



Friday 21 July 2023

Dear Parent/Carer,

Headteacher Update – End of Year

As we arrive at the end of the 2022-2023 academic year, I wanted to take the opportunity to share some final updates before our students and staff get to enjoy a well deserved summer break. It has been another busy year with us achieving so many things as a school community – including being recognised by Ofsted as a GOOD in all areas. I would like to share my sincere thanks to our brilliant students and staff, who are an absolute privilege to work with every day.

The past couple of weeks have seen our school community enjoy a number of summer term events, including the Year 10 and 12 work experience programme, Year 7 Community Cohesion week, Challenge week and, as a PE teacher, my favourite event of the year: the Festival of Sport! These events are such an important part of the school experience that allow students to develop their character, skills and confidence. I would like to share how proud I am of all the hard work of my colleagues; they go above and beyond to plan and prepare the many different activities to give our students such wonderful and enriching experiences. The opportunity for students to spend time outside of the classroom is a fantastic way to develop positive relationships amongst their peers and with their teachers and support staff. It develops social and personal skills and exposes them to cultural capital experiences, but most importantly, students get to create lifelong memories which I hope they look back on in years to come with great joy and happiness.

I would also like to pass on a sincere thank you to those staff that are leaving us to pursue new challenges. Mr Farrant (Science and Head of Year 10), Miss Lethbridge (MfL), Mr Leal (Maths), Miss Ackroyd (Behaviour Manager), Miss Russell (PE), Miss C Offer (Deputy DSL), Mrs Smith (Head of Year 7) and Mrs Winch (Cover Supply Teacher) have all made a significant and positive contribution to our school community and I wish every single one of them the very best in the future.

A Level and GCSE Examination Results Day 2023

We are looking forward to celebrating our Year 13s and 11s public examinations results in August. Regardless of the outcomes, our students have worked incredibly hard over the past few years and this has led them to give their very best in the final exams.

A level students will be able to collect their results on **Thursday 17 August** and Year 11 students will be able to collect their results a week later on **Thursday 24 August**. Further information has been sent out to students regarding the arrangements for the day.

September 2023 Updates

School Timetables

Our ambition at Plymstock School is to empower young people to have the knowledge and skills they need to be successful in life and make a positive difference to their communities. We aim to achieve this through our school vision of achieving excellence through curriculum and culture. You may be aware that our students received their new timetables for the next academic year at the start of the week. We would like to provide some clarity around the class coding and groupings. Firstly, the class codes do not always reflect a hierarchical setting system. We hold the belief that we should have the same ambition for **all** students regardless of background, circumstance or any additional need. As a school and a trust, we pride ourselves in ensuring we continue to provide equality of choice and opportunity for all.

Our grouping rationale is research informed and we endeavour to group students in ways that maximise their learning of the intended knowledge and skills. We group students broadly in mixed ability classes, with the exception of mathematics, science and languages from Year 8 onwards. We use internal data and teacher feedback all year round in order to inform our groupings. Student groupings are monitored and reviewed regularly by teachers and subject leaders and changes are made during the year if we strongly believe that this would best support student progress and attainment.

In languages we use this data and feedback to identify one group of students in each population that we recognise would benefit from studying an additional language. This group of students will remain together for a few additional subjects, such as English, as the timetable blocks English and languages together

The decision-making process with regards to how we group our students for their subject lessons are rooted in educational research, data and past experience of how we can best maximise attainment opportunities for all students and support their wider development at Plymstock School. We are confident that a combination of setting, broader streaming and mixed ability grouping in some subjects, where we know this works best, will provide a further enriching and educationally inclusive experience for our students, allowing all students to succeed and be their very best.

As always we work with parents, carers, staff and students to ensure grouping of students maximises their learning and this will continue in September as all students transition into their new year groups. Should you wish to discuss any concerns in the new year all subject leaders and year teams will be on hand to support with any queries.

Uniform Standards

We have delivered a number of assemblies to all year groups during the past week to share clear guidance on our uniform standards, including PE kit expectations. We place a great importance on all students wearing their uniform correctly; this is part of our ambition of creating a culture of excellence and ensuring that all students feel part of our school community through a sense of belonging. Everyone wearing our school uniform correctly helps us to achieve this ambition and we kindly ask for your commitment and support with this. Please use the information (including our Dress Code booklet) on the uniform section of our website to check what the expectations are before going ahead and purchasing any items of uniform. The link can be found here [Plymstock School – Plymstock, Plymouth, Devon | Uniform](#). If any parent/carers is finding it difficult to access any part of the school uniform, please contact the school and we will do everything we can to support.



ClassCharts Communication

We are pleased to share that we have been working hard to be in a position to launch a new communication tool called 'ClassCharts', which is an app-based platform. This will further improve our effectiveness in sharing important information about how your child is progressing in different aspects of their school lives, including behaviour, home learning and rewards. Your child will receive their login information when they start in September, and we will also be sharing parent/carers login and password details during the same week. There will be opportunities for parent/carers to access support if they are having trouble in accessing the new ClassCharts application. Further details will follow in September.

CORE Expectations

Thank you to our amazing student leadership team who have taken the time to work with us over the past few weeks in establishing our new school values. This was an important piece of work, as student voice highlighted that they wanted to provide clarity about who our school community is. Our new school values are **Be Kind, Work Hard and Aim High**. These values reflect the brilliant young people that are part of our school community, and I am sure that we would all agree that these values are just part of being an honest and decent human being.

This work has led to us establishing our CORE expectations that we will apply within our school community. These stand for Conduct, Organisation, Respect and Effort and will form the basis of our work around achieving excellence through culture. This work has led to developing an evidence-based approach to our behaviour systems, with the aim of having greater clarity for students, staff and parent/carers, leading to greater consistency.

One of our approaches to supporting students develop the correct behaviour and attitudes is through narrating the positive. Our recognition and rewards system, which are directly linked to our CORE expectations, is much more visible through Class Charts and this approach allows students and parent/carers to instantly see the recognition students have been given by members of staff and the reasons for this.

Looking ahead...

I would like to confirm the arrangements for the start of the Autumn Term 2023.

Wednesday 6 September 2023 - Year 7 and 12 ONLY

Thursday 7 September 2023 - All Year groups

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity in thanking you for your continued support of Plymstock School. I sincerely hope you manage to have a relaxing and restful summer break.

Yours faithfully



Alan Yendell
Headteacher

