

Hele's School

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



Friday, 20 January 2023

Dear Parent/Carer,

Enrichment has been rife this week, with visiting speakers, trips, rehearsals, sporting fixtures and experiences such as the Year 11 1-to-1 Employer interviews supplementing the usual curricular and extra-curricular provision; it certainly has been a busy week and there will many students and staff looking forward to the weekend!

Strike action: You may be aware from media coverage that the National Education Union (NEU) teaching union has declared strike action in schools. The strike is happening because of a national dispute over teacher pay between the union and the government, and not because of any issues at our school. There are 7 planned strike days throughout February and March, though strikes are regional so any individual school will only be affected by four of them. Southwest schools may be affected by strikes on: **Wednesday 1 February 2023; Thursday 2 March 2023; Wednesday 15 March 2023; Thursday 16 March 2023.** School leaders in the Westcountry Schools Trust are carefully planning to keep schools open wherever possible and to minimise any disruption to families. Further information will be shared with parents in due course, with a letter from Rob Haring, CEO of WeST, expected to be circulated later today.

Staffing news: Today, we say 'au revoir' to Head of MFL, Mrs Blandin-Neaves, as she leaves us for the rest of the academic year to start her maternity leave. Mrs Byrne will assume the leadership of the MFL department from now into the autumn term.

Good news: You may recall that our U13 girls' football team played in the second round of the EFL Girls Cup last week in Bristol. We were delighted to hear that they made it through to the semi-finals without losing a match! Despite having most of the possession in the semis and so many chances, the rub of the green didn't fall their way and our team lost a fiercely fought match 1-0. We are incredibly proud of our girls and congratulate the following on a fantastic Cup run: Molly Stroud; Freya Senior-Gosling; Maya Roberts; Lulia Petre; Ava McClymont; Megan Lawton; Elizabeth Hoare; Kiana Norcross

Looking ahead:

- Wednesday, 25 January: SEND Parent Network Meeting, 5.30pm
- Thursday, 26 January: Southwest CCF RN collaboration

Keyham Inquest: An inquest, which could last up to 6 weeks, has opened this week into the Keyham incident which took place on 12 August, 2021 and left five people dead. The gunman then shot himself. There will be a large amount of media attention – locally and nationally – and we are conscious that this intense focus could reawaken or induce considerable anxiety and other strong emotions amongst young people and adults alike. The Plymouth Together website www.plymouthtogether.co.uk is a one-stop hub which features an extensive list of helpful websites, phone numbers and links to support agencies and charities. It also features a dedicated page for youngsters: [Support for Children and Families – Plymouth Together](#) Free one-to-one sessions for any youngster aged 11 and upwards impacted by what happened in Keyham are also being offered by the charity Young Devon. Please do reach out if anyone in your family requires support; the impact of this tragedy runs deep and continues to affect many.

Kindest regards,

Justine Mason

Principal

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