Plymouth High School for Girls

"For life, not school, we learn"

25th September 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

My thanks to Year 10 and 13 parents, carers and students for joining us at the expectations evening this week. Staff gave presentations on what to expect in Year 10 and 13, the support and opportunities on offer, and tips on how to prepare successfully for assessments.

Year 13 have mock 1 right after October half term and the results of these will inform predicted grades. Mock 2 will be in the January to March 2027 window and will likely include any remaining parts of the courses that were not tested in mock 1. Mock 2 outcomes will enable teachers to review predicted grades ahead of the final summer run in.

Year 10 have their end of year assessment in May (plus several small assessments along the way) and teachers will be helping students to prepare for these.

All years. My thanks to parents and carers for helping their child(ren) to have the best possible attendance and to focus on developing effective study habits. Of course, all students want grades at the end of Year 11 and 13 that they can be proud of, and what we do each day has a real impact on those outcomes.

Parents and carers may be interested to know that the Year 11 students in 2026 who had attendance of 95% or more performed significantly better in their GCSEs than those whose attendance was between 90% and 95%. Of course, there are times when young people are just too ill to attend school and our pastoral and academic support teams are here to help.

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

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All years. A reminder that your child(ren)'s tutor is the first point of contact, so please do get in touch with them if you have any concerns about how you child is getting on in school.

Student achievement

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

- Student of the Week: **Vee H, 10L** – "Vee has made a brilliant start to German GCSE. She works collaboratively with others and has had a great positive attitude, asking appropriate questions to further her learning. *Wunderbar,* Vee!" - Nominated by Mrs Gilchrist.

- Group of the Week: **11h1 Maths** – "These students have shown outstanding attention to detail and have taken a great deal of pride in their written work in the first 2 weeks. Their books and topic guides are what we would certainly call '*beautiful books*'!" - Nominated by Mrs Freeman-Alford.

Reusable lunch trays – Message from Earth Alliance student leadership group

Our Earth Alliance student leadership group worked closely with our food providers to find ways of reducing our impact on the environment. Students across the school were keen for us to remove cardboard takeaway trays, and as a result, we have invested in reusable green plastic food trays. Unfortunately, not all students have been as eco-minded as we would have hoped and in just the first week of school, 30 of the new reusable lunch trays were thrown away or have gone missing.

On advice from Earth Alliance, we used our social impact fund (kindly donated by Impact Food Group) to purchase the new trays. Earth Alliance have asked that parents and carers discuss the issue of the lost/thrown away green trays with their child(ren) so that we can continue to do our bit for the environment.

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Students have been asked to make sure they are depositing their reusable tray in the correct bin (there are bags on the courts) or directly back to Newman. It would also be great if people would remind their friends if they were seen heading for the wrong bins. The Earth Alliance team are super grateful for everyone who has adapted to this so quickly, together we can all make a difference.

PTFA Annual General Meeting

The Plymouth High School for Girls PTFA Annual General Meeting will take place on **Tuesday 13th October at 4.00pm** at the school.

The AGM is an opportunity for parents, carers and supporters to hear about the PTFA's achievements over the past year, the formal appointment of committee members, and updates from the Chair and Treasurer. We hope to welcome new members (so please come along) and will be discussing the exciting programme of fundraising and community events planned for the year ahead. Everyone is welcome to attend and find out how they can support the PTFA and the wider school community.

Reading & Literacy

Extreme Reading competition

There's still time to submit entries to our extreme reading competition which closes on Wednesday of next week. Every entry will receive House points, and there is a prize draw for a selection of goodies for the most extreme entry. For inspiration, you can see some recent submissions on our website: Extreme Reading competition 2026

We look forward to receiving your entries and wish everyone the best of luck!

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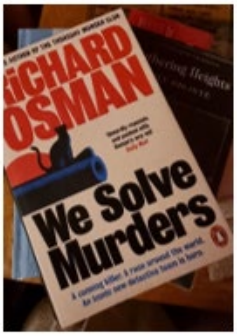
My Bookshelf – Spotlight on Mrs Jo Weaver, School Governor

"I always have a huge range of books on the go and a variety of genres. I recently finished *We Solve Murders* by Richard Osman which was a fast-paced, easy read.

I love Charlie Macksey and have both of his books – I think everyone should read them! My *Almanac* grounds me, and as you can see from the rest of the pile, I am interested in all sorts. I love to recommend a book and often re-read my favourites.

Books are a great escape, a wonderful source of knowledge, and a tangible break from technology. Reading is a pure indulgence, just for you, at your pace, without any expectation, judgement, or pressure."



Spotlight on student support: Understanding young carers

At PHSG, we are committed to ensuring every student receives the support they need to thrive. One important group within all schools is young carers – children and young people who help look after someone at home.

According to statutory definitions used in Department for Education–related guidance, a young carer is *a person under 18 who provides, or intends to provide, care for another person*. This care might be required because a family member has an illness, disability, mental health condition, or challenges such as alcohol or substance misuse.

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Their responsibilities can include practical tasks, such as helping with household routines or medication, as well as emotional support.

Research published through the Department for Education highlights how these caring responsibilities can affect a young person's school life, wellbeing, attendance, and social opportunities. Young carers often juggle significant home responsibilities alongside schoolwork, and this can understandably impact their day-to-day experience.

At PHSG, we want to ensure that all students who have caring roles are recognised and supported. Sometimes young carers do not realise that what they are doing *is* considered a caring role, and families may not be aware of the support available in school.

If you think your child may be a young carer – or if you are unsure and would like more information – we encourage you to get in touch. By identifying young carers early, we can work with families to provide tailored support, ensuring students feel understood and able to thrive both academically and personally.

For any queries or to share information, please contact Mrs Hatfield: philippa.hatfield@phsg.tsat.uk

Together, we can ensure that our young carers are supported, valued, and given every opportunity to succeed.

Flu vaccinations – Reminder

A reminder that 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.

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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

Best wishes,

Mr Simon Underdown

Headteacher

Keep up to date with our latest news by clicking here

Lunch menus for Term 1

Dates for your diary:

Whole school

13th October	PTFA AGM
16th October	Non-pupil day
19th – 30th October	Autumn half-term
2nd November	Non-pupil day
3rd November	All Years back to school

Year 11

8th & 15th October	Year 11 parents' evening