

SOUTHEND HIGH SCHOOL FOR BOYS

ACADEMY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Prittlewell Chase, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS0 0RG
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Headteacher: Robin M Bevan MA MEd PhD FRSA



May 25th, 2022

Dear Parent,

After all the tumultuous changes of the last two years, it is exceptionally pleasing to see school life very much back to 'normal' – or, perhaps, better expressed as a return to that 'special' experience that is the hallmark of Southend High School for Boys' provision.

Pupils thrive here, especially when they immerse themselves fully in the activities and opportunities that are available every week. Please do ask your child, every day, about what they have learned in their lessons; but also about how they have used the time to get involved.

Visitors and parents often remark about the 'feel' of the school. It is difficult to capture in words exactly what they mean, but some aspects of this – we hope – are relatively apparent. The school is characterised, each day, by a quiet and purposeful atmosphere during lessons, appropriately punctuated by more energetic moments of activity and discovery. Pupils relate easily and cheerfully with each other, and are comfortable in approaching teachers and other staff. A relentless determination to achieve in all aspects of the school curriculum is inspired by a recognition that effort and practice are at the root of success.

Of course, it isn't always the case that every moment of every day displays all these positive attributes. It matters that we recognise this, and all act to address those concerns that may arise.

Parents are encouraged to contact the school directly if there is an issue at home that requires our attention. If we don't know, we can't help. If an issue about school is raised at home, please first ask your child who they have told: early reporting by pupils, themselves, is so valuable. Parents are also asked to remember that there can often be more than one side to a story and to remain open to alternative narratives on first reporting concerns.

If there is any aspect of school that could be improved we encourage pupils to talk to a trusted member of staff – this can often secure the swiftest response, can prevent the amplification of a simple matter, and helps develop in the pupil those important skills which underpin the mature and considered resolution of problems. If you become aware of such an issue, please encourage your child to follow this route, but then contact the school if for some reason the situation remains unresolved.



Parents will be aware of the immense benefits of modern technology for learning, for entertainment, for communication and for social interaction. These benefits bring with them potential pitfalls as well, and we address issues of e-safety routinely in school. We recommend the advice to be found on the internet at <https://www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers> for anyone wishing to learn more about teenagers and the safe use of new technologies in the home.

GCSE, AS and A-level examinations are now fully underway. Our teaching staff have worked tirelessly to ensure all candidates were fully prepared and made familiar with any adaptations introduced for this year. They have also ensured the necessary portfolios of 'teacher assessed tasks' have been accumulated during the year, in case examinations had to be cancelled again. Support staff – our Examinations Officer in particular – have completed extraordinary logistics to host well in excess of 7500 individual exam component papers within a very tight time-period.

Our examination students have been superb: their quiet assurance and determination has been secured on the base of their individual and collective efforts to be 'at their best'. They enter every sitting with our very best wishes for well-deserved success.

Building works are very much underway, with a secure compound housing the contractors and their materials. Demolition of elements of the East End internal quad are being completed this week. This will be followed by structural adaptations to allow for a new upper storey (above rooms QE1 and QE2) mirroring the equivalent construction at the West End. The new upstairs rooms will provide accommodation for the **Autism Resource Base that is on schedule to open to a limited initial cohort in September**; all these works are fully funded through the dedicated Local Authority SEND budget.

A variety of necessary roofing works is also underway: replacing and repairing sections of flat roof and installing the necessary safety equipment to allow routine maintenance access to the roof areas, air conditioning plant and drainage.

By September, we also hope to be ready with a **new permanent external catering kiosk**, extending the catering offer, the number of serving points and the capacity to provide after-school 'grab and go' options. This new kiosk is being erected in the covered entrance area outside the Music Rehearsal Area, is funded by Caterlink, and has been designed to complement the architecture of the existing building.

*Looking ahead: we have outline plans to upgrade the two areas of astro-turf at the front of the school, with planning permission already secured for permanent 'sail type' canopy covers. The plans extend to the grass area at the West of the main school playground, where we hope to create an outdoor classroom/performance area, external seating for study and outdoor eating – a quieter place, adjacent to the newly established wild flower meadow, apiary and flourishing allotment area. **We do not have the funds to complete this vision.** The plans were originally intended to align with the school's 125th anniversary, 1895-2020, but Covid intervened! We will press ahead to find the necessary investment: at some point, however, **an appeal for parental donations may prove essential for this valuable development of the school site.***

Yours sincerely



Robin M. Bevan
Headteacher