



14 December 2022

Dear Parent/Carer

Headteacher Update – Autumn Term 2

As the second part of the Autumn term draws to a close and we head towards a well-deserved Christmas break, I would like to take the opportunity to provide you with key updates and share some of the many successes we have witnessed from members of our school community.

If you had the opportunity to attend last week's Christmas Show, you would have witnessed some incredibly talented individuals, who performed with such enthusiasm, energy and joy. It was wonderful to see students from our local Primary Schools, Oreston and Morley Meadow, be part of the show. I would like to thank the members of staff that put the show together and congratulate all of our performers – we are very proud of them!

Looking ahead, we have a large number of our students dedicating their time preparing and rehearsing for the upcoming school performance of We Will Rock You! which includes music and lyrics by Queen. The dates of the show are Monday 23rd, Tuesday 24th, Thursday 26th and Friday 27th January 2023. Further information on how to book tickets will be available by the end of this week. It would be wonderful to see as many people as possible supporting this event.

A big thank you to our languages department who took a group of students to Aachen, Germany to experience the Christmas markets along with having the opportunity to practise their language skills. We also saw our library and English team take another group of students to London, where they enjoyed a trip to Harry Potter World and some famous tourist attractions, including the London Dungeons!

I would like to take the opportunity to thank our careers and aspirations team, who organised a brilliant careers fair event, where we had over 50 external organisations in attendance. Students in Year 9 and Year 10 were able to explore a wide range of career pathways to support their future choices and aspirations. It was good to see how engaging and inspired the students were and it was wonderful to hear the amazing comments that were shared about how polite and kind the students were.

The Year 11s have been incredibly busy completing their GCSE mock examinations as they start to build momentum towards their final exams in the Summer Term. Whilst this is often an anxious time, the process is a helpful one in supporting the students to have clarity on exactly where they are and what they need to focus on moving forwards. We believe that with the right attitude and application, this cohort of students can go on to achieve some fantastic outcomes.

I am incredibly proud of the work that the school community is engaging in around anti-bullying and equality and diversity. This is an area that I have wanted to improve and to empower our students in leading in this area within our school. We have been working in collaboration with United against Bullying, The Diana Award and the Intercom Trust and I am so impressed at the way that students are making such a positive difference.

This time of year always seems to be so frantic with lots going on, things to do and places to be and it has been no different here at Plymstock School. Thank you to everyone who supported National Christmas Jumper Day and to all those students who have made donations to the Food Bank



collection. We have been overwhelmed with donations and we are looking forward to all the donations being collected this week. I hope that this goes some way in ensuring we have played our part in supporting our wider community.

Our Year 7s recently enjoyed a Christmas disco, which was organised by the Year 7 pastoral team. There were certainly some talented dancers on show! They have also been enjoying their Christmas Community lunch this week and our Year 9's, 8's and 7's will have the opportunity to enjoy watching the Christmas show. I would also like to thank our Heads of Year team who this week have been delivering celebration assemblies; they have recognised the fantastic achievements of students within their year groups. Well done to all of those individuals who have been in receipt of an award.

I am taking the opportunity to provide you with a couple of updates.

I am delighted to announce that Miss Hannah Martin will be joining Plymstock School in January as Deputy Headteacher. Hannah joins us from Ivybridge Community College, where she has been an Assistant Principal for a number of years. She will bring a wealth of experience that will positively contribute to the continuous improvements we are committed to making within our school community. I am sure you will join me in wishing Hannah a warm welcome.

Scarlet Fever and Invasive Group A Strep

You will have seen in the national press that data from the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) shows that scarlet fever cases continue to remain higher than we would typically see at this time of year in the UK. The bacteria usually cause a mild infection producing sore throats or scarlet fever that can be easily treated with antibiotics. In very rare circumstances, these bacteria can get into the bloodstream and cause serious illness – called invasive Group A strep (iGAS). This is still uncommon; however, it is important that parents are on the lookout for symptoms and see a doctor as quickly as possible so that their child can be treated, and the infection stopped from becoming serious. Make sure you talk to a health professional if your child is showing signs of deteriorating after a bout of scarlet fever, a sore throat, or a respiratory infection.

The UKHSA has issued some advice to schools and parents this week. It is well worth reading and will only take a few minutes: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ukhsa-update-on-scarlet-fever-and-invasive-group-a-strep>

Plymstock School Staff Training Day – Non-Pupil Day – Tuesday 3rd January 2023

A reminder that students return to school to start **Spring Term 1 on Wednesday 4th January** as staff are involved in a training day on Tuesday 3rd January. We look forward to welcoming all our students back on this date.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the wonderful staff who have worked tirelessly and continued to go above and beyond during what has been a busy and at times challenging term. It continues to be an honour and privilege to lead such a committed, hard working and compassionate school community.

Thank you for your ongoing support of Plymstock School and I wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Yours Faithfully,



Mr Alan Yendell
Headteacher

