



26 September 2022

Dear Parent/Carer,

## **RE: Headteacher Welcome**

I would like to take the opportunity to write to you all following on from the death of Queen Elizabeth II. As part of the national mourning period, the decision was taken to fully respect this period and not send out any communication. I am proud of the way our school and wider community came together during this period and would like to personally acknowledge and thank Sam Roberts from Year 11, who represented our school community in attending a service held at the Minster Church of St Andrew on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> September.

I hope that you all managed to have an enjoyable summer break. Whilst it has been a busy first three weeks, it has been wonderful to see our students back within our school community. At this point, I would like to share with you how proud we all are of the positive outcomes the Year 11 and Year 13s achieved this summer. These two cohorts of young people had their education significantly disrupted over the past two years but demonstrated resilience, determination and a strong work ethic, and they have been rightly rewarded. I wish each and every one of them every success in their next steps; they have been a credit to themselves, their families and Plymstock School.

I am delighted that our new cohort of Year 7 and Year 12 students have settled in well and have quickly adapted to our routines as well as forging positive relationships with other students and staff. They have adapted to our standards and expectations both within the classroom and school community. Our other years groups have also made a positive start, and for many of them this academic year provides them with numerous opportunities to continue to learn, grow and develop as they pursue their personal and career aspirations.

Last week, I delivered a series of assemblies to all our students, sharing with them the expectations that I place on all of them as valued members of our school community and the role each individual plays in ensuring we have a happy, safe and inclusive culture. The messages I shared align to my belief that every individual that attends Plymstock School has the ability, talent and potential to achieve well. It is of chief importance that they are exposed to the highest standards and expectations, at the same time as being able to receive the support and care needed to be able to fulfil their potential. I am confident in the belief that our parents and carers also share these high aspirations for our children.

However, maintaining these high expectations cannot be achieved by working alone. Firstly, we need our students to learn to take responsibility and lead the way; when it goes wrong (in which it will sometimes) they must ensure that they 'own' the mistake, are willing to learn from it and become better for it. We also need to ensure that as a school, we work in collaboration with our parent/carers and I thank you for working with us, providing us feedback, raising concerns and challenging us to be better at what we do. I encourage you to continue to communicate with us and it is an ambition of mine that moving forwards we create further opportunities to effectively engage with our parent/carers.

The ambition at Plymstock School is to achieve excellence through our curriculum and culture with the aim of empowering all young people to have the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in life and make a positive contribution to society. There are two highly important factors in us achieving this ambition: Attendance, and Behaviour and Attitudes.

Our students are unable to learn the knowledge and skills through their curriculum if they are not at school or are persistently absent. I acknowledge that there may be times when there are valid reasons why a student may not be able to attend school, and I kindly ask that the school is informed of any absence and the reason as soon as possible. Where there are concerns around a student's absence, it is our responsibility as a school and as parents/carers to work in collaboration to address these concerns.

My staff and I remain committed to continue to work as hard as we can with all students in ensuring they clearly understand their responsibilities in the behaviour and attitudes we expect within the school community. We firmly believe that this can be achieved by living out our school values daily, which means a number of things: I expect everyone associated with our school community to show compassion and kindness, to work in collaboration and accept their role in positively contributing to the greater good of the school. At this time, it is important to accept that mistakes will happen, there will be moments of difficulty and challenge but by demonstrating the right attitude, application and mindset, things **will** move forwards for the better!

At every opportunity I will be reminding the school community that we are on a journey of '**restless excellence**' – better never stops! Securing the highest possible outcomes for ALL our children must remain our highest priority – this unlocks doors to a brighter future. It remains an honour and privilege to lead such a vibrant, ambitious and inclusive school where the staff, students, families, governors and wider community of Plymstock School are truly committed to wanting to be the very best for our children and young people.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity in thanking you for your continued support of Plymstock School.

Yours faithfully,



Alan Yendell  
Headteacher

