

Hele's School

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



Monday, 12 September 2022

Dear Parent/Carer,

Welcome back to students and their families, old and new; we hope you all had a restful summer and are ready for the busy term ahead. I appreciate this is quite a lengthy letter, but I hope it provides you with the information you need for the term and year ahead.

Last week, we delighted in welcoming back to school all staff and students, and we have particularly impressed with the manner in which students have fallen quickly back into school routines and expectations with such enthusiasm after a 6-week break.

Our 240 new Year 7s have had a particularly demanding week as they navigate new environs and find their feet, but they really have been fantastic! I've no doubt that our wonderful Year 10 Mentors have had an important part to play in them quickly settling, but I've certainly been impressed by the resilience and effort of our new students.

Thank you for working in partnership with the school to ensure students wear the correct shoes and uniform appropriately in line with our policy, and for making sure young people are properly equipped for learning. Tutors will have a keen eye on tutees over the coming weeks and will pick up on any uniform that is not acceptable, alerting parents/carers so that action can be taken to rectify anything necessary. We appreciate your support in working with us should we need to resolve any infringements.

State Funeral for Queen Elizabeth II: The Government has confirmed that Monday, 19 September 2022 will be a Bank Holiday and Hele's School will join schools and colleges across Britain in being closed on this day as a mark of respect. School will reopen to all on Tuesday, 20 September.

Fr Robert Harris from the Plympton Team Ministry has contacted School to offer his pastoral support to staff, students and families at Hele's school as we process the news of the death of Queen Elizabeth II. St Mary's and St Maurice churches will be open over the coming days for those who wish to pay their respects.

New staff: I am pleased to confirm that we start the new academic year fully staffed with specialist subject teachers and have added to our teaching and support team over the summer term. I extend a warm welcome to our new staff:

Teaching Staff	Support Staff
Josh Bean, English Alicia Smith, Maths Nick Wellington, Maths Amanda Moore, Science Catherine Rutley, Science Stephanie Waters, Geography Lucy Speaight, History Jessica Russell, PE (2 nd in charge) Mark Rayner, Assistant Principal and PE	Stacey Cowling, Pastoral Support Manager Jessica Smith, Pastoral Support Manager (Pupil Premium) Nicholas Carter, Cover Supervisor Chloe Collihole, Science Technician Ellen Belton, Learning Support Assistant Rachel Bramwell, Learning Support Assistant Darren Drummond, Learning Support Assistant Marta King, Learning Support Assistant Victoria Noble, Learning Support Assistant Louise Hand, Cleaner Elaine Stitson, Cleaner David Cuthbertson, Caretaker

Principal: Justine Mason

Seymour Road, Plympton, Plymouth, Devon PL7 4LT

Telephone: 01752 337193 Fax: 01752 331460

email: heles.school@plymouth.gov.uk website: www.heles.plymouth.sch.uk

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

A charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales. Company number: 07398467



Learn and Grow: Our popular after-school provision, Learn & Grow, will run once more from Tuesday 20th September. Open to any students in Year 7 to Year 10, Learn & Grow will run daily Monday to Thursday from 3 - 4pm.

The provision is staffed by a team of fantastic Post-16 tutors and was well-attended last year, with up to 20% of students in each year group taking advantage of the opportunity. The staff at Learn & Grow, who are some of our finest Hele's students, offer a peer-tutoring model and have been fully trained in providing high quality tuition and safeguarding. They also work closely with our Key Stage 3 and 4 subject coordinators to ensure that the content of tuition sessions is carefully mapped against key subject priorities.

Students can attend as many nights as they wish, subject to demand. All those attending will have the opportunity to work individually or in a small group with a tutor focusing on areas identified as being priorities. There will also be the opportunity to work privately on any homework to ensure work is kept up to date. For our new Year 7 students, this can be a fantastic way to get into good routines and work alongside older students who will act as excellent role models and provide support across all subjects. For those students in years 8 and above, the provision offers invaluable support for your child from peers they can identify with, who have been in their shoes and can share their experience and successes.

Details of how to register your child for Learn & Grow will be shared in this Friday's update to parents and carers.

Study Café: Study Café will resume from Tuesday 20th September from 3pm – 4pm and is open to Year 11 students only. It provides a dedicated space for students completing GCSEs this year to receive support with homework, coursework and most notably, revision, in the Post-16 Centre. Again, staffed by some of our best-performing Sixth Form students, Study Café offers a wealth of resources around revision, as well as personalised guidance around different techniques to try in order to maximise time and efficiency.

Further information will be going out to Year 11 students and parents this term about the intervention opportunities available this year. Many of these will take place after school and Year 11 students should become familiar with an extended day to 4pm most days of the week. Where this is not directed, Study Café is an excellent place in which to complete work in a calm, purposeful environment with excellent support available. No prior booking is required, students simply turn up to the Post-16 Centre and they will be allocated a room.

Clubs and activities: We are excited to be able to offer a full extra-curricular programme for all year groups and we will release a comprehensive overview of the offer shortly. Year 7 had a university-style 'Fresher's Fair' last Friday to promote some of the opportunities on offer, and this was met with great enthusiasm. Whichever year group your child is in, please do encourage them to sign up to clubs and activities and make the most of the extensive opportunities on offer.

The Fitness Suite and Community Sports Centre are open and available for wider use in the evenings. Should you want to find out about the offer, access the gym and fitness equipment, or indeed book any facilities for community use, please contact Mr Giles on 231739 or communitysports@heles.plymouth.sch.uk.

Our next Holiday Club will be taking place from Monday 24th October to Friday 28th October 2022. For more information or to book, please contact holidayclub@heles.plymouth.sch.uk

Road works on Seymour Road: Thank you to the many parents and carers who have found alternative drop off and pick up places during the period of roadworks on Seymour Road; it has certainly helped ease some of the congestion and make the vicinity safer for our young people. That said, a concerned resident reported that a car had mounted the pavement this week at the end of the day in an attempt to circumvent the traffic, only narrowly missing her. May I issue another plea then to remain particularly vigilant to pedestrians, try to avoid drop off/pick up outside the school, certainly do not stop in the school entrance and block the roads, or enter the site between 8-9am and 2.30-3.30pm without prior permission. The safety of our school community is paramount. Thank you for your ongoing support.

Rewards and sanctions: This year, we continue to recognise the excellent conduct and work of our students through a range of rewards and events. To keep track of your child's achievement points and rewards, please continue to monitor their ClassCharts account. This will also provide details of any homework set, behaviour points your child has received, as well as notification of any detentions set.

We continue to run two forms of detention this year: Catch Up detentions which are 30-minute same day detentions for lateness to school (without good reason) or lateness to lessons, missing equipment or homework issues. Behaviour Detentions run for one hour 3-4pm on a Tuesday and Thursday. Behaviour detentions are used as a sanction where a child has not been able to correct their behavior following two opportunities using our Warn-Move-Park system and

has ultimately been parked in another lesson. Missed detentions or other serious breaches of the Behaviour Policy will result in staged sanctions moving up through a ladder which can be found within the Behaviour Policy on the school website.

The Reset Room is used for students who require a day out of main circulation in order to reset their behaviour. Within the Reset Room, there will be a strong focus on developing high standards of behaviour and work, as well as on restorative practice to enable students to return to circulation and be successful. Mrs Lloyd is our Reset Manager and will contact parents/carers directly where a student has been referred to the Reset Room to provide further details of the provision.

Attendance: There is a clear link between positive school attendance and educational outcomes, so we remain committed to working with families to continue to promote the importance of regular attendance and punctuality. We have a team of pastoral staff in school ready to work with you, if required, to overcome any hurdles you might have in getting your child to attend regularly. Please do get in touch with us if you think we can support you and your child in any way. In the meantime, we would ask you not to book holidays during term time. Please also try to keep medical appointments outside of school hours wherever possible, though we accept that there are times when you may have little say in this.

Looking ahead:

Monday, 12 September:	Silver Duke of Edinburgh Expedition (final day).
Wednesday, 14 September:	Parent/Carer Information Evening for the new Year 12 cohort.
Thursday, 15 September:	CCF is suspended. Training will start again on Thursday, 22 September.
Friday, 16 September:	Whole school sponsored walk around Plympton and Saltram.
Monday, 19 September:	Bank holiday. School closed to all staff and students.
Wednesday, 21 September:	Year 6 Open Evening, 5-8pm.

Finally: Regular, positive communication and inviting constructive feedback to ensure we deliver the very best experiences for our young people, families and staff are key features that underpin the Team Hele's ethos and make our school such a special place to be. I'm confident you will continue to support our staff in working to maintain high standards and ensuring routines and expectations are adhered to. Here's to a fantastic year ahead for all - let's make this academic year the best one yet!

Kindest regards,



Justine Mason
Principal