

# Hele's School

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



Friday, 18 June 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

As anticipated, recent events around the southwest (the half term exodus to Devon and Cornwall, plus the G7 Summit to name but two) have seen tens of thousands of people moving from all parts of the UK to our region. It is little surprise then, that infection rates of COVID-19 have started to rise locally.

As you know, this week I wrote to you about confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Year 10 and as a consequence we have 56 Year 10 students self-isolating as a precautionary measure in line with Public Health guidance and accessing remote learning provision.

We have just 24 school days left until term ends, but it is important we continue to follow protocols around 'Hands, Face, Space' and ventilation, in and out of school. In the event of a confirmed case, please can I reiterate the following:

- Use the online reporting form to alert school to a positive PCR test result. You will be contacted immediately by a senior member of staff. Alternatively, call the School Absence Line during working hours if you have no access to IT. *Please do not email Tutors or teachers and request that messages are passed on* - it is important the message is delivered first-hand.
- *Please refrain from posting anything on social media* as it causes widespread but unnecessary worry for other families. Contact School and we will confirm next steps and will start our track and trace process to determine close contacts from 48 hours prior to the onset of symptoms or from taking the PCR test. School will ask about out-of-school contacts, as well as in-school movements, to determine an identified group of close contacts. Please trust the processes in place to allow us to do this efficiently and accurately.
- We will always look to identify all close contacts, brief those identified about self-isolation and accessing work at home, and send them home (so long as there are no safeguarding concerns or they have no way of getting home at that time) *during period 4* in the event of a positive case notification. We will also ensure a letter is emailed to parents just before we brief our young people and send them home. Period 4 runs between 12.20-1.30pm, so parents and children can expect contact in this time slot.

We have arranged for a deep clean of the whole premises this evening and over the weekend as a proactive and extra precaution.

Please do continue to test on a lateral flow device twice a week, and report results accordingly. Remember, a positive LFT test must be followed with an immediate PCR test and self-isolation until the result is confirmed and next steps determined, depending upon the result.

Also, if your child is unwell, please do not send them into School. Should they have one or more of the 3 symptoms of COVID-19 - a sudden and persistent cough, a high temperature and/or a loss of taste or smell - then please arrange for a PCR test and immediately self-isolate as household until results are confirmed.

**Vaccine rollout update:** the Government has now announced that vaccination centres can start to call people over the age of 21 for a vaccination. I have been informed that Home Park has availability for vaccinations, so if you are eligible you can book a slot either online at: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/> or by calling 119.

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**Principal: Justine Mason**

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Hele's School is part of Westcountry Schools Trust. Registered address: Harford Road, Ivybridge, Devon PL21 0AJ

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WESTCOUNTRY  
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**Onsite Year 6 Induction events and tours for Year 5 families:** in light of the government's decision to delay wider lifting of restrictions until 19 July and the rising infection levels caused by the 'Delta' variant, we have consulted with Secondary Schools, both within and outside, the Westcountry Schools Trust (WeST), the Plymouth Association of Primary Headteachers and the guidance published by the Department for Education. All WeST Secondary Schools have postponed a number of planned events for Term 6 around transition, including pre-arranged tours for Year 5 families. The safety and wellbeing of our school community remains at the heart of this decision, and we will continue to ensure our incoming Year 7 families are supported virtually before joining Hele's in September. A letter from Rob Haring, CEO of the Westcountry Schools Trust, will be shared with all parents this shortly to give further detail.

**School Library books:** the School Library is having a stock check so Mrs Wolf would like to ask if students could kindly look for any Library books and bring them back to the Library as soon as possible. Books that are still in date can be kept but any that are overdue need to be returned. If students have lost any books, please could they email Mrs Wolf at [wolf@heles.plymouth.sch.uk](mailto:wolf@heles.plymouth.sch.uk) and let her know the circumstances. Normal procedures are to ask for a replacement copy which can be second-hand copy. The Library is able to issue books across the summer holidays so it would be good to get as many books back in the summer term so the widest selection of book stock is available for the Hele's School community to borrow, in term time and in holiday time.

**Rotary donation:** we were delighted to have received a set of laptops from the Rotary Club this week and thank the Rotary for their generous donation to Hele's School students!

**Uniform Store Plymouth - Click & Collect service for families:** Redeemer Church is planning to open their pop-up City Centre Uniform Store again during this summer's school holidays and will be accepting donations from early July. In the meantime, they have a Click & Collect service running out of the Church (at St Barnabas Terrace, Plymouth PL1 5NN). Families can access the service through their website - [www.uniformstore@plymouth.co.uk](mailto:www.uniformstore@plymouth.co.uk) under the 'Click & Collect' tab. At the moment, they have very little in the way of logo uniform for schools, but can usually help with the basics of shirts, trousers and skirts, as well as Primary School uniform including polo shirts and summer dresses. Their Facebook Page - <https://www.facebook.com/UniformStorePlymouth> - gives regular updates for people on the click and collect service and any donations needed.

**Polite reminder:** please be mindful of where you stop to drop off children at the front of School. Seymour Road gets particularly busy at the start and end of school, especially in poor weather, and it doesn't take much to cause congestion. This is, of course, frustrating for road users but also poses a significant danger to pedestrians, especially our children. It was particularly bad this week, exacerbated by parents stopping in the middle of the road or pulling into the entrance of the school to allow children to alight. Your support in this matter is appreciated.

**Good news:** each year, the National Theatre commissions ten new plays for young people to perform, bringing together some of the UK's most exciting writers with the theatre-makers of tomorrow. After working hard on 'Find a Partner' since the start of November 2020, our Drama students got the chance to perform the play in the National Theatre's Digital Festival last Saturday night – and what a performance it was, sparking a rise to a new level! I am thrilled to be able to announce that Hele's School has been selected out of 300 youth companies across the UK, comprising approximately 6000 young people, to work alongside the alongside the National Theatre and a professional film crew to capture our finalised product. The film, along with a documentary, will be released in September and we cannot wait to share it! Congratulations to all the students and staff involved in the production on this wonderful achievement – we are so proud of you!

As we head into what should be a glorious weekend, a reminder that Monday 21<sup>st</sup> June is a Staff training day and School is closed to students. We look forward to welcoming everyone back on Tuesday.

Kindest regards,

*Justine Mason*

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**Principal**

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