

Hele's School

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



Friday, 23 July 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

As we approach the end of another school year, and an extraordinary one at that, I write to pass on my sincere thanks to you all for your tremendous support throughout this most challenging time. COVID-19 has certainly tested our patience and our resilience in equal measure. It has presented us with numerous problems to solve and has required us to respond rapidly to change and adapt our practices, often with very little notice. We have been reminded of how strong we are as a school community, how capable our students and staff are, and how creative we can be under the most difficult of circumstances - Team Hele's at its best!

I am sure, like me, you are hoping for a disruption-free academic year in 2021-22 with some semblance of normality restored for our September return, but we should have confidence in knowing we are able to deal with whatever we are faced with in the Autumn term and beyond, should things not be quite as we'd wished for - let's remain optimistic, but cautious for the time being!

Term dates 2021-2022: Below are the confirmed term dates for 2021-2022, which also reference the days for year group LFT testing prior to returning to school in September. These dates are also on the school website.

Autumn Term 2021 (Monday 6 September – Thursday 16 December 2021)		
<i>*Friday 17 December is the agreed date across all WeST schools in lieu of the extra Bank Holiday assigned for the Queen's Jubilee</i>		
Term 1 35 days	Monday 6 September	School closed to students for Staff Training, unless Year 7, Year 12 or Year 10 Mentors attending an LFT appointment.
	Tuesday 7 September	Term 1 begins Year 7 and Year 12 (8.30am) LFT testing for students in Year 10 and Year 11
	Wednesday 8 September	LFT testing for students in Year 8 and Year 9
	Thursday 9 September	Term 1 begins Years 8, 9, 10, 11 and 13 (8.30am)
	Friday 22 October	School closed to students for Staff Training Term 1 ends
	Monday 25 – Friday 29 October	HALF TERM
Term 2 34 days*	Monday 1 November	Term 2 starts for all students (8.30am)
	Thursday 16 December	Term 2 ends for all students and staff (3.00pm)
	Monday 20 – Monday 3 January	CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY (includes Bank Hols. on 27 and 28 Dec. and 3 Jan.)
Spring Term 2022 (Tuesday 4 January – Friday 8 April 2022)		
Term 3 34 days	Tuesday 4 January	Term 3 begins for all staff and students (8.30am)
	Friday 18 February	Term 3 ends for all staff and students (3.00pm)
	Monday 21 – Friday 25 February	HALF TERM
Term 4 35 days	Monday 28 February	School closed to students for WeST Staff Training Day
	Tuesday 1 March	Term 4 begins for all staff and students (8.30am)
	Friday 8 April	Term 4 ends for all staff and students (3.00pm)
	Monday 11 – Friday 22 April	EASTER HOLIDAY (includes Bank Holidays on 15 and 18 April)

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Summer Term 2022 (Monday 25 April 2022– Tuesday 26 July 2022**)		
Term 5 24 days	Monday 25 April	Term 5 begins for all staff and students (8.30am)
	Monday 2 May	Bank Holiday
	Friday 27 May	Term 5 ends for all staff and students (3.00pm)
	Monday 30 May – Friday 3 June	HALF TERM (includes Bank Holiday on 2 and 3 June)
Term 6 39 days	Monday 6 June	Term 6 begins for all staff and students (8.30am)
	Friday 22 July	Term 6 ends for all students and staff (3.00pm)
	Monday 25 July	Staff training day (disaggregated)**
	Tuesday 26 July	Staff training day (disaggregated)**
	Mon. 25 July – Thurs. 1 Sept.	SUMMER HOLIDAY (include Bank Holiday on 29 August)

**Disaggregated staff training days on Monday 25 and Tuesday 26 July 2022 in lieu of Twilight training – no staff required to attend school on these days. Last day for students and staff Friday 22 July 2022.

Uniform: Our uniform allows students to feel part of the school and have a sense of belonging. We will continue to be very vigilant about ensuring our students wear their uniform correctly and I have included the school's dress code to help you when buying school wear over the summer. In short, uniform and general appearance should be appropriate for school, our place of work, and conform with Health & Safety standards. It is therefore required that:

- All students are wearing polishable black shoes with no obvious logos – not trainers or canvas shoes. If you are unsure as to whether a pair of shoes is acceptable for school then please do not hesitate to get in touch to check before spending your hard-earned cash – I am aware that many retailers market their wares as 'back to school', which can be very misleading for parents since it doesn't always match a school's own uniform expectations.
- For students in Year 7 and Year 8, the regulation school skirt is the only skirt that will be accepted and will remain so as students move through the school. For all other year groups (Years 9 - 11), students choosing to wear a skirt are strongly encouraged to purchase the school skirt. Where they opt not to, they should opt for a skirt of no more than one inch above the knee and made of durable material, not Lycra, canvas or denim. Please note that ***the regulation school skirt will be introduced as the only accepted skirt for all year groups from September 2022.***
- School trousers follow the acceptable style laid out on the website - no jeans, jeggings, or ¾ length trousers.
- Make up is unobtrusive and natural and worn only in Years 10/11 – no obvious nail polish.
- Extreme hairstyles and colours are not acceptable. If hair is long, it should be tied back for practical lessons.
- False/acrylic nails and false eyelashes are not to be worn in school.
- Ear piercings are a plain silver or gold stud – no nose studs, lip, tongue or eyebrow piercings, or ear stretchers permitted.
- Coats (of a dark colour) are advised for inclement weather and should be suitable for the conditions.

Where a student is found to be infringing the uniform policy, a warning will be given, and parents will be contacted by Tutors to seek a speedy resolution. A time will be agreed to resolve the issue and follow up contact will be made. Where the issue cannot be resolved at Tutor level, the Head of Year and Senior Leadership Team Link will become involved and where your child displays repeated defiance, they may well be removed from circulation until a resolution is found.

I must stress that we do not wish for any student to miss out on valuable learning time and do not wish for any student to feel uncomfortable in addressing their uniform, however, we also need to ensure that all students meet the expectations that come with being a Hele's School student. Our rules and expectations about uniform are clearly laid out on our website. Further details of uniform and a link to the uniform web shop can be found on the Hele's School website, [here](#).

I am always heartened when I speak to our parental body that they share our high standards and want to support the school in ensuring our students take a great sense of pride in being a student at Hele's School. We value your help with this matter enormously as we aim to prepare students for the world of work where dress code and presentation remains of utmost importance.

Mobile phones: Our policy around mobile phones remains the same in September, in that phones must be switched off and out of sight between 8.40am and 3.00pm, including social time. Again, your support in ensuring your child understands the need to conform to this rule is much appreciated so that items are not confiscated, or situations

escalated unnecessarily. Should students choose to bring a phone or other valuables to school, they do so at their own risk and take responsibility for safekeeping - the school will not take responsibility for loss or damage.

Super Six: To keep a sharp focus on learning we will be continuing with our daily 'readiness for learning' checks for students during tutor time to ensure that students arrive for the school day with the basic equipment (their 'Super Six'). We appreciate your support in ensuring that your son/daughter arrives to school each day with their Super Six: a blue or black pen, a green pen, a pencil, a ruler, a Knowledge Organiser folder, a mini whiteboard kit. All these items are available to purchase in school very cheaply if a student is not able to provide from home. Failure to produce equipment will result in a same-day 30-minute Catch Up detention. We much prefer to celebrate a student's readiness for learning, however, and will recognise this through ClassCharts.

Staffing: As mentioned in last week's letter, we have several staff leaving us to explore pastures new, whether in this country or internationally. We wish our esteemed colleagues the very best of luck for their next steps. I will write again in September to welcome everyone to the new academic year and to introduce the 11 new teaching and support staff we have joining Team Hele's in the Autumn.

LFD tests: The government have confirmed that students do not need to continue LFD testing during the summer holiday. However, given that Plymouth's rate of infection remains significantly above the national and south west infection rates currently, there is arguably a strong case for continuing to test regularly and remain alert to symptoms. Testing kits can be picked up free of charge from pharmacies or test centres. *Parents/carers will not need to notify the school of any positive COVID-19 cases until the start of the Autumn term.* That said, I hope you and your family remain happy and healthy over the coming weeks and have no need to report a positive Covid case to anyone at all!

Summer School: We are excited to be welcoming 223 of our 240 incoming Year 7s who have opted to join us for a week-long Summer School from Monday, 9 to Friday, 13 August. The programme, a blend of experiential and academic learning as well as outdoor activities, looks fantastic - our students and our staff volunteers running activities are in for a treat. Let's hope the weather is kind to us!

Summer holiday resource pack: We are pleased to share with you a resource pack put together by Hannah Adamson, Year 9 Pastoral Support Manager, to support our young people through the 6 weeks ahead. The pack is split into 3 sections - wellbeing, cool events happening in and out of Plymouth, and tips about what to do if feeling a bit lost or lonely during the summer holiday. The [pack can be found on our school website](#) - just click the image on the front page to open the resource pack. Please do dip into the booklet - it has lots of great ideas and references.

Fit and Fed programme: If you are in receipt of free school meals, a Fit and Fed holiday programme for Plymouth children is running during the summer holidays. There are over 70 holiday clubs offering a range of different activities. Further details can be found at www.plymouth.gov.uk/fitandfed.

Good luck: We wish our exam students the very best of luck for August when they receive their GCSE and A Level grades and can confirm their anticipated next steps. I've no doubt there will much to celebrate!

Fun learning with Oak this summer: Oak National Academy's newly launched [Summer Learning Support package](#) offers optional lessons, formative tools and creative and active enrichment resources to help prepare students for next academic year. It can all be accessed by children and young people with no charges for data, as mobile networks will continue to keep Oak's site data free all summer. Follow the link above to see what is on offer.

Start of term: We look forward to welcoming Year 7, Year 10 Mentors and Year 12 back to school on Tuesday, 7 September and the full school on Thursday, 9 September at 8.30am for an 8.40am registration. All arrangements for return were sent in a previous communication and can also be found on the school website as a point of reference.

Good news: To finish on a high, whilst football didn't quite make it 'home' despite the valiant efforts of England in the Euro finals earlier this month, there remains plenty to cheer about. Warmest congratulations to Maddi Curno in Year 10, who has been selected to attend the FA England Women's 'Discovering Talent' football camp next week. We wish Maddi, a hugely talented goalkeeper, the very best of luck at this competitive and prestigious event.

Whilst Maddi reaches for the stars, I shall be reaching for the sun cream (hopefully) and a good book to kick start a period of much needed rest and relaxation! Whatever your plans, I do hope you find some time to unwind. On behalf of all at Hele's School, may I wish you and your family a restful and peaceful summer. We'll see you all in September.

Kindest regards,



Justine Mason
Principal