

Plymouth High School for Girls

"For life, not school, we learn"

11 December 2020

Dear Parents/Carers and Year 13 Students

Sixth Form Update

This has been a challenging term for all, whether that be the distressing disruption from COVID or completing UCAS applications and preparing for mocks, everyone has had a tough time and I have been impressed with the way in which students have coped, particularly with the transition to online learning when necessary. Even when times are hard they have supported each other, and in school been cheerful.

Next week Monday 14th Dec- Thursday 17th Dec

Lessons run as normal. Students are expected to be in school, however we are asking everyone to be even more vigilant about monitoring whether they have symptoms of COVID and if they do, that they stay off school, and get a test immediately as Mr Underdown requested in his letter to all parents yesterday. This is in order to protect our whole community as there are many who have long awaited visits from grandparents which would be very disrupted by any request to self-isolate over the holidays. Staff have completed lesson seating plans as we have to request self-isolation of those in close contact with a positive case from 48 hours before their symptoms start, or if they have no symptoms, from 48 hours before the test was taken. We are obliged to continue our track and trace for the first weekend of the holiday which is why we would like you to take a test immediately this week if you think you have symptoms so that we can inform people as quickly as possible, which could mean the period of isolation does not hit the entire Christmas holiday.

Friday 18th Dec

The only Sixth Form who need to be in are those who have lessons periods 1 and 2. It is a half day, and the other lessons before lunch are given over to a virtual assembly. Sadly, there is no Drama Festival, nor Carol Service this year, to the House Captains great disappointment. The handover of the Head Student Team and House Captain teams will take place during the virtual assembly as will the announcement of the winning House.

COVID Positive test reporting "button" for Saturday/Sunday 19-20th Dec only

From Friday Dec. 18th there will be a dedicated COVID reporting "button" on the website, please use this rather than emailing any staff if you receive a positive test over the weekend. If you receive a positive test result after this, please use the NHS track and trace service.

End of term gathering

Sadly, we can't allow any form of Sixth Form get together or end of term celebration. We must uphold the intent and spirit of the current regulations and do our best to keep students socially distanced as often, and as much as possible. Therefore, we cannot allow any special, nor larger than normal gathering, than is usual according to the timetable. This is, sadly, an unusual year. Next year we look forward to good times and hopefully can plan something then.

Food from outside

While the canteen has to prepare individual bags of food and deliver them to students we have allowed Sixth Formers to bring food from outside providers on site in order to reduce the pressure on the canteen. This is a new privilege. However, once the lockdown/Covid restrictions on the canteen are reduced we will return to our usual rule of not allowing food e.g. KFC, Dominos to be brought on site.

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Common Room

From January 18th, when Year 13 complete their mocks, there will be a swap of common rooms. All personal possessions including cups need to be removed on Friday 15th January when each room will be thoroughly cleaned. **Year 13** will move into the Sixth Form Common Room and continue to use the computer room. **Year 12** will move into the staff room as their Common Room and also have the use of room 5 for break and lunch, and free rooms and the library for study. I hope the Sixth Form have appreciated the fact that they have been given the Staff room as an extra common room during the COVID period, and that we have provided an extra fridge, microwave and kettle in Room 5 on top of those in both the common rooms.

Mocks/Reports

Students in Year 13 may study at home for the first two weeks of next term while they have mock exams; they are of course, allowed to study on site if they wish to. Teachers will be available at the usual timetabled time in their rooms if students have queries, and students may use these rooms to study in. Lessons resume on **January 18th** except for students who still have exams (Art, History, Law, F.Maths).

Reports will be written once the mocks have been marked and should be sent out before half term. At the moment we know very little about the summer arrangements but do anticipate exams being held; however, it would be in the students' interests to do the best they can in these mocks, just in case the grades are needed if the situation changes. The Government is currently consulting on possible alterations to exams such as giving hints as to topics on the papers or allowing support materials in the exam. No details have been given to schools yet.

We wish all students the very best.....GOOD LUCK!

UCAS

Nearly all students who wish to apply to university next year have now done so. As I informed them, they must submit the application by the last week of this term if staff are to have enough time to double check all the details on the form, write the reference, and send it on to UCAS before their deadline. UCAS have told us that applications are coming in later than usual and that they have had fewer than normal from European and International students. The implication is potentially lower offers for those who do apply as they need students, therefore it is definitely worth applying for 2021. UCAS has also altered the timings which may mean students can visit universities they have chosen before the June 10th deadline for making their Firm and Insurance choices from the offers they have received.

Careers/Apprenticeships

Careers interviews are available for all students, please do email Ms Longford to request one hlongford@phsg.org

Please check your emails regularly as Ms Longford shares lots of opportunities such as virtual work experience, which come our way. This is particularly important for those who are still unsure about their direction after leaving Plymouth High.

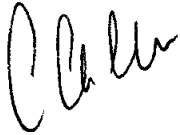
Here is a slightly more alternative and seasonal careers inspiration for you to watch, how Christmas affects these jobs: Nick is a magician and DJ on the side, Adiel is a Deputy Sargent Footman at the Royal Household and Anna is a Buyer for John Lewis!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rras1MYysKw&feature=youtu.be>

Thank you for all your hard work this term and for being such a positive year group in the face of many problems thrown at us. A reminder that term starts on 4th January, which is an A week.

We wish you and your families a safe, happy and restful Christmas holiday.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C Eales-White', written in a cursive style.

Mrs C Eales-White
Assistant Headteacher and Head of Sixth Form