



THINKING
SCHOOLS
ACADEMY TRUST

Plymouth High School for Girls

"For life, not school, we learn"

28th March 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope this finds you well.

Moving away from SiMs to Arbor

We are in the process of changing our management information service from SiMs to Arbor. Whilst the change will not impact parents/carers and students much, it does mean that the SiMs app will stop working. There will be a new Arbor app which we are hoping to launch with parents and carers soon after the Easter break. More details in due course.

Annual Health and Safety Review by Devon County Council

I am delighted to share that we have received a glowing report following our recent Health and Safety review carried out by Devon County Council. The facilities team, who monitor and improve health and safety across the school site, have worked tirelessly to ensure that our site is safe. The review scrutinised the school's Health and Safety arrangements and policies, in order to measure our compliance against the recognised national standards and established best practice. The review showed that we are 100% compliant across all H&S areas.

Tranquil Turtles

As you may know, our students complete regular check-ins with Pulse, our online wellbeing platform. I am delighted to share that our students are engaging enthusiastically with Pulse. It is important for students to 'check-in' as it provides us with visibility of wellbeing levels across the school, and gives our young people a chance to pass on a 'thank you' to someone who has made a difference to them. With



so many students completing their wellbeing check-ins, there was tough competition for who would win the tranquil turtles this week. The winning tutor group is 8T. Miss Cook enjoyed congratulating them when she delivered their tranquil turtles this week. Congratulations 8T 🎉

A further shout out to the following tutor groups for getting 100% 'checked-in'; 7L, 7T, 8K, and 8L

Reading

We know that the more we read, the more neural activity occurs. This leads to more neural productivity while also strengthening the various pathways in our brains. These pathways improve overall cognitive functioning, which helps our ability to actively recall information.

Below are the reading suggestions for this week. Please do encourage your children to have a look, perhaps also discuss the content at home. As always, the topics are related to subjects that are taught at PHSG.

PSHE [Why do we procrastinate even when it feels bad? - The Day](#)

Law ['I'm not jumping in after you' says officer - The Day](#)

Economics [The woman forging a greener, more equal world - The Day](#)

TikTok, a revision warning

TikTok can be a significant part of the lives of people aged 13 and over (TikTok is not for children below the age of 13), and your child may spend time viewing content every day. It can be a fantastic source of entertainment and inspiration. However, I want to share a word of caution about using TikTok for examination *revision*.

There are many accounts promoting revision techniques, re-teaching content, and promising top grades. However, it is important to consider the motives behind these content creators. The reality is simple: financial gain. Many rely on sponsored content, brand deals, and gifts, meaning their primary goal is likely to be increasing their followers, not necessarily providing the most effective revision strategies.

To attract more followers, many creators exploit children's preference for familiarity and comfort. They aim to make students *feel* as though they have mastered a subject, encouraging them to return time and time again for more content. However, they often achieve this by focusing on simpler aspects of the curriculum and providing less depth than is required for top-grade answers. This can lead students to mistake

comfort for confidence—only to realise in the examination that their understanding lacks the depth needed to achieve the highest marks.

We would encourage parents and carers to talk with their children about how they revise and where they are accessing resources. Please do encourage your child to use a variety of reliable revision sources, including school-provided materials and also trusted brands (such as BBC Bitesize and the UK examination boards), as this will help ensure they are fully prepared.

Understanding Metacognition: Helping Your Child Become a Better Learner

Metacognition is the ability to think about thinking. It means being aware of how we learn, monitoring our understanding and adjusting strategies when necessary. Simply put, it's about knowing how to learn effectively.

Research shows that students who practice metacognition tend to be more successful. They improve their problem-solving skills, become more independent, and retain information better. By reflecting on their thought processes, students can develop stronger study habits and increase their confidence.

To help develop metacognitive skills, teachers will regularly discuss with students the reasons behind the activities they choose. This helps students understand the thinking behind their learning tasks and see the value in them. As students become aware of how they learn best, they can take more control of their learning process, improving their outcomes.

As parents, you can support metacognition at home by encouraging self-reflection. Ask your child questions like, what worked well in your homework? or what strategies helped you understand this topic? Encourage goal-setting and celebrate their efforts and strategies, not just the results.

By fostering metacognitive skills, we empower students to become independent, confident learners, ready to tackle challenges both in school and beyond.

Parent/Carer surveys

During the summer term we will be inviting parents and carers to respond to a range of surveys to help us capture your views. More information about these surveys in due course.

Dates for your diary

All years

4th April, last day of term and Gym and Dance Festival. Normal school day timings
22nd April, first day back after the Easter break

Year 12

Mocks begin after Easter

Years 7 to 9

May 19th End of year examinations begin

Year 10

24th April and 1st May main days for the Year 10 parents' evening (online via booking)

Best wishes,



Simon Underdown
Headteacher