

Plymouth High School for Girls

"For life, not school, we learn"

18th September 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope this finds you well. We held our open evening last night and, as usual, our students were magnificent. Our visitors commented enthusiastically on how positive, helpful and knowledgeable the student ambassadors were. Thank you to those parents and carers who helped to support the event by enabling their child(ren) to attend. You can enjoy a flavour of the evening by clicking [here](#).

The PTFA were also at the open evening doing a super job of promoting the work of the association. Any parent or carer who would like to join the PTFA or find out more should email pta@plymouthhighschoolforgirls.org.uk.

We will be running the second 11+ examination on 19th September, and I feel confident it will be as smooth and straight forward as last week. Best of luck to all our current families who have a Year 6 child taking the assessment.

Student achievement

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



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Headteacher: Mr Simon Underdown BSc (Hons) NPQH

Interim Chief Executive Officer: Mr L Miller MBE BSc (Hons) FCCA PGCE

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- Student of the week: **Narissa P (9L)** - "Narissa came back to PE after the summer break with a fantastic attitude. She is so helpful and kind to others around her. She always demonstrates fantastic character". Nominated by Mrs Pickles
- Group of the week: **Year 10 Drama** - "The class have begun their GCSE studies with a highly productive, conscientious, and enthusiastic approach". Nominated by Mrs Crouch.

Plymouth Youth Parliament

Parents and carers will know that Gwen M in Year 9 has been elected to the Plymouth Youth Parliament. Gwen is hugely enthusiastic about her role and very keen to make a difference. [Click here](#) to see what Gwen has been up to. We are very proud of what Gwen is doing and how the PHSG spirit shines through in her work.

PHSG GCSE Art Exhibition 2025/26

The incredible creativity, skill, and imagination of our 25-26 Year 11 students are on display in our online [PHSG GCSE Art Exhibition](#). The exhibition showcases the culmination of two years of hard work, experimentation, and personal exploration, celebrating the diverse talents of our young artists.

The work reflects the ambition and individuality that are central to art education at Plymouth High, where students are encouraged to develop their own creative voice and express ideas in meaningful and original ways. Although we couldn't show you all of their work, we have selected a piece from each student to give you a flavour of their individual journeys through GCSE Art.



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These works – vibrant and visually mature – are never copies, they are undeniably their own. To make something brilliant and deeply personal, and to bring it into our world, is a brave act, one that our students do with determination and intelligence.

Among the many outstanding pieces on display is a striking portrait study that demonstrates exceptional attention to detail and technical skill. Through careful use of colour, shading and composition, the artist captures both character and emotion, inviting the viewer to look beyond the surface and consider the story behind the subject.

Another memorable piece features intricate natural forms, combining careful observational drawing with imaginative interpretation. The work highlights the student's ability to transform everyday inspiration into something visually captivating, showing both patience and creative flair.

'The arts' play a vital role in education and personal development. Art encourages students to think independently, solve problems creatively and communicate ideas in ways that words alone cannot. It provides a powerful outlet for self-expression, helping young people explore their identities, reflect on their experiences and build confidence in sharing their perspectives with others. These are values that sit at the heart of the Plymouth High Art curriculum. Everyone studies Art in Years 7 to 9 at Plymouth High and it is a very popular subject at both GCSE and A level. Art outcomes this year were superb; the average GCSE outcome was above a grade 7 and every A level student recorded a grade in the A* – C category.

The exhibition is a testament not only to the artistic achievements of our students but also to their resilience, dedication, and willingness to take creative risks. We warmly encourage parents, students and the wider community to explore the exhibition on our website and celebrate the remarkable work of the Class of 2026. Their creativity is truly inspiring, and we look forward to seeing how these talented young artists continue to develop in the future.



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PTFA school lottery

Our wonderful and hardworking PTFA use a school lottery to raise funds for Plymouth High. Whilst the PTFA are not intending to promote gambling, they have found that many schools have successfully used a school lottery to raise funds for those little extra things. Of course, there would be no expectation for parents to buy lottery tickets, and the option to contribute to the PTFA school fund via the usual methods remain open.

Should parents decide to take part in the school lottery, a portion of the cost of each 'ticket' does go to cover things like administration costs. However, there are prizes, just like in any lottery, and a share of the ticket money comes directly to school, so far raising almost £800 of funds! Should you wish to get involved, please [click here](#).

Reading & Literacy

Library stationery shop

We have a stationery shop in the library with lots of great value learning aids at low prices. The shop provides students with access to essential school equipment at cost price. Items can be purchased with cash in the library or ordered and paid for via Arbor, then collected from the library.

A popular item is the 'Ready to Learn' pack, which includes a clear (examination-approved) pencil case and key stationery items such as biros, a pencil, ruler, eraser and highlighter. All this for just £1.60.



The shop is open every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. You can view the full price list [here](#).

Please note that any items ordered on Arbor after Thursday will not be available for collection until the following Tuesday.

Overdue Library Books

We are exceptionally proud of our school library. It is a superb space where students can read, study, revise, and develop a lifelong love of learning and reading. Each year, we invest in expanding our collection and providing students with access to high-quality books that reflect their interests and support their studies.

Unfortunately, this work is being undermined by a significant number of overdue books that are not being returned. Last academic year alone, the school lost the equivalent of **£500-£600 worth of books** that were never brought back, despite reminders to students, support from our librarian, and emails home to parents and carers.

We are therefore asking for your support. If there are any library books at home, perhaps sitting on a bookshelf, under a bed, or tucked away in a school bag, please encourage your child to return them as soon as possible.

We would much rather have the books returned than have to charge for replacements. The £500-£600 spent replacing lost books could instead be used to purchase exciting new titles requested by our students. We are always keen to expand our collection, but with school budgets increasingly tight, every pound spent replacing lost books is a pound that cannot be spent on new resources.



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Please take a moment to check any emails you may have received regarding overdue library books and support us in ensuring that any outstanding items are returned promptly.

Thank you for your continued support in helping us maintain and develop this valuable resource for all students.

Calling all Shakespeare fans!

Mrs Blunden-Currie is keen to share details of the **Betty Haigh Shakespeare Prize** with you:

[The Betty Haigh Shakespeare Prize for students aged 11-19](#)

The winning submission will receive a cash prize of £200, with two runners-up receiving £50 each. The winning submission will also be published in The English Association *Newsletter*, which is read by members around the world.

This is a wonderful opportunity, and parents and carers are warmly invited to encourage their children to take part.

Extreme Reading competition

Don't forget about our extreme reading competition which remains open until the end of September! Every entry will receive House points, and there is a prize draw for a selection of goodies for the most extreme entry.



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For inspiration, you can see some recent examples on our website: [Extreme Reading competition 2026](#). We look forward to receiving your entries and wish everyone the best of luck!

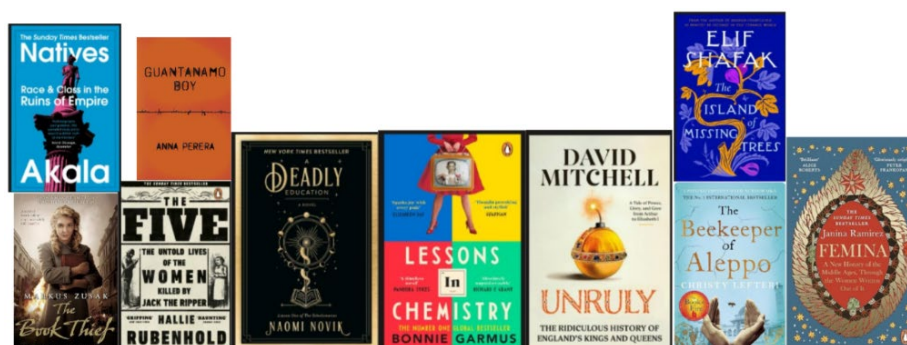
My Bookshelf – Spotlight on Ms Alannah Palmer, School Governor

“I find selecting a particular author I enjoy really hard. I feel like I am a magpie – always seeking to discover a new genre, style, or writer that captures my imagination.

I like to read real life books and enjoy opportunities to share books amongst friends and colleagues. I also love a charity book shop. I can spend far too much time and money in there.

A recent author I discovered was Naomi Novick and her *Deadly Education* books based in a magical school. Think *Harry Potter* but much darker. I often enjoy fantasy novels that help you escape from real life but maintain the humanity that reflects everyday relationships.

I tend to be drawn to historical fiction (and non-fiction too) that explores a period of history from an unexpected angle and, again, helps to appreciate humanity through it all: books that teach me and entertain me are a real treat. My preference are books set from around 1850 onward, but at the moment, I am reading *Unruly* which is a complete history of the British Monarchy.”



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Flu vaccinations – 26th November

Kernow Health CIC's School Age Immunisation Service will be delivering annual nasal flu vaccinations to PHSG students in Years 7 – 11 on Thursday 26th November 2026. You can find more information about the flu vaccination programme in this letter [here](#).

How to Consent

To provide consent, please use the link below by **9.00am on 25th November 2026**:
<https://www.kernowimmunisations.co.uk/Forms/Flu?schoolcode=DV148369>

Year 9 upcycling project – Donations needed

Our Year 9 Design & Technology students will soon be starting an exciting upcycling project, where they will transform unwanted clothing into new and creative products. We would be very grateful for donations of clean old clothes, fabric items, denim, shirts, skirts, dresses, T-shirts, or other textiles that are no longer needed.

Donations can be brought into school and given to the Design & Technology department. Thank you for helping us promote sustainability and reduce textile waste while supporting our students' learning.

Year 11 and 13 revision sessions

As our Year 11 and Year 13 students begin this important academic year, we are pleased to be offering a range of revision and intervention sessions led by subject teachers at lunchtimes and after school.



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These sessions provide valuable opportunities for students to strengthen their understanding, address misconceptions, develop examination techniques, and practise with past examination questions. In some subjects, sessions will also provide targeted support with Non-Examined Assessments (NEA/coursework) to help students make the best possible progress. The full timetable of revision sessions can be found [here](#).

We strongly encourage students to take advantage of these opportunities and to begin their revision early. Regular attendance at revision sessions throughout the year can help students build confidence, reduce stress closer to the examinations, and develop effective study habits that will support their success.

Top tips for getting the most out of revision sessions:

1. **Attend regularly** rather than waiting until just before exams.
2. **Arrive prepared** with any materials, notes, calculators, or equipment needed.
3. **Ask questions** if there is anything you do not understand.
4. **Act on feedback** and complete any follow-up tasks set by teachers.
5. **Review learning afterwards** so that key knowledge and skills are retained.

We look forward to working together to support our students in achieving their full potential and encourage all Year 11 and Year 13 students to make the most of the revision opportunities available.

Best wishes,



Mr Simon Underdown
Headteacher



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

[Lunch menus for Term 1](#)

Dates for your diary:

Whole school

16 th October	Non-pupil day
19 th – 30 th October	Autumn half-term
2 nd November	Non-pupil day
3 rd November	All Years back to school

Year 10

23 rd September	Expectations evening
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Year 11

8 th & 15 th October	Year 11 parents' evening
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Year 13

23 rd September	Expectations evening
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