



5<sup>th</sup> July 2024

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope this finds you well.

## **PHSG reaches 150 years**

I write to you following a very successful celebration of Plymouth High having officially reached our 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. On the 4<sup>th</sup> July we had a wonderful morning with our students, sharing details about our school's long history and recording PHSG memories for posterity. Students were also able to visit our archive room which was full of articles and artefacts from across the years.

In the afternoon we hosted an event for our alumni and special guests and were delighted to welcome back two past Headteachers, Mrs Rosemary Stoggall and Mrs Sue Martin, both of whom very kindly addressed the audience. Our guests visited the archive room, had a good look around the school and enjoyed a cream tea and a rendition of the school song. If you would like to learn more about the long history of our school, do visit our website [here](#)

## **PHSG mock election**

As part of PHSG's preparation for this week's General Election, members of our Sixth Form helped raise awareness and engagement by hosting a debate, taking on the roles of spokesperson for each of the main political parties.

With a large audience taking up much of the Newman Hall, students from all year groups had an opportunity to put questions to the parties regarding a broad range of issues ranging from tuition fees and mental health to transgender rights and Gaza in what proved to be, at times, a very lively and enlightening debate.

The debate was followed by a whole school mock election on the Tuesday morning where every student across KS3, KS4 and KS5 had the opportunity to vote through a secret ballot for the party they felt best represented their views and hopes for the country. This had clearly provoked conversations between students with many sharing with their friends and family afterwards how they voted and why. The count took place and at Wednesday breaktime, the day before the real thing, Plymouth High gave its verdict.

And it was overwhelmingly in favour of the Liberal Democrats winning 177 of the 402 votes cast, thanks largely to huge numbers of Year 9 and 10 voting for the party. In second place were the Greens with 88 votes with Labour in third with 75. Reform finished with 51 votes while the Conservatives ended with 11 votes.

A big thank you should go to our five intrepid sixth formers who took on the roles of representatives for the political parties and prepared thoroughly for the debate, scanning manifestos and watching the debates. These include the candidate of the winning party Janek S, Olivia H (Green), Sarah C (Labour), Tom C (Conservative) and Joshua H (Reform). They all did a fantastic job.

## **The Day**

As mentioned in my letter a few weeks ago, Ofsted inspectors felt there was capacity for us to increase student opportunities for academic reading (rather than reading fiction for pleasure which our students engage with enthusiastically). We thought carefully about how this might look and wanted students to have the widest possible access to age appropriate and verified articles in the easiest possible format. As a result, we have subscribed to The Day.

The Day is an online platform specifically designed to provide students with a diverse range of reading material that should spark their interest and help them to stay informed.

The Day is an online daily newspaper for young people. They publish analysis of the news that provides context for debates that explore current affairs in some depth.

Here is the link to [The Day](#), there is no need to log in, just click and read on. Parents and carers should feel free to use this website as well. Students can read all about the

general election outcomes using The Day in the sure knowledge that all articles have been verified.

### **The end of term and the new school year**

We are all looking forward to curriculum enrichment week next week, then the music festival on Friday the 19<sup>th</sup> July. We will finish at 1pm on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> July as our last day of the school year. DHSB buses have been organised to collect students for the early finish. However, we are unable to change other bus and train times. If you would like us to supervise your child until 3.30pm, please do contact your child's Head of Year. There will not be a lunch service on Friday 19<sup>th</sup>, but students will be able to buy food at break time as normal. Friday the 19<sup>th</sup> July will be a mufti day.

The return to school in September is as follows. Year 7 and year 12 return on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> September and the rest of the school return on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> September. You can see the term dates for 2024 25 [here](#) and the calendar [here](#). Don't forget that we have a two week October half term holiday in 2024 25.

Very best wishes,



**Simon Underdown.**  
**Headteacher.**