

SOUTHEND HIGH SCHOOL FOR BOYS

ACADEMY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Prittlewell Chase, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS0 0RG

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Interim Headteacher: Mrs R V Worth



December 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

As I approach the end of my first term as Interim Headteacher, I wanted to take this opportunity to reflect on what has been a truly rewarding and successful half term.

A Thank You to Staff and Students

Having worked closely with our staff for many years, I want to express my thanks for their unwavering commitment to the students of this school. They routinely go above and beyond, ensuring that our students receive the very best education, both inside and outside of the classroom. Their dedication, professionalism, and tireless support for our students is truly appreciated.

I am equally grateful to our students, who have demonstrated exceptional effort, resilience, and enthusiasm across the term. Whether it's in academic work, extracurricular activities, or school events, our students have consistently shown what a talented, motivated, and inspiring group of young people they are. The positive energy they bring to the school is truly infectious, and it is a privilege to see them grow and develop. I will have the opportunity to wish them a very Happy Christmas in our final assembly on Friday.

End of Term arrangements



Term ends on Friday 20th December, when pupils will be released at around 12.30pm after our final assembly.

Please note that the school will be closed from 1pm on the last day of term. Your child will not be able to remain on the premises after 1pm, so please ensure that you have made suitable arrangements for their journey home.

Our new term begins on **Monday 6th January**.

Term Highlights and Achievements

Our students have been working exceptionally hard this term. Particular commendation goes to our students in the Sixth Form who are deep into preparation for their mock exams. I was also very pleased to read the recent Year 11 reports, which highlighted the commitment and dedication of our students. It is clear that the majority of our Year 11s understand that an effective work ethic leads to success. It is always encouraging to see students giving their best, and I am confident that their continued hard work will serve them well in the months ahead.





Beyond the classroom, the Autumn Term has seen an array of exciting opportunities provided for our students. These have included trips, House competitions, the Model United Nations conference, concerts, enrichment activities, STEM events, and a wide range of workshops and competitions. Many of these events have been celebrated on our social media feed. I am incredibly grateful to our dedicated staff, who ensure that students have access to such a broad and enriching educational experience. Their commitment to fostering personal growth and creativity is second to none.



The Importance of Regular Attendance

As we look ahead to the Spring Term, I would like to take this opportunity to highlight the importance of regular school attendance. Consistent attendance is crucial, especially as students enter the critical phase of exam preparation. For students in Year 11 and the Sixth Form, this is a time when every lesson and piece of learning is vital to their success.

I encourage all parents to ensure that their child attends school regularly and arrives on time. If there are any concerns or challenges regarding attendance, please do not hesitate to reach out to the school. We are here to support every student in achieving their full potential.



Fundraising and Parental Support



We also want to express our immense gratitude for the continued support we receive from our parents. This partnership is central to the success of the school, and we are truly fortunate to work alongside such a supportive community. We are looking forward to the purchase of a new (pre-loved) minibus, made possible by the fundraising efforts of our Parents' Association and the generosity of our parent body.

This will be an invaluable resource for our students, and we will be thrilled to see it put to good use.

I am also pleased to report the success of our Festive Fun fundraising appeal, which, to date, has raised almost £10,000. This is a tremendous achievement, and I would like to thank all those who contributed. As we have previously communicated, the focus of our current fundraising efforts is the replacement of our school computers to ensure compatibility with Windows 11. The funds raised so far will provide a very strong start to this important project, and we are deeply grateful for your generosity.

Staff Valedictories

The end of term is often a time for us to say goodbye to valued members of staff.

Mr Dowding (Leader of Mathematics) shares some words in recognition of **Miss Sparrow**, who left us earlier in the term.

Miss Sparrow has left Southend High School for Boys, and indeed the teaching profession as a whole, to explore the vast and complex world of Actuarial Sciences. Since leaving university Miss Sparrow has been keen to explore this world; her enthusiasm was piqued when studying financial mathematics and she never had a chance to properly explore it. Now she does, and what an exciting time it is for her. Miss Sparrow was only with us for four terms but, in that time, she brought a big personality and warmth to the Mathematics department. She was a teacher that the students respected and the staff enjoyed. We wish her all the best; she seems to have transitioned well to her new life but she does miss the classroom and hopes one day to return.

At the end of this term, we are also saying goodbye to **Miss Roberts**. Mrs March (Assistant Headteacher) shares some thoughts about the impact Miss Roberts has made upon our community.

In just a year and a half, Miss Roberts has made an extraordinary impact on SHSB, immersing herself fully into the life of our school. In the Drama department, her passion and dedication has been truly inspiring, as she quickly built strong relationships with colleagues and pupils alike. Each week, Miss Roberts selflessly supports the drama club, fostering students' creativity and confidence while providing invaluable support. Her commitment goes far beyond the classroom; she actively volunteers for duties, building meaningful connections

with pupils during playground interactions. Miss Roberts' contribution to our highly popular school production was remarkable, as she devoted her break and lunch times to support our pupils. Her positive energy in the staffroom is contagious, and her kindness and willingness to support others, especially new colleagues, have made a lasting impression. Although we have had the privilege of working with Miss Roberts for a short time, it feels as though she has been a part of our team for much longer. She will be deeply missed by everyone.

We sadly said goodbye to some members of our support team earlier in the term. **Mr Player** joined us as a caretaker with many years of experience. Although his tenure was brief, his dedication, warmth and commitment has left an indelible mark upon the community. Mr Player was always happy to help and support, routinely going the extra mile. He had a care for the school and he will be greatly missed. We wish him a long and happy retirement.

Mrs Wightman has left our Finance Office to pursue a career within the private sector. Mrs Wightman was primarily first point of contact for all enquiries regarding trips, music tuition and lockers, and was known to all for her efficiency and willingness to help others, often volunteering to assist outside of the Finance function to contribute to overall school life. **Mrs McCullim** joined us as Finance Assistant in February 2024 to cover maternity leave of a colleague; she leaves us after securing a post in another local school. We wish both colleagues all the very best in their new jobs.

Our final words of goodbye are for **Mr Oxenham** who has served us as Director of Finance and Resources since 2012. Whilst his work has remained invisible to most parents, Mr Oxenham has worked tirelessly over the years, overseeing the school finances. He has also been at the forefront of many successful capital projects, including our Hitchcock building project and, most recently, our roof and guttering works. Whilst we are sad to see Mr Oxenham leave us, we wish him all the very best in his new role. He is moving to oversee operations in a large multi-academy trust in London and we congratulate him on this well-deserved promotion.

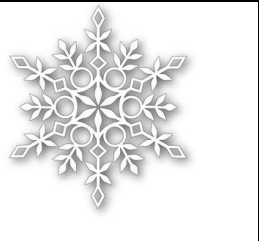
Message from the Parents' Association

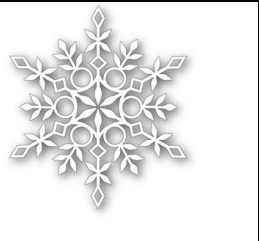
The Parents Association would like to wish you all Seasons Greetings and a Happy New Year. We also send our thanks to everyone for supporting our fundraising efforts this term, be that donating gifts, giving of your time or purchasing from us in the uniform shop, the raffle and other donations. We will be sharing some exciting new initiatives for 2025 in January so please keep an eye out.

Looking Ahead

Looking ahead to the Spring Term, we are excited about the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead. We continue to be inspired by the enthusiasm, resilience, and talent of our students, and we are committed to providing them with the best possible education and experience. I would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your families a peaceful and restful holiday season.

Thank you again for your ongoing support.

On behalf of all the staff and pupils of SHSB, many thanks – in anticipation – for the 'Christmas wishes' sent in by so many parents; and to all associated with the school – Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year!	
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Yours sincerely



Mrs R V Worth
Interim Headteacher