

Hele's School

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



Friday, 26 March 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

It's quite something to consider that a year ago, the first national Lockdown was called, and schools closed their gates to most children for what was an unknown length of time. What a journey we've all been on these past 12 months and how we've grown through having to adapt to an ever-shifting situation and introduce rapid change or find creative solutions in the face of challenge and uncharted territory! I know I've written it several times before, but we really do appreciate how you've supported the school throughout this uncertain time and trusted the decisions we've made to keep our community safe and still learning.

Lateral Flow Testing (LFT) - home testing kits for students: following the success of the asymptomatic testing programme on the return to school, it is vital to keep testing twice weekly at home throughout the Easter holidays and into the summer term. We will be distributing 2 packs of named testing kits to every student during period 5 next week as follows:

- Monday 29th March – Year 10 & Year 11
- Tues 30th March – Year 8
- Weds 31st March – Year 7
- Thurs 1st April – Year 9
- Post 16 to go to Mrs Curtis for distribution on demand

The packs will consist of 6 tests to cover the Easter holiday period and the first week back after the break. Students are strongly advised to take a test on Sunday 18th April prior to the return to school.

Please report results [online](#) as positive, negative or void to support Public Health England's Test and Trace strategy.

A reminder that families and households can also access [home test kits for adults](#) via the centres at Marjons, Seaton Barracks or the Guildhall from 1pm-8pm daily.

Year 11 and Year 13 last day confirmed: WeST schools have agreed that the last day for Year 11 and Year 13 students will be Friday 28th May. We are planning to offer some targeted support and bespoke intervention to aid individuals and groups of students in preparing for their next steps thereafter. This will include some optional Careers Information, Advice and Guidance sessions and employability skills enhancement, some face to face and some virtual, as well as an enhanced induction for those returning to our Sixth Form in September. Further details will be published directly to families of Year 11 and Year 13 nearer the time.

Please also note that parents/carers of students entered for exams this year will receive important information regarding Teacher Assessed Grades and our plans for Term 5 assessment early next week from Ms Clapham (Year 11 and selected Year 9 & 10) and Mr Stone (Year 13), and again early next term. This information will be emailed to students and their parents/carers directly.

Arrangements for the last day of term: Term 4 ends at 3pm, next Thursday 1st April for the Easter break. All students and staff will return on Monday 19th April 2021, with registration and Tutor time starting at 8.40am. The current expectations around logistics will run into next term, including face coverings, designated entrance gates, lanyards and PE kit worn on days when PE is timetabled only.

'Fit and Fed' Easter activities: for students aged 11-16, Plymouth City Council have a programme of Easter holiday activities for children in receipt of Free School Meals. The Mount Batten Centre are offering FREE SUP (Stand Up

Paddleboarding) and Kayaking sessions, which can be booked directly with them on the following link: <https://www.mount-batten-centre.com/fit-and-fed-2021/>. Please note this is a self-declaration form on Free School Meal status and no proof will be required.

Good news: it was a joy this week to see the manner in which a committed group of our Key Stage 4 students have embraced their training to become Wellbeing Listeners for their peers. This development is part of our broader Wellbeing Strategy, with this strand being led by Miss Prifti, Head of Year 9. I look forward to seeing the positive impact these fabulous young coaches will have in supporting our young people now and in the future.

The return of camouflage to Hele's School has been long awaited, but it has given me great pleasure to see our CCF Cadets and Officers once more in their uniforms on a Thursday, conducting drills and learning skills in year group bubbles.

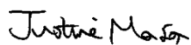
Likewise, the number of young people wanting to be part of next year's School Show, 'Legally Blonde' has gone through the roof! Slowly, carefully, we are moving towards some semblance of normality and the development of extra-curricular provision and enrichment is most welcome by all.

In addition, a number of other events have been delivered virtually with great success this week - our fourth online Parents' Evening delivered incredibly high levels of engagement and positive feedback, and a wonderful evening of magic and mayhem for 'Potterheads' (the collective noun for die-hard Harry Potter fans, I believe) was delivered by a team of dedicated and creative staff, led by Miss Sum.

Who could have predicted that within a matter of months, online events would regularly feature as part of our curriculum experience and add an extra dimension and opportunity that few anticipated was possible this time last year? I can only imagine what further exciting developments the year ahead will have in store!

Given that this is my final weekly communication of this term, I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you both a restful weekend and a very peaceful Easter when it arrives.

Kindest regards,



Justine Mason

Principal

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