

# Hele's School

*A great place to learn. A great place to grow.*



Friday, 12 February 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

It is hard to believe that our students have now been learning remotely for six weeks. Your support of your child(ren) and the school throughout this term has been nothing short of remarkable – thank you!

**School reopening plans:** we know the Government indicated that schools nationally will continue to be closed to all children, with the exception of those who are eligible to attend as per the current arrangement, until at least Monday 8 March 2021. Current arrangement for providing vouchers to children eligible for free school meals will continue after the half-term holiday, until Friday 5 March.

We are expecting the government to release plans for school reopening on Monday 22 February, following the half term break, but we have no idea what these plans will look like, whether they will be different for Primary and Secondary schools, for different year groups, or for different parts of the country depending on the 'r' rate. We will be in touch as soon as we are able to following any announcement regarding schools being able to re-open, but please be patient as we work through the parameters of any return and plan the logistics. In the meantime, we continue to have a focus on delivering the very highest standard of education provision possible during this period.

**Yr8 Options:** it has been heartening to see the positive responses to the virtual options evening which went live earlier this week. Please be aware that the information page on GCSE Religious Studies has been updated to reflect a planned change in examination board. Remember, we are here to support your child so do keep lines of communication open and continue to talk about GCSE subjects with your child at home.

**PD lessons Term 4:** from Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February, all Personal Development (PD) lessons will be delivered as live lessons through MS Teams, and students in all year groups will be invited to lessons as they are for other subjects. This will enable us to continue with our planned curriculum and ensure that sensitive subjects are delivered with teacher guidance and expertise.

**Plympton during a Pandemic:** the Rees Centre is planning an exciting project to capture the memoirs of the Plympton community living through a pandemic. If you live in Plympton and are keen to share the highs, the lows, the best bits and how COVID-19 may have changed you, you can tell your story through text, poetry, photographs or drawings. Please send submissions to [enquiriesrees@gmail.com](mailto:enquiriesrees@gmail.com) with the subject 'Plympton during a Pandemic'. I wonder what future generations will think as they look back on the COVID years and the way humanity responded and adapted to overcome such adversity?

**Good news:** plenty to share this week, so let's finish a challenging term on a high!

Congratulations to Year 10 students Lauren Kendrick and Ami Webber, who have won places to take part in a prestigious Maths enhancement course with Exeter Maths School until February 2022. A fantastic achievement and one that we are all so proud of! We wish Lauren and Ami the very best for his programme and I'd also like to thank our fabulous Maths department for having a part in the girls' success.

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**Principal: Justine Mason**

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We are so proud of the work and commitment shown by Lucy Hedges in Year 13, who has been leading a dedicated group of students each Wednesday through Zoom as part of Plymouth University's Environmental Futures & Big Data Impact Lab. Working on a project called 'Eco Hele's', Lucy and the team are exploring important themes, including reduction of single-use plastics in school, sustainable meal plan changes, developing a campaign to educate the school community on why these changes are so important, and growing a committed group of Hele's students to carry on this work after Lucy flies the Hele's nest this summer. What a wonderful legacy to leave!

As part of the 'Lockdown Lunacy' challenge, we have been receiving some fantastic photos of local scenery that students have taken – the calibre and creativity is exceptional! Max Van Dyke and Harrison Aslett in Year 10 have hatched a lovely plan to collate the photos to send to local residential homes as a means of bringing the outside inside and encouraging residents to reminisce and share stories of local beauty spots. Well done to the boys for being so community-minded and planning to spread some love and happiness to the vulnerable and elderly during these difficult days. Please encourage your child to contribute their photos to the challenge – this would make a great half-term project!

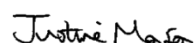
Hele's has a strong tradition of Duke of Edinburgh Award completion at Bronze and Silver level, and in recent years we've seen some success with the much-acclaimed Gold Award. We are absolutely thrilled to hear that previous Deputy Head Girl, Emma Jarvis, has successfully completed her Gold since leaving Hele's last summer in the midst of a global pandemic and on the back of having had A Level exams cancelled. We have been in contact with Emma as those achieving this esteemed accolade are invited to Buckingham Palace for a special ceremony and her Hele's family are determined to support her to have her moment of celebration, subject to national restrictions. Emma is achieving highly in her electrical engineering apprenticeship and is currently designing the electrical systems for various buildings, including hospitals which will be used for COVID-19 patients. Her exceptional performance has seen her nominated for the Building Plymouth Apprenticeship of the Year Award. What an inspiration!

Best of luck to the 26 girls in the Sixth Form who are running a virtual marathon as a relay race in order to raise money for Young Minds, a charity that aims to 'see a world where no young person feels alone with their mental health', and which is so important to us all, especially in this period of time. They have smashed their £250 target and are currently at more than £2 200 in sponsorship, which is remarkable! Well done, girls, and good luck!

Whilst I have absolutely no plan or desire to run a marathon this half term – virtual or otherwise - I shall certainly be taking some time to rest and recharge; more exercise and fresh air and less screen time is my intention. I hope that you and your family get plenty of opportunity to do the same! We look forward to kicking off the new term, whether online for the majority or face-to-face for those accessing onsite provision, on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February.

As always, thank you for your ongoing support of Hele's School – we couldn't do this job in these times without you.

Kindest regards,



Justine Mason

**Principal**

**COVID-19 reporting:** I sincerely hope your family stays happy and healthy this half term. It is important, however, to notify the school during the half term period if your child tests positive for COVID-19, regardless of whether they have been attending provision within the school or they have been learning from home. Please do so through the COVID-19 reporting form, which can be found in the 'Contact Us' section of the Hele's School website. The link is [here](#).

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