



20 October 2022

Dear Parent/Carer

Headteacher Update – Autumn Term 1

I hope this letter finds you well. I wanted to take the opportunity to write to you all as we head towards the end of the first half term of the academic year. It has been a very busy start to the academic year, and I would like to acknowledge and thank all my staff for all their hard work, dedication and commitment.

There has been a great deal going on within our school community since we returned in September. It has been wonderful to see so many of our students start the academic year with such high levels of positivity, commitment and focus. In addition, we have seen numerous events taking place including World Mental Health week, sporting fixtures and events, extra-curricular clubs and activities, Geography fieldwork, an Art trip to the Box, a Business trip to Alton Towers, the NSPCC Young Voices project, Year 6 open evening, National Poetry Day and Black History Month.

There are plenty more exciting events and activities planned as we move through the year and I will be encouraging as many students as possible to access these; they provide such a valuable opportunity to develop and grow as young people beyond the classroom.

I am also taking the opportunity to provide you with some updates and continue to ask for your support in the matters I have highlighted below.

Attendance

We continue to have a restless focus on ensuring that all students attend school, as expected. Whilst I recognise that sometimes children and young people find it challenging to make their way into school, we must do everything we can to work in collaboration to remove any barriers that may exist in attending school. I ask that if any parent/carers is concerned around their child's attendance, they contact the school to discuss this further and work with us to ensure that their child is fully accessing their education.

Timings of the school day

You may recall that I wrote to you previously to share that we had made the decision to amend the timings of the school day. This was to increase the time in our tutor lesson and decrease our second break. Having reflected on this decision and taken feedback from students, staff and parents/carers, we have made the decision to amend again to provide some additional time at lunch break, which we feel to be in the best interests of students and staff. The amended timings (which will come into effect as of Tuesday 1st November) are:

Movement Time 8.40-8.45
Tutor Lesson (or assembly) 8.45-9.05
Lesson 1 9.05-10.05
Lesson 2 10.05-11.05
Break 1 11.05-11.35
Lesson 3 – 11.35-12.35
Lesson 4 – 12.35-1.35
Break 2 – 1.35-2.10
Lesson 5 – 2.10-3.10



School Uniform

I would like to thank everyone for their continued efforts in ensuring our school uniform is worn consistently well. This is an important part of our identity that ensures all students feel a sense of belonging and self-worth within our school community.

I am committed to creating a culture of excellence for all our students by insisting on the highest possible standards; this includes uniform. I have attached the uniform standards guidance, with the aim of providing greater clarity.

One of the aspects of uniform where we have seen a decline in standard is footwear. I would like to remind all parents/carers of the expectation around school shoes.

Shoes - Must be sensible and **plain black, leather or leather look (not fabric), with no logo or large marking or branding**. No high heels, no metal buckles, and no boots. Pumps, slipper, woollen, flip-flop styles or trainers are not acceptable.

I am aware that a number of students wear a specific version of a Nike Air Force plain black trainer which has a small silver buckle type feature on the shoelace. **I would like to clarify that we are allowing students to wear this type of shoe as an acceptable part of the school uniform.** I am aware that there has been some confusion and some inconsistencies in the clarity of the information that has been previously provided to staff, parent/carers and students. I hope this now provides the clarity for everyone.

WeST Staff Training Day – Non-Pupil Day – Monday 31st October 2022

A reminder that students return to school to start **Autumn Term 2 on Tuesday 1st November 2022** as staff are involved in a Trust training day on Monday 31st October 2022. We look forward to welcoming all our students back on this date.

Once again, thank you for your ongoing support of Plymstock School and I hope you all managed to have restful and enjoyable half term.

Yours faithfully,



Mr Alan Yendell
Headteacher