



20 July 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

Before I send my final letter of the year to you, I would like to take this opportunity to celebrate and recognise the hard work and dedication of a number of our staff who leave Plymstock School this year. Some of them have invested significant parts of their working careers to teaching the children of our community.

I begin with Mr Wil Sprenkel, Acting Deputy Headteacher, who retires from full time teaching after 37 years as a teacher and over 25 years of service to Plymstock. He started at Plymstock in April 1996 as Head of Humanities and RS, joining the senior leadership team in January 2001 as Director of Key Stage 4. In 2007 he moved to what he describes as his 'dream job' Director of Post 16. He moved back to key stage 4 in 2014 before returning to Post 16 in 2016 whilst also taking up the mantle of Designated Safeguarding Lead. In 2019 he became Pastoral Deputy, switching roles in January 2021 to lead our remote education strategy. Wil returns to teach part-time in September. He has provided so much in terms of the support and encouragement he has given to parents, carers, students and staff over the years. Numerous parents and members of staff will remember being taught by him, which is why, he says, it's time to retire! Countless alumni remember him as a teacher who on first impression appeared a trifle scary, but then ultimately realised that he possessed a wicked sense of humour, was never afraid to poke fun at himself and always wanted the best for every student at the school.

Ms Andrea Perry, is retiring after 38 years as a teacher and 20 years' service to Plymstock School. Ms Perry started at Plymstock as Curriculum Deputy in 2001 and has served under six headteachers. She has ably led and overseen many changes to the curriculum; at the heart of her creativity and design was an overriding desire to ensure all children had opportunities to excel and demonstrate their talents and skills. Her passion and drive was never to deviate from a curriculum that was rich, broad and balanced but above all one, in her words, educated the *whole person* beyond academic success. In addition, as Senior Deputy Headteacher she has provided guidance to myself, Mr Farmer and Mr Diment and has throughout this pandemic remained resourceful, imaginative and focussed on ensuring all staff and students are supported and included. The good of Plymstock School has always been at the heart of everything that she has done. She is thoroughly principled and has always fought to ensure we do what is right for our school community regardless of educational trends, league tables and other extraneous factors. An outstanding mathematician, she has inspired numerous students, particularly at A level.

Mrs Angela Sherwood, one of our hard working and dedicated Librarian Assistants, is leaving the school after 20 years' service and has been integral to the literacy support provided by our library team.

Mrs Sarah Oakley, English Teacher and Whole School Literacy Coordinator, is also leaving after 17 years' service to relocate with her family overseas. Mrs Oakley will be greatly missed by all staff and the English team and has been a passionate advocate for reading to the benefit of staff and students.



Miss Sharon Dodson is leaving after 15 years as a Maths Teacher and one who has enabled many students to achieve that crucial pass grade. She has been a creative driving force within the maths team, who are constantly amazed by her never ending resourceful energy to teach something in a better way.

Mr James Wright, Geography Teacher, is leaving after 8 years to work overseas. James has been a passionate advocate for Geography but also someone who has given willingly of his time to enable students to have many opportunities beyond the classroom. Whether at Fox Cove, field trips, or as a rugby coach and tutor, James has always looked for ways to support our students and staff.

Mrs Hilary Braine is retiring after 7 years as our Improvement Room Manger. Hilary is known for her quiet demeanour, calmness and relentless pursuit to help our students learn from their mistakes.

Mrs Abby Bartlett, Head of Geography leaves after 6 years and has been appointed as Head of Humanities at Teignmouth School. An outstanding practitioner and much loved teacher, as well as ably leading improvements within our Geography department, Abby has provided outstanding support as a lead practitioner for Geography within many South West schools.

Miss Maria Grainger, is leaving our English Department after 6 years as an English Teacher and Pupil Premium lead for English. She will be greatly missed within the English team and the performing arts department who she has supported with many school performances. Maria is passionate about English and creating opportunities for all, and we are delighted she has achieved a promotion at Stoke Damerel Community College.

Both Mrs Laura Biddle, TA, and Mrs Pearsall, Intervention teacher, leave us after 2 years. They are both thanked for their contributions to supporting our students.

Finally, I should like to say thank you and goodbye to Miss Phillipa Hurst, Sociology Teacher; Mrs Louise White, Science Teacher; Tammy Hill, Art Teacher; Miss Makenzie Holden, Pastoral Support Worker; Mr Wayne Smith, English Teacher; Mr William Surrige, Maths Teacher and Miss Emily O'Connell, KS3 Learning Mentor. All leave after joining us this year to support fixed term contracts and are thanked for their commitment and work.

We also wish Mr Neil Bellamy, PE and Drama Teacher, the very best wishes on secondment to Coombe Dean as Head of PE and Drama.

Mrs Debby Slade also steps down as Head of RS, a position that she has held since January 2003, to teach part time.

Early this half term we also said goodbye to Mrs Sue Shillabeer, Examinations Manager who is thanked for her leadership of our exams team for 12 years and the significant support she gave to thousands of students in that time. Miss Ashlea Easton, who leaves after 2 years as Geography Teacher, pursuing her ambition to travel and teach overseas. Miss Easton will be greatly missed by students and staff and as a former student has inspired her former teachers and all staff with her contributions to our professional development sessions.

Between them, this group of staff have committed 142 years of service to this community and taught and supported countless children.



I thank them on your behalf for all that they have done; we will miss them and wish them every success in their next journey.

We look forward to welcoming our new colleagues in September and you will find an article in this blog about their induction. <https://plymstockschool.org.uk/friday-16th-july-2021/>. More information will follow in September but after seeing so many talented staff leave the school, we are excited to be welcoming some equally talented new colleagues.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rob Pearsall', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Rob Pearsall
HEADTEACHER