



Plymouth High School for Girls

"For life, not school, we learn"

8th September 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

I do hope you are well and that you enjoyed a relaxing summer break.

I should like to extend a warm welcome to those of you who are new to the Plymouth High family. Welcome back to our existing parents, I thank you for your support and encouragement over the last year, it really does make such a difference.

Below is an outline of the various updates I thought would be of interest to you.

School updates

GCSE and A Level results

Our year 11 and 13 were delighted to receive their GCSE and A level results this year. It is the first year since 2019 where students have sat examinations in the traditional way and received their results from the examination boards. Our students performed amazingly well with lots of happy faces on results day. Please do take a look at the school website [here for the GCSE story](#) and [here for the A Level story](#) to find out more.

Our sixth form is becoming increasingly popular with young people from across the city resulting in a record number of students in year 12 following on from the previous record that we enjoyed last year. We are now in a position to offer an even wider range of courses at A level enabling our students to work towards their future aims and ambitions. Our sixth form is a diverse and talented group and they have every chance of performing at the highest level. Of course, hard work and dedication is the foundation of success and they are being encouraged every step of the way by our dedicated sixth form team.

New staff and name changes

I am delighted to welcome four new teachers to the Plymouth High family, Mr Kasim Langmead (Deputy Headteacher), Mrs Nicola Illott (English), Miss Kate Wakeling (Mathematics) and Miss Lowenna Jones (PE). Please click [here](#) to find out more about our new colleagues.





Over the summer, Miss Boyle got married and will become Mrs Nicol-Boyle and Miss Westaway also got married and will become Mrs Young. I am sure you will join me in congratulating both colleagues and wishing them well.

Improvements around school

I am delighted to announce that, yet again, we have been able to make some very substantial improvements to school over the summer break. The Main Hall has been completely redecorated, the History suite has had a total makeover and is now fully airconditioned, the languages corridor has been redecorated and has a new floor and lighting, the library has been moved to the old sixth form space following a substantial renovation, the sixth form now have a dedicated study space and space to relax together at break and lunchtimes and the languages toilet block has been completely re-fitted with each cubicle having its own basin as well as the usual sink vanity unit away from the cubicles. In addition to this, we have had a number of upgrades to our connectivity network, safety and security systems and the main drains. I will keep you updated as we continue our programme of refurbishment.

Parents evenings

Parents evenings will continue to be run online in the way they were last year. The process seems to have suited many families with parents liking the flexibility and efficiency afforded by the video calls. However, we are mindful that parents still appreciate the opportunity to come into school and to meet staff. To this end, we will be running a series of open evenings for existing parents. These evenings will not be like traditional parents evenings, but an opportunity for parents to come in and find out more about what goes on in school. We will write to you again as we get nearer to one of these events to detail what is on offer.

Expectations

At the start of the year we spend some time refreshing our message to students around expectations so that everyone can enjoy a happy and fulfilling time in school. Students are expected to have excellent attendance and punctuality and to arrive at lessons ready to learn. Regular independent work will be set for students to complete and they are expected to work hard on this and hand it in on time. Students are expected to be kind to each other and to contribute to our school



community being a friendly and happy place where people behave well. Thank you very much for your support with this.

I have reminded students about mobile phone use. Year 7 students hand their phones in at the start of the day. Years 8 to 11 may use their phones at break and lunch if they wish, but at no other times. Sixth form should not have their phones out in lessons or use them in the corridors (this is for H&S reasons.)

On Wednesday 14th September at 5pm we will be hosting our Year 12 Expectations evening. Parents of students in year 12 will receive more information from our Head of sixth form, Mr Jenkins, in due course.

Free lunch taster sessions

During the week beginning 12th September we will be giving students the chance to sample the lunch options for free. Year 7 were offered a free lunch on their first day, so the offer will be for the other years. Students being offered a free lunch will finish their period 4 lesson at 1pm to give us time to serve the year group before the other students arrive. There will be different year groups on each day following the pattern below. Students will be informed of the plan by their tutors.

Monday, Year 10

Tuesday, Year 8

Wednesday, Year 11

Thursday, Year 12&13

Friday, Year 9

GCSE support for students and parents of year 10 and 11

We have been made aware of a webinar to support year 10 and 11 and their parents in the run up to GCSEs. This is not produced by the school or the Trust, but the key speakers have a wealth of experience in supporting young people. I have mentioned this to year 10 and 11 and suggested that they may wish to discuss it with their parents. You may find the event helpful. It is due to take place on **Sunday 18th September from 2pm** [Click here to register](#)



Topics for parents include:

- Food For Thought: Eat Well, Feel Well, Think Well Helping your teen understand the link between eating & thinking.
- The 3 best ways to talk to your teenager about school.
- Future-proof decisions: How to avoid mistakes that could affect your child's future.

Topics for students include:

- How to ace your maths revision.
- The unbelievably easy way to write an essay.
- How to stop procrastinating and stay productive, without burning out in the process

Should you and your child wish to watch the webinar, please click [here to register](#)

Dealing with the energy crisis

Schools and all public buildings are feeling the effects of the energy crisis in much the same way as households. As you might imagine, our energy costs have risen dramatically putting an additional strain on our finances. Plymouth High, along with all schools, must look to make substantial efficiency savings to meet the rising cost of energy. We plan to reduce our energy consumption by running the heating at a lower background level. Please be assured that the building will still be heated, but it may be a degree or two cooler than usual. As we approach the winter months, students might decide to increase their clothing layers, perhaps a white T shirt beneath their school shirt. A school jumper is available at the uniform shop and we have pre-loved uniform in school as an alternative. Please contact Ms Straker at j.straker@tsatrust.org.uk if you wish to access the pre-loved uniform.

Staff leaving

Over the summer break, Mrs Lawrence-Felton made the decision that she would like to spend more time with her family. As a result, Mrs Lawrence-Felton will not be returning to PHSG. Mrs Lawrence-Felton has served the school over many years and made a positive difference to a number of our students. We thank her for her service and wish her happiness and good luck in whatever she chooses to do.



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Miss Brake, our art technician, will be leaving us at the end of September to further her education at University. Miss Brake has been with us September 2016, we wish her well and thank her for her dedicated service.

We are looking forward to another year of rich experiences and excellent academic outcomes and I thank you for your ongoing support and encouragement.

Very best wishes,

Simon Underdown.
Headteacher.

