

Hele's School

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



Friday, 20 May 2022

Dear Parent/Carer,

It has been a momentous week at Hele's and in schools and college across the country as GCSE and A Level exams returned for the first time since 2019. So far, feedback from the students has been largely positive and as we reach the end of week 1, motivation is high for what lies ahead. Well done to all involved, be that student, staff, or family cheerleader behind the scenes on ensuring a successful start!

WeST Curriculum Review of Hele' School: It has been an absolute pleasure to have been able to immerse the 14-strong WeST School Improvement Team into the Hele's community for the past 2 days and to have shared our progress and ambition with the team in so many areas, notably around curriculum, behaviour and safeguarding. It was an extremely positive review and we received affirmation that we know our school well and we are working on the right things. A few quotes from members of the review team that I must share:

"This is one of the warmest and most welcoming schools I have ever been in."

"I would not hesitate in sending any child of mine to this school."

"It (Hele's) is a special place, and your children and staff are an absolute credit to you."

A wide variety of students were interviewed throughout the 2-day process and without exception, they were a credit to themselves, the school and parents/carers. They spoke with great enthusiasm about their learning at Hele's and were very keen to show off their depth and breadth of knowledge and experience, both within and beyond the classroom. We continue to do all we can to ensure Hele's School is 'a great place to learn and a great place to grow' and keep this ambition at the heart of all we do, day in, day out. A great Team Hele's effort - well done, all!

Let's Talk Teenagers: After the success of the first 'Let's Talk Teenagers' sessions earlier this year through Safer Devon, a second series of the online sessions will be held in June. These sessions are a further opportunity for parents and carers of teenagers to hear about the challenges young people are facing today whilst being offered tips, techniques and resources to explore for more help and support. These 90-minute sessions will be running on consecutive Wednesdays at 7.00pm on the 15th, 22nd and 29th June. Topics covered include:

- Substance misuse
- Peer pressure
- Exploitation
- Healthy relationships
- Body image
- Safety online
- Mental health
- Social risks

Visit devon.cc/teenagers to find out more about each session and book your FREE place.

Message from Plymouth City Council: In November 2021, the murder of Bobbi-Anne McLeod shocked Plymouth. On Thursday 19th May 2022 sentencing took place at Plymouth Crown Court and it is possible that some of the details shared will affect children, young people and their families, as well as school staff.

The city's partners are available to provide support if needed, with a range of services and advice for children and adults. Details are available here:

<https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/plymouthsupportoffer>

Information about the ongoing work that is taking place to help keep Plymouth safe can be found here: <https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/newsroom/plymouthnews/saferstreetsplymouth>

I'm sure you will be thinking of the family during what will be an incredibly distressing time for all. Do please reach you if you need help or support.

Looking ahead:

- Sunday 22nd May - Gold and Silver Duke of Edinburgh practice walk on Dartmoor
- Monday 23rd May - HPV immunisations for consenting Year 8 and consenting Y10 (2nd dose)
- Tuesday 24th May, 4.30pm - 6.30pm - Centre of Excellence (Y7 and Y8) presentation in the Studio
- Wednesday 25th May, 9am - 3pm - A Level Geography Non-Examined Assessment (NEA) launch, University of Plymouth
- Thursday 26th May, 4pm - 7pm – Additional Tutor Evening (invitation only)
- Friday 27th May, periods 1 & 2 - Year 13 Leavers' Assembly in the Studio
- Friday 27th May - End of Term 5

Good news: It was wonderful to see over 200 of our young people on-site until the early evening last night as the Combined Cadet Force opened their doors to almost 100 budding new cadets. Our annual CCF Trial Night for students in Year 9 looking to join the ranks of either the Army, Navy or Air Force contingent was more popular than ever, with record numbers attending. Supported by existing cadets in Years 10 - 13, along with our voluntary CCF staff, the Year 9s were treated to just some of what they might expect if they join up officially - it certainly looked from afar as if all were having a great time. A huge thanks to Major Kevin Randall and his team for the superb organisation and I look forward to seeing a host of new uniforms around the school soon!

Finally: As we move towards the final week of this short term, we continue our drive around attendance for all students to ensure every single one of our students has the very best opportunities to benefit from all that we offer here at Hele's. Whole-school attendance currently is good and higher than attendance in schools nationally, and your ongoing support in ensuring your child attends school every day unless they are genuinely unfit for school, and for phoning any absence through on the school absence line in such circumstances, is very much appreciated - there is no question that regular attendance at school gives young people the best possible start in life and prepares them for the future whilst positively impacting on attainment, wellbeing and wider outcomes. A reminder that Year 11 students continue to be in full-time - whether they have exams or not on a particular day - and this expectation continues for one more week, in line with information sent out earlier this term.

I wish you a wonderful weekend, whatever you have planned.

Kindest regards,



Justine Mason
Principal

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