

Hele's School

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



Friday, 3 April 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

One week into the Easter holiday, I hope that this letter finds you safe and well and enjoying a well-deserved break from home schooling! Having recently been juggling the demands of online learning supervision for a Year 4 and a Year 2, I am only too aware of how challenging it is to work remotely and keep all the plates spinning. It's really not easy, but you have all been doing a great job!

Exams: Just this morning, Ofqual, the regulating body for exams and assessments in England, issued guidance documents on how GCSE and A Level grades will be awarded this summer. There has been no decision on awarding of grades for vocational and technical subjects yet, but this should follow shortly. Also, there is a clear **proposal** from Ofqual – but no firm decision has yet been made – that **no grades will be issued for the current Year 10 or below.**

The links to this exams guidance can be found below:

A Letter to Students from Sally Collier, Chief Regulator for Ofqual:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/877830/Letter_to_students_-_Summer_2020_grading.pdf

Guidance for Teachers, Students, Parents & Carers:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/877842/Summer_2020_grades_for_GCSE_AS_A_level_EPQ_AEA_in_maths_-_guidance_for_teachers_students_parents.pdf

In summary, exam boards will be contacting schools *no earlier than 29 May 2020* for two pieces of information for each child in each subject, based on what we know about a student's work and achievements:

1. The grade we believe a child would most likely get if teaching, learning and exams had happened as planned.
2. Within each subject, the rank order of each student doing that subject at Hele's School by performance, for each grade.

Please be assured that teachers will use a wide range of information to help formulate the grade and the rank order of performance. **SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS ARE FORBIDDEN FROM RELEASING THE TEACHER ASSESSMENT GRADE AND/OR THE RANK ORDER OF A CHILD IN THE EXAM COHORT - PLEASE DO NOT COMPROMISE TEACHERS BY CONTACTING THEM TO ASK WHAT GRADE HAS BEEN ASSIGNED OR ATTEMPT TO INFLUENCE THE GRADE IN ANY WAY.**

We are informed that results will be published to students, parents/carers and schools no later than the usual exam results release (second Thursday in August for A Level and third Thursday in August for GCSE), but hopefully sooner.

Year 11 and Year 13 students and their parents/carers will receive an email from Ms Clapham (Year 11) and Mr Stone (Year 13) later today, so please do check your inbox for further information and assurances.

ClassCharts Feedback: Many thanks to the 551 students who completed the recent home learning survey. The feedback will enable us to refine and improve our home learning provision after Easter. We are in the process of creating a guide to address your frequently asked questions and will publish this ahead of next term. In the

meantime, if you or your child are experiencing any difficulties logging in to ClassCharts, please contact Mr Fonseca via fonseca@heles.plymouth.sch.uk.

Safeguarding: Our pastoral team have been in contact with many of you this week and will continue to maintain contact with some students and families throughout this period. Please do not hesitate to email any member of the safeguarding team, safeguarding@heles.plymouth.sch.uk or your child's Tutor or Head of House/Year, should you have any concerns about their welfare or that of another Hele's School student.

Wellbeing: Please be reminded that Hele's School students can access [Kooth.com](https://www.kooth.com), a safe and secure means of getting confidential support for mental health and wellbeing, designed specifically for young people. Kooth offers the opportunity to have a text-based conversation with a qualified counsellor. Counsellors are available from 12noon to 10pm on weekdays and 6pm to 10 pm at weekends, every day of the year on a drop-in basis. Young people can access regular booked online counselling sessions as needed. Outside counselling hours, young people can message the Kooth team and get support by the next day. When students register with Kooth, they will have support available to them now and in the future. Support can be gained not only through counselling but articles, forums and discussion boards. All content is age appropriate, clinically approved and fully moderated. For example, there is a series of self-help toolkits, specifically around COVID-19. These include: Coronavirus Q&A: safety tips for isolation: and how to create your own self-care box. Details of how to access Kooth are online at [Kooth.com](https://www.kooth.com) and also on the Hele's School website.

Keeping with the theme of wellbeing, your child's Head of Year/House sent out a wellbeing challenge to all students via student email last week. Whilst this is an optional task, there are some wonderful ideas that are of interest to children and adults alike. In case your child hasn't shared the challenge with you and you are intrigued to find out more, please do ask them about it and get them to check their School email account if they haven't yet seen it.

On a related note, please be advised that a Wellbeing folder has been added to the COVID-19 section of the Hele's School website, containing information and advice for young people and for parents/carers to support our School community through these challenging times.

Communication: A reminder that whilst Classcharts remains the primary contact method with your child whilst at home, please do encourage regular checking of their School email too. Students were instructed to check both communication channels on the last day before School closure, but it is certainly worth reinforcing this so they don't overlook some important information or opportunities.

Please keep safe and continue to follow the guidance from the Government: Stay at home. Protect the NHS. Save lives. I wish you good health.

Kindest regards,



Justine Mason
Principal

Principal: Justine Mason

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