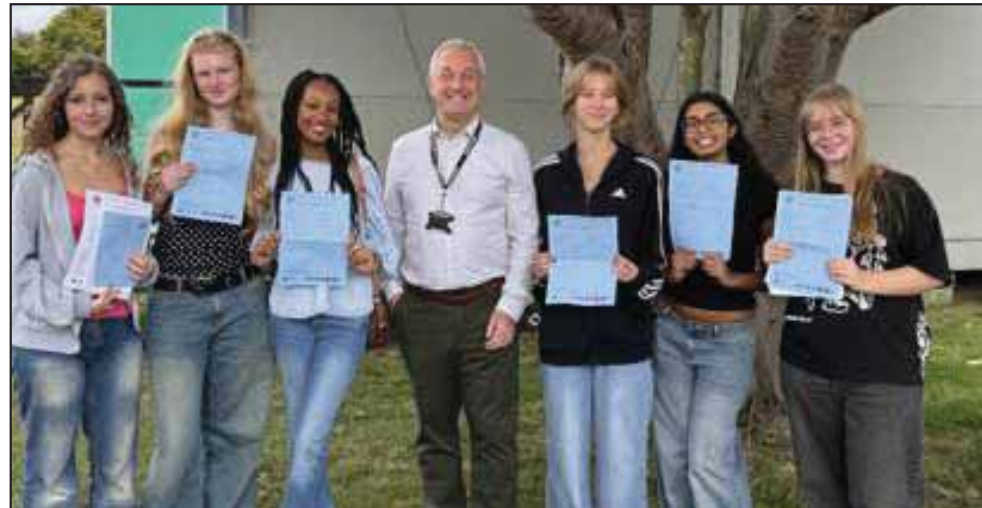


Southend schools cheer

Students shine as grammar schools celebrate their outstanding results



■ Rising pass rates - Students with their GCSE results at Shoebury High School



■ National success - Headteacher Jason Carey with Southend High School for Girls pupils



■ Thrilled - Headteacher Mike Skelly with pupils at Westcliff High School for Boys

GRAMMAR schools across Southend and Westcliff are celebrating another year of outstanding GCSE success.

Record numbers of top grades were achieved, with pupils ranked among the best in the country and many preparing to return for sixth form.

At Southend High School for Girls, more than 80 per cent of pupils secured an average of grades 7, 8 or 9, with 47 per cent of results at grades 9 and 8.

A fifth of all grades were at the highest level 9.

Headteacher Jason Carey said the results were “truly outstanding” and praised students’ “dedication and resilience”.

Among the standout stories, Emily Anstis, Mia Keith, and Mayah George were named among the top Fine Art performers nationally, following in the footsteps of sixth-former Gabriel Borbe, who last week earned a top national mark in A Level Art.

Westcliff High School for Boys reported some of its best ever GCSE results, with 56 per cent of grades at 9–8 and 75 per cent at 9–7.

Nearly a third of exams achieved grade 9, and 70 per cent of pupils achieved at least eight grades at 9–7.

Seven students earned an extraordinary 12 grade 9s, placing the school firmly among the country’s leading performers.

Headmaster Mike Skelly congratulated students on their “outstanding results which reflect their commitment and endeavour”.

At Southend High School for Boys, nearly one in five grades awarded was a 9, with thirteen pupils collectively securing more than 150 top grades between them.

Headteacher Rachel Worth said: “We are incredibly proud of all our students at SHSB — not just for their outstanding GCSE results, but for the remarkable young people they have become.”

“These achievements reflect their resilience, ambition, and determination, nurtured through the support of our dedicated staff and wider school community.”

Meanwhile, Westcliff High School for Girls celebrated with an atmosphere of “joy and pride”, with Headteacher Emma Matthews praising students’ resilience and determination.

Many will now continue into the school’s sixth form, joined by new students from across the region.

GCSE success stories

By SOPHIE ENGLAND

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PUPILS at schools across Southend celebrated not just outstanding GCSE results but also triumphs over huge personal challenges.

At Chase High School in Westcliff, several teenagers who had to adjust to life in a new country and education system achieved impressive grades.

Their success comes as schools across Southend marked another year of strong GCSE results.

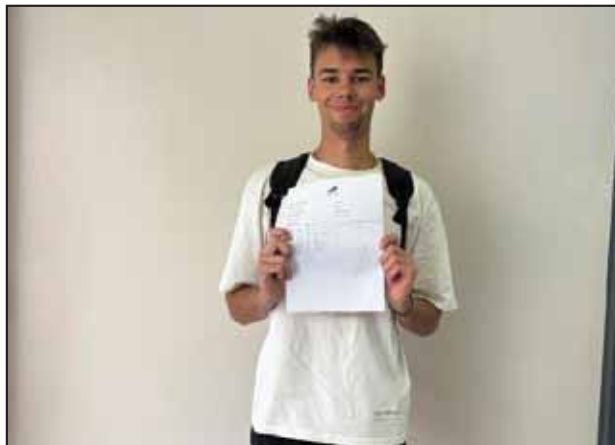
Among them was 16-year-old Arsenii Handzii, who fled the war in Ukraine and joined Chase at the end of Year 8 with little English.

Supported with extra language lessons, he went on to secure three Grade 7s, alongside solid passes across his subjects.

Arsenii, who also excels in sport, will go on to study physics, maths and PE with ambitions of a career in engineering.

He said: "Back then, I thought I would fail English, for sure, so I am so happy. I had really good teachers who helped me and cared about my results."

Fellow student Tharul Maduma Kankanamalage, who



■ Impressive - 16-year-old Chase High School pupil Arsenii Handzii

moved from Sri Lanka less than a year ago, achieved Grade 8 and 7 in English GCSEs, and will go on to study maths and science at A-level.

Meanwhile, Zimbabwean twins Deborah and Dianah Chikopo praised the school's support after moving to the UK in 2022. Both also earned solid sets of results and have set their sights on medi-

cine and criminology.

Deputy headteacher Danielle O'Neill described all their journeys as "a testament to their resilience and ability to thrive in unfamiliar surroundings."

Elsewhere in the borough, schools were also celebrating success.

Shoebury High School reported rising pass rates at grades 4-plus



■ Celebrating - Pupils at Chase High School

and 5-plus.

Headteacher Teri-Leigh Jones said: "I am incredibly proud of our Year 11 students, who have shown real determination, resilience and maturity throughout their GCSEs and I know that I speak for all of us here at Shoebury High School."

At Southchurch High School, pupils achieved the school's best

GCSE results ever.

Headteacher Tracy Airoll said the record outcomes were down to students' "remarkable determination" and the dedication of teaching staff.

She added: "We are incredibly proud. Congratulations to everyone involved, and we wish our students all the best as they embark on their next steps."

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Your exam triumphs

Zimbabwe twins' success

TWIN sisters who moved to the UK from Zimbabwe just two years ago are celebrating GCSE success.

Deborah and Dianah Chikopo, 16, joined Chase High School in 2022 and leaned on each other for strength as they adapted to a new country and education system.

Deborah achieved one Grade 9, one Grade 8, two Grade 6s, two Grade 5s and two Grade 4s. She plans to study biology, chemistry and psychology, with ambitions of working in medicine.

Her sister Dianah secured two Grade 7s, three Grade 5s and two Grade 4s and hopes to pursue a future in forensics or criminology.



Record breaker Kara

RECORD-HOLDING athlete Kara Dodd, 16, collected one Grade 8, one Grade 7, five Grade 6s and a Distinction* when she returned to Chase High School on results day yesterday.

She will now stay on at the school's sixth form to study biology, chemistry and psychology.

Kara, who described sport as the "highlight" of her time at the Westcliff school, has broken school records in high jump every year from Year 7 to Year 10.

She is also a thorough champion in both high jump and hurdles, and has competed in regional athletics finals, as well as helping her school team win the borough basketball championship in Year 8.

Kara said: "I am actually very happy with my results. It is a massive weight off my shoulders.

"Sport was the highlight of my time at school. The school literally has every path open to you. Whatever sport you wanted to do, the school would support you.

"There is the option to take sport as an enrichment at sixth form, so I will definitely be doing that."



Thanks to teachers

A MAYFLOWER High School pupil is celebrating an outstanding set of GCSE results after praising her teachers for the guidance and extra support that helped her prepare.

Ruby Toll, 16, from Billericay, achieved an exceptional haul of grades with eight Grade 9s, one Grade 8 and one Grade 7.

She will now remain at Mayflower's sixth form to study Spanish, politics and psychology.

Reflecting on her success, Ruby said: "I could go to my teachers with extra work and they were really knowledgeable about the exams, so I felt really prepared. The extra sessions they put on were also really helpful."



'I can't believe it'

A SHOEBOURY High School pupil is celebrating an outstanding set of GCSE results after achieving far higher grades than she had expected.

Lyric Marimba, 16, collected two Grade 9s, five Grade 8s and three Grade 7s – including a surprise Grade 7 in maths, where she had been working at a Grade 6 level.

She said: "I'm really happy – I can't believe it.

"I've done much better than I thought. In maths I was at a 6 at a push, but I managed to get a 7 – pressure and revision helped.

"I'm staying here for sixth form to study chemistry, biology, art and RE."

Shoebury High School headteacher Teri-Leigh Jones said the results reflected the hard work of students and staff.

She added: "I am incredibly proud of our Year 11 students, who have shown real determination, resilience and maturity throughout their GCSEs.

"These results reflect not only the hard work of our young people but also the commitment of our staff, who have supported, challenged and guided them every step of the way."



Outstanding results

A BILLERICAY student is celebrating an outstanding set of GCSE results as his school marked its best ever year of attainment.

Josh Rodgers achieved two Grade 9s, five Grade 8s and two Grade 7s, securing his place at The Billericay School's Sixth Form, where he will go on to study maths, further maths, economics and computer science.

Josh said: "It wasn't just the free breakfasts each morning at the Breakfast Revision Clubs that helped me achieve these grades, it was the support from the teachers. I'm really happy with the results and I'm coming back here for Sixth Form in September."

This year's GCSE results were the best in the school's history, with the highest percentage yet of students achieving grades 9 to 4 in both English and maths.

Headteacher Patrick Berry added: "These results are a testament to the dedication of our students, commitment of our staff, and the support of our families."



My nursing dream

A STUDENT from Nigeria is celebrating her GCSE success after achieving a strong pass in English at South Essex Colleges Group.

Olayiwola Ode, 17, secured a Grade 5 in English while studying Level 2 Health and Social Care at South Essex Colleges Group.

Her result marks an important step on her journey towards a career in nursing.

She said: "I feel good, all my hard work was not in vain, and my teacher always pushed me.

"Even when I didn't pass my mock exam, she was encouraging saying 'it's your first time writing GCSE English, you're doing so good and to keep pushing'.

Now, Olayiwola is determined to achieve a Grade 4 in maths, which will allow her to progress to university and begin training for her chosen career.

Her success reflects not only her determination but also the support of staff at South Essex Colleges Group, who have helped her strive for a future in healthcare.



Grade 9 sweep

A 16-YEAR-OLD among just 13 pupils at his school to achieve grade 9s across the board has thanked his hard-working teachers.

Luke Barton, from Benfleet, picked up 11 grade 9s in his GCSEs at Southend High School for Boys yesterday.

He will now be returning to the grammar school's sixth form to study maths, chemistry, geography and music.

The teenager said: "I'm so grateful for the opportunities Southend High School for Boys has given me over the past 5 years.

"The hard work of teachers and pupils are reflected in the results."



Proud of marks

A PUPIL who travelled all the way from Hornchurch to Southend High School for Boys also achieved 9s across the board.

Raahaan Chhina, 16, is celebrating picking up 11 grade 9s.

Raahaan will be heading to Brampton Manor Academy, one of the top performing sixth forms in the country, and then hopes to pursue a career in finance.

He said: "I am proud of my achievements and thank all the teachers and friends and family that have helped on the way."



12 grade 9s

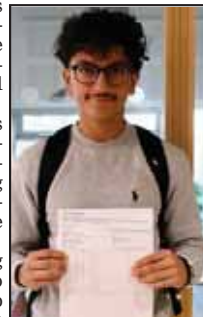
A TEENAGER is celebrating achieving an impressive 12 grade 9s at Westcliff High School for Boys.

Karmanya looks forward to celebrating his terrific results having achieved an outstanding 12 grade 9s at GCSE.

He is among seven pupils who achieved the top results across the board.

Looking at his results, Karmanya said: "I am so pleased with all the hard work I put in and so grateful to all my teachers."

Westcliff High School for Boys saw 70 per cent of pupils achieve eight or more 9 to 7 grades, placing it among the leading school in the country.



Work paid off

A GIRL who achieved an impressive four grade 9s credited her perseverance for her results.

Keziah Dulsan, 16, pictured with headteacher Patrick Berry, achieved 4 grade 9s, a Distinction Star, a grade 8, a grade 7 and a grade 6, at The Billericay School.

She said: "My great results are all down to the hard work and perseverance from both me and the school.

"I am very much looking forward to joining The Billericay School Sixth Form."

This year, the school recorded its highest percentage of students achieving grades 9 to 4 in both English and maths, representing a 2 per cent rise on the previous year.

