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Plymouth High School for Girls

"For life, not school, we learn"

27th June 2025

Dear Parents,

I hope this finds you well.

We had a really successful open evening last night, made all the more special by our fabulous student ambassadors. So many visitors commented on just how knowledgeable, confident and polite our students were. They are a real credit to our school and to their families, thank you to those parents and carers who supported their child to be part of the event.

PHSG wins SWAT Challenge Cup 2025

We are delighted to share that Plymouth High School for Girls has been awarded first place in this year's prestigious SWAT Challenge Cup, a competition that brings together grammar schools from across the South West of England to tackle complex, real-world challenges through critical thinking, collaboration, and innovation.

This year's theme was a particularly timely and nuanced question: "How can we increase public trust in the police?"

Representing PHSG were five members of our Thinking Leadership Team – Lilly, Katie, Amira, Simran and Ingrid – who responded with an outstanding proposal: a smartphone app named "Police Connect." The app would serve as a hub for local policing information, offering features such as up-to-date policies and practices, advice on crime prevention, a chat function to improve accessibility, and tools designed to boost transparency and build community confidence in policing.

Their concept stood out for its relevance, innovation, and practicality – impressing a judging panel that included Catherine Saunders, Communications and Publications



Manager at The Police Foundation, and Temporary Assistant Chief Constable Mathew Longman of Devon & Cornwall Police.

We are incredibly proud of the team for this remarkable achievement – especially given the strong competition from the other grammar schools in Plymouth the rest of the south west. Their thoughtful response to a real societal issue reflects the best of PHSG's values: learning not just for school, but for life.

Events like the SWAT Challenge Cup remind us of the value of working collaboratively with other leading grammar schools across the region, and of the shared commitment within the South West Academic Trust (SWAT) to nurture thoughtful, articulate and socially engaged young people.

Electric car racing team

Yesterday, both our Hummingbird and Xantus cars raced at Predannack airfield in the Greenpower F24 race. Both cars performed really well as did the pit and strategy teams. Team PHSG provided so much support from trackside that our drivers could hear the cheering inside the car with their helmets on as they raced by. A huge thank you to our generous sponsors Becton Dickinson, who joined us at the event and provided essential support and guidance.

Hummingbird came 2nd on the day after winning race 1, but had a power issue in race 2. Xantus finished 6th in the end after being 1st for a large part of the race, but unfortunately running out of power with 4 minutes left of the race.

The race at Predannack was Miss Cook's last race and she couldn't be more proud of the way the teams conducted themselves on a very busy day.

PHSG also won best presented teams, meaning that we came home with two trophies. A great day was had by all.

Celebrating Success in the Intermediate Biology Olympiad

We are incredibly proud to share that ten of our Year 12 students recently took part in this year's UKBC Intermediate Biology Olympiad, a highly respected national competition run by the Royal Society of Biology.

With over 17,000 students across the UK taking part, this was a significant challenge, designed to stretch and inspire the most able young biologists. We're delighted to congratulate **Rosalind**, who achieved a Silver Award, placing her in the top 15% nationally, and **William**, who earned a Bronze Award, ranking in the top 30%. These

are exceptional achievements and a reflection of the intellectual curiosity, determination, and resilience that we aim to nurture in all our students.

Opportunities such as the Biology Olympiad exemplify our school's motto: *Non scholae sed vitae discimus* – *For life, not school, we learn*. Competitions like these go beyond the classroom, challenging students to apply their scientific thinking to unfamiliar and complex scenarios. They provide valuable preparation for future study, careers in STEM, and for becoming informed, reflective citizens of the world.

We applaud all ten students for stepping up to this challenge and embracing the opportunity to stretch themselves academically.

Reading

Reading is a key skill that can be developed and improved with practice. Reading makes such a difference to wellbeing, school curriculum access and widening our perspectives. Parents and carers who encourage their child(ren) to read the weekly suggestions and listen to them talk about what has been learned are offering their child a super opportunity for personal development. Thank you to our parents and carers for the value placed on reading in the home, it really does make a difference. Reading 20 pages per day is like reading around 30 books per year. Also, listening to a 1hr podcast per day gives us 365 more hours of knowledge per year. Below are the reading suggestions for this week. As always, these links have been sent to students.

IT [Apple to launch thinking phone](#)

Economics [Why are football shirts so expensive? - The Day](#)

Revised behaviour process for next academic year

I recently informed parents and carers about our plans to revise our behaviour processes for the next academic year. We will be replacing lunchtime detentions with after-school detentions and changing how these sanctions are applied.

Under the new system, if a student makes a minor mistake, such as a uniform fault or missing a deadline, they will receive a "C2". If a student accumulates three "C2"s in a term (we have six terms in the year), they will be given an after-school detention. At the end of each term, the count of "C2"s will be reset.

We hope that receiving a "C2" will encourage students to reflect on their actions and avoid further mistakes. We believe this change will be beneficial for our young people.

I will be sharing the details with students during assemblies next week.

Student Blazers

Due to the forecasted rise in temperatures over the weekend and into the start of next week, **blazers will not be a compulsory part of the school uniform on Monday.** Students should still wear the rest of their uniform as normal and are encouraged to bring a water bottle to stay hydrated throughout the day. We also advise applying sun cream before school and wearing a hat during break and lunchtime if outdoors. Students will be expected to wear their blazers as usual from **Tuesday onwards**, unless further guidance is provided by the school next week.

Best wishes,



Simon Underdown
Headteacher

School website latest news page.

This is where we celebrate student achievements and promote school related news. Please click [here](#) for our latest news

Dates for your diary

All years

Week beginning 7th July - Curriculum enrichment week and year 10 work experience week

15th July – Sports day

23rd July – Last day of term. Early finish for students. If you would like your child to be supervised until 3.30pm on 23rd July, please contact their Head of Year

Year 11

1st July - Year 11 Prom at Elfordleigh