



The Essential Case File : Character Profiles The Sussex Academy Teachers

Ms Stratmann :

Ms Stratmann is the head teacher at Sussex Academy, and rather strict with it. She has no time for nonsense and believes firmly in doing things by the book.

She appreciates Shirley's classwork and good grades, but isn't prepared to let the girl get away with any rule-breaking or unpunctuality because of it. As for Bo; Ms Stratmann makes no bones about the fact that he has a lot of catching up to do – and she's not at all sure that Bo and Shirley's friendship is a good thing. His grades might be improving but, in her opinion, his attitude isn't.

Deep within her, Ms Stratmann has rather a soft spot for Shirley's wild side – but even a detective as good as Shirley has trouble seeing through the head teacher's stern nature.



Mrs Goldstein :

Mrs Goldstein is teacher of English at Sussex Academy, and loves both her job and her subject. A flamboyant dresser with an interesting past, she is passionate about poetry, drama and literature.

She adores heated class debates (of which Shirley is often the instigator) and doesn't follow the curriculum too closely. Sometimes this gets her into trouble with Ms Stratmann ! Mrs Goldstein considers Shirley to be one of her bright sparks. She sent home one glowing school report, singing her praises as a creative thinker and a talented actress. She's also very supportive of Bo, enjoying his ready wit that spices up class discussions.

Mrs Goldstein is the only teacher at Sussex who sees right through Molly Hardy – a fact that hasn't gone unnoticed. Molly is unlikely to let this go without some retaliation.

Mr Howie :

Mr Howie teaches history at Sussex Academy. Only three years away from retirement, he can't wait for that day to arrive ! He's been in teaching for 40 years and, during that time, children and the whole world have changed far too much for his liking.

Once upon a time, his students were obedient and quiet; they just sat still and did what they were told. Nowadays there are kids like Shirley to contend with – always asking questions. Or Bart – whose incessant babble about extraterrestrials completely unhinges him. Why all his students can't be like Molly, he doesn't know. Now, there's a nice, polite, quiet girl....

Dr Mackey :

Dr Mackey looks like a mad professor and often behaves like one too. He's very good at what he does, but he's also quite scatty and forgetful, too. Consequently, science lessons at Sussex Academy can occasionally be rather dramatic !

Shirley is regarded by Dr Mackey as remarkably observant, with an analytical mind. However, he gets annoyed when she uses the lab to do her own experiments, which he considers potentially dangerous. This makes Shirley smile – why, only last Friday she had to remind him to turn off the Bunsen burner before he left for the weekend !

Ms Tanaka :

A lean, mean machine, woe-betide any pupil who tries to duck out of Physical Education at Sussex Academy. Ms Tanaka is a firm believer in the benefits of exercise and sport; her claim to fame is that she nearly qualified as an Olympic rower back in the eighties. A firm disciplinarian, she just loves the whistle that hangs around her neck !

Ms Tanaka has often remarked that Shirley has difficulty with team sports. Shirley agrees to a certain extent : she just doesn't see the point of a group of people charging at her just to get a ball ! But Ms Tanaka doesn't get to see her excellent skills of running, climbing and jumping in action – when she's on a case.

Mr Finkel :

Mr Finkel has been a music teacher his whole life and, while he's competent, he doesn't find it inspirational any more. He goes through the motions – and keeps a big supply of ear plugs in his desk !

Shirley has violin lessons with Mr Finkel and is very disappointed that he seems to share Watson's opinion of her musical ability. In fact, in her last report he suggested that she should maybe try another instrument – perhaps the triangle ? Still, as we know well by now, Shirley is not a girl to give up on anything in a hurry. Sherlock Holmes had been an excellent musician and, since they share so many traits, she is sure she's got the music in her, somewhere