



Lipson Co-operative Academy

Sixth Form Newsletter – April 2025

A few words from Mr Mee – Head of Sixth Form.

This term has been nothing short of exceptional in our Sixth Form, marked by outstanding achievements and an increasingly vibrant community spirit. Students have excelled academically, with many achieving impressive grades in their assessments and mock exams, setting a strong foundation for a busy final term.

Our enrichment program on a Wednesday afternoon has seen good participation, and allows students to find that balance between working hard academically and looking after their own health and well-being. Students have shown excellent dedication to community service with several initiatives that aim to give back and support those in need. In particular the work of students who have been volunteering at Age UK has been nothing short of exceptional and this commitment not only reflects their character but also enriches the school's ethos and values.

From UCAS fairs, working hard in and out of the classroom, enrichment thrown in and a few tasty rewards along the way, we are looking forward to building on this momentum and continue supporting our students in their academic and personal growth with a busy term ahead.

Early indications show that year 13 students are going to perform exceptionally well in their final exams, and year 12 should go into their exams in June with every confidence.

I am proud of every student in the Sixth Form, they continue to impress me everyday and I look forward to sharing many successes in the future.

Pelican of London – Congratulations to all those students who have secured a place on the Pelican of London for the Plymouth Science Voyage dates are the 15th – 24th September. We are so excited for you all and cannot wait to hear about your adventures. Thank you to our benefactors who can make this once in a life time adventure possible. More details can be found at <https://pelicanoflondon.org/>. We are also pleased to announce that 3 of our students who sailed on the Pelican of London last year are sailing again from Boston to the Azores this summer on the Staad Amsterdam, what a way for them to celebrate the end of their A Levels.



Attendance - A polite reminder that all students are required to be in school registration for 8.38. Should a student continue to be late within a week, this may result in students losing their reward mornings on a Friday. If students are unable to attend due to illness please can the parent/carer email sixthform@lipson.plymouth.sch.uk or contact Student Services. All external exams will be completed by Friday 27th June for Year 13. Please do not book any holidays before this time.



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Careers - We submitted 41 applications to UCAS! 15 of our students have applied to a Russell Group University. The courses our students have applied for range from Liberal Arts, Sociology, Paramedic Science, professional Music, Politics and International Relations, Psychology and Aerospace Engineering to name but a few. They have now started to choose their accommodation and complete their student finances following an assembly from Next Steps.

Congratulations to all the students who applied for apprenticeships and are through to the next stage. These apprenticeships include the BBC and Babcock.

Our sixth form students attended an assembly from Next Steps South West to discuss Higher and Degree apprenticeships, the differences and how to apply.

English and Maths GCSE

English Paper 1 – 23rd May

English Paper 2 – 6th June

Maths Paper 1 – 15th May

Maths Paper 2 – 4th June

Maths Paper 3 – 11th June

Please can all students completing Maths and English GCSE make a note of these times and make sure you arrive at 8.40am for each exam. Booster sessions will also be running.

Year 12 Physicists - Take on the BPhO Senior Physics Challenge

During British Science Week, while younger students were exploring the wonders of science, our Year 12 physicists took on an even greater challenge—the British Physics Olympiad (BPhO) Senior Physics Challenge. This national competition pushes students to apply fundamental physics principles to unfamiliar and complex scenarios, testing their problem-solving skills under pressure. With over 6,000 students competing across the country, we are incredibly proud of our students' achievements:

- Three students achieved a Bronze Award – demonstrating a solid understanding of advanced physics.
- Three students received a Commendation – an impressive recognition of their problem-solving skills.

The Senior Physics Challenge is no ordinary test— it is designed to stretch even the brightest young minds. Any student who participated should be immensely proud of their achievement. They have proved themselves to be among the best young physicists in the country.

A huge thank you to Mr. Chick and Mr. Connett for making space in their busy lesson sequence to allow students the opportunity to take part. Their support and encouragement were invaluable in enabling our students to push themselves beyond the standard curriculum and embrace this exciting challenge. Congratulations to all who took part— your dedication and enthusiasm are truly commendable.





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Lessons from Auschwitz– Two of our dedicated sixth form students recently participated in the *Lessons from Auschwitz* trip to Poland, an unforgettable experience that allowed them to engage with the history of the Holocaust on a deeply personal level. During their visit, they had the opportunity to walk through the former concentration camp, hear survivor testimonies, and reflect on the atrocities of the past. Their participation in this trip not only enriched their understanding of history but also strengthened their commitment to fighting intolerance and prejudice in our society today. They are eager to share the powerful lessons they learned with their peers and continue raising awareness about the importance of remembrance and human rights. Both students are in the process of planning how to use this experience to influence others within the Lipson community, they are excited to move forward and engage with the younger years in sharing their experience through their 'next steps programme' where we look forward to seeing their creative art pieces and assemblies.



iStudy - It is open every school day from 8am until 5pm. All the chrome books and resources are available for you to use. I know a lot of students find it beneficial to complete the work before they go home or to use the space to work with their friends. Remember what your "Why" is and aim for that goal!

UCAS Conference – Year 12 pupils attended the UCAS Discovery Conference at Westpoint Exeter. There were over 100 UK universities represented as well as apprenticeship providers and employers. It allowed all students a fantastic opportunity to gather information, speak directly about their choices to the universities and to plan for their future.

Students will start the UCAS process on the 9th June so that they can be working on it over the Summer holidays. Students applying for Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary and Oxbridge their UCAS applications needs to be submitted by the 15th October 2025.



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It's in the bag -

Testicular cancer is the most common cancer in men aged 15 to 45. Yet, for many young and middle-aged guys, it's not even on their radar. Over 2,500 men are diagnosed with testicular cancer in the UK, but it is over 96% curable and, when detected early, requires less treatment.

Nevertheless, many men don't like to talk about their balls and find it a struggle to go to the GP. We would like to encourage men to check themselves regularly and feel confident to see a GP if they have any concerns.



<https://itsinthebag.org.uk/>

AGE UK – Congratulations to the 8 students who have completed their Age UK work placements. Ryan, Nicole, Aiden and Summer will begin after Easter. Students have really enjoyed the opportunity with several of them taking up a week long placement in the summer.

Key Dates:

22nd April – First day of term

23rd April – Safety on nights out talk

30th April – Yr 12 Ted Wragg Trust Day at Torbridge High

5th May – Bank Holiday

9th May – Yr 13 Sport – Climbing Day

26th – 30th May – Half Term

16th – 27th June – Yr 12 PPE's

20th June – Yr 13 Celebration Afternoon

25th June – Yr 13 Celebration Evening

15th – 17th July – Yr12 Enrichment

15th Sept – 24th Sept – Pelican of London Plymouth Science Voyage

Sixth Form Leadership – It has been a lovely term!

We have all worked really hard and we have been determined as a leadership team. We had a few things planned out this term, starting off with two Fundraisers. On the 7th of March 2025 we facilitated a bake sale which was aimed at raising money for the Age UK Plymouth, Mount Gould branch, charity. Additionally, on the 28th of March 2025 we organised a Pyjama Friday to raise more money for Age UK, as this charity supports the sixth form students in many ways including voluntary work experience, which has been very valuable.

As we look towards the next term we have a few things cooking.

Currently undergoing preparation:

- Whole school talent showcase
- charity football match

And much more...

Finally, we are actively supporting the year 11's in preparation for their GCSE's in iStudy after school for an hour every day. We encourage all students to find a day that suits them and come along to our student mentoring sessions after school, and if you think about it this way, it is one less hour of revision at home - and you have our support!

and remember... A positive mindset = a positive performance!



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PERK Awards – Each term the Sixth Form team select students who have gone above and beyond the school values, this term the winners are:

Prepared – Molly Lane, Jacob Eddy, Sam Ingham and Saria Dube Sampson

Engaged – Mya Staward, Archie Waines, Ryan Walton and Grace Brownbridge.

Responsible – Leena Uresh, Riley Baker, Felix Goodwin and Ellie – May Sargeant

Kind – Lily Bance, Gui De Abreu Barbosa, Dylan Bailey and Molly Grayfox

Year 12 Biology – They had an electrifying day at the Plymouth Electron Microscopy Centre! They explored how electron microscopy slides are prepared, including advanced fixation techniques, and got to use both scanning and transmission electron microscopes—something even some of our science teachers haven't had the chance to do! A *micro* adventure with *major* learning for these budding scientists.



Mindfulness for revision



Mindfulness is best defined as **“paying attention in a particular way, on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally.”**

Jon Kabat-Zinn

You can be mindful in two main ways by:

- doing simple practices (meditations) but also
- being completely in the moment enjoying something simple like eating your lunch so you really taste and appreciate it rather than just gulping it down.

Neuroscience is helping us understand how our brains work and the effect mindfulness can have upon it. Mindfulness can be used in two ways to help prepare for exams.

1. It can help keep you calm. Feeling some stress and anxiety around exams is natural and indeed can help boost performance. It's when it becomes too much that it becomes a problem. Mindfulness helps calm activity in the bit of your brain associated with worry.



2. Mindfulness can also help increase the neural connections in the front of your brain. This is part of the brain associated with memory, your ability to solve problems and helps to manage distraction.

One of the most simple mindfulness practices is focusing in on your breath. This helps both create a sense of calm which is great for reducing worry about exams and also helps increase your focus and memory.

Find a quiet place to sit where you won't be disturbed and switch your phone to silent.

- Choose a chair that is comfortable. Ensure your feet are touching the floor, hands resting on your knees, back supported by the chair. Keep your shoulders back so you're sitting upright with your head looking forwards.
- Close your eyes and allow your focus to come to your breath.
- Feel all the sensations of the breath coming in through the nostrils as the air passes down to your lungs. Feel your abdomen expand and then contract as the breath then passes back up and out through the nose or mouth. Repeat this focus for each breath you take.
- It's only natural your mind will wonder. Each time it does, gently bring it back to the focus on your breath. It doesn't matter how many times you have to do this. You're simply training your mind to focus on one thing at one time. This is the essence of mindfulness.
- Try to practise this for 10 minutes every day. Find a regular time that works.
- Bit by bit you should start to notice yourself becoming calmer. It can work more quickly for some people and more slowly for others.
- The most important thing is to give it a go and explore with a sense of openness and curiosity.





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Everyone's exam experience is unique and we understand this can be a very stressful time for many and looking after yourself during this time is vital. Organise self-care by getting enough sleep, eating nutritious meals, staying active and practicing relaxation techniques like deep breathing or mindfulness. Also, remember to take breaks, connect with friends and family, and seek support when needed.

Here's a more detailed breakdown of how to look after yourself during exams:

Physical Well-being:

- **Sleep:** Aim for 7-8 hours of quality sleep each night.
- **Nutrition:** Eat regular, balanced meals and snacks to maintain energy levels and focus.
- **Hydration:** Drink plenty of water throughout the day.
- **Exercise:** Get some physical activity, even a short walk, to boost your mood and reduce stress.
- **Breaks:** Take regular breaks during study sessions to avoid burnout and allow your mind to rest.
- **Fresh Air:** Get outside for some fresh air and sunshine to help improve your mood and energy levels.

Mental and Emotional Well-being:

- **Relaxation Techniques:** Practice relaxation techniques like deep breathing, meditation, or mindfulness to manage stress and anxiety.
- **Positive Self-Talk:** Use positive language and reinforce your strengths and abilities.
- **Limit Social Media Use:** Reduce screen time, especially before bed, to promote better sleep and reduce anxiety.
- **Connect with Others:** Reach out to friends, family, or support services for emotional support.
- **Set Realistic Goals:** Break down large tasks into smaller, more manageable steps to avoid feeling overwhelmed.
- **Celebrate Small Wins:** Acknowledge and celebrate your achievements, no matter how small, to stay motivated.

During Exam Days:

- **Prepare the Night Before:** Gather all your materials and plan your route to the exam venue.
- **Start the Day Well:** Eat a good breakfast and get to the exam venue with plenty of time to spare.
- **Stay Calm:** Practice relaxation techniques before and during the exam.
- **Don't Compare Yourself to Others:** Focus on your own performance and avoid comparing yourself to others.
- **Take Breaks During the Exam:** If allowed, take short breaks to stretch your legs, take a deep breath, or refocus your mind.

Reward Yourself: After the exam, reward yourself for your hard work with something you enjoy.