

Plympton Academy

Moorland Road, Plympton, Plymouth, PL7 2RS
Principal: Ms Lisa Boorman
Telephone: (01752) 338373
Email: enquiries@plympton.academy
www.plympton.academy



Autumn Newsletter 2017

Dear parents/carers

What a fantastic start to the year it has been so far. It really makes me proud to drop into lessons and see what great progress our students are making. With strong collaborative approaches to learning, our students are articulate about the purpose of the lesson and what they have learnt. In addition, through our student voice, it is lovely to hear how positively our students talk about their learning.

In order for our students to continue to learn so well, can I please give a gentle reminder that the Academy day starts, in lessons, at 08:40. This means that students need to be on site and making their way to their first lesson by 08:30. Unfortunately some students are arriving late and therefore miss valuable learning time during that first period. Thank you to all parents who support their children to arrive on time; I look forward to seeing all of our students in, on time, in the future.

Year 7 students, one of our biggest years, have settled in amazingly well. They are polite and helpful with both staff and students and are enjoying the experiences and challenges that life at the Academy brings. I spent a day with the year group at the residential in Bude, and the instructors and staff at the centre spoke very highly of their behaviour and resilient attitude - both great traits that they can bring back into the classroom.

Year 8 will be starting their GCSE/BTEC options process next Semester and are already thinking about the process with their tutors and Head of Year. Careers guidance will be available along with the opportunity to talk to subject leaders at the Look to the Future Fair on the 30th November. Final decisions are not made until March, however do ensure you gain as much information as possible throughout this period so that the best courses are chosen to support student success and wellbeing.

Our older year groups, Year 11 and Year 13, are currently studying hard for their mock exams. These are essential to help staff and students identify where there are areas of strength but, more importantly, areas where additional learning needs to take place. Future lessons can then be structured around this information to maximise success in the final exams. Year 10 have also had a couple of mock exams in Statistics and RS, as these GCSE exams are taken at the end of Year 10. I would like to reiterate that the exam boards do not allow mobile phones, and now smart watches, into exams. It is unfortunate that every year, nationally, there are students who are disqualified from



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an exam as they have not followed this rule. Please encourage your son/daughter to leave their phone and/or smart watch at home on the day of exams.

I am delighted with the way Year 12 have settled into the Academy, in their new Sixth form centre. Whilst we recognise there is still some aesthetics needed in the rooms, being able to provide a separate study area is an important feature of the Sixth Form. The use of these rooms is no longer compulsory for our Sixth Form students; however, even though their timetables are not full of lessons, significant additional study time is needed to reach those high grades at A level. It is expected that for every taught lesson students complete one hour of independent study. This guidance is provided by the exam boards and is one we wish to promote.

Our inaugural Week 10 is happening next week with some fantastic opportunities for our students to experience deep learning within, or across, a subject area. Year 7 will be immersed within The Arts throughout Week 10, with the opportunity for parents to come and watch the product of their learning at the end of the week, whilst Year 9 will be asking if they “can change the world”. Do look out on our website, Facebook page and Twitter accounts for up-to-date news and photos of our students’ experiences across all year groups.

I would like to also welcome our new Chair of Governors, Sue Dann. A Plymouth City Councillor and local resident. She brings a wealth of educational and governance expertise. I look forward to working alongside her to continue our drive towards excellence.

There are many events happening over the next Semester, including carol services, parents evenings and awards evenings - please do refer to our social media or website for full details. It is lovely to see the support our parents give to us, as an Academy, through high attendance at these events and I thank you all for continuing to do so.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L Boorman'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Lisa Boorman
Principal