



Plymouth High School for Girls

"For life, not school, we learn"

19th October 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are very nearly at the end of our first half term under COVID-19 regulations. Whilst it has been wonderful to have our students back in school, it has been quite a challenge for us all to steer through the many requirements and expectations set out for us.

Unfortunately, we have had to manage some positive cases in some of our bubbles and this has led to periods of isolation. We work closely with Public Health England in all positive cases and follow their guidance at all times. When we have to isolate bubbles, teachers are setting classwork on Google Classroom and, where possible, are delivering live elements via Zoom.

As a reminder, students and staff should not come to school if they have COVID-19 symptoms and should isolate straight away. People with symptoms should arrange to take a COVID-19 test. You can [click here](#) to check the facts about COVID-19 symptoms. You can also [click here](#) to see the general NHS advice and guidance on all things relating to COVID-19. Students are wearing face coverings when they enter school and when they leave. They are also wearing them as they move about in busy corridors. Hand hygiene remains a priority and the hand sanitiser stations are supplementing our regular hand washing facilities to ensure that students and staff can do their bit to keep everyone safe. The disinfectant we use on the tables after each lesson kills bacteria and viruses. Our community remains mindful and understanding in remembering that a very small minority of people in school are exempt from wearing face coverings. I thank you in advance for discussing appropriate COVID-19 measures with your child(ren).

You will know that we have had to cancel a number of our planned parents events. We are working on ways of providing alternatives and we thank you in advance for your patience and understanding.

We have started our trial of offering hot lunches to students and these have proved quite popular. After half term, we will work on extending this offer to cover more days whilst ensuring that we are meeting the bubble requirements set out for us. The cold lunch offer continues alongside the newly introduced hot offer. After half term we are planning to reopen some of our clubs. All extra-curricular clubs must operate within strict bubble arrangements and we have planned carefully for this to ensure that everyone is kept as safe as possible.

We are planning to trial the use of our student laptop initiative over the coming weeks with year 8. Like any new initiative, we imagine there may be a few teething problems, but once these are ironed out, we feel that the opportunities for our student's learning will be worth the investment. The devices are being provided free of charge on a loan arrangement, although there is also an option to buy. For now, we are focusing on year 8 and will be contacting families when the roll out is due. In time, we plan to roll out the initiative to more year groups, but it is important that we do this in a controlled manner so that we have the capacity to investigate issues as they arise.

I hope that you have had the chance to look at our new website. It's full of information about the school and celebrates what our students have been up to. The Head Student Team and the Student Council sections will give you an idea of what our student leadership is working on, whilst the virtual events and prospectus help potential new parents to see what Plymouth High is all about. You can download the website app should you wish to receive notifications on the latest updates.

I should like to remind you that we have recently launched the new SIMS app for parents to download, this gives student level information that parents may find helpful. I encourage you to download this app if you haven't already done so.

Year 11 are beginning to prepare for their mock examinations which are scheduled to begin at the end of November. Teachers have already posted information on Google Classroom to support students in their mock preparation and have discussed revision strategies with their classes. Results for the mocks will be distributed after Christmas, so students can have some much needed downtime after the mock session. We wish year 11 the best of luck. The year 13 mock examinations will start right after the Christmas holidays.

As a reminder, the half term holiday for students runs from Friday the 23rd October to Monday the 2nd of November inclusive. This means that the first day back after the holiday will be Tuesday the 3rd of November.

I wish you all a happy and restful half term holiday.

Regards,



Simon Underdown.
Headteacher.