The Priory School, Hitchin

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Headteacher: Mr M. Blayney MEd (Cantab)

23rd October 2026

Dear Parent/Carer,

Reference: Thank you

In September, you may recall that I wrote to you welcoming you and your child back to TPSH after the summer holiday. The past eight weeks have flown by and I cannot quite believe that I am writing to you as we approach the October half-term break.

As always, I would like to thank you for the support that many of you have kindly offered since September and for your continued support as we move forward together as a whole-school community. I would also like to thank so many of you who sent us good luck or congratulations messages linked to our recent Ofsted inspection. It's always nice to receive positive feedback and we are truly grateful for it.

It has certainly been a busy eight weeks and I wanted to summarise some of the achievements and developments that have taken place:

1. **Positive Ofsted inspection**: As you will be aware, we were inspected by His Majesty's Inspectors on 15th and 16th September 2026. Due to a significant amount of hard work and dedication from staff, students, governors, and parents/carers, we secured the best outcome in TPSH history. We are incredibly proud of this achievement and if you missed the article in *The Comet*, you can find the link here: Hitchin school earns its highest-ever Ofsted rating | The Comet.

2. **Fire**: You will also be aware that we experienced a small fire in our Technology block on 30th September 2026 resulting in the loss of our laser cutter. Thankfully, nobody was injured in this incident and the only damage incurred centred around the laser cutter itself. Over half-term, the affected rooms will undergo a deep clean by external professionals and re-open upon students' return on 2nd November 2026.

3. **Teaching & Learning focus**: Our three focus points this academic year in all classrooms are that students will '*Enter into Challenge',* staff will *'Check for understanding'* and students will *'leave with success'*. Our observations show that the vast majority of our students are benefitting from high-quality starts to lessons and formative feedback through a range of subject-specific techniques when checking for understanding. We are also working hard to offer higher degrees of live marking for students in lessons, which research suggests supports positive progress in lessons and over time.

4. **New Behaviour Leadership Policy**: As you know, our new Behaviour Leadership policy was launched in September and has been received positively by the vast majority of students and parents/carers. As always when new systems are introduced, we continue to review and refine certain elements to make sure they remain as supportive as possible. We always appreciate feedback from students and parents/carers and please do continue to get in touch. Just a reminder that students will receive a fresh Responsibility Card at the beginning of every half-term. We are keen for students to enjoy a '*clean slate'* after every holiday to signal our desire to offer all students the chance of a fresh start. Existing cards will be collected in on Friday 23rd October 2026 and those students with no amber warnings will receive achievement points and be entered into our prize draws.

5. **Trips and events**: Even though we've only been back to school for eight weeks, a huge number of school trips and events have already taken place. Duke of Edinburgh qualifier expeditions for Bronze and Silver, a trip to Sky Studios, the A-Level Geography field trip to Southwold, a Year 11 Physics trip to the University of Cambridge, the Year 7 Halloween disco, a visit to Harrods Aviation, and the Battlefields trip to Flanders are just a taste of what we've been up to so far this year.

6. **Year 7**: I would also like to say a huge congratulations and well done to all of our new Year 7 students. We are so proud of the fantastic start that they have had since joining TPSH. Thank you to parents and carers for making this possible.

There are so many more things that have happened this half-term, however, I am conscious not to take too much of your time. May I close by thanking you once again for your support over the past eight weeks. As a home-school team, it is my sincere hope that we can continue to work together to make TPSH the best possible school for our students and your children.

I hope that your child enjoys their half-term break and please do reach out to us should you need to upon our return in November.

Yours sincerely,



Matt Blayney
Headteacher