

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



6th September 2023

Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome! It was a delight to welcome a full return to school at the beginning of this week. We trust that the holiday time was relaxing, refreshing and productive for all our families. Nonetheless, we know that most pupils, at the end of six weeks, find it is very good to be back in school: enjoying lessons, cultivating friendships and becoming immersed in the additional activities that 'complete' the school experience.

Weather: although the holiday has ended, the summer weather appears determined to reach a peak for the first week(s) of term. Almost all of our classrooms are air-conditioned and well-ventilated; but we will be explaining to all members of the school our arrangements for '**temporary Summer uniform**' so that everyone remains suitably smart but comfortable for a day of learning activities.

Exam results: we were, as a school community, able to celebrate very significant success in public examinations.

[from our public Press Release literature]

At A-level (A2) it has been another very impressive year for our Sixth Form, with over 600 A-levels completed with more than 250 A/A* grades in total.

- ✓ 94 A* grades, which require exceptional performance, have been awarded to our Year 13 students – one out of every six of the grades obtained.
- ✓ 49 students have achieved 3 or more grade As at A-level and there are 13 students with three or more A*!

178 pupils at Southend High School for Boys completed almost 1650 GCSE qualifications. Almost a quarter of these were awarded the highest possible, grade 9.

- ✓ 70% – a remarkable 1150 – of the grades were at level 7 or above
- ✓ Fifteen of our most consistent performers secured over 150 A* equivalent – 8's and 9's – between them!

We share in this success and are delighted to have been able to support students in their onward journeys to the country's leading Universities, overseas to study or into high profile degree apprenticeships.



Social Media: school posts

Please do take the opportunity to follow the school's social media accounts. There is so much fabulous activity every week, within the school. We cannot write about it all, but we do post significant events, stories or successes on social media. For most parents, the [Facebook account](#) is the obvious place to follow these stories.

School buildings/funding

Parents can be reassured that our buildings do not contain 'crumbly concrete' (RAAC): we completed a full site survey many months ago, when the issue was first raised and maintain a highly-focussed programme of premises maintenance. This is not without its challenges, as aspects of the building – impressive as they are – are reaching 100 years old. Along with almost all schools across the country our capital maintenance income falls below the level needed to 'stay on top' of all the repairs, maintenance and upgrade work we have scheduled. As Headteacher, I will be using my public voice to emphasise the need to invest in school buildings for the current and future pupils at SHSB and all of England's schools.

The school's revenue position is also exceptionally challenging. Our income is due to rise, for 2023/24, by only 2.6%; at a time when essential expenditure, impacted profoundly by inflation across the whole economy, is rising by closer to 10%.

I am very pleased that our local MP, Anna Firth, has taken this issue seriously: raising the question of school budgets, energy bills, and unfunded pay changes in the context of historic austerity restrictions. She cited this school, as an example in her evidence to the Education Select Committee in July. Her interventions have secured a meeting with the Schools Minister, Nick Gibb MP. We can only hope that urgent action will follow to avert the otherwise unavoidable deficit budgets and depletion of reserves.

Sponsored Walk: new sound system

On Friday 14 July, we enjoyed the whole school walk: a day out in the 'Benfleet hills'. The light rain did not diminish the enjoyment, although it did shorten the picnic lunch stop at Hadleigh Castle. It was a significant success for the school and for all the participant walkers, marshals and helpers. Thanks to all who have contributed so far, almost £10,000 was raised in donations – **please use Wisepay to make a further contribution if you have not yet done so**. In combination with other donations to the school, these funds have been used over the summer holidays to upgrade the (20 year old) sound system in the school hall, with expert acoustic engineering advice helping to enable a clarity of sound that is otherwise difficult in such a large space.

Journeys to school

It was delightful to have over 170 bikes used for journeys to school on the very first day of term. Cycling represents the most obvious, healthy, convenient, cheap, 'green' and safe way to travel for most pupils within 5 miles of the school. Many others take the opportunity to walk or combine being 'on foot' with public transport. Thank you.

For the very few pupils who arrive by private car: please remember – no parent should bring a car onto the site for 'pick up' or 'drop off'. Please also remember it is dangerous (to our cyclists as they enter and leave the site) and illegal to stop on the yellow zig-zag lines outside the gate. Thank you.

11+ Early Closure

Parents are reminded to keep a close eye on the school calendar and – in particular – to note that **school will close early, at 1pm, to all pupils on Friday 22nd September**, to allow for the preparations required in advance of the 11+ the next day.

Harvest assemblies and collection

For many years the school has made an active commitment, at Harvest time, to collecting and donating food items and other specified goods to HARP, Southend's local charity for the homeless. This year is no different and we hope all pupils will respond to the requests from their tutors: so we can exceed the generosity of previous years, at a time when the need is acute. Thank you.

Please see the list here: <https://www.harpsouthend.org.uk/donate-items-or-food> of suggested and preferred donation items from HARP.

As term progresses, I look forward to writing with news of more school activities and events.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robin M. Bevan', followed by a small dot.

Robin M. Bevan
Headteacher