

SOUTHEND HIGH SCHOOL FOR BOYS

ACADEMY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

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Headteacher: Robin M Bevan MA MEd PhD FRSA



18th July 2024

Dear Parent,

Thank you once again for your sustained support, as parents, of our work in school. We have recently received a number of 'thank you' letters following the publication of the OFSTED inspection report. The letters are a source of encouragement and frequently reference *not only* the outstanding academic provision in and beyond lessons *but also* the school as a nurturing environment of empathy, vision and leadership. In turn, we are inspired by the growth and maturity demonstrated by our pupils as they progress through the school and onwards for further study, employment and adventure.

National Athletics – national success

The last few weeks of the Summer Term are always full of varied challenging and creative activities. In one fortnight, we have had an Art exhibition, a full day of 'mock interviews' for Year 10, overseas trips, Sports Day, our 'Big Bike Ride' and much more besides! Keep an eye on our social media for regular insights into school life at SHSB.

We will be celebrating a full and varied array of contributions to, and successes in, these events in our run of end of term assemblies – so many pupils deserve a well done for their role in house, subject, school and other activities.

One result, however, deserves special commendation. It was a delight to see our Intermediate Athletics squad return from the national finals as team 'silver' medal winners – second best in the country. Their success was underpinned and reinforced by a national fifth place position for the Junior squad. Whilst there were some notable individual performances, this level of success is only possible because of the sustained contributions of all in the squad: all those who trained, those who travelled as reserves, those who competed – outstanding!

'Big Bike Ride' and seafront walk

The 'Big Bike Ride' is our biennial opportunity for pupils (Years 7-9) to cycle from school to Shoebury East Beach, for an extended lunch-stop before pedalling back to school. Involving over 400 cyclists – pupils, staff, Sixth Form helpers & Southend Wheelers volunteers – this is the largest school organised bike ride in the country! Alongside the cyclists, an equally challenging and rewarding walk was offered; whilst Year 10 had a sports-themed tournament in school.

We could not run these activities without expert assistance: the role of the Southend Wheelers in providing bike safety and maintenance checks to every bicycle within 90 minutes is quite extraordinary. They have popular free summer holiday coaching activities too – click here: [Summer of Cycling holiday activity](#).



End of term/start of new term

The Summer Term ends on Friday 19 July. We anticipate that pupils will be released, after the final school assembly, from 12.30pm. There will be no facility to remain on site after this time, so all pupils should ensure they have planned their journeys home accordingly.

The new term begins for all pupils on Tuesday 3 September. Year 7 register at 8.30 am; Year 12 register at 9.30 am in the Main Hall; Years 8-11 & 13 register at 10.00 am. All lessons start Period 2a after break-time.

The school is fully-staffed for September with all timetabled lessons currently assigned to subject specialist teachers. The school will be welcoming a few new names onto the teaching staff in the Autumn.

Valedictories

The end of the Summer Term is often coloured by the need to say 'goodbye' to valued colleagues. In the closing days of term, we will be taking the opportunity to express appreciation to Mr Bowles and Dr Sheehy, both of whom have assisted in short-term vacancies within the teaching team. Their contributions have been of immense value in a short space of time.

Likewise, we thank Mrs Girling after serving the school for two years, teaching in our Languages department. Her enthusiasm for Spanish is always evident and her expertise in the classroom has been a source of invaluable assistance to all who she has taught. Mrs Reynolds is also moving on from the school. It is striking how quickly her 10 years of service, predominantly in the Mathematics department, has passed. Pupils rightly recognise her professionalism, dedication, and authentic care for all the pupils in her classes. We wish them both all the very best for their future plans.

Señor Tatay is bringing his professional career to an end after 17 years at SHSB, latterly as our Leader of Spanish. There are few teaching professionals who can sustain an authentic love of their subject, a clear sense of expectation for all, an energy and delight in learning, as well as an evident insistence on behavioural standards ... whilst also ensuring every pupil knows his loyal dedication to Barcelona FC and his love of the 'beautiful game'. His legacy is considerable and he will be fondly remembered by many pupils, present and past.

Finally, we are saying goodbye to two exceptional 'servants of the school' – Mrs Thorp and Mrs Higgs. They began their work at the school in 1999 and 1995 respectively. They both warrant a considerable 'vote of thanks'! Mrs Thorp progressed to be appointed as Mr Frampton's (Headmaster) secretary; but, for most of her time at the school, she has served as my PA. The extent of her contributions in and beyond that role – not least in liaison with the school's Parents Association – will be known to only a few, but should be rightly recognised by all.

Mrs Higgs was promoted, from her position as Headmaster's secretary, to be Office Manager and has over time developed very considerable expertise in both governance and admissions – becoming the Clerk to the Trustees and the school's Admissions Officer. She has been called upon, on many occasions, to offer admissions advice to other schools and worked with the Local Authority in this capacity. Her clerking expertise has been commended externally on a number of occasions. She, too, has contributed way beyond the job descriptions and roles to which she has been appointed: as a First Aid expert and instructor, yoga teacher (for pupils and staff), and a 'first port of call' for almost everyone at some point in their time in school!

“Goodbye!”

I, too, must say ‘goodbye’. The end of term marks a very significant step towards my departure from SHSB; although the summer holiday is a surprisingly busy time for Headteachers! I am looking forward to the GCSE/A-level results days, to finalising contracts for new staff, and to seeing progress on the major premises work on the roofs, guttering, chimney stacks and drainage!

I will miss the rhythms of working life in a school, the challenges of leadership and the opportunity to create the circumstances in which others can thrive; but, above all, I will miss the people – pupils, parents, staff and governors – who are the community of our school and without whom I simply could not have done, let alone enjoyed, my work across the last seventeen years.

Summer holiday

As we approach the end of term, may I extend my very best wishes to all our pupils and families for the holiday period. We would encourage every pupil to take time to rest, to read, to challenge themselves (with something new or different), to sustain fitness, to be bold in adventure, to learn, to foster friendships and extend kindness ... and to do so with a deliberate limitation on ‘screen time’!

Enjoy the sunshine!

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robin M. Bevan', with a small flourish at the end.

Robin M. Bevan
Headteacher