online sessions run by staff at Oxford and Cambridge, on topics including entry criteria,

super curricular study and writing personal statements. We were delighted that SHSG had the second highest number of signups from any of the 104 schools in Essex who were invited to apply.

Winter Fair write up by Priyanka P – Year 10

"Our school Christmas Fair was a fantastic success, capturing the festive spirit and uniting students and staff in a joyful celebration. With festive bake sales, handmade crafts, fun games, and a bustling tombola, the event brought excitement and a real sense of joy. More importantly, we raised an incredible amount, £749.26 for MIND, the mental health charity, making the day even more meaningful during this season of giving.

Students described the atmosphere as "absolutely electric," with one Year 9 remarking, "I've never actually experienced that kind of atmosphere at a Christmas fair before." The tombola was a standout, with a prefect noting, "The Tombola section was always busy with new students wanting the thrill of winning a prize."

A huge thank you to the prefect team, whose hard work made the event seamless. Together, we turned a single lunchtime into a celebration of generosity, unity, and Christmas cheer."



PE Changing Rooms

For the first two weeks after the Christmas holiday, year 11 and 13 students will take their PPE examinations in the Sports Hall. This means students will have no access to the changing rooms, the PE classroom, the sports hall and the fitness suite.

When students have a PE lesson or an extracurricular club, they must come to school in their PE kit and remain in it all day. At the start of their lesson (or club), students should go to the gym, where they will be registered and taken to their learning area. Students will be outside in all weathers, so please wear the appropriate school PE kit.

The extracurricular timetable will also change, and students will be notified through their respective MS Teams pages. Normal changing room access will resume on Monday, January 20th. Students who are found to be wearing PE kit on days when they do not have a PE lesson or a club will receive a behaviour point.

Planet Action

Planet Action and the geography department are again collecting clean, empty plastic tubs e.g. empty Xmas chocolate tubs in the geography office at break times only until 27/1/24. Students will receive 2 achievement points for every 3 tubs they hand in. This is part of a national initiative run by Greene King pubs, which not only recycles plastic but also donates the proceeds to Macmillan cancer support. Please click here for further information. <https://www.tub2pub.co.uk/tub2pub/>

Geography Christmas Bauble Competition 2024

Thank you to everyone who participated in the competition this year. We had some fantastic entries ranging from Christmas trees to snowflakes! This year's winner for KS3 is Sophie S (8HRA) who made shaker baubles for each of our houses! This was a fantastic effort as we had 6 baubles for one entry! Our KS4 winner is Chloe L (10ATH) who created a brilliant, recycled paper 3D tree! Well done on your fantastic entries photographed below.



Parallel UK – a message from Miss Graham

Congratulations to Shivani S (Year7) and Sarina S (Year10) who have completed a Parallelogram every week since September. Parallelograms are weekly maths problems completed on the following website: parallel.org.uk

*Well done to all other students who have completed some of the weekly questions. For those of you who haven't yet got involved please visit the following website: parallel.org.uk. It is completely free so students should create an account and enter my teacher code, **GOPX-8SWA**, when prompted, as well as their year group. This will then add the student to my dashboard so I can keep a record of the students' achievements. Each week students will be emailed a new Parallelogram to complete by Sunday evening. I will then be able to see their results.*

Students will receive 3 achievement points for every one they complete and for getting over 50%.

There is no obligation to get involved, but I think this is a great opportunity for keen maths students to stretch themselves and explore mathematical concepts beyond the classroom. This is also ideal for students who want to go on to study maths, science or engineering.

Miss Graham

Springpid for students in Year 9 and above

We have received an invitation from Springpid for students in Year 9 and above to take part in a free online Healthcare Careers programme. There are 7 modules to take part in at your own pace with a finish date of March 2025. This is a great opportunity for aspiring medics to complete over Christmas. More information is attached to the end of this letter.

RAF - online registration talk

Our online registration talk to the whole school this half term was delivered by the RAF. We had a fascinating talk that explored just a few of over 60 different entry points and careers areas that the RAF offers. Did you know you do not need a degree to be a pilot and they do not recruit over the age of 23 as it costs £6.5 million to train a pilot? Students were given the opportunity to sign up for a follow up in person workshop and on Wednesday Cpl Bates visited us. He was able to advise interested students on their next steps. Key tips he gave us were to apply in the first year of university as there are lots of bursaries available to help fund degrees such as engineering, nursing and medicine. He also advised students to join university air squadrons, which again often offer significant bursaries and 10 hours of flying experience. It was a valuable session and Cpl Bates spent lots of time answering students' questions. More information on careers in the RAF can be found here [RAF Recruitment | Home | Regular & Reserve | Royal Air Force](#)



Cpl Bates has promised to visit us again to help out with our Year 10 interview experiences in May and the Careers Carousel in September.

Regional Schools' Biathlon

Huge congratulations to Anna R (Year 9) and Zoe W (Year 10) who competed in the Regional Schools' Biathlon competition at the weekend. They performed brilliantly in the run and the swim. Anna finished first on the swim and second on the run placing her as the overall winner. Zoe finished first on the swim and fifth in the run, placing her as second overall. We now wait to hear if they have qualified for the National final, well done to you both.

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 \(shsg.org\)](#).

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 \(padlet.com\)](#)

[SHSG Mental Health Board \(padlet.com\)](#)

Key Dates

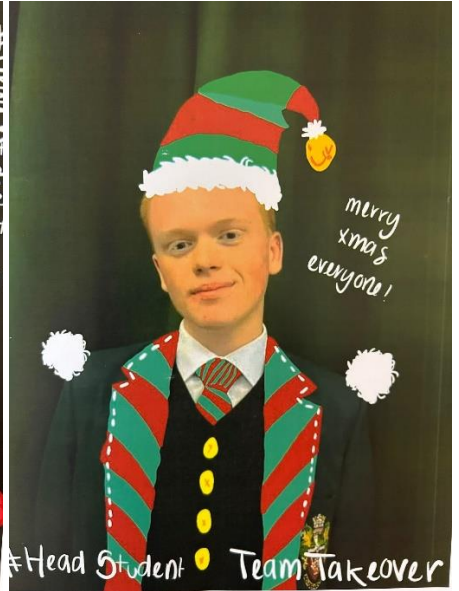
The calendar on our website is regularly updated and contains key dates of activities and events that are taking place in school. A full list can be found [here](#).

Wishing you all a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year!

Yours faithfully,

Jason Carey
Headteacher

Head student team takeover Christmas 2024



Southend High School for Girls' production of



Disney
FROZEN JR.



4th, 5th, 7th & 8th February 2025

TICKETS:

£75 Cabaret Tables (seat 4 with hamper)

£12 Adults ~ £8 concessions

7pm

Refreshments available
Doors open 6.30pm

Tickets available online from 12pm Monday 23rd December:
www.ticketsource.co.uk/southend-high-school-for-girls

Music & Lyrics by
Kristen Anderson-Lopez & Robert Lopez

Book by
Jennifer Lee

Based on the Disney film written by Jennifer Lee
and directed by Chris Buck and Jennifer Lee

Disney's Frozen JR. is presented through special arrangement with and all authorized
materials are supplied by Music Theatre International, New York, NY 212-541-4684 mtishows.com

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Top Tips for looking after your Mental Health at Christmas



Keep active!

Being active is great for your physical health and fitness, and evidence shows that it can also improve your mental wellbeing.



Watch what you eat!

Nutrition can significantly impact your mental health. A healthy, balanced diet is good for you physically and mentally. A healthy body means a healthy mind.



Stay in touch!

Having good friendships is important for your mental health. Connect or reconnect with friends and family this Christmas.



Take a break!

Allow time for yourself, even if it's just for 5 minutes - stop and put your feet up or have a cup of tea. Make sure you get enough sleep.

Ask for help!

Talk to friends or family or contact:

Samaritans
Child line
Shout (text)

116 123
0800 1111
85258

If you feel you are struggling with your mental health over the holidays, please reach out and seek help.

SET CAMHS Team: 0800 953 0222

Out Of Hours (Mental Health Direct): 0800 995 1000

Emergency: 999



MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT TEAM