



# SCGSG

Sutton Coldfield Grammar School for Girls

**DECEMBER 2025**

## GOSPEL CHOIR AND THE BBC

Students sing at BBC Radio  
WM Christmas Carol Concert

## ALSO IN THIS EDITION:

Christmas Concert  
Delphinus House charity event  
Creative Careers Week



A message from the

# Headteacher

*Dr. Barbara Minards*

Welcome to our final newsletter for 2025! It has been a positive and productive half term packed with lots of seasonal events in addition to the numerous extra and super curricular activities which continue alongside all the lessons and tutor times.

Congratulations to Year 7 on completing their first term at Sutton Girls, to Year 12 for making a positive start to Sixth Form, and to Year 11 and 13 for successfully sitting their mock examinations. Students in all year groups have achieved so much since the start of the academic year, furthering their understanding and showing a love of learning in a wide range of subjects. They have earned a huge number of character points, participated in house competitions and attended a variety of clubs at lunchtimes. Many students have also regularly attended rehearsals for music concerts and the annual school show or represented the school in a sports team. We are particularly proud of the Gospel Choir who recently performed with the Birmingham Cathedral Choir as part of the BBC Radio WM Christmas Carol Concert that will be broadcast on Christmas eve and Christmas day.

Having welcomed back last year's Year 11s on 26th November for a presentation evening to celebrate their GCSE results and successes during their first five years at Sutton Girls, this week we hosted a celebration evening for the Year 13 class of 2025. It was great to welcome back our most recent alumni to recognise their fantastic A-level results and contributions



to our school community. We were delighted to be joined by former student Emma who presented the A-level certificates and subject awards. Emma shared her experiences of studying Biomedical Sciences at the University of Oxford, completing a master's degree in Reproductive and Developmental Medicine at the University of Sheffield and her current work as a Clinical Embryologist. Emma's messages about believing in yourself, taking time to find your own path and using the skills and experiences gained from being a student at Sutton Girls were inspiring. It was great to hear how much Emma enjoyed her time at school and that she is continuing to build on the lessons learned within our positive and supportive environment.

We showcased our inspirational learning environment at our Sixth Form open evening on 13th November. The event was very well attended by our Year 11 students and their families along with prospective students from a variety of other schools. It was great to see so many of our current

sixth formers being tour guides and helping in departments, sharing their experiences of the 20 different A-level subjects and the many different opportunities that are all part of the sixth form offer here at Sutton Girls.

Delphinus held their house charity day in aid of Children in Need on 14th November. The student-run stalls in the sports hall at lunchtime were very popular along with the staff versus students' competition involving a variety of 25 second challenges. The long-standing tradition of fund-raising for a range of charitable causes at Sutton Girls continued at the Christmas Concert with a raffle organised by A-level Music students in support of the Red Cross Hurricane Melissa Emergency Relief Fund with items donated by members of our school community.

At the end of this term we say goodbye to three members of staff who leave Sutton Girls to begin their retirement. We thank Julie Holden, Tracey Eden and Carol Carter for their years of dedicated service to the school and wish them all the best for their new adventures.

Please enjoy reading this edition of our newsletter which is filled with some of the varied activities that have been happening at Sutton Girls this half term.

Have a lovely Christmas holiday and best wishes for a happy and healthy 2026!

***Dr Minards***



# Annual PA Christmas Fayre kicks off the 2025 festivities!

by Mr S. Hall  
*Marketing Assistant*

The festive season officially kicked off on Friday 5th December as our Parents' Association Christmas Fayre took place after much anticipation from our Year 7 students!

This year's packed-out event was spread across the dining hall and Hub spaces; with Year 7 students occupying the Hub with their form-run stalls, the dining hall which featured a collection of small businesses from the local community, including one run by Year 7 student, Aria, and crochet gifts by Holly in Year 11.

The Hub area contained stall from each of the Year 7 form groups, this year focusing on a variety of arcade-style games such as "pin



the nose on Rudolph", a tin can alley, a festive take on the classic "hook-a-duck", a snowball toss, raffle and "guess the name of the festive bunny".

Music for the evening was once again provided by our Gospel Choir, performing classic Christmas carols and some unique pieces brought together by SFE

Music Services specialist, JJ, and a very special set from our Brass Band, lovingly prepared and accompanied by Mr Collet.

We would like to thank everyone who attended and donated so kindly during the course of the evening, you helped to make everything that little bit more festive!



# Ariya's business at the PA Christmas Fayre

Hi, I'm Aria and I'm a Year 7 with a business outside of school. I admit, it is hard sometimes, but it is a great part of my life that I hope will stay with me.

I have a resin business and you are probably wondering "What's resin" so let me tell you. Resin is a hard, plasticky substance that begins as two liquid parts (A&B) that when combined, harden. With resin, you can colour it with pigments, powders and glitters that come through very clearly. When you are happy with your colour, you pour it into a mould that (when it hardens) that the resin takes the shape of. Some designs and patterns can take



multiple pours to complete though.

Resin to me was originally a small hobby that I enjoyed. Me and my dad would just do small experiments for fun and once he took a small keychain on his keys

to work and someone noticed it and asked for one. One turned to two and two turned to three. Eventually, so much was selling that in June last year, me and my dad created a Facebook page and it has made my business grow very wildly and successfully.

You may think it is very hard to fit resin in with school, but it is not. As long as you prioritise what you need to, it is easy to balance everything.

I enjoy the freedom of it all. Resin is very experimental and open so you can basically do what you want with it.

# GCHQ National Language Challenge

by Amara and Rebecca  
in Year 9

The GCHQ National Language Challenge is a group competition which consists of a variety of puzzles ranging from easy to extreme. Each challenge is worth a certain number of points and the more points you gain the higher you rank in your school, regionally and nationally. Hints can also be used at the expense of points.

You are set 25 hours spanning across 5 days in which you must work together in teams of up to 4 to complete as many challenges as you can. We did most of the work at home, with some being done at school in the mornings and during lunch. This challenge helps students to think logically and gain extra knowledge along the way, like how I now know all the spices in biryani, but most importantly, to have fun!

The challenges range from easy, medium, hard, and extreme. We had 78 to do in total! In the beginning, there were lots of most mostly easy challenges, and there



became less and less challenges in each section as the difficulty increased.

There are a mix of puzzles and translation challenges, and the ones we found the hardest where sign language and lip reading. There were language-based challenges but there were also maths, geography, logic, and ones that questioned our general

knowledge too. We think that the challenge was difficult, but it was great when we finally completed the challenges and watched our ranks go up.

Our advice for those who want to take part next year, is try not to use any clues as they will help boost your ranks to the top and bring glory to SCGSG!

# BBC Radio West Midlands Christmas Carol Service

On Tuesday 16th December, our Gospel Choir had the pleasure of performing with the Birmingham Cathedral Choir at the Cathedral Church of Saint Philip as part of the BBC Radio WM Christmas Carol Concert.

The recorded performance will be broadcast on **Christmas Eve** and **Christmas Day at 1pm**, and will be available on BBC Sounds afterwards. We can't wait for you to hear it!





# Delphinus raise money for BBC Children in Need

by Hannah in Year 10

We put two teams of staff and students against each other in a friendly "Challenge Yourself to 25" competition, featuring general knowledge questions and silly tasks to complete, like eating the largest amount of M&Ms with chopsticks, guess the song from its intro, charades, netball shots and more...all to be completed in 25 seconds!

It was a tense first half, with students narrowly behind staff



at the beginning but winning the first round. The second half was very similar, but the staff team edged ahead in the "how many M&Ms can you eat with

chopsticks in 25 seconds", giving them a deserved win.

Thank you to our Delphinus House Captains, Emily and Eleanor, who did a great job of running the show, and Mr Hughes for making sure everything ran smoothly in the background.

Well done to every member of Delphinus for coming together for an amazing charity day and thank you to the rest of us at Sutton Girls for raising **£1,499.75** for Children in Need this year!



Exploring careers in the creative and performing arts – 17th-21st November

# Former SCGSG students give talks on their career journeys

by Mr S. Hall  
Marketing Assistant

As part of our Creative Careers Week celebrations, we were delighted to be able to welcome back three former students: Faeryn, Olivia and Pam to speak to our Year 9 students. All three delivered insightful, heartfelt speeches about their career journeys since leaving Sutton Girls.

During her final year at Nottingham Trent University, Faeryn experienced a loss of interest for creating visual art, making her feel like a failure at such a critical point in her studies. This made her realise that her passion lay in becoming a writer instead, shifting her efforts into writing-based degree show and portfolio, leading to her being awarded a first-class degree.

Through leaving the logical and leaning into the obscure, Olivia discovered there was no problem she couldn't find a solution to. Olivia also left our students with an invaluable tip for living outside of your comfort zone; *"start with one small thing. Take something that would usually make you uncomfortable and do it consistently. The habit will develop and will ricochet across other areas of your life"*.

Pam's current role as a journalist for Operation Mobilisation was born out of a love of music and a desire to work in the industry at school. , proving that if something



excites you, you don't always have to take the traditional path to get there.

At 13/14 years old, our Year 9s aren't going to know exactly what they want to do with the rest of their lives, but the powerful

message from today was that if you love something, stick at it. Stick with the people that encourage you, build you up. Don't accept that something can't be done until you've tried it.



## Year 8 students get insight into CBSO operations

by Jessica in Year 8

During creative careers week, Mr Collet invited Carolyn Burton, the Learning Programme Manager at the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, to talk to us about what she and her colleagues do at the CBSO and how working in music, doesn't necessarily mean you need a background in music.

She shared with us what goes on behind the scenes, beyond

what we saw on the stage during the CBSO concert we attended earlier in the year (when we were in Year 7), and talked about the huge variety of careers that are on offer in the music and wider arts sector! From the orchestra itself, the "Audiences" team which covers marketing, social media and data, the "Learning and Engagement" team, which Carolyn belongs to, and the Board of Trustees are all roles we never thought of!

## BCU Professor, Jamie Savan, speaks to Year 9 about his work and research

by Orla in Year 9

In my recent music lesson, Professor Savan came in to talk to my class about careers in music. He explained lots about his amazing job and the path he followed to get there.

Firstly, he told us about his journey during his time at university and the jobs he undertook whilst there. He explained that he was studying trumpet at Birmingham Conservatoire but whilst there he began playing an archaic instrument (a Renaissance-era cornett) as there was a musical instrument museum. Due to this exposure, he began investigating other ways to make extinct or very old instruments himself. He explained how he designed a 3D printed instrument that he made from scratch; it was extremely cool!

Later, he talked about jobs that he had taken, including



being part of a very prestigious orchestra. He travelled all over the world, performing in France, Japan and so many more places whilst on tour. He also performed in the Globe Theatre where he learned to play lots of different instruments to play on stage as well as dressing up as a musician from that era.

Finally, he explained his current project; simulating old buildings

and chapels for others to learn about and experience exactly what it would have looked and sounded like in the past. The simulation was excellent; we could even hear the differences in the acoustics. We watched a simulation of King Henry VI entering a very old chapel in 1451, it was wonderful and very realistic!



# A Day in the Life

Hi there, we are **Lara and Scarlett**, and we're identical twin sisters currently in Year 12 at Sutton Girls, having joined the school in September. Deciding to move here was a big step for us, we knew it would be quite a change, but as soon as we joined, we both settled in really quickly with everyone being extremely friendly and welcoming.

Here is a day in our life...

## 8:50

After a brisk and often chilly walk to school, we go to our form rooms where we get involved in a range of activities including personal development, learning things like first aid, hearing announcements from our student leaders which Lara helps present as a representative for the Making Good Decisions team and having time to catch up with friends.

## 9:10

Firstly, on a typical Friday morning, we take part in an hour of enrichment. We've both chosen to work towards achieving our sports leader's qualification, a course where we learn how to lead groups with confidence, develop our communication skills and practise planning inclusive sessions. This is a nice hour to start the day with the balance of classroom work and hands on time in the sports hall giving the lessons a varied feel.

## 10:10

Time for English, one of our favourite hours of the day, where we are currently reading *Othello* and *The Great Gatsby*, having just finished *Richard II*. Compared to GCSE, there is lots more discussion time and the class size being much smaller means everyone gets more individual feedback. The books studied varies between schools but so far we've really enjoyed the chosen texts and the format they

are taught in – the lessons are a mixture of watching, reading, note taking and discussion, so we gain different perspectives from fellow students, and you feel like you're really engaging with the text.

## 11:10

A twenty-minute break gives us time to talk with friends as well as having a snack.

## 11:30

Art is quite an independent lesson, most of the time involving us coming in, setting up our equipment and getting straight down to work, unless we are starting a new piece where we are taught how to use the new media. It is relaxed and often goes by so quickly! The scale of the art is quite different, being much larger than GCSE, but this is definitely a positive as it gives more time for a piece to develop. The equipment and specific Sixth Form space is really helpful – at the moment we are doing a portrait project, working with oil paint which is exciting and something new for us.



## 12:30

We now have an hour for lunch, during which we sit in the hub, chatting with friends and eating – we mostly bring our own food but if we fancy a treat we get lunch out, organising the day so we can

all eat out together.

## 1:30

Now it's time for our free, yay! During this hour we can choose where we go, options including the common room for a more social environment, the hub which is a great space for group activities or the library mezzanine which is the perfect quiet space for concentrated work. We often opt to go to the Sixth Form only art area to catch up on any incomplete pieces. It's great to have time to spend on individual improvements, giving us the freedom and independence to manage our own workload.

## 2:30

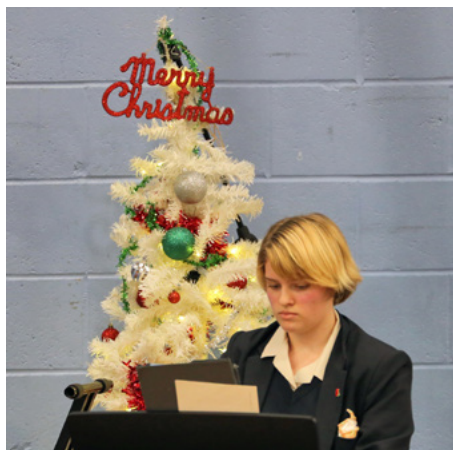
We end the day with a maths lesson. In this hour we usually focus on learning new content as we are expected to really cement our understanding with independent study, done outside of school. Although we were concerned with the teaching pace when we first moved, the teachers have been super supportive, there is no limit to the number of questions you can ask and there is a real focus on fully grasping the topic before we move on. Assessments are frequent but we've found this puts less pressure on each result, the focus being instead on reviewing and learning from mistakes.

## 3:30

In terms of extra-curricular activities, we both enjoy cross country running so we run twice a week which is super fun and a good activity to help us maintain a healthy work life balance. Typically, once we return home, we spend some time completing homework and independent study and, if we have a test the next day, do some revision. If we're not running, we might then take our dog for a walk and spend some time with our family.

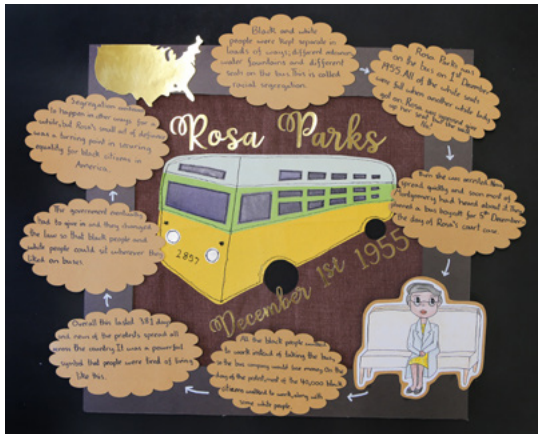


# Christmas Concert 2025

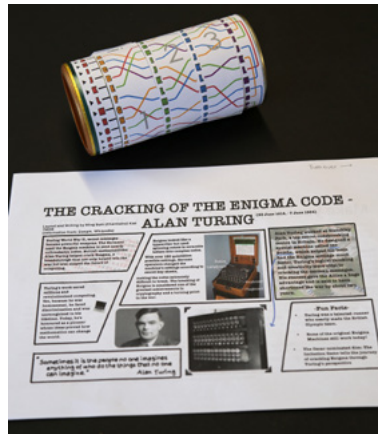




# Year 7 create amazing entries for “Turning Points in History” competition



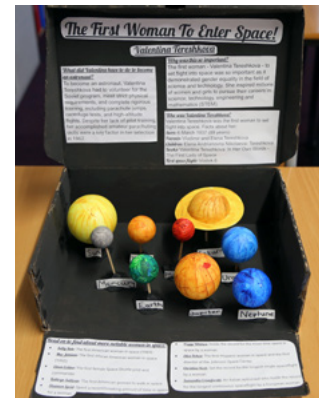
**1st** Rosa Parks  
by Olivia in 7SPA



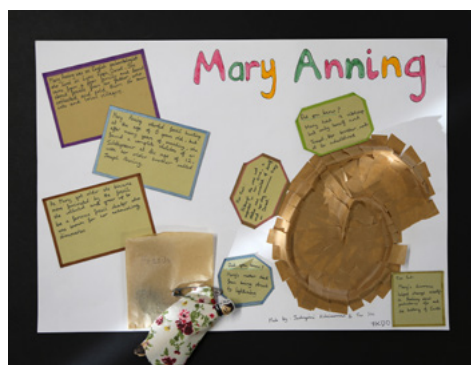
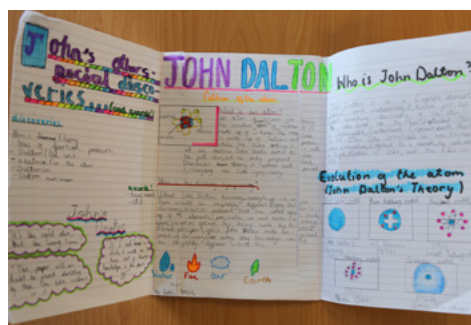
**2nd** The Enigma Code  
by Charmaine in 7MOR



**3rd** The Black Death  
by Reet and Jia in 7AHU



Highly Commended entries: **The Steam Engine** by Bianma in 7AHU, **Man on the Moon** by Taiba in 7PSA, **The Printing Press** by Hailey in 7AHU, and **First Woman in Space** by Ella in 7KDO.





## Year 9 'Tinsel Tourny' netball competition



You can look forward to our next newsletter at the end of the Spring 1 half-term in February!

In the meantime, keep up to date by following us on:  
[facebook.com/suttcold](https://www.facebook.com/suttcold)



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