

# Hele's School

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



Friday, 10 December 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

As this term draws to a close, I would like to take the opportunity to thank all staff, parents/carers, students and governors for their incredible hard work this term in ensuring that despite the on-going challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, our young people continue to thrive and make fantastic progress.

**Plan B of the Autumn and Winter Plan:** The Prime Minister announced the move to Plan B for the country earlier this week and subsequent guidance to schools was issued. In summary:

- Schools are required to stay open and deliver face-to-face teaching to all young people until the end of term - all students and all staff are expected to attend school and absence will be followed-up in the usual way
- Extra-curricular and enrichment/trips can continue as planned
- Masks in and around communal areas inside continue (but not recommended in classrooms or outside spaces)
- Vocational exams in January will continue as planned
- Schools are strongly encouraged to ask parents, carers and other visitors to take a lateral flow device (LFD) test before entering the setting
- Families and staff should continue to test twice weekly throughout the holiday and should LFT test in the morning if they will be in a high-risk situation that day and before visiting people at risk of severe illness if they get Covid.

In response to this guidance, ***only essential business visitors/contractors will be allowed onsite next week and there will be no on-site meetings with parents or carers for the remainder of this term.*** The only exception would be essential visits from children's services professionals.

I would ask for your support in avoiding dropping off packed lunches, PE kits, etc. and instead phoning Reception on 337193 so that alternative arrangements can be made for your child. Should you need to collect your child for a medical appointment or because they are unwell, may I remind you to wear a face covering and sanitise upon entry to Reception.

**End of Term:** School will close to students for the Christmas break at the end of day (3pm) on Thursday, 16 December. Please note that no extra-curricular clubs will run on the last day, including the Learn and Grow facility.

**Christmas Mufti, Thursday, 16 December:** For a £1 donation to charity on the last day of term, staff and students are invited to wear a Christmas jumper or similar festive attire, but we are also happy for students to wear non-uniform items of clothing for this day. We hope to have some Yuletide fun whilst also raising money and awareness for Young Minds, the mental health charity supporting young people. Donations will be collected by form tutors during form time.

**Start of Term, from January 4:** As I have previously alerted you, the Government has announced that upon return to school in January 2022, students should complete one on-site COVID-19 test. The purpose of this testing programme is to reduce the prevalence of COVID-19 within our school community and keep everyone safe by identifying asymptomatic cases. We strongly encourage all students to take part in our testing programme with their parent / carer's consent.

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**Principal: Justine Mason**

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**UNLESS THESE PLANS ARE REQUIRED TO CHANGE IN LIGHT OF ANY GUIDANCE ISSUED CENTRALLY NEXT WEEK OR OVER THE CHRISTMAS BREAK,** Hele's will proceed with the arrangements for a staggered return in January.

	Year groups tested on-site	Remote learning at home	Normal lessons in school
Tuesday 4 <sup>th</sup> Jan.	7 11 13	All years	-
Weds. 5 <sup>th</sup> Jan.	9 10 12	8 9 10 12	7 11 13
Thurs. 6 <sup>th</sup> Jan.	8	8	7 9 10 11 12 13
Fri. 7 <sup>th</sup> Jan.	-	-	All years

**Tutor groups will be allocated an appointment window to turn up within to test, and this information will be emailed to parents before the end of this term.**

It is important to stress that if someone has had a positive PCR within the last 90 days, then they should not LFT test (unless they have developed new symptoms, in which case they should arrange for a PCR test). If your child has had COVID-19 in the last 90 days, please therefore ignore the appointment time for on-site LFT testing that will be sent through to you. Children in this situation should engage in remote learning as detailed on the table to the left and return to normal lessons in school on the day allocated to your child's year group.

Students whose parents/carers do not wish for their child to take part in the testing programme should return to school on their year group's allocated first day back on site.

**Remote Learning:** Where students awaiting their on-site test are not required to physically attend the school site for a period across the first two days of school, we will be providing remote learning. Students should access lessons via Microsoft Teams, in line with their usual timetable. All absences will be followed up in line with our normal attendance procedures. Further guidance will be issued to each year group next week and emailed to parents/carers.


**Access to devices and technology:** We are currently undertaking our annual audit of student access to technology at home to ensure we can support families, where needed. [Please complete this 2-minute survey](#) before Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> December so we can ensure any required technology can be arranged for your child/children to support their remote learning.

**Staffing update:** A warm welcome to Philippa James, Food Technician, who is set to join Team Hele's next week. Phillipa is relocating from the Outer Hebrides to take up her new post in Plympton, so I'm sure she will have plenty to keep her occupied over the coming weeks!

**Finally:** I hope that the above communication provides you with all of the information that you need in relation to both the end of this term and the beginning of next, however, if you have any questions, please email [heles.school@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:heles.school@plymouth.gov.uk).

It has been a challenging year for all, but your ongoing support of Hele's School continues to make a positive difference and is much appreciated. On behalf of Hele's School Staff and Governors, I'd like to wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas and a healthy and Happy New Year!

Kindest regards,



Justine Mason  
Principal