



# SCGSG

Sutton Coldfield Grammar School for Girls

FEBRUARY 2025



## PHOENIX RAISE OVER £1,500!

Phoenix House put on fun-packed charity event!

## ALSO IN THIS EDITION:

- Canadian team sport "Kin-Ball"
- Netball and Badminton successes
- Year 7 trip to Symphony Hall



A message from the

# Headteacher

*Dr. Barbara Minards*

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2025! It has been a busy six week half term, time has flown by and we are now halfway through the academic year.

The Spring Term programme of extra-curricular clubs is providing a range of opportunities for students, and it is fantastic to see so many students from across the year groups involved in a variety of sporting, musical and creative activities during lunchtimes, before and after school. The Spring 2 timetable is available [on our website](#). The rehearsals for Frozen Jr. are well underway, hearing the cast sing after school on Mondays and Thursdays are highlights of my week. The cast are already sounding amazing and I am looking forward to the performances next half term, it is going to be a great show and tickets are selling fast!

In addition to lessons, tutor times and assemblies there have been several opportunities for students to participate in super-curricular activities. There have been trips to the University of Birmingham for A-Level Chemistry students,

to Shrewsbury prison for Year 13 Psychology and Sociology students, to a performance of Blood Brothers at the Wolverhampton Grand for GCSE Drama students and to the CBSO for Year 7s.

Year 11 students participated in a Sixth Form taster day to help with their decision making about the next stage of their educational journey. They experienced six taster lessons, met current sixth form students and staff to learn more about the extra-curricular, super-curricular and leadership opportunities available alongside the careers guidance and pastoral support we provide. There was a positive atmosphere throughout the day, our current sixth formers were a credit to themselves, and the school and we hope our Year 11s choose to stay at Sutton Girls next year.

Congratulations to Year 12 who finished the half term by completing their mid-year examinations. This experience will help students evaluate their VESPA strategies (an approach that helps

students develop Vision, Effort, Systems, Practice and Attitude). Combined with the feedback from teachers, students will be provided with key information on their progress so far and how to refine their approach for the next stage of their learning.

This morning the school ski trip departed, with 45 Year 10 students and 5 staff members on their way to Jasper, Canada. We hope they have a fantastic time and look forward to hearing all about their adventures on their return.

We hope all members of our school community take time to reflect on everything that has been achieved since September and re-focus on the goals to be accomplished by the end of the school year, once we have had a refreshing break over half term.

Please enjoy reading about what has been happening recently at Sutton Girls. Have a happy half term holiday!

***Dr Minards***



*Frozen Jr. rehearsals are well under way, and we are looking forward to the performances in March!*





# Phoenix keeping the bar high with charity day fundraising!

by Oluwamayode  
in Year 7

The Phoenix Charity day, which was on Friday 24th of January, was incredibly successful raising £1855.69 in total.

The money was donated to Young Minds: a mental health charity for children and young adults.

The event had stalls which included: baked treats, sweets, a gingerbread competition, origami bookmarks, bracelets and a boba (bubble tea) stall.

The Teachers verses Students events consisted of netball hoop shooting, rowing, table tennis and an egg and spoon race. The teachers only just won! Well done to all students that participated.

In my opinion, I loved the Phoenix Charity day, it was fun and I really enjoyed everything. My personal favourite were the baked treats.

I didn't get to see much of the teacher vs student events as I was too busy looking at other stalls, but from what I heard it was amazing!



# Sixth Form Taster Day

by Mr M. O'Rourke  
*Sixth Form Team*

On Tuesday 14th January, our Year 11 students had the chance to experience a day in the life of a sixth former during our Sixth Form Taster Day. They were able to learn more about the wide array of A-Level subjects we have to offer with exceptional results and experience our inspirational environment beyond GCSEs.

In the morning, students had taster sessions in six A-Level lessons of their choice, getting to grips with new topics and concepts that they could master as they

narrow down their studies in Year 12. We have 20 subjects on offer, some continuing courses such as Mathematics, Biology, and Chemistry alongside new courses for sixth form available such as Psychology, Sociology, Economics, Media Studies and Politics.

After some freedom to enjoy lunch off site, in the afternoon the "Sixth Formers" completed a carousel of activities. These focused on our VESPA mindset (Vision, Effort, Systems, Practice and Attitude) which helps build a growth mindset in our students. The first session was a reflection on the next steps for careers goals or university

aspirations, with anything being achievable in our Sixth Form. The second session was a question-and-answer session with existing students to hear more about the wider life beyond academics in Sixth Form such as leadership opportunities and the extra-curricular offering at Sutton Girls. The afternoon culminated in some time to socialise in the common room reflecting our thriving community.

There was a super atmosphere throughout the day with the Year 11s taking to sixth form life well and we look forward to continuing with them in September.



“It helped me to formalise what choices I wanted to make for my studies in Sixth Form, as well as see different perspectives of students”

“For me, the day started with Economics which I found very useful as we covered what it actually was and how it's different to business which I currently take at GCSE.”

“The teachers were excellent at presenting their subjects, making everything really engaging and interactive.”

“The vibe of the day was really positive, and I left feeling inspired and eager to start my Sixth Form journey!”

## Sixth Form and Alumni Updates

We are proud of our Sixth Form experience here at Sutton Girls, and we love hearing about the successes of former students. If you would like to hear some of the stories we share, head over to our [LinkedIn page](#).



# Year 7's orchestral experience with CBSO

by Rose in Year 7

I thoroughly enjoyed the trip to Symphony Hall - the atmosphere was amazing, and the orchestra provided an enthusiastic and captivating performance.

My favourite experience was Star Wars – the Empire Strikes Back as they taught us some conducting. It was an immersive, enthralling performance and shows the potential that Symphony Hall holds. I feel I would enjoy returning as the overall likeability of the orchestra is infectious.

They introduced us to the main families of instruments, these included my personal favourite, the woodwind section, as it consists of the flute, an instrument that I play. They also showed us the percussion family and we relished in the sounds the timpani showed us.



An unexpected area of the performance was when the orchestra requested for us to stand up and join them in dancing to the can-can, this was especially great memory as it gave us a chance to feel as if we were participating in the performance. Another bonus of this was the ability to stand up and join in with the crowd, helping us feel connected from some unseen

bond. The execution of dropping a 5 pence coin illustrated how it could be heard from anywhere in the hall really intensified the work that was accomplished to allow us to visualise Symphony Hall.

In conclusion, the trip to Symphony Hall was an excellent performance and something that will stay with us for life.

# Year 9 students pitch their project ideas to the Parents' Association for funding



by Mr S. Hall  
*Marketing Assistant*

As part of unit in their English Language lessons aimed at honing their oracy and rhetorical skills, Year 9 are have been putting together Dragon's Den-style pitches to bid for £200 cash from the Parents' Association.

They have to come up with an idea for a project which they believe would make a difference for current and future students.

This is run as an internal competition across the whole year group, with the winning team from each teaching group competing against each other as finalists before a judging panel made up of representatives from the Parents' Association, the school's Senior

Leadership Team, Mrs McIntosh and this year, me.

The successful group's idea was to introduce CPR training into Year 9 Personal Development lessons, using the PA funding to purchase the equipment for use in school.

The level of professionalism from each of the six teams was exceptional, with each presentation being totally unique and the project ideas were all so different! It really was a pleasure to sit and be able to take in the effort that students had put into their pitches.

Everyone should be so proud of themselves for the way they presented, not only their projects, but themselves!



## A-Level Psychology make special visit to Shrewsbury Prison

by Kate in Year 12

The Shrewsbury Prison trip was an extremely eye-opening experience. The staff at Shrewsbury took us on a journey of the different conditions a prisoner would face in the Victorian era, whether it be in isolation or with other prisoners. How certain prisoners overcame addictions and the harsh reality of that were also explored.

Although an institution put in place for the retribution of criminals, the prison engaged in multiple outlets for prisoners to talk about their feelings and work on their mental health.

We were also able to take part in interactive activities such as Q&As and an escape room, which allowed for us to fully be immersed in a prisoner experience. Both

these activities and the boiler suits we were made to wear, became a gateway for us to learn that the prison experience is far more difficult and mentally challenging than we imagined.

Overall it became an experience that would teach and mean a lot more to us than we anticipated.

## Evening Lecture at the University of Birmingham, run by West Midlands Chemistry Teachers Centre

by Esha and Prabjot in Year 12

The Chemistry department gave us the opportunity to attend a lecture about drug discovery through chemical biology at the University of Birmingham. The lecture was around an hour and taught us about the vital role of medicinal chemists and also touched into the economics of the discovery process. We learnt about numerous molecules, including those used in

chemotherapy, such as cis-platin which is a molecule that reacts with DNA bases and forms cross-links, so they cannot replicate.

As well as this, we gained an insight into some of the difficulties regarding curing diseases such as cancers due to there being an estimated value of over 1500 protein targets but only 266 addressed. (Overington et al, 2006) The experience of the lecture gave us a taste as to what university life is like, whilst encouraging us to explore

areas of Chemistry outside the curriculum.







# A Day in the Life

This half term, we hear from Year 8 student Kirstie about what her typical school day looks like...

Hello! My name is Kirstie and welcome to a typical day in my school life!

My day starts when I get into school at around 8.30am and meet my friends in the hall before registration. During form time, we always have things to do, like discussing a topic on VotesForSchools (this week was whether learning about our emotions help us to feel better), the weekly theme, or playing games like Pictionary. After submitting our class's answers for VotesForSchools, Mrs Appleton wished us all a good day and we set off for our first lessons.

It's Tuesday today, which means my first lesson today is French with Mrs Harradence and we are learning about holidays and celebrations (Les Fêtes)! I have been practising at home with Duolingo between my homework assignments. Then it was Spanish! I also had an end of unit test in Spanish, as most subjects are reaching the end of units before the holidays, which



is great, as I don't have to worry about tests. The Spanish test was slightly difficult, but my studying paid off as I found most questions relatively simple. At the end of the test, we marked it in class and I

discovered I did quite well!

And suddenly it was break time. This morning has gone by very fast! This is a chance for me to get a snack from the canteen and socialize with my friends in the Hub before moving to the other side of school for my next lesson, Art.

In art we are looking at masks, how they are made, and what they mean to different cultures. Mr Hall came in to one of our lessons to take some photos of what we have been creating. I am really enjoying this topic!

Lastly, I had Maths where we are finishing our algebra topic before our test. We did some complex equations and reviewed our latest revision homework, which was difficult, but I have been working hard, and I'm pleased with my progress.

Stepping out of school and into the cold, I'm glad I bought my warm coat with me today! I am looking forward to the warmer days after the half term break!



We're always looking for students to share a day in their life. Are you interested in writing for the school newsletter? Email [Mr\\_Hall](mailto:Mr_Hall) for more information.





# Year 10 enjoy Canadian Kin-Ball

by Sam in Year 10

In PE on Tuesday 11th February, we played something called Kin-Ball. Kin-Ball is a team sport that was created in 1986 in Quebec, Canada.

The game started out a bit complicated, but I do think after getting into the swing of it we all found it quite fun. It started with

a team in the middle of the sports hall crouching down, all balancing the massive Kin-Ball, which is actually heavier than you'd think. Then, another person would hit it (hopefully) 6 feet into the air whilst the people crouching had to yell the colour of another team. This then involved trying to control what was essentially, a giant balloon. And then the process repeated.

The variation we played was more like "floor is lava" where we have to keep the Kin-Ball from touching the floor.

Overall I do think it was quite a bit of fun. I have no idea how you would ever play it competitively, but for the 40 minutes we played it, it was really good fun!







# National Schools' Badminton Competition

by Miss E. Hewitt  
*PE Department*

On Monday 20th January, 4 of our Year 8-9 students participated in the county round of the National Schools' Badminton Competition. Winning all their matches whilst

showing excellent sportsmanship, they will proceed to the regional stage of the competition.

Well done to Joshika (Year 9), Sharleez (Year 9), Chimayi (Year 8) and Reya (Year 9).

## Incredible effort from U14s Netball squad

by Miss L. Taylor  
*PE Department*

After a chilly start to Sunday 2nd February, our U14s Netball team reached the semi-finals of the Regional Schools' Netball competition!

Beating a strong Bromsgrove School team, losing only to Kings High School (Warwick), Sutton played Stratford Grammar in the semi-final. At half-time the score

was level (4-4). Stratford stepped up a gear to win 12-8. This is the first time Sutton has progressed beyond the pool stages in this tough competition.

This is a fantastic achievement from a phenomenal team!

Well done to students Martha, Serena, Kierah, Yvette, Evaleen, Savannah, Isla, Hollie-Mai, Esmee and Anna. We cannot wait to see how they progress in the years to come.



## Year 10 students receive medals for their efforts!

by Miss E. Hewitt  
*PE Department*

Well done to Saara, Anabel, Laila, Yasmin, Gabby, Megan, Evelyn, Chiara and Mischa in Year 10s for taking part in the U15 Birmingham Schools Netball competition.

They played with great spirit and determination, pushing themselves through what was a very tough competition, coming third overall and earning themselves all a bronze medal!

We couldn't be more proud of you all.



You can look forward to our next newsletter at the end of the Spring 2 term in April. In the meantime, keep up to date by following us on:

[facebook.com/suttcold](https://www.facebook.com/suttcold) or [twitter.com/suttcold](https://twitter.com/suttcold)



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