

Hele's School

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



Friday, 19 November 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

Annual Parent & Carer Survey: To help us make sure we're providing the best standard of education for your children, we'd like to know how you feel about Hele's School and the service we offer; this will help us to find out from you what we're doing well and where we could do better to make sure we're meeting the needs of you and your children.

Please take the time to [complete this short online survey](#) to help us ensure Hele's School is the very best it can be. The survey will close at midday on Wednesday 24th November, so please complete responses by then to ensure your voice is heard. Replies will be treated in the strictest of confidence and no names of students or parents/carers will be used when reporting headlines to staff, governors or the wider parent/carers body.

Once we have collated the feedback, I will share the headlines from the survey along with our next steps thereafter.

Your honest and constructive feedback is very important to us, and I thank you in anticipation of your support in helping shape our provision at Hele's School.

Curriculum overviews: We are delighted to publish our latest KS3 and KS4 curriculum overviews for you to see. These will inform you of what your child is covering in each subject across this academic year, and it affords the perfect opportunity to talk with them about their learning at different stages of the course. All overviews are on our website and can be found [here](#), and then by clicking on the appropriate Key Stage and Year Group.

Duke of Edinburgh Award- Silver and Gold level: It's been great to see so many students from Years 9-12 completing their Bronze and Silver Awards in recent weeks. From next week, anyone who has completed a level can now move on to the next level, with new groups meeting after school on Tuesday 23rd (Gold) and on Tuesday 30th (Silver) to start their training. Eligible students will have had an email about this, but if anyone feels they have been missed, then they should contact Mrs Ayres for more information at ayres@heles.plymouth.sch.uk.

Mental health and wellbeing: Approximately 10–25% of all school-age children have a recognisable mental health condition with 50% of such problems emerging before the age of 14. Untreated, these can lead to further problems in young adulthood, exposing young people to a wide range of risk behaviours and outcomes, however, the right support, before crises occur, may prevent ongoing problems.

Hele's School is one of 50 secondary schools in the UK to get involved in evidence-based research to improve youth mental health and wellbeing, working in partnership with the University of Warwick and the National Institute for Health Research. The aim of the research is to find the most effective way to support parents/carers of children aged 11-15 years to reduce depression and anxiety in their children.

Next week, you will receive information by email about the trial from Mrs Crawford and details of how you can get involved. Each participating family will receive a £25 voucher from Warwick University at the end of the trial if questionnaires are completed at each time point (baseline, six months and 15 months) by both parent/carers and young person.

Year 9 Young Voices project with the NSPCC: Hele's School has been selected to work with the NSPCC to create a peer-led campaign around the theme of Healthy Relationships. This week, students had their first session to start scoping their campaign with the NSPCC facilitators. They will meet weekly from now until February with the aim of creating a resource to be used in all schools across Plymouth and we look forward to seeing what they produce.

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WESTCOUNTRY
SCHOOLS TRUST

Covid landscape and control measures: Public Health England have recently reiterated advice regarding PCR testing, strongly recommending that if you have positive cases within your family that you book PCR tests for the household. For any tests that return a negative PCR result, please continue to LFD test daily for 5-7 days as a precaution. This advice also applies to close contact testing where the PCR test comes back negative.

If your child feels unwell with new symptoms of cough, loss of smell (anosmia) or a fever, please book a PCR test straight away. If your child feels unwell with a new symptom such as a runny nose, continuous headache, sneezing and sore throat AND you might have been exposed to COVID-19, then it might not be 'just a cold', so please book a PCR test. This has been advised by our local health protection team.

To find out more about how to get a PCR test, please visit www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test or call 119 between 7am and 11pm. **When ordering a PCR test, it is important to check the box (online) or tell 119 'I've been told to get a test by my health protection team' and not 'I've been told to get a test by my school'.**

Thank you for your support in this matter to reduce the transmission of the virus within School.

Immunisation update: VirginCare, the School Immunisation Service, has secured dates and venues for Flu clinics in the Plymouth area on 20th November, 11th December and 18th December 2021. These clinics are for those children in years up to Year 11 who would have missed their nasal Flu vaccination at school when VirginCare visited last term. They are for the Flu immunisation only.

Parents and carers need to email VirginCare at vcl.immunisations@nhs.net and provide a telephone number for someone to contact you and book you in to one of the clinics, as well as the date you would like to book. VirginCare will then call you back to confirm arrangements - please note this call will be from a "no caller ID" number. Alternatively, you can call VirginCare on 0300 247 0082, but be aware that lines will be very busy. The phone lines are currently open from 9 am - 11 am and then again from 2pm - 4.30 pm.

A reminder that if your child has missed their Covid immunisation, you can now book this by phoning 119 or [online](#).

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has advised that all healthy 16 to 17 year olds should be offered a second dose of the Pfizer vaccine. The second vaccine dose should be given 12 weeks or more following the first vaccine dose. For those in this age group who have had the COVID-19 infection, the second vaccine dose should be given 12 weeks or more following the first vaccine dose, or 12 weeks following a positive COVID-19 test result – whichever is later. Those 'at risk' will continue to be offered a second dose 8 weeks after their first dose.

16 and 17 year olds will not be vaccinated through the schools programme, but through vaccination centres, community pharmacies and GP led primary care network sites. The national booking service will be available from Monday 22 November for 16 and 17 year olds to book their vaccine directly.

Staffing update: This week, we welcomed Rachael Mockett onto Team Hele's. Rachael joins the Reprographics Department, providing admin and design support to subjects and the wider school. As a Hele's parent herself and already knowing the school well, I've no doubt that Rachael will quickly settle in to her new role.

Good news: I have been absolutely delighted to see so many young people accessing extra-curricular provision over recent weeks, with football and netball being particularly popular, it seems. Our staff and older students work hard to provide opportunities for all year groups and there is something for every taste, with the Student Voice group playing an active role in shaping this provision. Please do continue to encourage your child to attend opportunities beyond the school day. [Details can be found on our website](#) if you need a reminder of the offer.

I have been particularly impressed with Year 12 student, Alex Bennion, who has established a chess forum and an opportunity for students and staff to challenge each other. Admittedly, it has been some time since I last played chess, but I'm looking forward to meeting my allocated opponenet anon! Well done, Alex!

Kindest regards,



Justine Mason
Principal