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Plymouth High School for Girls

"For life, not school, we learn"

30th January 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope this finds you well.

You will have seen in the news that the Secretary of State for Education is clear in her view that phones have no place in school. We took the decision some time ago to ban the use of phones for Years 7 to 11 during school hours. At present, the only space the Sixth Form are permitted to use their phones is in the study centre. We will keep an eye on the emerging national picture and update parents and carers should our position change. Thank you to our wonderful parent and carer body for your unwavering support of our behaviour and phones policy, it makes such a difference to be able to work together to best support our young people.

Year 11 and 13 celebration events

Parents and carers will know that Year 11 and 13 are in the process of planning their respective proms. These are always great, fun filled events that our young people enjoy and will likely remember for some time. They will also be looking forward to their in-school celebration events. The celebration events will be in early May, just before the public examination season begins. As we get nearer the time, I will share with parents and carers of Year 11 and 13 information about how and when the celebration events and study leave will operate. Teachers will be available throughout the public examination period to provide support, guidance and encouragement.



Spotlight on student excellence

Congratulations to the following students who have recently been celebrated for demonstrating commitment to our school values and ethos:

- ◇ Student of the week: **Rosie M, Year 7** for being super helpful in her textiles lesson this week and collecting up lots of pins when tidying up. Nominated by Mrs Brown.
- ◇ Group of the week: **Class 9A/Geography** for discussing the 'One Child Policy' with respect of everyone's views and tackling a hard topic with maturity and excellent thinking. Nominated by Mrs Nicol-Boyle.

Years 9, 10 and 11 – Tetanus/Diphtheria/Polio and Meningitis ACWY vaccines

Please see the letters [here](#) regarding vaccines available in school (and the opportunity to give consent) and remember that our visiting health care team can only administer the vaccines if permission has been given. Online consent will need to be completed before 9:00am on 12th February 2026. Vaccines will be given at school on 23rd February 2026.

The Children's Society Guide for parents

Parents and carers will know that young people and their use of social media is a current hot topic. Australia have already issued a ban on social media to the under 16s, and our government is looking closely at whether that is something they will consider introducing in the UK. At present though, social media can be a big part of most teens' lives, and many parents and carers worry about the content they are seeing or the dangers they might encounter. That's why The Children's Society created [Social Media Safety: a guide for parents and carers](#). Together with their children, parents can learn about how to set up controls on the content they might see online or on social media.

Remembering Ms Kelly Luscombe – One Year On

As we approach 26th February, we are mindful that this date marks one year since the passing of our much-loved colleague and teacher, Ms Kelly Luscombe. Ms Luscombe's memory lives on within our school community, and we understand that this time may bring a range of emotions for students, families, and staff as they remember and reflect.

Whilst staff will be gathering privately on 26th February to reflect, remember and celebrate Ms Luscombe's life, we would also like to offer students the opportunity to take part in remembrance. On **Friday 27th February** at lunchtime, students will be warmly invited to join a reflective gathering by a new memorial bench. The memorial bench will be installed in Ms Luscombe's memory by the courts. This will be a gentle and supportive space for students to sit, reflect, think, and celebrate the life of a teacher who was deeply valued and is greatly missed.

We recognise that everyone experiences grief and remembrance differently. There is no expectation for students to attend this event, and we fully understand if some choose to remember privately. Support will be available in school for any student who may find this time particularly difficult, and we encourage parents to contact us if they have any concerns or feel their child may benefit from additional support.

Thank you for your continued care, understanding, and support as we come together as a community to remember Ms Luscombe with kindness and respect.

The online Year 12 parents' evening will be rescheduled to take place on **Thursday 12th March** so that it does not clash with the staff memorial gathering. Thank you to Year 12 parents for your understanding.

Uniform shop

The uniform shop will be open on **Friday 6th February** and **Friday 6th March** 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.

National Year of Reading 2026

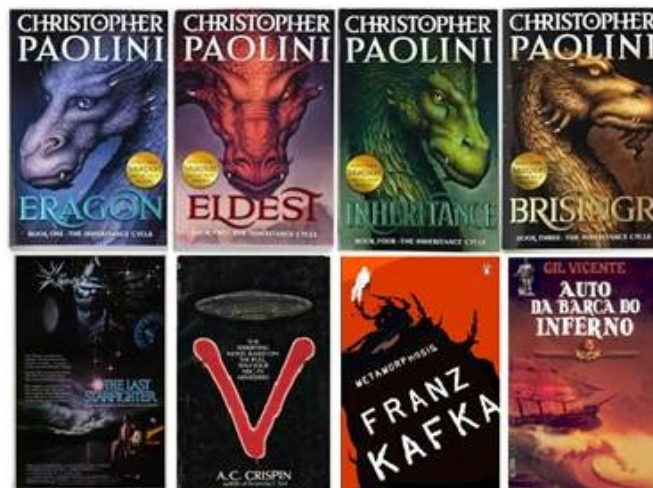
The National Year of Reading 2026 is a UK-wide campaign led by the Department for Education and the National Literacy Trust to reignite a love of reading across all ages. The theme, **“Go All In,”** encourages people to connect reading with their passions such as music, sport, food, film, and family time, showing that reading can fit naturally into everyday life. The initiative responds to a significant decline in reading for pleasure and aims to make reading relevant, joyful, and culturally connected through nationwide events, school programmes, community activities, and partnerships with major literacy organisations.

This week, there is an interesting [news article](#) for parents and carers to read along with another staff ‘bookshelf’.

My Bookshelf – Spotlight on Tiago Moriera – Part of the TSAT facilities team based at PHSG:

My favourite book series for years has been *Eragon*. I was hooked from the very first read – a blend of fantasy, rich world-building, and meticulous detail makes it incredibly immersive. I own both physical and digital copies, and I still find myself returning to them from time to time.

From a very young age, my mum introduced me to sci fi, and the very first book I ever read in the genre was *The Last Starfighter*. It became my gateway into the world of science fiction and sparked a lifelong love for the genre – both in books and in movies.



PHSG does Legally Blonde Jr.

We are into the final preparations for PHSG's annual show: this year we are excited to present, Legally Blonde Jr. The cast and crew have been incredible, working so hard to produce an exceptional show. Tickets are on sale via the website *TicketSource* [here](#).

We also have a [brand new poster](#) on display around school. Tickets are selling fast. Get them quickly to avoid disappointment!

Holocaust Memorial Day

Our school community have marked Holocaust Memorial Day this year through the publication of a reflective piece by two of our talented Year 12 students, Ellen S and Ellen B. I would encourage everyone to spend time reading what they have produced; it is powerful and wonderfully written. Click [here](#) to find out more.

The Holocaust Memorial day 2026 recommended reading list is both comprehensive and varied and can be found [here](#). Parents and carers may wish to look at the reading

list with their children and discuss the importance of remembering what happened in the hope that we never see the like again.

Thinking week

This week, across all Trust schools, we have been celebrating “Thinking week; metacognition in action”. Students have been involved in activities and competitions around the principles of planning, monitoring and evaluating – skills that are especially useful when learning new material and when preparing for examinations. You can find out more by clicking on the following link [Plymouth High School for Girls - Metacognition in Action!](#)

Attendance

Thank you to our parents and carers for supporting our young people to have the highest possible school attendance. Of course, there are times when a child is so unwell that they cannot attend school, but aiming for 100% attendance makes such a difference in terms of belonging in school as well as academic and social development.

Very best wishes,



Simon Underdown
Headteacher

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

Dates for your diary:

Year 9

5th February Year 9 options deadline

All Years

16th – 20th February Half term holiday