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Plymouth High School for Girls

"For life, not school, we learn"

12 December 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope this finds you well.

A huge thank you to everyone who contributed mince pies and raffle prizes for our Carols and Mince Pies event. Your generosity helped make the occasion truly special.

The singing and playing were fantastic, and it was wonderful to see so many of you joining in the festive spirit. Our new 2026 Head Student Team really enjoyed hosting the event and are all set to lead the student body after Christmas.

A special thank you to the PTFA for providing drinks and serving warm mince pies, and for their ongoing support throughout the year.

We appreciate everyone who came along to sing and celebrate with us and for purchasing raffle tickets – a grand total of £129 was raised, so thank you for your generosity.

On behalf of all who attended, Mrs Marcer and Mrs Walsh deserve a heartfelt thanks for their hard work in putting the event together.



Reading

We know that reading is crucial to our academic and personal development and as we prepare for 2026 – The National Year of Reading – we are excited to launch a school-wide initiative: **The 26 Reads in 2026 Challenge!** This challenge is for everyone – students, parents, and staff – because reading is a shared journey that benefits us all.

Why Take Part?

Reading is one of the most powerful tools for learning and personal growth. It builds vocabulary, strengthens comprehension, and develops critical thinking. But the benefits go far beyond academics:

- **Improved Mental Wellbeing:** Reading reduces stress, improves focus, and offers a healthy escape from daily pressures.
- **Stronger Family Connections:** When parents and children read together or share recommendations, it creates meaningful conversations and shared experiences.
- **Equality of Opportunity:** By making reading a community priority, we ensure every child has access to the skills and confidence they need for success.

26 Reads could be:

- 26 books on your own as an individual – One book every two weeks is achievable yet impactful. It encourages regular reading without overwhelming busy schedules.
- 26 books as a family group across the year – Whether it's a novel, a biography, or a collection of short stories, each book adds to a growing habit that lasts a lifetime.

How We'll Support You:

- **Book Lists & Recommendations** – We'll share diverse reading lists for all ages and interests.

- **Community Events** – Look out for book swaps, reading circles, and themed challenges and consider joining your local library for more ideas.
- **Digital Access** – We'll highlight free e-books and audiobooks to make reading accessible for everyone.

Let's make 2026 a year where reading brings us together as a school and community.

Are you ready to take on the challenge? Start thinking about your first book and join us in making reading a habit that lasts a lifetime. Thank you for your support in making literacy a shared priority. Click on the following link to learn more:

[GO ALL IN | National Year of Reading 2026](#)

We need your help. The focus on parental reading (with their children and modelling their own reading behaviours) historically has largely concentrated on primary age children. However, statistics show that the number of young people who regularly read for pleasure drops significantly for secondary age students. This is something we would like to continue to address as a school and getting our wonderful parent body involved might be a way to boost this.

[Parents urged to read more to boost children's life chances - GOV.UK](#)

"Reading for pleasure isn't just a hobby. It's linked to a range of benefits including stronger writing skills, improved wellbeing and confidence, and even higher future earnings".

Look out for ways to get involved, including the school's "26 in 26" initiative - to be launched in January. There is also the opportunity to record reading a short story with your young person – the winners will be used during the Wednesday A reading slot.

School Admission Arrangements 2027/2028 Consultation

All members of our community are encouraged to take part in the city-wide school admission consultation. The closing date for the consultation is Sunday 11th January 2026 and any comments should be submitted using the online form at:

www.plymouth.gov.uk/admissionconsultation

Uniform shop

Want to save money and the planet? The uniform shop could be for you. It has already proved very popular with several families – over 65 students have bought or swapped uniform so far and we still have plenty of stock.

The shop will be open on **Tuesday 16th December** at 1.30pm in the new exam room.

- £5 for uniform (blazers, trousers and jumpers)
- £3 for any PE uniform
- 3 for the price of 2

Items are free from the shop if swapped with an existing item. Uniform shop items are free for pupil premium students.

Upcoming Consultation on our PSHE Curriculum

We would like to inform you about an important consultation regarding our Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) curriculum. This includes both the existing content and the new statutory content that will come into effect for first teaching in September 2026. PSHE plays a vital role in supporting students' personal development, wellbeing, and preparation for life beyond school. It helps young people build resilience, develop healthy relationships, understand the world around them, and make informed decisions about their health and safety. By teaching these skills in an age-appropriate way, we aim to equip students with the knowledge and confidence they need to thrive in modern society.

After the Christmas break, we will share detailed information about what we currently teach and our proposed placement of topics to ensure they are age appropriate. Following this, you will receive a form where you can give your feedback on the suitability of these topics for different age groups. Your views, alongside those of students and staff, will help us shape our updated PSHE curriculum, which will be introduced in September 2026. Please look out for the information and feedback form in January and take a few minutes to share your views.

In addition, we will be inviting parents to participate in a face-to-face forum to view and discuss the resources we use in PSHE. Your input is essential in helping us create a PSHE curriculum that reflects the needs of our students and community. If you are interested in joining the parent forum in March, we would very much like to hear from you. Details on how to sign up will be shared after Christmas. Thank you for your continued support.

Key Dates:

- **January 2026**
Information sent to parents about current and proposed PSHE content.
- **February 2026**
Parent feedback form distributed.
- **March 2026**
Parent forum to review resources and discuss age appropriateness.
- **April–June 2026**
Review of feedback from parents, students, and staff and development of the Schemes of Learning and resources.
- **September 2026**
Launch of updated PSHE curriculum.

Iceland Trip 2027

We are in the early stages of planning an exciting school trip to Iceland for curriculum enrichment week 2027. The trip will be open to students with a keen interest in Geography from Year 8 onwards. Please see the attached poster for more information. Students can go to A07 in school to see Mrs Nicol Boyle, the trip leader to find out more.

School production of Legally Blonde Jr

Please note that there will not be any rehearsals at lunchtime or after school next week.

Lunch menu

Please click our [lunch menu](#) link to see what's on offer for week commencing 15th December. It is a Week B/Week 2 next week.

Support over Christmas from Kooth

Kooth, a mental health platform, have provided information and support for families over the Christmas period. Please visit Kooth [here](#) for more information, and see the poster on our website [here](#).

DHSB buses

Many of our families make use of the bus service to and from school that DHSB manage. PHSG students are very welcome to apply for seats on the DHSB buses and there are new routes opening all the time. Please see the information on our website [here](#) for the routes and prices. Parents and carers can contact Mr Ewan Grewal at ewan@ridetandem.co.uk for more information.

This is my last letter to you all for this calendar year, next week we'll send out our termly newsletter. I wish you all a joyful and restful holiday and a happy New Year.

Very best wishes,



Simon Underdown
Headteacher

Keep up to date with our latest news by clicking [here](#)

Dates for your diary:

All Years

18th December Drama Festival, normal day timings. Non-Uniform day, usual rules for jewellery and hair colour.

19th December Last day of term. Students finish at 12.30pm, full uniform.

PTFA cinema trip after school. (If you would like us to supervise your child until 3.30pm on 19th December, please contact their Head of Year.)

5th January 2026 First day back for all students. Full uniform, normal school day timings.