

Hele's School

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



Friday, 16 September 2022

Dear Parent/Carer,

By the time you receive this letter, the Team Hele's army of staff and students will be pounding the streets of Plympton and the surrounds on our biennial whole school sponsored walk. Having travelled to Luton for a couple of days this week connecting with The Chiltern Learning Trust and visiting their outstanding secondary schools, I am certainly looking forward to being able to stretch my legs! The weather has been kind to us and I've no doubt that being in the fresh air, talking and walking with so many wonderful people will raise spirits, as well as funds to supplement our student reward scheme this year. I must thank Mr Stone, Director of Post 16, for taking a lead on this mammoth operation – it has been quite some undertaking, but his organisation and attention to detail has been superb.

Mental Health & Wellbeing: Last term I made reference to one of our key priorities for this academic year which is around mental health and wellbeing. Whilst a key focus here will be on the students at Hele's School, the extent of our work goes beyond the school and across parents and the wider community, as we recognise the challenging time many adults are having currently and wish to support as much as possible. As such, we will continue to signpost to appropriate services and opportunities for children and adults alike and provide timely updates on our offer for families.

To begin with, I wanted to share with parents details of a new service launched by online counselling service, Kooth, which is an excellent tool for students. This year, NHS Devon, Devon County Council, Plymouth City Council, and Torbay Council have worked in partnership to commission [Qwell](#) (delivered by [Kooth](#)) – a free, online digital mental health and wellbeing support for anyone aged 18+, living in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay. Qwell (www.qwell.io) is a free, safe and anonymous mental health and wellbeing online service with no referrals required. There are no thresholds required to access the platform which offers services ranging from online messaging and personal development tools through to booked and drop-in chat facilities where you can receive immediate professional support. If you feel that Qwell may be useful for you, please do take a look.

Take 3 Parenting Course: We work with a number of external agencies to support parents with the needs of children beyond school, covering all sorts of domains from mental health and wellbeing through to attendance and extra-curricular opportunities. We have recently received notification of a new round of Take 3 Parenting Courses which are being run by the Local Authority to support parents who find it difficult to manage their children's behaviour at home. Take 3 is a 10-week course designed for parents with young people whose challenging behaviour is causing problems for parents/family and/or in the community, however, the skills and strategies from the course will benefit *any* parent as we know all children present issues at different times! We have had parents in previous years sign up for this course and the feedback has been very positive as a lot of the content focuses on real life issues faced by parents who have children who behave in challenging ways and suggests ways to help manage these behaviours. If you feel this may be beneficial to you, please contact Emma Clapham, Deputy Principal (clapham@heles.plymouth.sch.uk) for further information or take a look on the [School website](#) where there is signposting to other community offers.

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

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Learn and Grow: I wrote last week to outline the Learn and Grow provision. We were hopeful that by today we'd be in a position to share details of how to register your child for Learn & Grow, but the admin demands around preparing for the sponsored walk have been prioritised. Details will be shared shortly, so do keep an eye out. Study Café for Year 11 students will start on Tuesday 20th September – no booking required as we expect to see all Year 11s there!

Plympton Tennis Club: Hele's School has a long association with Plympton Tennis Club, with many of our families regularly actively engaging in coaching or playing and the club regularly using Hele's School Dome. A variety of coaching sessions for Juniors of all ages is on offer, as well as sessions for adults too. If you are interested in pursuing any of these opportunities, further details can be found on the Plympton Tennis Club FaceBook page - <https://www.facebook.com/plymptontennisclub/>

Looking ahead:

Monday, 19 September: Bank Holiday. School closed to all staff and students.

Tuesday, 20 September: Year 9 Photos.

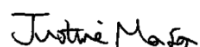
Wednesday, 21 September: Year 6 Open Evening, 5-8pm.

w/b Monday, 26th September: Year 6 Tours (advance bookings).

Thursday, 29th September: Year 11 Subject Parents' Evening, 4-7pm via MS Teams.

Finally: It is a solemn time for the Nation, and Monday will be a time of reflection and prayer for many across the country and beyond. Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth famously said, "grief is the price we pay for love" – I wish you a peaceful weekend with your loved ones and look forward to welcoming staff and students back to school on Tuesday.

Kindest regards,



Justine Mason
Principal