



13th September 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope this finds you well.

It was wonderful to welcome year 12 parents and students to our year 12 expectation evening this week, thank you to everyone who was able to make it. Communicating expectations and being clear about our school offer is a crucial part of our school-home relationship. We are fortunate to have a supportive parental body and are grateful to parents and carers for what they do at home to amplify the school message of being kind, trying hard, attending well and being organised. Our young people really do benefit from the consistent messaging around study and behavioural expectations, and I thank you for working with us as we do our best to help every young person maximise their opportunities and outcomes.

Year 7 have been enjoying their team building activities this week. Each tutor group have been for a day out with their tutor, working together and getting to know each other better. Friendships made and strengthened on these days will be the foundation for strong positive relationships for years to come.

Year 11 information from Mr Law

I hope you have had an enjoyable and restful summer.

It was a real pleasure to welcome our students back to school last week. The students have started the year positively and we thank them for the lovely atmosphere since returning to school.

I would like to take this opportunity to provide you with some key information and dates to support you as parents/carers, as we begin Year 11.

The progress of our students is affected by many factors both at school and at home and we are committed to working with you to maximise your child's chances of success next summer. Ensuring our Year 11 students are provided with all the support they need to achieve their full potential and are well prepared for the summer examination period is a key priority for the school. Year 11 is a key time for your child.

At classroom level, teachers will adapt to the needs of their classes constantly, looking carefully at assessment results and responding to the needs of individuals. The majority of this will be done within the normal school day but sometimes students will be invited to extra small groups after school or during lunchtime as the need arises.

Key dates for your diary for the autumn terms:

Parents evening 11th and 17th October
Sixth form open evening 7th November
Mocks start 18th November

As you can see from the dates above, we are planning a Year 11 mock exam period in the run up to Christmas. Please can you support your child by encouraging them to revise at home for these important examinations. Over the coming weeks, I will write to you with hints and tips on how you might support your child in with their revision.

The countdown to year 11 mocks starts now:



May I take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support.
If you have any concerns or queries, then please do not hesitate to contact me directly, your child's tutor or Miss Roughton, Deputy Headteacher.

Assessment and Reporting

You will recall from my last letter that further details about our revised reporting system were promised this week. Here, Miss Roughton provides information which

we hope will enable parents and carers to feel more informed about how we will report progress. In assemblies this week, the students have been given information about the revised process in the hope that conversations at home following the reports being issued are as productive as possible.

Our reporting system at PHSG will ensure that you are kept up to date with how your child is both progressing with their studies as well as informing you of their effort and behaviour.

We want ALL students to:

- Make progress and excel
- Know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve
- Know that they can achieve
- Celebrate their progress, whatever their starting points

The first report that you will receive provides a statement about how well your child is progressing in each of their subjects and a number to indicate their approach to learning in each of their subjects.

Statements about how well a student is progressing in each of their subject are:

A. Your child has been successful in both the learning and application of the content taught to date. They have successfully met the demands of the content that they have been presented with in class.

B. Your child has at times found some of the content difficult. They must try to work through these difficulties and keep applying themselves to gain full understanding and make progress.

C. Your child has found a considerable amount of the content to date difficult. We would recommend that they use their knowledge organisers to learn key terminology, facts and processes to help support their learning journey and to take up the ongoing support that teachers offer in class to ensure that these difficulties are dealt with quickly to improve understanding and confidence.

The number will outline the students approach to learning which will include their attitude, effort and behaviour in lessons.

The scores will fall into one of four categories:

1. **Outstanding:** a student who is consistently highly motivated and ambitious, with an excellent work ethic. A student who takes responsibility for their learning and is proactive and goes beyond the expectations of the teacher.

2. **Good:** a student who is motivated and has a good work ethic. They are keen to work and to learn, and are usually **enthusiastic**, participating actively in lessons. They make use of opportunities to reinforce learning and can be independent.
3. **Requires improvement:** a student whose motivation, and work ethic, is inconsistent.
4. **Cause for Concern:** a student who is rarely motivated and has a poor work ethic.

We set high expectations at PHSG and whilst some students will have a mix of 1s and 2s, it is not uncommon for some students to have a mixture of 2s and 3s on their reports. An attitude learning of a 3 indicates that a student is on a learning journey and that improvements can be made in one or more areas to help them progress. For example, some students might need some support with their organisation and hence a 3b might be issued for some missed or incomplete homework.

Categories 3 and 4 are further broken down to allow teachers to highlight the specific area that a child might need to improve on and this might be with regards to; effort, attitude, homework or behaviour, or perhaps a combination of these.

3a. **Requires improvement:** a student whose motivation and work ethic is inconsistent. Is not always actively **engaged** with the lesson and may need prompting to keep focussed on a task. Does not make the most of opportunities to reinforce learning beyond lessons.

3b. **Requires improvement:** a student whose has repeatedly produced homework late or that is not up to the standard expected. on a task.

3c. **Requires improvement:** a student whose behaviour in lessons has had to be challenged on more than one occasion, this may include repeatedly talking when the teacher or another student is speaking or calling out or not listening.

3d. **Requires improvement:** a student whose behaviour in lessons has had to be challenged on more than one occasion and whose homework is often late or not up to standard.

4a. **Cause for Concern:** a student who is rarely motivated and has a poor work ethic. Shows **little enthusiasm** for learning, needing constant supervision, and prompting. Gives up easily, especially if work is challenging or if low marks are received; shows **little resilience**; may refuse, or take steps to avoid, advice or requests to improve the work.

4b. **Cause for Concern:** a student whose behaviour is not appropriate and has had to be moved seats or removed from the lesson so that the lesson can proceed without distraction or interruption.

Other reports throughout the year will include the same information as above about effort and behaviour but will also include information about predicted grades.

Parents will also receive one written report each academic year with targets and/or improvement comments.

Photocopying

We are mindful about our green credentials as a school and we endeavour to recycle and reuse wherever we can. One way in which we can reduce our carbon footprint is to reduce the printing that we do as a school.

We have imposed limits on how much students can print for free starting from this September.

We are mindful that students in years 10 and above often need to print more documents for their GCSE NEA portfolios in D&T, Art and Music or, they may wish to print past papers to complete at home and the limits reflect these potential needs.

Year 7 to 9 - Limit of 10p per month. This gives printing of 50 sheets per month.

Year 10 to 11 - Limit of 30p per month. This gives printing of 150 sheets per month.

Year 12 & 13 - Limit of 75p per month. This gives printing of 375 sheets per month.

These limits have been chosen in light of the analysis of the data collected throughout the past academic year on how much each student printed. These limits have been chosen so that the majority of students will not see any change to their printing habits and will be able to print as normal. However, for some, it might make them think about what they are printing and why.

Top-up printer credits will be available to purchase on parent pay, but as this is a new process please bear with us whilst we set this up for the students.

As always, we thank you for your support and understanding as we do our bit to limit our impact on the environment and to reduce waste.

Sparx

Mathematics homework will once again be via the Sparx platform for years 7 to 11. Years 8 to 11 have had their first Sparx homework set this week, whilst year 7 will have their first Sparx homework set next week. Sparx is a weekly homework which is matched to each student's ability and work rate. The idea is that every student is capable of achieving 100% each week. Our expectation is that 100% of students complete their Sparx each week with a score of 100%.

Attached to each homework are explanation videos that students can use if they are not sure and homework tasks are always linked to recent learning. Students can also access support in school should they be unsure as to what to do. Homework will be set on a Wednesday and is due in the following Wednesday. As you would expect, whilst there is always support available for students who would like some extra help, there are also consequences for students who do not meet the 100% expectations. As always, we thank you for your support in helping to ensure that your child achieves 100% each week.

11+ and open evening

This Saturday is the first of the two 11+ testing days for year 7 entry in 2025 followed by the second testing day the week after. If any of our parents and carers have a child joining us for the assessment this week and next, we wish her good luck.

We have our main opening evening on Thursday 19th September. Full details can be found [here on our website](#). As ever, we have been inviting students to stay behind on the 19th to be ambassadors for our visiting families. If your child would like to help out on the evening, they should collect a consent letter for you to read, sign and return. Thank you to those parents and carers who support the evening by helping their child to attend. It is always the student ambassadors that visiting families enjoy meeting, indeed you may remember your visit on an open day and how the student ambassadors made it special.

Very best wishes,



Simon Underdown.
Headteacher.