

Hele's School

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



Friday, 5 May 2023

Dear Parent/Carer,

Thousands of Plymothians may be riding the crest of a wave celebrating the Plymouth Argyle FC's successful promotion campaign to the Championship next season, but such euphoria was also evident last night in the U18s Football Plymouth Cup Final, a well-fought local derby between Hele's School and Plymstock School. Having come from 2-0 down to equalise in the very last minute of the match, Plymstock's elation was short-lived after Harrison Lacy (Year 13) scored from the kick off to bag his second goal after coming on as a sub and to win the game and the Cup, 3-2 to Hele's! What drama, and what a super way for our U18s to end their school sporting career before they fly the Hele's nest next term. The team also featured some Year 12 players who will get an opportunity to defend the crown next season, and the future certainly looks bright. Well done to all involved!

Parent Subject/Tutor Evenings, 2023-24: As you are aware, we moved to online Tutor and Subject Teacher Evening appointments during the Pandemic and have kept to this model since. Whilst we have received overwhelmingly positive feedback in past years about the convenience and clear focus of online meetings, we are conscious that we may lose a little something in personal connections and opportunities to build relationships with families with fewer opportunities to meet in-person.

As we start to plan for 2023-24 therefore, we feel it is timely to canvass staff and parent viewpoints on whether to retain this model, revert to face-to-face meetings at School, or indeed find a hybrid model. We are aware that no one size fits all though, and we won't be able to please everyone, but will consider feedback carefully before agreeing our model for next year. We would be grateful if you could please complete this very short MS Form by Thursday, 10 May: [Subject and Tutor Evening Consultation](#). Thank you in anticipation of your support.

Extra-curricular provision: the Summer term timetable for all extra-curricular clubs and activities can be found on the Hele's School website, [here](#). We'd love as many students as possible to access at least one club or activity, so please do encourage your child/ren to push themselves out of their comfort zone and maybe try something new. All students have been alerted to the wide range of opportunities available and advised that if they'd like to see a club that isn't currently on offer then they only need to speak with Mr Giles, Community Sports Manager and Enrichment Leader – we're always open to new ideas!

Ofsted report published: In case you missed the email sent to families yesterday with the Ofsted report attached from our recent Inspection on 22 and 23 March, please be advised a [copy can be found on our School website, here](#).

Attendance: Thank you for your continued support with ensuring positive attendance to school. You will, by now, be used to receiving our 'nudge' emails personalised to your child and will be aware of our aspiration of achieving 96% attendance for every child. We are committed to working with you to improve attendance and remove obstacles where they exist. Attendance remains a high priority for the Westcountry Schools Trust and will form an important strand of our work going forward. As such, WeST has employed 3 Education Welfare Officers (EWOs) who will be working closely with our family of schools to ensure there is consistently rigorous tracking, monitoring, and follow up across all of our Trust schools.

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Communication is key and the EWO team are busy putting the final touches to their procedures, which will include a range of letters and support plans. We will be reviewing the attendance of every child who falls below the 96% threshold with our EWO over the coming weeks and will take appropriate action following their guidance, which will include written communications and face to face meetings where necessary. Thank you in advance for your engagement in any process to maximise your child's attendance. As we all know, young people get one chance only to receive a good education, and it remains our priority to ensure every child attends school regularly, feels safe and supported once here, and is ready for learning; we know it isn't always easy, but with Home and School working in partnership we can ensure every young person gets the best provision possible.

Staffing update: Warmest congratulations to Christine McNamara, SENDCo and Teacher of PE, on news of her promoted post and new career challenge in another Plymouth school. Miss McNamara's final day at Hele's School will be Thursday, 6 July 2023.

On a related note, I am delighted to confirm that Angela Byrne has been appointed to the SENDCo role at Hele's School from 1 September 2023. Many families will know Mrs Byrne from her years at Hele's School (during which time she was known as Miss Pike) teaching MFL and holding leadership positions in both MFL and in RS. Mrs Byrne is currently working as Head of MFL at Hele's School and covering Mrs Blandin-Neave's maternity leave, so we are in an incredibly fortunate position to have an established and very experienced member of staff who knows our school, our young people and our families well, shares our passion for inclusion, and is in a position to be able to have a thorough handover with Miss McNamara as we see out this academic year.

Good news: Congratulations to Year 11 students Grace Luscombe and Libby Williams who won the U16s County Cup with their football team last weekend. By all accounts it was a tough game, ending 1-1 after 90 minutes, but the determination of the team got them through on penalties! Grace has now won the cup twice with the team, and this time she also picked up the Player of the Match award to add to her trophies. Very well done to both girls and best of luck for next season.

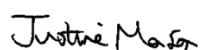
Our Year 7 and Year 8 Basketball team played at home against UTC Plymouth on Thursday. The match was played in excellent spirits with Hele's winning the game 50 - 8. All students played superbly and represented Hele's brilliantly. Eddie Conday deserves a special mention for the MVP (Most Valuable Player) performance, scoring over 30 points in the game! Well done to all involved.

Looking ahead:

- Monday, 8 May: Bank Holiday
- Tuesday, 9 May: Geography Fieldtrip to Dartmoor – Year 8y population
- Wednesday, 10 May: Maths Faraday Challenge for selected Year 8 at the University of Plymouth
- Thursday, 11 May: Geography Fieldtrip to Dartmoor – Year 8x population
- Saturday, 13 May: Duke of Edinburgh Bronze practice walk, Cann Woods
- Monday, 15 May: A level Geography NEA launch at the University of Plymouth
- Thursday, 18 May: Year 7 Subject Evening, 4pm – 7pm via MS Teams
- Friday, 19 May: Travel & Tourism visit to Alton Towers, 4.30am departure from School
Duke of Edinburgh Silver Practice Expedition, Friday - Sunday

Whether you are a Royalist, a Republican, or really not bothered either way, this weekend is unquestionably an historical moment as King Charles III is coronated to The Throne along with Queen Camilla. However you choose to spend the long weekend ahead, I hope the Bank Holiday weekend brings you plenty to cheer about!

Kindest regards,



Justine Mason
Principal