

Hele's School

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



Friday, 10 February 2023

Dear Parent/Carer,

I join the hundreds of supporters this week, who have already been wildly entertained by the School Show, *Fame* and I am really looking forward to this evening's grand finale - though I've no doubt it will be an emotional affair for all involved! Not only have our super cast, supporters and crew showcased their talent and passion every single night this week, not forgetting the 2 matinées for Primary Schools and community groups, but they have also mustered up the energy to attend lessons as normal during the day and continue to be the very best versions of themselves in the classroom. Very well done and thank you to all involved, and enjoy taking your final bow tonight!

On the subject of strong performances in the Creative and Performing Arts, our young people have received strong endorsements for the quality of their work following the external moderation of the Bronze Arts Award Programme. The Moderator exclaimed that it was 'a delight' to moderate our students' portfolios, praised the detail of the work produced, and passed on congratulations to all. We look forward to hearing final outcomes upon the course completion.

I was very proud to receive some marvellous feedback from members of the public following our Year 7 Geography fieldtrip to the Eden Project this week. Staff were approached by several members of the public who wanted to pass on their praise for the way our students conducted themselves in terms of good behaviour and etiquette. The examples they gave ranged from their politeness when speaking to them for questionnaires, to holding doors open for the elderly around the site, and everything in between. As Mrs Davies, Deputy Head of Geography, reported back, there was definitely much 'pride in the Hele's badge' on show today, and the Year 7s were exemplary. Well done, Year 7, for being fantastic ambassadors for Team Hele's - keep up the great work and attitude!

Sporting update: Some great success in the Plymouth Football Cup for the boys last week, with Year 10 beating Stoke Damerel 4 – 0. There were also strong performances in the Plymouth Central Venue competition, with an 8 – 0 win over Plymstock 'A' and 3 – 1 win over Lipson from our Year 10s, and the Year 9s securing 3 strong wins, scoring 19 goals and conceding only 1. Our under-13 sports teams also saw a flurry of activity, with the Indoor Cricket team competing at Marjons in the West Devon Indoor County Championships and our Table Tennis team contesting the Plymouth Championships. Congratulations to all who wear the black and gold with pride and represent our school so well.

'Hear from Hele's' launch: I read the inaugural edition of student-led newspaper, 'Hear from Hele's', with great delight this week! The brainchild of some KS3 students who wanted to celebrate writing and share thoughts about key issues faced by young people, Year 8 students Alice Shelley (Editor), Emma Bagshaw, Darya Ghorbannia, Isla Hockey, Isabelle Baxter and Grace Middleton have crafted articles covering strike action, the Holocaust, identity, and events in Plymouth and Hele's. I was particularly moved by Darya's poignant question, 'what makes you proud about being you?' and her thoughtful response: *'I am proud to be half Iranian, ¼ Jewish and ¼ English. I am proud to be a girl. I am proud to live in a country where I am allowed to sing, dance and act. I am a proud human being. I am proud to be a part of Team Hele's. I am proud to be me.'* [The paper, which is on the Hele's website](#), is well worth a read. I hope you enjoy it as much as I did!

Community Art competition: The Rees Centre in Plympton has launched a 'Free to be me' project, encouraging art work to be submitted by young people based around themes of Youth, Inclusion, Diversity, Community or Activity.

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Hele's School is part of Westcountry Schools Trust. Registered address: Harford Road, Ivybridge, Devon PL21 0AJ
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Designs (which must be in landscape format) may be submitted as part of a group collaboration or an individual entry, with the closing date confirmed as Monday, 6 March. The winner will be announced on Wednesday, 8 March with the presentation of a £20 voucher and a plan to get the winning design painted onto the Rees Centre.

As well as artists, Rees are keen to involve young people who may be interested in supporting the project in other ways, such as fundraising and sponsorship, as part of their studies, Duke of Edinburgh Award or in a voluntary capacity. Further details about the competition and opportunities for volunteering can be found by emailing chodmarley@gmail.com at the Rees Centre.

Founders Day and Thinking Day: Every year, on 22nd February, the Scouting movement celebrates the birthday of Lord Baden-Powell and his wife, Olave, who was the first Girl Guide. Known worldwide as Founders Day for Scouts and Thinking Day for Girl Guides, it is a day to celebrate by wearing their uniform with pride. Hele's is joining several Plympton Primary schools in actively encouraging all Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Explorers, Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, Rangers and Leaders to wear their uniform to school all day on the first Wednesday of next term.

Good news: Jensen Mumford in Year 10 is a national Boxing champion after winning the Alliance Amateur Boxing Association National Schools title (66-70kg weight division) last weekend in Swindon - a Hele's first! Jensen boxes for Carl's Boxing Stable, which is based at the Rees Centre. As was reported through to School, *'Jensen was involved in the best bout of the finals. He boxed superbly versus a tough opponent, yet despite giving away height and reach, he forced his opponent to receive a standing 8 count from the referee on his way to being awarded a unanimous points decision from the three judges. He is a credit to your school - always training hard, he is very dedicated and conducts himself well at all times. In my opinion, he has the ability and potential to go a long way in the sport if he continues to progress and maintains his level of dedication.'* A superb achievement, we are incredibly proud of Jensen!

Looking ahead:

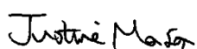
- Monday, 20 February: Westcountry Schools Trust (WeST) Staff Training Day – all WeST Primary and Secondary Schools closed to students for staff training.
- Tuesday, 21 February: All students return to School to start Term 4. Year 11 (core subjects) and Year 13 internal exams begin.
- Wednesday, 22 February: Founder's Day/Thinking Day for Scouts and Girl Guides. Wear your uniform to school with pride!
- Thursday, 23 February: Year 9 Subject Parents' Evening via MS Teams, 4pm – 7pm.
- Wednesday, 1 March: Year 10 Poetry Live trip to Bournemouth.
- Thursday, 2 March: NEU Strike Day 2 – details to be confirmed.

Staffing news: We bid a very fond farewell to 2 colleagues of who have supported our young people over several years and embraced their roles with professionalism and compassion. Jack Baxendale, Learning Support Assistant, leaves to follow his dream and set up his own Physical Training company, and Louise Bennett, Technology Teacher and Food Technology Lead, has said an emotional goodbye today as she leaves teaching to take up a leadership position in the food industry. We wish Louise and Jack the very best of luck for the next step in their career, and thank them for all they have done our students and school community.

Finally, I'd like to wish the students and staff who are travelling to Florida this half term a safe and exciting trip. Heading off to London tomorrow to catch a flight to the USA, they have a fun-filled itinerary ahead of them, including: Hollywood Studios, The Magic Kingdom, Florida Atlantic University, Florida Everglades, Orlando Science Centre, and not forgetting the Kennedy Space Centre, which is certain to be out of this world! Have fun, make memories that will last a lifetime, and stay safe, Team Hele's!

As ever, thank you for your ongoing support of Hele's School. Have a great half term and we look forward to welcoming back all students on Tuesday, 21st February.

Kindest regards,



Justine Mason
Principal