

SOUTHEND HIGH SCHOOL FOR BOYS

ACADEMY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

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Headteacher: Robin M Bevan MA MEd PhD FRSA



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Dear Parents,

OFSTED inspection – ‘thank you’

Last Tuesday, we received notification that OFSTED would be visiting SHSB to conduct a full inspection that week. Across the two days, the team of five registered inspectors – led by HMI James Chester – visited more than 50 normal timetabled lessons, spoke with a considerable number of staff members and engaged in conversation with countless pupils. *They secured a detailed and authentic immersion in the daily – but nonetheless exceptional – life of our school!*



It was the school’s first full inspection in almost ten years.

The formal report of the inspection will be published in a few weeks’ time; hopefully, but not definitely, before the end of term. We look forward to the validation which will be afforded to the school community through this process of external audit and expert scrutiny.

Alongside members of the school’s Senior Leadership Team, and with Governors also, I was afforded the opportunity to convey our shared and sustained commitment to a clear set of enduring values, our visionary purpose, the daily dedication to professional quality and our authentic investment in workplace/school relationships. However, a key aspect of the inspection process is to ‘triangulate’ the evidence (and claims) from senior staff, with pupil voice and parental opinion.

As such, we are immensely grateful to all parents who responded to the OFSTED survey request – 298 submissions were received in a 36-hour window. The results can be seen here: <https://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/parent-view-results/survey/result-print/23532/14>. It is the most positive and supportive set of survey data that colleagues have ever seen for any school!

We appreciate your vote of confidence in what we do; and ‘thank you’ for taking the time to show that support!

In the meantime, school continues as normal ...



Borough Athletics

Our social media feed is the main place to read about, and comment on, the school's significant successes, performances and activities. The weekly 'feed' provides an easy and enjoyable update on a sample of our school events.

At the end of our inspection week, however, it is worth celebrating the success of our school athletes in the inter-schools Borough athletics finals which took place – track and field – at Garon Park, on Friday.

The school retained the overall championship trophy for the 41st successive year – *every year, since 1984!* – with a dominant points-based performance and many individual/relay medallists.

We anticipate teams going forward, from regional rounds, to compete in Stoke-on-Trent at the national finals in the weeks ahead.

General Election – 'school funding'



As a school, we take the opportunity of a General Election to provide considered, balanced and engaging opportunities for civic and political education. The school's 'mock' General Election is underway with candidates selected to represent the main national parties and expected/required to defend and represent the national party policies.

The 'mock' election also provides an opportunity to consider different voting/electoral systems; and whether alternative approaches would yield different, or more representative, results.

Alongside my responsibility to help promote suitable learning opportunities related to the General Election, I also have a public responsibility to raise questions about the extent to which the various political parties and local candidates are committed to reversing a sustained, and detrimental, pattern of 'real terms' reductions in school funding across the last decade.

Per-pupil funding at SHSB is now 20% below its value in 2014. For the last two years the school has spent more than it has received and our reserves are depleted. Building repairs and maintenance are now 'on hold'; and curriculum opportunities are being placed at risk.

In simple terms, regardless of which party forms the next Government, unless there is a sustained commitment to above-inflation increases in school funding, the opportunities available to pupils at this school will have to be curtailed. *This is a real election issue – although not the only one, of course – so, I would urge you to raise it as a concern in doorstep conversations with candidates and/or in considering the relative merits of the manifesto policies.*

Finally, may I take this opportunity to express personal thanks to the many parents/families who have sent messages of thanks, words of appreciation, or expressions of encouragement, following the announcement last week that I would be leaving the school this Summer. *It is deeply appreciated!*

Again, many thanks to you all:



Robin M. Bevan
Headteacher