



Plympton Academy

REVIEW

EASTER EDITION 2020



SCHOOL of ROCK!

Students 'Rock Out' with latest show at the Academy



FIND MORE EXCITING NEWS INSIDE!

WE MEAN TO BE GREEN, CLEAN AND KEEN

A small band of enthusiasts at Plympton Academy has been quietly working on a number of small but significant initiatives to improve the academy's 'G R E E N' credentials - recycling materials, reducing waste and reusing resources.

WHAT WENT WELL...

Collections of batteries (over 22kg), pens and crisp packets for recycling with Terracycle

LED lighting project rolled out to encompass 95% of the academy site, saving 62.4 tonnes of CO₂ per annum

Our Catering team has swapped single-use plastic bottles for refillable cans (saving over 10,000 bottles going to landfill)

Upgraded water fountains so drinks bottles can be refilled

Began a KS3 project using 'eco-bricks' to construct picnic furniture, preventing un-recyclable plastic ending up in the sea

EVEN BETTER IF...

1. We vastly reduced our spending on lamination (over £1000 in 2019)
2. We develop the 'garden' area to encourage wildlife, especially bees
3. Separate our waste, recycle more and send less to landfill
4. Implement a PC 'auto shutdown' each evening
5. Plant more trees on site



MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL



Plympton Academy
REVIEW



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Welcome to another packed edition of the Plympton Academy Review. Another very busy term is coming to an end and we are all looking forward to the Easter break.

I hope many of you were able to join us for our annual production in February - this year **'School of Rock'**. I would like to say a huge thank you and offer congratulations to both students and staff involved in the production - which was a real treat to watch but I know took a huge amount of dedication, time and hard work to produce. We are all looking forward to next year's production already!

Our new teaching block is finally looking like a building and there is a lot of work progressing to ensure a smooth transition into our lovely new teaching spaces in September. We will be arranging with the contractors for students to make orientation visits to the building at the end of the summer term once the block is fully safe to accommodate students. We hope this will ease the move into the new block - as students we go straight into lessons in the new teaching spaces once we return in September.

As you can see from the following pages the past few months have been packed with a broad range of activities and opportunities for our students and I hope this newsletter helps give you a flavour of the range of things on offer to our students. Wishing you a Happy Easter and looking forward to welcoming students back on 14th April.■

Lisa Boorman, Principal

FRANTIC ASSEMBLY TRIP -

On Tuesday 4th Feb, amidst the busy rehearsal schedule for the upcoming academy production **'School of Rock'**, the Performing Arts Faculty at Plympton Academy took a group of 40 students from Year 9 to 13 to see the latest production by Frantic Assembly.

Frantic Assembly are now an internationally recognised theatre company who were pioneers in bringing physical theatre to the mainstream. This week the Theatre Royal has opened their most recent show before it begins a national tour. **'I think we are alone'** is a collaboration between Scott Graham (the founder of the company) and actress Kathy Burke who has directed the piece.

Although it may be lacking their stylistic signature in terms of physicality it was a moving account of the human condition and our relationships with family and loved ones.

The themes were sensitive and adult and all year groups came away full of discussion and praise for the production.

"I thoroughly enjoyed this production and loved how different it was to their usual work. It took us on a rollercoaster of emotions and really inspired us for our work we're doing in school," **Devon Moran, Year 13.**■



PERFORMING ARTS
A LEVEL & BTEC COURSES STILL AVAILABLE

MUSIC
BTEC
PERFORMING ARTS
BTEC LEVEL 3
PERFORMING ARTS
DOUBLE BTEC

We have a flourishing Performing Arts department that is based in the new state-of-the-art Morpurgo Studios.

This facility offers music classrooms, practice rooms, recording studio, drama studio, dance studio and a new performance space.

THE Morpurgo
01752 338373 • www.plympton.academy
Contact crookj@plympton.academy for more details

New Build Update

The countdown to September begins to gather pace

Since our last newsletter at the end of the autumn term the new block has had cladding added to the external walls and now actually looks like a proper building!

Inside the building the partitions are going up quickly to create new classroom and learning spaces.

We are now working through which departments will occupy which new classrooms so that staff can start to plan their own moves into the new block.

The Site team are busy planning the logistics of the move - packing crates, delivery dates, clearing space to store any new purchases on an already packed site due to the scale of demolition which has taken place.

There is a huge amount of planning work going on as we start the countdown to moving into our new teaching spaces for September. ■

Teresa Lakeman, Business Director



New to the PA team

Welcome and wishing all the best to our new staff members joining Plympton Academy

CHRIS JONES HEAD OF GEOGRAPHY

My name is Chris Jones and I am very grateful and excited to be the new Head of Geography at Plympton Academy. I started teaching in 2014 and have had a very diverse career to date previously working within Birmingham for 3 years and in Exeter for 2 ½ years. I studied Geography (Bsc) at Plymouth University and obtained my PGDipEd at the University of Birmingham.

I have a huge passion for Geography, especially with the unique landscape we have around Plymouth. So when I was appointed, I was thrilled that I would be able to work within such an amazing environment and the area I grew up in. I have strong ties being originally from Plymouth and I look forward to helping the new generation of students. I am very excited to be working with a new team in creating an innovative, exciting curriculum which provides every single student with the ability to reach their full potential. ■

JODIE LITTLEJOHN GEOGRAPHY TEACHER

I have been a geography teacher for nine years recently moving from Tiverton High School, where I also took on additional responsibilities of Assistant Head of House and Activities



Week Co-ordinator. I was thrilled to obtain a position at Plympton Academy allowing my family the opportunity to move back home.

As a geography teacher, I aim to inspire into my students a love of the world around them by making the subject relevant to them, relating topics to students own experiences and ultimately empowering students to make sense of the landscapes surrounding them locally, nationally and globally.

In addition I am a team leader for AQA and each summer mark GSE scripts. This has been an invaluable experience in understanding and being able to embed the requirements for GCSE.

My first term at the academy has been extremely welcoming from students and staff and I look forward to the future. ■

IAN MCFARLANE SCIENCE TEACHER

Hello, I'm Mr McFarlane, one of the new Science Teachers at Plympton Academy. I have taught Science for a number of years and in a number of different countries including both Chile and Peru in South America. I really enjoy teaching Science as it allows me to work with a great bunch of students whilst introducing them to the weird and wonderful worlds of Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

When I'm not planning lessons and marking test papers, you might find me out on Dartmoor or at the coast cycling, climbing and taking in the incredible landscape. ■



HOLLY PINION EXAMS OFFICER -

I have worked in school admin in various roles including Exams Officer for the last 4 years. Previous to this I have a varied background mainly in senior retail management with large retail organisations.



I was born in Plymouth and have lived here most of my life. I studied BA Management with Art and Design as my degree at Marjons. The opportunity arose to work in a school, which really appealed to me and I do love the buzz of a school environment. I am really excited to be working at Plympton Academy and working with such a range of departments all with great people! Everyone has been really welcoming and supportive. ■



WANT TO JOIN OUR TEAM?

Check online at plympton.academy/about/job-vacancies to see our regular job section.

Charity of the Year

Crohns and Colitis UK

Fundraising continues for our charity of the year which is Crohns and Colitis UK. Following on from our successful launch in October, we held more fundraising events in December, including a Christmas Jumper day and a staff lip sync battle alongside the ever popular cake sale.

Crohns and Colitis UK supports a number of our students and their families and there is no known cure for the disease which affects approximately 300 000 people in the UK, with someone being diagnosed every 30 minutes and 1 in 4 of those diagnosed being under 16. Symptoms of the condition include dramatic weight loss; severe pain; extreme fatigue; swollen joints; mouth ulcers and diarrhoea - all of which can have a massive impact on a person's quality of life.

On Monday 16th December an expectant audience gathered in the theatre to watch members of staff compete in the inaugural Plympton Academy lip sync battle. Despite the best efforts of Mrs Lucas; Mrs Taylor and Dr Knight nothing could compare to Mr Strachan channeling his inner Mariah Carey and performing 'All I Want for Christmas is You' whilst looking radiant in a 'Mrs Christmas' outfit and blonde wig. The trophy looked like it was Mr Strachan's for the taking until Mr Yates stepped up to the microphone. No one knew quite what to expect when Whitney Houston's classic 'I Will Always Love You' started blaring out of the speakers, but Mr Yates soon had the audience in the palm of his hand as he performed the romantic classic complete with saxophone interlude. We are already looking forward to seeing Mr Yates defend his title next year.

There are more fundraising events taking place this year including an Easter Egg Hunt; the return of the Year 7 and 8 sponsored sleepover and a special version of 'I'm A Teacher Get Me Out Of Here' featuring a

'Crohns and Colitis UK supports a number of our students and their families and there is no known cure for the disease which affects approximately 300 000 people in the UK'

bug eating competition with students having the opportunity to vote for who they would like to see eating a smorgasbord of insects.

Members of staff are also completing their own challenges to raise money for Crohns and Colitis UK and Mr Hartley will be running the London Marathon in April as part of the Academy's fundraising efforts. Training started at the beginning of January and he is pounding the pavements in the cold, dark, wind and rain so that he can make it round the course in one piece. If you would like to sponsor him, then donations can be left at reception. ■



MR HARTLEY: Ready to run

HOMELESS SHOE BOX APPEAL -

Plympton Academy's Student Council wanted to give something back this Christmas time. Tutor Captains from Year 7-11 and Sixth form took part in the Homeless Shoe Box Appeal. Each tutor group filled a Christmas shoe box with scarfs, gloves, socks, toiletries, chocolates and personally written Christmas cards to the Homeless in Plymouth.

The initiative is run by Keira and Shaun Roberts through the Plymstock United Church where the Soup Run is based. I was overwhelmed by their generosity and their genuine care and support for the Homeless. They coordinated 26 shoe boxes, a crate and a black bag full of clothes, gifts, treats and toiletries; as well as 46 personally written Christmas cards.

Their attention to detail and thoughts behind each donated item was heartfelt and demonstrated their selfless kindness. ■



MR YATES: Lip sync champion

PiXL Edge Award Scheme

Developing attributes of Leadership; Organisation; Resilience; Initiative and Communication

At Plympton Academy we have been offering all students the opportunity to complete the PiXL Edge Award Scheme as part of our Personal Development programme, with dedicated sessions as part of the afternoon tutorial programme, although students can log their activities via the online portal at any time. The award scheme focuses on developing the attributes of Leadership; Organisation; Resilience; Initiative and Communication. It was developed by the PiXL organisation in conjunction with Sky Sports; the CBI and Virgin Money to develop the skills that higher education providers and employers are looking for in young people.

From a database of over 2000 activities, students choose two activities for each section which can include school based activities such as attending an extra-curricular activity for a semester; completing homework; contributing to a charity activity or taking part in a residential (such as the Year 7 trip to Bude or ones outside of the Academy such as being part of a team, (water polo; hockey); regularly playing a musical instrument or attending an organised activity such as Scouts; Guides or Cadets.

Students have to complete two activities from each section to achieve their Apprentice award, but will achieve a certificate and badge when they complete each section, and when they complete their first six activities. To complete their Graduate Award, they have to complete another eight activities across



the five attributes. Students should be able to achieve their Apprentice Level by the end of Year 8, and their Graduate by the end of Year 10. When in Sixth Form, students have the opportunity to work towards the Master Level, which is based upon their A Level or BTEC choices.

At the moment we have 814 students across the Academy working on their Apprentice award, with 1532 activities being recorded since September and 14 students having completed their Apprentice award. For the Graduate level, 36 activities have been recorded, with one student having completed the award. Certificates are presented during the Christmas and summer assemblies and I am looking forward to presenting the next set at the end of the summer term. ■

Ian Hartley, Assistant Principal

STUDENTS RAISE NEARLY £700 IN ONE DAY -

Students raise nearly £700 for Jeremiah's Journey in one day! Year 9 students of Plympton Academy wanted to show their gratitude and support for Jeremiah's Journey after their selfless care, support and guidance following a very difficult time for the year group. Tutor Captains of Year 9 worked together to promote, advertise and collect the donations from an Academy fundraiser day. The majority of the funds raised came from the 'mufti day' where students donated £1 to wear their own clothes to school for the day. Students also sold cakes/biscuits and one tutor group coordinated 'a guess the number of sweets in a jar'.

Mrs Harvey, Head of Year 9, was incredibly proud of their achievements in raising the money, but also with their maturity and sensitivity around grief.

Jasmin Burton, Tutor captain said, "Jeremiah's journey really helped all of us during a difficult time and we wanted to give a little back to them."

Alfie Aitken, Tutor Captain said, "I'm pretty taken aback by the support of Jeremiah's Journey and just glad we were able to help. I designed the posters and slides to advertise our fundraiser." ■



Year 10 Careers

Students enjoy inspirational talk by Sarah Pinch

On Thursday 23rd January, Year 10 students enjoyed a careers talk by Sarah Pinch, who founded her own communications company, Pinchpoint Communications, in 2013. Prior to this, Sarah worked as a journalist at the BBC; led developmental and fundraising projects for Christian Aid and Children's Hospice South West. She won PR Director of the Year for her work with Bristol NHS Trust in 2011 and also worked with the First Group.

In September 2018, Sarah was voted 45th in the FT HERoes Top 100 Business List, which celebrates female leaders and she is also a non-executive director of the Health and Safety Executive and is an independent advisor to the National Welsh Assembly.

Sarah spoke about her connections to both Plympton Academy (her grandfather attended the school) and Plymouth and how

her career path went from working at the BBC to her current roles. She talked about the importance of being kind to everyone, illustrating with stories of people who she encountered whilst working at the BBC and how it's important to explore career options that might involve leaving the safety of your home and the comfort blanket of what you know.

Resilience was a key feature of the question and answer session, with students also asking questions about careers in journalism and PR.

Carys said, "Sarah's talk was really inspirational and it's definitely motivated me to explore my interest in journalism more." Leah said 'It was interesting listening to Sarah talk about her different careers. I didn't know what a career in public relations involved and she made us think about what options we could explore.'

Ian Hartley, Assistant Principal said, "Sarah's visit was organised by the Speakers for Schools charity, which puts schools in touch with inspirational speakers to help inspire them to pursue their ambitions and broaden their horizons. Sarah was our first speaker from the charity and she captured the attention of our Year 10 students whilst talking about her career; the importance of treating everyone kindly and why it's important to have both ambition and aspiration.

I know that both staff and students were inspired by her talk, and the conversations about her talk have continued with form tutors and teaching staff.

I'd like to thank Sarah for taking the time out of her very busy schedule to visit and enthuse our students." ■

THE BIG GIVE -

In the lead up to Christmas, students in Year 7 and Year 8 demonstrated kindness in our local community by collecting donations for the Foodbank. Miss Kneebone and Mr Yates set each year group the challenge of collecting the most items and were really impressed by the generosity of everyone involved.

Just before Christmas, Miss Kneebone and Mr Yates took four students: Harry Hansford, Ruby Pinder, Jessica Bean and Phoebe Hall to the Foodbank to drop off an impressive 333kg of food, toiletries and festive goodies!

Eunice Halliday from Plymouth Foodbank said, "330kg is an amazing contribution and we really appreciate all the kind donations from the students and their parents." Whilst there, the students were given a tour and were able to see the fantastic work that the volunteers do to support families in need.

Next year, Miss Kneebone and Mr Yates intend to increase the number of donations collected to 1000kg, by inviting all year groups to contribute. ■



INSPIRATIONAL SPEAKER: (From left to right) Caleb Amissah, Jacob Laniewski, Leah Nelson, Carys Macaskill and Jack Hopson with Sarah Pinch (centre) and Ian Hartley (far right)

iDEA (inspiring Digital Enterprise Awards)

As part of our Personal Development programme, all students in Years 9, 10 and our Sixth Form are enrolled into the iDEAS Award programme, which they complete as part of the afternoon tutorial sessions. It is a digital award scheme that develops student knowledge and understanding in the following areas: Citizen; Worker; Maker and Entrepreneur. It is the digital equivalent of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, and certificates are dispatched from Buckingham Palace upon completion of the award scheme.

Each area is made up of a number of short online courses, for example under the 'Citizen' heading, students complete modules on E Safety; Social Media Etiquette; Fake News; writing a personal statement and understanding how the brain works. The Entrepreneur section helps students to develop financial skills; problem solving and how to make a profit using social selling sites. All of the courses have been designed to help students develop the digital skills that employers are now looking for. Some of the modules have been designed by organisations such as the Peter Jones Foundation, which was started by the famous 'dragon' from Dragons Den to help young people develop employability skills, whilst others have been developed by Barclays Bank; CodeFirst and Viber.

For each course that they complete, students earn a digital badge and since September, over 1248 badges have been earned and by completing a set number of badges under each heading, students can achieve the Bronze award. Riley Schmid (pictured above) in Year 10 was the first student to achieve this, and was quickly followed by Georgia Morris; Makayla Cook;



Ellie Doddridge; Lily Wallers; Connor Perry; Ryan Vince; Carrie Irwin; Haydn Alexander; Harry Johnson; Lauren Ancill; Justin Combs; Lewis Treleaven; Ben Brockman; Amy Bennett and Jake Grenney.

Once students have completed their Bronze award, they can progress onto their Silver which further develops their understanding of online etiquette; how social media works; employability skills; managing finances; leadership and resilience. Carrie Irwin in Year 12 is our first student to achieve the Silver award.

I am looking forward to presenting more Bronze and Silver certificates during our celebration assemblies and if you would like more information about the award scheme then please visit the website idea.org.uk or contact Mr Hartley at the Academy. ■

Ian Hartley, Assistant Principal

YEAR 7 DISCO -



On Wednesday 11th December, almost 150 Year 7 students came together to celebrate the end of an action-packed first term at the Academy. The Christmas Disco took place in the Morpurgo Studios and was organised by Year 11 students, Ciaran Blair and Dan Clarke. The students arranged a display of lights, and also a playlist of songs which kept the dancefloor alive all night long!

In addition to the music and the dancing, a highlight of the evening was the attendance prize draw: over thirty students were rewarded for having improved or maintained an excellent rate of attendance. Throughout the previous term, students had been awarded raffle tickets for each week they had had 100% attendance; those with the most tickets stood a better chance of winning an exciting, mystery gift. Mimi Aston, who attended the disco and won a prize, said, "I really enjoyed the disco - it was so much fun! The prize competition made me really want to come to school, so that I had a better chance of winning!"

The Year 7 tutor team also enjoyed the disco and were keen to take part in the dancing - especially the cha cha slide! ■

'I really enjoyed the disco - it was so much fun!'

Mimi, Year 7



Tutor Time Reading

The world of storytelling comes to life at Plympton Academy

It has been another successful semester with all students engaging in a wide range of fiction novels through our Tutor Time Reading Programme.

Students continue to enjoy classic tales from the past along with contemporary classics. Students' understanding of vocabulary and culture is expanding rapidly and it is amazing to be having so many conversations with students about their favourite moments from their Tutor Time Reading book.

YEAR 8 VICTORIAN LITERATURE

This semester, Year 8 will be studying a range of Victorian fiction in order to improve their reading skills and analysis of texts. At the heart of this unit of work, is a secure knowledge of the Victorian era and how it shaped our lives, and literature. Below is a feature from the **'British Library'** which explores the use of orphans as a tool for pathos within the Victorian era. We will be exploring this characterisation and making links to modern texts such as **'Harry Potter'** and **'His Dark Materials'**. Please enjoy the article and we hope you enjoy talking to your child about their knowledge of Victorian literature this term.

Why do orphans appear so frequently in 19th-century fiction? Professor John Mullan reflects on the opportunities they provide for authors, considering some of the most famous examples of the period.

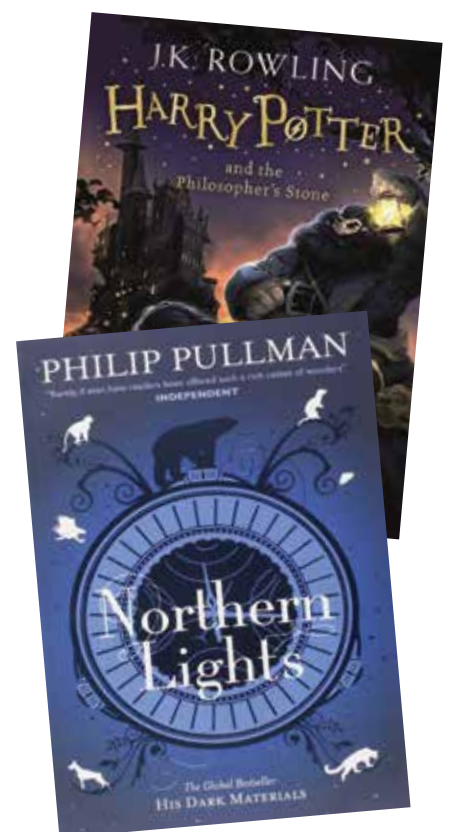
It is no accident that the most famous character in recent fiction **'Harry Potter'**, is an orphan. The child wizard's adventures are premised on the death of his parents and the responsibilities that he must therefore assume. If we look to classic children's fiction we find a host of orphans. The child heroine of one of the earliest popular children's



stories, Little Goody Two-Shoes (published by John Newbery in 1765) was an orphan. Protagonists of *The Secret Garden*, Anne of Green Gables, Tom Sawyer, and Ballet Shoes, to name a few, are also orphans. Their stories can begin because they find themselves without parents, unleashed to discover the world. Thus Orphan Annie (the good-hearted and resilient child heroine first of a hugely popular comic strip in the USA, then of a radio show, film and musical) wanders through a sometimes wicked world, revealing the qualities of others, herself untainted by folly or corruption.

The orphan is above all a character out of place, forced to make his or her own home in the world. The novel itself grew up as a genre representing the efforts of an ordinary individual to navigate his or her way through the trials of life. The orphan is therefore an essentially novelistic character, set loose from established conventions to face a world

of endless possibilities (and dangers). The orphan leads the reader through a maze of experiences, encountering life's threats and grasping its opportunities. Being the focus of the story's interest, he or she is a naïve mirror to the qualities of others. In children's fiction, of course, the orphan will eventually find the happiness to compensate for being deprived of parents. Dickens's **'Oliver Twist'**, who remains virtuous and innocent despite the criminal company he keeps, is comparable with these characters from children's fiction. Like many of them, he discovers inherited affluence, but along the way reveals to the reader the secrets of London's criminal underbelly. ■



Daffodils

I wandered lonely as a cloud

This term Year 7 students have been challenged to learn a poem by heart. The poem selected was 'Daffodils', by William Wordsworth. Here is the first verse -

**I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.**

Learning a poem by heart teaches patience, attention to detail and develops your memory skills. Also - once you have learnt a poem by heart you are able to recite it with heart. The poem you have learned becomes a part of you. Why not try to learn a poem yourself over the next few weeks?

ACTION - ADRENALINE - ADVENTURE - ALEX RIDER IS BACK!

Have you read the Alex Rider series by Anthony Horowitz? The teenage spy has appeared in 11 missions so far and the long-

awaited twelfth novel, Nightshade, is out soon. To celebrate, the Library have bought new copies of all the Alex Rider novels and sets of the Alex Rider Graphic Novels. Walker Books have also send us Nightshade posters, stickers and bookmarks.

The Alex Rider series is estimated to have sold more than 19 million copies worldwide.

Nightshade will be released in April this year - so there is still time to catch up on Alex's earlier adventures!

ACCELERATED READER

Plympton Academy use the Accelerated Reader (AR) software to track the reading habits of our students. Every book in the Library has an AR quiz and the words in each book have been counted so we know how much our students are reading.

This year, our Librarian Mrs McGlinchey has been keeping track of the number of words each student has read. From September to 31st January, Year 8 students have read 18,242,495 words whilst Year 7 have read a staggering 22,913,207. ■

READY STEADY READ -

Before Christmas, Year 7 and 8 were given the opportunity to fundraise for new Tutor Time Reading books through the Ready Steady Read initiative in partnership with Usborne Publishing.

Students asked friends and family to sponsor them per minute read, per book read or per any varied reading material.

This was a fantastic opportunity for students to really engage with reading for pleasure whilst raising money.

Over £250 was raised and the school received a £90 boost from Usborne Publishing which enabled the school to purchase two new class sets of books, 'The House with Chicken Legs' and 'Mockingbird' which have now entered Tutor Time Reading circulation for the students to enjoy.

Our top fundraiser was Ben Mercer in 7HPH with over £100 raised and hours of reading completed - well done Ben!

Prizes and certificates will be issued for students who took part in the initiative and we are so proud of their commitment to reading. ■



An update on Careers activities so far this year

Students learn new skills and interests for future careers

Students have been involved in numerous careers' activities already this year. We were really pleased that Pheobe Hall, Keira-Leigh Marshall and Kacper Pawlus attended a Year 8 careers and study skills week at Marjons in the October half term. Pheobe was also awarded a prize for the best student in Criminology. Following on from this Ellie James and Amber Lindsay attended a Year 9/10 careers and study skills week at Marjons during February half term. All students had a good time whilst at Marjons and felt that they learnt new things and experienced things they aren't able to do at school.

At the end of Semester 1 we had a variety of careers activities for Years 8, 10 and 11. We were supported in these activities by Bath University, Marjons University and a variety of employers. Year 8 students started looking at their skills and interests and how these relate to potential careers.

'Some of our Year 10 students who participated in Articulary last year will be taking part in **White Water Writers** this year where they will be writing a book that will be published'



Year 10 learnt finance skills, found out about university, apprenticeships and employment opportunities and had a go at a variety of activities involved in starting their own business. Year 11 started looking at 'What next after Year 11?'

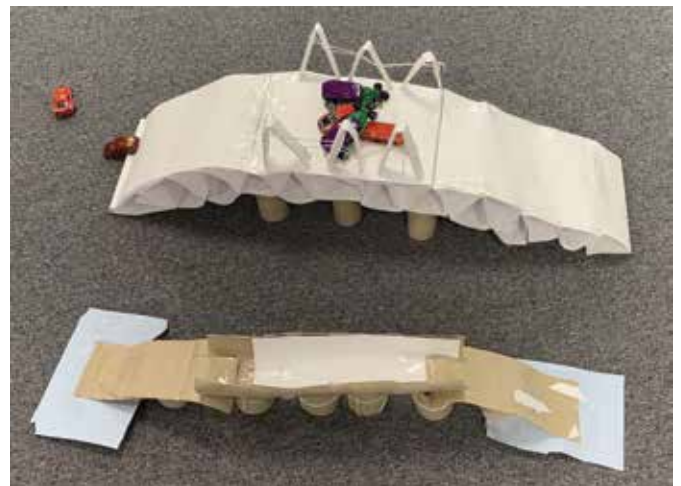
We also took a group of Year 10 female students to Schneider for a Woman In Industry

day. During that day they had a tour of the site and talked to some of the staff about their roles and what it took to get there. They also participated in two 'Engineering' activities. All students enjoyed their time.

Fifteen Year 9 students participated in the Articulary week in December. They all completed the final exam exceptionally well and achieved the English Speaking qualification. We had feedback from the tutor and examiner saying that these students were one of the best groups that they had taught. Some of our Year 10 students who participated in Articulary last year will be taking part in White Water Writers this year where they will be writing a book that will be published.

What's still to come in careers? Year 7 looking at Transferable skills. Year 12 visiting the UCAS Fair and a University to start looking at what they are going to do after Year 13.

Year 10 and 12 having an introduction to work and completing their work placement in July. ■



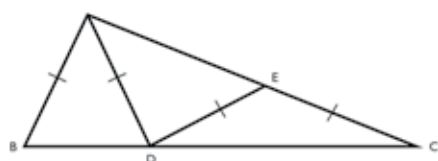
Extra Maths

A fun and engaging way to stretch your mind

To think that Maths at Plympton Academy is challenging would be an understatement, believe me. There's the work, yes, and that can be hard. But everyone has something to do and it's always related to the work. Extra Maths, I find, is a really fun and engaging way to continuously stretch my brain to the point that I see Maths lessons as more than just any old boring lesson. It's a brain training session. The other day, even, we were finding the n th term (or X position-to-term rule) for linear or quadratic sequences. I was sat there, having finished the work and was greeted by Ms Pitcher holding this - Find the n th term for

9, 11, 15, 21, 29, 39 (it's $n^2 - n + 9$) and
7, 18, 33, 52, 75, 102... (it's $2n^2 + 5n$)

A SELECTION OF QUESTIONS I HAVE BEEN ANSWERING



In triangle ABC, D is a point on BC, such that $AB = AD$ and E is a point on AC, such that $EC = ED = AD$.

Angle ABC is 60° . Angle CAB is K° .
Pass on the value of K.

The operator ' \diamond ' is defined as follows -
 $a \diamond b = a + 2ab$

Find the value of x that makes this equation true - $(3 \diamond x) + (x \diamond 3) = 94$

The best thing, I feel, about these sorts of challenge questions is that not only are you

'I cannot express my thanks to the Maths department enough and their decision to use **Hegarty Maths** as a homework platform to boost our learning'

permanently occupied, but you will see these questions on a GCSE paper. These challenges are preparing us for our GCSEs before we've really begun them. I truly enjoy Maths at Plympton Academy and I hope that generations to come will be stretched in a similar manner. But Maths isn't just in the classroom at school. There's a UKMT (UK Maths Challenge) team challenge club which I attend which currently focuses on the team challenge. I also attend workshops at Exeter Maths School once a month and this has all been arranged by school.

I cannot express my thanks to the Maths department enough and their decision to use Hegarty Maths as a homework platform to boost our learning instead of standard homework procedure.■

James Ferrier, Year 8



PERIOD 6 STUDY SESSIONS -

Mrs Keane and I would like to take the opportunity to write to you to raise your awareness of the students that have attended the period 6 sessions on offer by Plympton Academy.

The period 6 offer by the Academy has been hugely varied and has included dedicated sessions for Maths, English and Science on Tuesday's and Wednesday's. There has also been the offer of master classes run by Geography, History Photography and Art. As well as this there is an exam cafe that is run every day in the canteen by Mrs Keane and Mr Strachan.

As an Academy we value any time that students can give us to help support them. We hope that students feel that these sessions have benefited them and supported them with their revision, exam technique, exam stress management, effective preparation and revision planning.

These sessions have run alongside a tutorial programme that has focused on effective revision techniques and their application in the lead up to the terminal exams. The Year 11 students have shown real dedication and focus both in their lessons and in their own time. We wish all of the Year 11 students the best of luck with their exams and would like to remind students that we will continue to offer support right up to and during the exam period so please continue to encourage attendance to the sessions on offer.■

Mr Strachan, Head of Year 11



The Wonderful World of Electron Microscopy

A Level Biologists visit University of Plymouth to experience phenomenal opportunity

What is the smallest thing you have ever seen? If you could swap your eyes for the world's most powerful microscopes you could see something a hundred million times smaller than that! How amazing would that be? On Friday 17th January 2020 Plympton Academy's A Level Biologists visited the University of Plymouth's Centre of Electron Microscopy to experience this phenomenal opportunity.

In Science lessons we regularly use Optical Microscopes which use a beam of light to observe specimens. However, to get down to nano-dimensions we need a beam of electrons (minute charged particles that occupy the outer regions of atoms) to see much more detailed imagery. Electron Microscopes are revolutionary pieces of equipment with a much higher magnification and resolution (the ability to distinguish between objects that are close together) than Optical Microscopes. Here the specimens have to be very carefully and specifically prepared. They need to be held inside a vacuum chamber from which the air has been pumped out (electrons do not travel very far in air). The Electron Microscopes use coil-shaped electromagnets, instead of lenses, through which the electron beams travel, resulting in the formation of an image on a screen called an '**electron micrograph**'. There are different types of Electron Microscopes; the most familiar being the Transmission and Scanning Electron Microscopes (TEM and SEM).

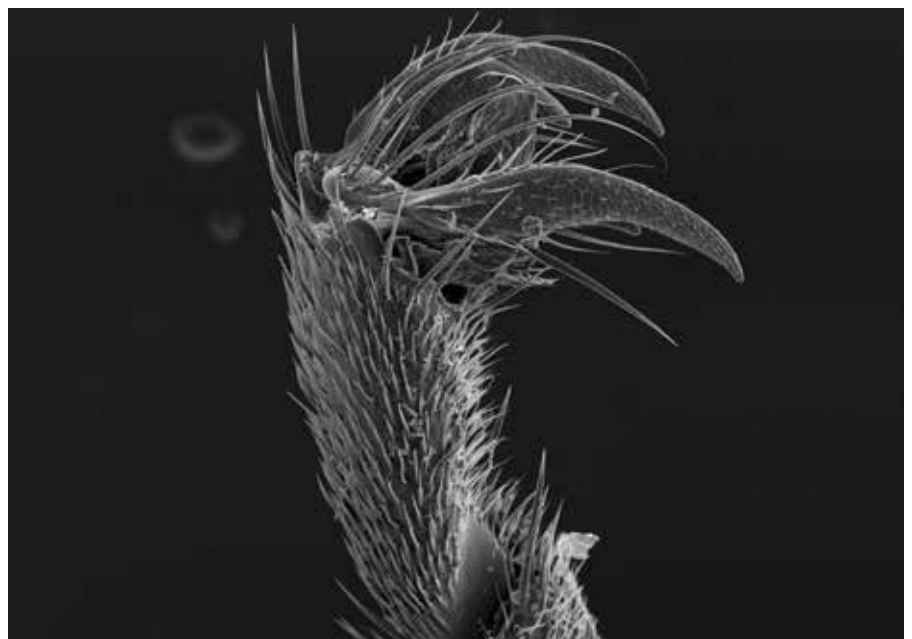
Plympton Academy's A Level Biologists

were able to observe these specialist pieces of equipment and see them in use. They were able to process and analyse imagery and observe the differences in micrographs from the TEM and SEM. The equipment at the University costs over £1 million and so delivery of this content in the classroom is only ever on a theoretical basis. This was an invaluable opportunity for our Year 12 and 13 Biologists to use specific and specialised equipment and gain practical, hands-on experience of Electron Microscopy.

The Year 12 Biologists had recently studied '**Cell Biology**' and '**Microscope Use**' and the Year 13 Biologists used the session as

'Mr Harper, Senior Technician was incredibly complimentary of our **Year 12 and 13 Biologists** who were all an absolute credit to themselves and Plympton Academy'

an opportunity to revise AS course material in preparation for their examinations. The students were divided into two groups on SEM and TEM rotation. They were given the opportunity to observe the two different microscopes, discuss their internal workings



SEM SCAN: An image of a bee's foot (x1 10) taken with Scanning Electron Microscope

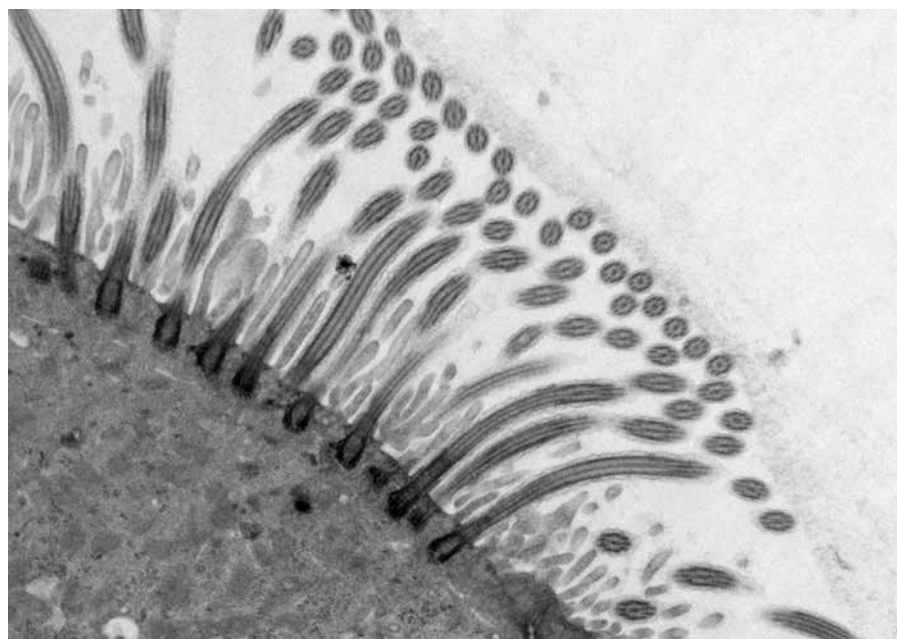
and observe a variety of specimens and images achieved using each device. These images varied from epithelial cells from the human respiratory tract to ticks that you find on sheep.

Mr Harper, Senior Technician, was incredibly complimentary of our Year 12 and 13 Biologists (Year 13 - Sid Basouyni, Harry Dales, Sarah Lyon, Alex Connell and Faith Colt. Year 12 - Maria Couet, Carrie Irwin, Taylor Vockings, Lewis Treleaven, Connor

Bean and Harry Johnson) who were all an absolute credit to themselves and Plympton Academy.

On behalf of Plympton Academy I would like to take say a huge **'Thank you'** to Mr G. Harper and Dr A. Strachan, and the University of Plymouth, for supporting an excellent outreach programme that allows students fundamental practical application of the core A Level Biology curriculum. ■

Emma Hagan, Second in Science



EXCITING PRACTICALS: Students get a chance to experience the facilities on offer at Plympton Academy

YEAR 5 SCIENCE FUN -

Fizzing salt water, magic coloured chemicals and flaming Bunsen Burners: just a few of the exciting science practicals carried out by visiting Year 5 pupils from Glen Park and Plympton St Maurice schools in January this year. As always we at Plympton Academy have enjoyed welcoming teachers and pupils from our partner primary schools to share some of our science resources and expertise.

Year 5 pupils were firstly given the task of separating salt from salty water. For most pupils this involved the exciting (and maybe slightly scary!) task of setting up and lighting a Bunsen Burner and then evaporating the water until small crystals of salt appeared from the solution.

In another session pupils competed with one another to create the cleanest water from a sample of extremely dirty River Plym water. This involved several rounds of chemical filtration and then measuring the water clarity using a light sensing phone app.

Finally in a session exploring reversible and irreversible changes the young scientists used heat to change green copper carbonate into black copper oxide, using careful laboratory-standard measurement, heating and observation skills.

Every one of the pupils who attended demonstrated excellent laboratory skills, and left the Academy with a greater understanding of the chemical world around us.

For us at the Academy working with primary colleagues and pupils brings many benefits. It helps us to align our curriculum with primary schools and therefore accelerate progress when students enter Year 7 at Plympton Academy. We are able to deliver aspects of the primary curriculum which require facilities and expertise not widely available in primary schools and of course we also learn from our primary colleagues about the excellent teaching approaches they have developed in working with children of this age. ■

Belsen75 Project

75th anniversary of the liberation of Bergen-Belsen concentration camp

This year is the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. As part of the national Belsen75 project, four Sixth Form students who study Philosophy and Ethics (Lucy Ayres; Carrie Irwin; Anna Laniewski and Hannah Lombard) are taking part in two seminars and a day visit to the former camp itself.

Bergen-Belsen has a complex history, between the years 1933 and 1950.

It first became a Prisoner of War camp for Soviet and then Italian prisoners. Then the camp became an atypical concentration camp—murder by neglect. Later then barracks in the area became a displaced persons camp for the struggling survivors. Each of these stages has a multitude of stories and horrors.

The project started with the first seminar. Mala Tribich (a Holocaust survivor) gave her testimony to a room of two hundred people. Among many things she said, she emphasises we must remember those who cannot tell their story—those who died. She described people as ‘walking skeletons’ in Belsen and explained how ‘people could drop dead in front of you’. The testimonies of survivors are vital in accurately portraying the scar of humanity history that is the Holocaust.

For the visit to the camp we were on the road by 3:30am and after checking in to our flight at Exeter Airport, we soon landed at Hannover where we got a coach to visit the exhibition which is just offsite of the former concentration camp. Here we were exposed to many testimonies from survivors and liberators, from the time as a POW camp, concentration camp and DP camp. These were moving and hard to comprehend.

We swiftly moved onto the memorial itself. This was quite possibly the most surreal experience many of us have been a part of.



A mosaic concrete path guided our roots through grave after grave. To the edges lay mass graves each containing estimated numbers, varying from 800 people to 2,500 people. It seems impossible to conceive these numbers as people with lives. Yet we must out of respect to the survivors and those who sadly didn't make it to be able to share their experiences.

We later walked the full length of the camp and it seems huge which made the concept of overcrowding inconceivable. The site in the present day is beautiful, yet barren heathland as all the buildings were burned down by the British days after liberation. This was necessary because Typhus plagued the camp. Although it was controversial along with the continuation of filling the mass graves by the British yet this was what needed to be done by people who by no means wanted to see any of what was seen.

We also learnt about the nature of the liberation of Bergen-Belsen in April 1945. Survivor testimonies said how many they were too broken to feel ‘happy’ or anything for the sight of British troops and ‘What are we free to do?’ At Bergen-Belsen the true liberation of the people came later during the time of the Displaced Persons camp as they began to rebuild their destroyed lives and culture.

Overall, the first two phases of the Belsen75 project has been an extremely valuable experience and something we will never forget. Now we must reflect upon what we saw and learned then produce a worthy legacy project. The aim of this will be to remember the horrors that took place during the Holocaust and to combat modern day antisemitism and racism which still plague our societies.■

Carrie Irwin | 2PKN

Hastings History Club

Encouraging students to learn more about the past

From October, some of the Year 7 students have been attending Hastings History club. The club has been run by four Year 13 students Rachel, Ethan, Lauren and Sarah who have been involved in an Inspire2Involve project. This project was set up to encourage students to find out more about the past through learning, creating and re-enacting it.

The Year 7 students spent time learning about the Battle of Hastings. They found out about the weapons, shields, helmets and tactics that were used by the Norman and Saxon armies. They had great fun eating biscuits as well as thinking about how they could use their knowledge to create their own weapons.

On a cold wintry day, the students went down to Castle Green to re-enact the battle of Hastings using their newly designed weapons. They enjoyed using the tactics of William and Harold II to decide the outcome of the battle.

This term the students are learning about the Egyptians and their burial practices. We have started to design our own mummies and sarcophagus tombs. We meet every Wednesday in H5.

Do come along for food and to learn more about the events of the past. We are hoping to go out on a trip to the Box in Plymouth when it is open in the spring. ■

Mrs Brake, Ethan Wilshaw,
Lauren Hampson, Sarah Lyon and
Rachel Wren



EXCITING TIMES FOR GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT -

It is a very exciting time for the Geography department with the introduction of our new teachers. Myself and Mrs Littlejohn. I am the new Head of Geography and bring my knowledge of the subject from working previously in Birmingham and Exeter. I am also an associate examiner for AQA and have marking expertise in Geographical applications GCSE paper. Mrs. Littlejohn joins us from previously working in Tiverton. She is also an AQA team leader and has expertise in marking the Human Geography paper.

As we start to move into Semester 3 the department will be looking to bring new ideas to lessons along with entirely new, exciting schemes of work for our students. For Year 11 and Year 13, we will be offering revision sessions in the build up to the exams as well as updating online resources to aid with revision. Both Year groups have finished their courses and lessons are now based around tailored revision.

Looking further ahead, I will soon be investigating potential field trips for students. GCSE students have to complete two days of fieldwork while, for our students looking to carry on with the subject to A level, will need to complete at least four.

Both Mrs Littlejohn and I have settled in well to life at Plympton Academy and we look forward to developing the subject further. ■

Chris Jones, Head of Geography

'Both Mrs Littlejohn and I have settled in well to life at **Plympton Academy** and we look forward to developing the subject further'

Plymouth Art Panel Project 2020

Year 10 artists design panel to be displayed in the city

Six of our talented Year 10 artists are busy designing a panel that will represent our school and be displayed in the city this summer. The aim is to transform the Embankment Road visitor experience by installing a series of vibrant art panels which will be designed by children and young people from across the city focused on the theme of 'Discovery' telling Plymouth's history and heritage over the past 400 years. Schools are invited to come up with a theme and an individual design that will form the art panel story board.

This project we will be bringing together professionals and students from the world of Construction, Engineering, Creative Industries

'The aim is to inspire and enthuse the young people of Plymouth to be proud of their home town, to study these related subjects and develop vital **STEM** skills in order to pursue future careers in these industries'

and the Arts who will act as mentors and art directors for the design of the panels. The aim is to inspire and enthuse the young people of Plymouth to be proud of their home town, to study these related subjects and develop vital

STEM skills in order to pursue future careers in these industries.

We look forward to following the progress of our Year 10 artist team.■

KEEP UP TO DATE
WITH THE VISUAL
ARTS DEPARTMENT
ONLINE -

The Visual Arts department has a Tumblr Blog which showcases all the fantastic, creative things that our students are getting up to here at the academy. Please check it out at www.plymptonacademyart.tumblr. We are also on Twitter [@PlymptonAcademyArt](https://twitter.com/PlymptonAcademyArt)■



Visual Arts Department Round Up

It has been a very busy time for us in the Visual Arts department with students from all year groups involved in creative and exciting projects.

Year 7 have been exploring the theme **'Chromatic Insects'**, this project enables them to look at the work of contemporary artists and photographers whilst also learning about colour theory and entomology.

Year 8 have looked at **'Figures in Action'**, learning how to draw the figure in proportion in different poses and then looking at the work of the Futurist artists to inspire their own paintings. They have also explored Aardman and stop motion animation; creating their own short films using green screens.

Year 9 students have been looking at **'Pop Art'** and creating their own designs taking inspiration from current popular culture. They are looking at the super-sized sculptures of Claes Oldenburg to inspire their own food sculptures and lino prints.

Year 10 are using recycled bottles to create abstract sculptures inspired by the artist

'We are all starting to get very excited about the new build and the fantastic facilities that we will have for Art and Photography'

Aurora Robson and they have also designed mandalas based on the theme **'Mechanic Organic'**.

Our Year 11 and 13 students have now completed their coursework and are well underway with their exam projects. Some very interesting and original ideas are being developed. Year 12 students are just starting their **'Personal Investigations'** and we look forward to seeing their work develop over the next 9 months.

We are all starting to get very excited about the new build and the fantastic facilities that we will have for Art and Photography. There certainly is lots for us to look forward to going forward.■

Maria Romanski, Head of Art

MAYFLOWER 400 UPDATE -

Our Year 8 Mayflower 400 artists have been busy since the start of the year. They have taken part in a mask making workshop with artist Karen Evans, been on a visit to Plympton Castle with Historian Richard Fisher and been on a nature walk with Tess Wilmot. We will continue to follow their progress as we head towards the Mayflower celebrations across Plymouth this summer.■



SCHOOL of ROCK!



Students 'Rock Out' with latest show at the Academy

Students at Plympton Academy and some local primary schools recently finished staging their own fantastic performance of the West End hit musical 'School of Rock!' to packed out audiences. The cast featured pupils from feeder primary schools as well as Plympton Academy students from Years 7 through to 13. All students performed with energy, passion and a real sense of professionalism over the five days and many audience members came back for a second time!

The students were an absolute pleasure to work with. They consistently supported and looked after one another; encouraging each other and stepping in for us as a team, during our busier times around Christmas. They led rehearsals, took warm ups, directed scenes and set their own choreography - exactly how a school show should be!

We are incredibly proud of every single one of them, on stage, off stage and in the band! I would like to say thank you to all of you for making 'the making' of this show such fun!

I would also like to take this opportunity

to thank my team for their passion, energy, creativity and commitment. Every day they go above and beyond for the students at Plympton Academy and I feel privileged to work alongside them. You Rock!■

Jo Crook, Director of Performing Arts

I have been a governor for more than 20 years and while I have not been to all productions during that time, I have now been to the best!

The performance I saw was way above what I expected. The way the students built the story, leading me and holding my attention. When we got to the climax I was right into the performance and not thinking about students trying to put on a show. The leads were very good and the others 'popped out' grabbed my attention and made me focus on who or what would surprise me next.

In the end they all did, individually or in groups. I wasn't at school, I was in the theatre. The band didn't show off students who can play instruments, they were the support which made the performance a real musical. The crew did the business allowing the show to flow. Everybody behind the scenes, costumes,



scenery, sound and lighting, support (printing, raffles, refreshments, etc.) made the evening for me one I will remember for a very long time.

Well done to all.■

Paul Hutchings, Governor

PERFORMING ARTS



Dance at Plympton Academy

Students get a taste of the professional industry

RAMBERT DANCE COMPANY

The Dance Department at Plympton Academy organised three separate opportunities for students to give them a taste of the professional industry and inspire them.

Some of the Academy's students took part in a workshop at the Plymouth Theatre Royal with professional dancer Connor from Rambert Dance Company. Students danced on the Lyric stage learning some of the repertoire choreographed by Marion Motin, whose hip hop-influenced style is probably best known through her work for Christine and the Queens and her VMA-nominated music video for Dua Lipa. After the session students asked questions regarding training routes for dance, life as a touring dancer and Rambert's pieces being performed. Students then returned to the Theatre to watch the triple bill performance.

Stephanie Jenner, Lead Practitioner of Dance at Plympton Academy said, "Giving student's opportunities like these are so valuable and important as it allows them to work closely with professional dancers, learning new skills and techniques and experience the methods used to create choreography. It inspires them and gives them a precious insight into the world of dance. Dancing on the Lyric stage gave our students an insight to professional working spaces which was brilliant for them to experience."

JAMES WILTON DANCE COMPANY

Thirty boys in Years 7, 8 and 9 took part in a boys dance workshop with James Wilton Dance Company this semester. Most of the students form the BCD (**boys can dance**) dance company and work on various workshops like these throughout the

'Giving student's opportunities like these are so valuable and important as it allows them to work closely with professional dancers, learning new skills and techniques and experience the methods used to create choreography'

year. However, for some this was their first experience working with professional dancers. James Wilton Dance Company are known for their dynamic and physically demanding movement, two company dancers Ollie and Jacob who are on tour with the company

came to the Academy to work with students, teaching them improvisation techniques, repertoire and creative methods. The boys absolutely gave all the energy they had and as a result learnt and performed the style of James Wilton with power and strength! It was a super challenging day, but our boys really showed the dancers their skill and flare for dance!

However, this was not it... the next day, students had the opportunity to see Ollie and Jacob perform with the rest of the James Wilton Dance Company at the Exeter Northcott Theatre to watch '**The Storm**'. The piece touched on the theme of mental health and explored the neurological processes of the brain, metaphorically connecting this to the concept of a storm.



Year 9 student Lee said, "I found it exciting how they showed the mood of The Storm through their movement, the workshop was really good. I liked how they used their bodies with power, fluidity and ease... I found new ways to travel and perform."

Stephanie Jenner, Lead Practitioner of Dance said, "Giving boys the platform to dance is so important as it allows them to grow and be encouraged to pursue it further. Changing the stigma of boys dancing is crucial so they can approach dance with a sense

of security. Since joining the Academy in 2017 it has been my mission to ensure that all students at Plympton Academy are open minded to this change in views and the boys who have risen to this challenge have really started to show such promise and passion in what they do. Working with Ollie and Jacob inspired the boys so much, our students gained so much from this experience and I look forward to seeing all the new movements taught in their up and coming pieces!" ■



MATTHEW BOURNE'S RED SHOES -

Forty students from Plympton Academy had the opportunity to watch Matthew Bourne's Red Shoes at the Theatre Royal, for some this was their first experience watching a professional dance piece. Matthew Bourne is renowned for showcasing classics with a darker twist which really displays to students how to be creative and reinvent the wheel. Students loved the production and came away mind blown by the dancers' skill and talent as well as the staging, lighting and costumes.

Year 7 student Grace said, "I liked how they performed the story, it was the first dance show I have seen and I loved watching it. Matthew Bourne has a really good contrast of dance moves." ■

'I extremely enjoyed it. Red Shoes was the first dance show I watched created by **Matthew Bourne**, I found it really clever when they made ballet within the piece. I really want to go again' Jasmin, Year 8



UCAS Application

Securing a place at university by Jonathon Watson

Recently, I was given an offer to study Computer Science at Queens' College at Cambridge University. In order to get this offer, I had to go through a difficult application process and participate in a set of exams and interviews.

The first step in applying to any university is submitting a UCAS application. This process involves giving academic and personal details about yourself and must be done by the fifteenth of October to apply to Cambridge. The most important part of the UCAS application is the personal statement, which is a four thousand character essay communicating why universities should give you a place. The UCAS application is also where you pick which five universities you would like to apply for.

As part of my application at Cambridge, I also had to fill out a form called the SAQ where I was able to give further details about

myself. At the end of October, I completed a maths admission test in school called the CTMUA, which consists of two consecutive exams assessing problem solving skills.

After almost one month, I found that I did well enough to receive an invitation to be interviewed in December.

To prepare for my interviews, I was given the opportunity to do a mock interview in school. Also, as part of my application to Imperial College London, I took part in an interview which helped me prepare. I also practiced for another maths exam that I would have to take on my interview day by going through past papers.

On 10th December, I traveled to Cambridge and stayed in one of the rooms at the college I applied to for free. At ten in the morning the next day, I did a maths test for two hours with six other applicants. This exam focused on very difficult long maths questions. In the afternoon, I had two interviews, both of



which with two specialists and an observer from another school.

My first interview was based on my interests in computer science. In the first part of the interview, I was asked to discuss my past experiences in the subject based on my personal statement. The second part of the interview involved answering a set of questions about stack machines. My second interview was about mathematical and logical thinking. In this interview, I went through three different questions from different areas of maths.

The most important part of answering questions in an interview at Cambridge is communicating your thought process and expressing your ideas. If you are taking a science subject, it is also important to practice sketching complicated graphs, as graph sketching questions are very common. You should read back through your personal statement before your interviews as it is likely that this is what a few questions will be based on. Finally, it is important to elaborate in your interview and use subject terminology to demonstrate your knowledge. ■



Our Alumni

Esmee Turleji

I am studying a degree in Fine Art at Bristol UWE and am finding it amazing! Bristol has an incredibly motivating and inspiring vibe about it and PLENTY of interesting people to meet; no two days are the same! There are lots of opportunities to do great things if you actively seek them; one of the hardest things I've had to learn since moving away and onto a course where the studio is open for you all through the week is self-motivation to attend the lectures! It took a while but I have it now!

I have a part time job where I get to practice my GCSE Spanish a lot as I work with a large proportion of Spanish people, which is particularly helpful as I am going to Barcelona for four months this year as I am lucky enough to be able to attend an Erasmus cultural activities event, where I will get to meet lots of other young people.

I have been exhibiting and performing dance in multiple exhibitions and have also completed a couple of portrait commissions. In a couple of weeks' time I will be competing

in 'Bristol Art Battle' for which I was selected against eleven other UK artists. Also, I spend a lot of time bouldering and have joined the climbing society where I have made a lot of new friends and we are planning on going climbing around Europe in the summer.

After the course I shall be going to Australia for a year of mango farming and travelling, after that six months in Ghana to get experience of teaching in a Primary School there, and I will be lucky enough to be collaborating with an Architect I know, on projects combining art and architecture. ■

'One of the hardest things I've had to learn since moving away and onto a course where the studio is open for you all through the week is self-motivation to attend the lectures!'

Millie van Rijckevorsel -

For my A-levels, I took Geography, Spanish, Performing Arts and Photography - all things I'm still very captivated by. The combination of Geography and Spanish lead me to escape the Island, inspiring me to head to continental Europe. During my time in school, I totally fell in love with the Spanish language. Needless to say, my teachers were certainly instrumental in giving me the confidence to leave the UK, heading over to the warmer climes of Barcelona.

Ironically enough, on arrival to the new big city, I realised that Catalan was the primary language spoken, however, I was still very much able to keep improving my Spanish. Barcelona is in a beautiful location and within the first month of moving to this beautiful city, I headed out for several hiking trips to Pedra Forca and Montserrat. At the summits of these treks, the views are incomparable, hundreds of thousands of metres above sea level. From Pedra Forca, you could see the more hardcore summits off in the distance, their peaks dusted with snow.

It wasn't only the breathtaking nature and vibrant Catalan culture that brought me to Barcelona, but I went to study at a nomadic art studio in the heart of the city. Here, all nationalities were present, but strangely enough (in my case, it brought me a lot of comfort), the studio was full of Dutch people. Not only was I improving my Spanish, but my Dutch too! Estudio Nómada gave workshops about all things art! From history of art lectures, to street art, life drawing and pottery.

Since leaving the studio, I travelled to Senegal, made a few trips back to Barcelona to visit friends and most recently, been a windsurfing and sailing instructor with Rockley - a Dorset based company with centres dotted around the UK and France.

I am thinking of higher education, but for now, I have applied for several volunteer schemes in London - cooking for Extinction Rebellion protestors, and in Greece to help refugees find their feet while waiting for asylum. Who knows what the New Year will bring! ■



Skiing Trip 2020

Students take to the slopes for fantastic experience

Forty three students travelled to Zell-am-See in Austria as part of the Academy's February Ski Trip. With many of the students getting the experience of International travel for the first time the students settled down to the long coach trip to Dover, across the channel and down through France, Belgium, Germany and finally into Austria.

With 33 of the 43 students being complete beginners on snow, all the students made huge progress over the week with Harry, Jason and Ethan conquering the black slopes (the hardest slopes on the mountain) on day 3 of the trip - a fantastic achievement. However, with all the beginners progressing so well everyone achieved to ski off the top of the mountain, known as the Schmittenhohe (2000m), by the end of the week showing excellent resilience and determination to succeed.

'With 33 of the 43 students being complete beginners on snow, all the students made huge progress over the week with **Harry, Jason and Ethan** conquering the black slopes (the hardest slopes on the mountain) on day 3 of the trip - a fantastic achievement'

The students experienced how varied mountain conditions can be when they started the week in sun and high temperatures several degrees above freezing, midweek seeing fresh snowfall and finally in chilly sub-zero windy conditions. One thing that was for certain is that the students never stopped laughing and having fun on the slopes whether that was

skiing or having the occasional snow ball fight!

To get a real Austrian experience the students took part in a number of activities during the evening that included bowling, swimming and watching professional ice hockey - something you don't get the chance to watch every day in Plympton!

After another mammoth journey by coach and ferry the students were glad to be back on solid ground. They not only participated in every aspect of the trip with great enthusiasm but they also developed socially as a group throughout the week.

The staff that travelled with the students enjoyed their company and had lots of laughs throughout the week particularly with those students who desperately did some amazing things to try and win the '**duck of the day**' hat in recognition of their mishaps!

Watch out for the next offer to book your place on the next School Ski Trip! ■

Mr Taylor



Indoor Athletics

Year 7 and 8 students compete in Level 2 Secondary Championships

Plympton Academy's Year 7 and 8 athletics team took part in the Level 2 Secondary Indoor Athletics Championships in February. The competition took place at Marjon Sports Centre and involved sprints, middle distance, field events and relays.

The team took 4th place against very strong competition and have qualified to compete in the Level 3 event which takes place in March. ■

MOUNTAIN BIKE CLUB

Despite the bad weather this year, our mountain bike club have been hard at work sculpting the school mountain bike track. We still have a lot of work to do, so if you like a bit of digging, and want to get involved in creating the track, come along on Wednesdays after school. You will need a mountain bike and a helmet, and clothes that can get muddy. ■

PLYMPTON ACADEMY NETBALL

This year our Netball teams have had some wonderful victories and huge success! Their

team work, dedication and commitment has not gone unnoticed. Our Year 8, 9, 10 and 11's all finished 2nd in the league. Let's hope our Year 7's have the same success. ■



YEAR 10 BASKETBALL ROUND UP -

This semester the Year 10 Boys basketball team played several basketball fixtures against a variety of Plymouth schools. The team started their basketball season off with narrow defeats to Hele's and Coombe Dean, but the made huge improvements in both their teamwork and individual performances. The boys then picked up a well-deserved 26 - 14 win during an away game at All Saints and also beat Stoke Damerel Community College.

The team now have just one more game coming up, where they will be hoping to round off their successful basketball season with a victory at home to Plymstock. ■

'The team started their basketball season off with narrow defeats to **Hele's** and **Coombe Dean**, but the made huge improvements in both their teamwork and individual performances'





Plympton Academy Easter Holiday Programme

TURN UP and PLAY!
Extended Opening Times
TBC

FOOTBALL -
£3 for an hour
£5 for longer

**2 WEEKS OF
ACTIVITIES
INCLUDING...**
Football, Swimming,
Table Tennis,
Badminton and
more*

WEEKS COMMENCING
30th March and 6th April
10:00 - 16:00
For ages 8-14 years
For more information, please email
corym@plympton.academy

**£12 PER
DAY**
*activities are subject
to change

Like our facebook page: "Plympton Community Sports
Centre" to keep up-to-date with ALL the latest
information and confirmed schedule

COMMITTED, CARING COACHES DELIVERING A FULL DAY OF ACTIVITIES WITH THE FOCUS ON FUN & SKILL DEVELOPMENT



Summer

Plym Fest

Fayre

FRIDAY 10TH JULY 1.00 PM - 2.30 PM

ON THE SCHOOL FIELD

PARENTS WELCOME

- Inflatable Assault course • Fun, games & prizes
- BBQ • Ice cream van • Food & Drink stalls
- Raffle & Tombola

Live Music & Karaoke!

A celebration of Music and Performing Arts with performance from school bands, Music BTEC classes and Performing Arts BTEC classes!

Summer Gala

10th July at 6:30 - 9:30 in the Morpurgo Studio

Tickets available from Main Reception:

Refreshments provided

£3 Adults £2 Concessions

10th July

Plympton Academy
Inspiring Success