

# Hele's School

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



Thursday, 23 February 2023

Dear Parent/Carer,

## **National Strike Action in Schools, Thursday 2 March 2023 – Partial Closure of Hele's School**

I write to confirm the response plan to mitigate the strike action declared by the National Education Union (NEU), which will take place initially on **Thursday, 2 March 2023**. A reminder that the strike is happening because of a national dispute between the unions and the government over Teachers' pay and conditions, and not because of any issues at our school.

In the event of a strike, the Department of Education requires the Headteacher to take all reasonable steps to keep schools open for as many students as possible, whilst ensuring staff and students are not exposed to risks to their health and safety.

Our risk assessment has been updated accordingly and details of the plan are below. Please note that we have had to amend the model for partial opening slightly from the one we ran on 1 February; we are unable to accommodate multiple groups of students in the Sports Hall on Thursday, as the Trust-wide GCSE Mock Exams are running throughout this week and next, and hence we have no other large space available.

## **The agreed plan for partial opening on Thursday is as follows:**

- **Hele's School will remain open for all students in Year 10, Year 11, Year 12 and Year 13.** Students will follow their normal timetable for the day (as far as possible). Catering will run as normal for all students.
- **Year 7, Year 8 and Year 9 will study remotely at home**, completing work set via ClassCharts. All set work should be completed to the best of a child's ability. Further details about the work and how to access it will be emailed to families early next week.
- **Vulnerable and SEND students in Year 7, Year 8 and Year 9 are able to attend school with a bespoke timetable for the day.** If you are a parent of a vulnerable or SEND child we will contact you separately to confirm whether or not you require your child to attend or if you would prefer to supervise them working from home. Miss McNamara (SENDCo) can be contacted via [mcnamara@heles.plymouth.sch.uk](mailto:mcnamara@heles.plymouth.sch.uk) should you have any queries about SEND in the meantime.
- **For students in Year 7, Year 8 or Year 9 who are eligible for free school meals**, an electronic voucher representing the cost of a school meal will be emailed to parents on Wednesday, 1 March.
- **For students on site on Thursday, 2 March:**
  - **All students should adhere to uniform and conduct expectations** – the behaviour policy still applies and all aspects of the school continue as normal.
  - **All students in Year 10, Year 11, Year 12 and Year 13 must attend School** and absence will be followed up in the normal way. In the event of illness, please report your child's absence through the usual channels.
  - **Break and lunch times will operate as normal** with appropriate supervision in place.

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**Principal: Justine Mason**

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- **Registration for Year 10, Year 11, Year 12 and Year 13 will happen as usual in normal Tutor rooms.**
- **Catering will run as normal.**
- **All extra-curricular clubs and detentions are cancelled on Thursday, 2 March, with the exception of Year 11 Prep (Period 6), which will run as normal from 3 – 4pm and be supervised by senior members of staff.**

We appreciate that industrial action is disruptive and you may need to change your plans or working arrangements whilst this action is ongoing. We understand your inevitable frustration, but we will of course continue to monitor the arrangements in place and make modifications where possible to improve support for students wherever we can reasonably do so.

Whilst unlikely, there remains a slight possibility that these arrangements may need to change at short notice. If the strike action is called off then we will confirm this as soon as we can, and in this eventuality the school will be open as usual to all students.

The NEU has indicated that they will continue strike action for a further 2 days after this strike: on Wednesday 15 March 2023, and Thursday 16 March 2023. Please make a note of these dates now and I will write to you in advance of each date to confirm any changes to arrangements and whether the strike is going ahead.

Thank you for your continued support and patience whilst we navigate this challenging situation.

Kind regards,



Justine Mason  
**Principal**