

SOUTHEND HIGH SCHOOL FOR BOYS

ACADEMY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

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Headteacher: Robin M Bevan MA MEd PhD FRSA



December 13th, 2021

Dear Parent

End of term arrangements and Christmas holiday lateral flow testing (reminder)

Term will end on Friday 17th December after final assembly which will be 'live-streamed' to classrooms; we expect to release pupils at approximately 12:20. Please note that the school site will be locked up at 1.30 pm; on this occasion, we are unable to accommodate students on site once they are released following assembly.

Home testing kits, with sufficient tests for the holiday period, will be distributed to all students before they leave.

We are looking forward to welcoming all pupils back to school, after the Christmas holidays, on Tuesday 4th January.

Informed by discussions with local Public Health officials – balancing the risks of disruption due to individual infection and/or outbreaks *as against* the importance of limiting disruption to learning; and recognising the challenges of a widely-dispersed pupil population – **every pupil must complete the two lateral flow tests supervised at home: once, on Thursday 30th December, and then, a second time on Monday 3rd January.**

In order to confirm compliance rates, we will provide a swift email survey for parents to complete at the time.

This programme of self-testing is for one simple purpose: to protect our school community from further transmission of Covid and, as a result, ensure uninterrupted educational provision from the start of term. **We need every family to support us: every pupil must undertake two tests before term resumes.**

Christmas Concerts – thank you!

During last week we were delighted to be able to host audiences for both nights of the school's Christmas Concert: our first public performances for two years. The guidance provided by the Southend Director of Public Health was invaluable in confirming the decision to re-open our doors, and ensure that we were doing so with appropriate precautionary measures in place. Thank you to every parent who attended or supported the event in any way: the quality of the music was exceptional and the dedication of pupils and staff, in challenging circumstances, genuinely remarkable.

We have received a substantial number of comments from those in audience that reflect the extraordinary experience of being 'in the Hall' on the night:



"I just wanted to email in and express how we were blown away with the amazing Christmas concert. My son is [...] in year 8 and due to Covid it is the first time we have been able to visit the school to experience anything like this.

The talent was outstanding and the way all the students conducted themselves was amazing. We were super proud [our son was able ...] to be a part of this, ...

Thank you to the amazing teachers we felt like we were watching a professional concert. Looking forward to future events at the school."

National Cross-country Championships

As inter-school sports competitions begin to resume their previous calendars of fixtures; it was fantastic to see our Junior, Intermediate and Senior teams all qualify – through two preliminary rounds (local and regional) for the national cross-country championship finals in Cornwall. *Many schools will feature a single team in one age group on an isolated occasion and will rightly celebrate that success. SHSB holds the record for the longest continuous run of qualifying performances, with teams in the national finals every year uninterrupted for more than twenty consecutive finals! The senior team came 17th in the country, the intermediates 9th and the juniors – just missing a podium position – were a very impressive 4th.*

Staff 'goodbyes'

Señora Juan-Ramirez joined our teaching staff two years ago to teach Spanish. This Christmas she returns to live in Spain and we wish her all the very best for this next step. Throughout her time at the school, pupils have valued very highly her expert teaching, her genuine interest in each individual, her words of encouragement and her high expectations in learning. She will be very much missed by the school and the languages team in particular.


For the last five years, Mrs Galvin has served the school on an invaluable part-time basis providing administrative support within our SEND team and doing so with immense positivity. She has been actively involved in ensuring that annual reviews are completed to a high standard and on time, as well as being the 'go to' expert in assembling the relevant information for pupils entitled to 'access arrangements' in external examinations. We thank her for her professionalism: she, too, will be much missed.

Having served the school since 2008, Mr Olson has been a mainstay of our support for those pupils requiring additional expertise in order to thrive in the classroom. During his time, working as a Learning Support Assistant, he has seen our approach to SEND extend and develop considerably. His consistent, calm, positive approach has been instrumental across that period of development. As he moves into retirement, he will be able to recall with pride and a smile the very many individuals whose academic trajectories have been transformed through his contributions. He will also recognise that he has helped to build the basis on which the school's new Autism Resource Base will flourish. Mr Olson also served as a valued staff representative on the governing body. He deserves considerable thanks.

Season's Greetings

We recognise that our families celebrate the Christmas period in many and varied ways: we wish you all 'season's greetings' and best wishes for the New Year!

Yours sincerely



Robin M. Bevan
Headteacher