

Hele's School

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



Tuesday 2 June, 2020

Dear Year 6 and family,

I hope this email finds you happy, well and excited about starting at Hele's School in September. We are delighted that you will be joining us next term and offer a warm welcome to you as we finalise our plans for you to join our Hele's family. We hope the years you will spend here will be both happy and memorable!

With primary schools being allowed to welcome Year 6 children back from 1st June, I've no doubt that many of you may have experienced a return to school this week, and I hope you've enjoyed being back, even if it does feel quite different. At Hele's, we are getting ready to open our doors to our Year 10 and Y12 students and, just like your teachers have been, we are so excited about the prospect of seeing some of our children again.

The process of preparing for you starting at Hele's began at the beginning of April, with Mrs Crosley (Head of Year 7) and her team contacting all primary schools to gather information on our new Year 7 students. Our pastoral team have been in contact with your primary school teacher so that we can be as informed as possible about each youngster who joins our community. This has been a very useful process and we have a much better understanding of you as an individual and the new year group as a whole. In addition to discussions about individual contexts and needs, we have also discussed gaps in knowledge and understanding, which may have been affected by a reliance on remote learning during the lockdown period. Our curriculum at the start of Year 7 will be reshaped and revised to reflect these discussions.

Sadly, we are not able to continue with our usual summer term transition programme in the way we ordinarily would. In the current climate, with school closures and an uncertainty surrounding when schools will fully reopen, our transition programme has had to be reconsidered and we have been looking for creative ways to manage this process. Please don't worry about this - the transition process has been adjusted to ensure that your experience is at least as good as previous year groups, and that you feel welcomed and prepared for the start of secondary school.

Our contingency is to run a transition day before all our other children return in September, and we will make sure we stay in touch with you remotely to ensure you will have had plenty of time and information to get prepared for the new start and we are confident you will not miss out on anything. The most important thing for us is that you have all the information you require to make the transition and that you are well prepared for the move from your primary schools.

Later this term we would usually have met you at our Welcome Evening and we are so disappointed that we have had to cancel this event. We had planned to introduce you to key members of staff and give you another insight into your wonderful new school. However, although current circumstances do not allow us to do this in person, we would very much like to show you what it means to be a Hele's School student so you can understand the ethos of the school you will be joining in September 2020. Therefore, we will be reformatting many of our Year 7 transition events and making them digital, wherever possible, to include things like a virtual tour of the School or online presentations.

Starting secondary school may seem like a daunting and overwhelming experience, particularly given the situation we have all been living through since March when schools were closed to most children, but we will do all we can to help ease you into life as a Hele's School student. Mrs Crosley and her team are putting the final pieces together for a 'Transition' section on the Hele's School website. This will contain all of the information you need, such as documents, letters, uniform lists, etc., listed in date order, so you have a one-stop-shop of where to find information. In the meantime, I have included a 'Frequently Asked Questions' document with this letter that provides answers to the questions you have been asking us along the way. We hope you find this useful!

Principal: Justine Mason

Seymour Road, Plympton, Plymouth, Devon PL7 4LT

Telephone: 01752 337193 Fax: 01752 331460

email: heles.school@plymouth.gov.uk website: www.heles.plymouth.sch.uk

Hele's School is part of Westcountry Schools Trust. Registered address: Harford Road, Ivybridge, Devon PL21 0AJ

A charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales. Company number: 07398467



Over the coming weeks Mrs Crosley will send out a detailed information pack, which will also include details of your Tutor for September. We are confident that you and your family will be suitably informed after reading this information, but should you have any questions then please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Crosley at crosley@heles.plymouth.sch.uk.

It is worth me updating parents/carers on information from our uniform supplier to ensure that you can purchase your new school uniform in a safe and timely manner. The usual uniform 'try on' evenings will clearly not be taking place. However, uniform can be purchased online at our Uniform Webshop on the Hele's School website, found at:

<https://app.parentpay.com/ParentPayShop/Uniform/Default.aspx?shopid=150>. Uniform can then be collected from School Reception at an allocated time and day between June and the end of the summer holidays, respectful of social distancing rules. We have been assured that any orders placed by 31st July, will be fulfilled for collection from mid-August. Adelle has informed us that they have no plans as yet to open their unit at Beech Avenue, PL4 0QQ, to allow students to try on uniform, as they will be unable to support stringent social distancing, but they too can arrange for collections of pre-ordered uniform from the shop at an allocated time/day. Should you have any further questions about uniform, please phone Adelle on 660145 to discuss your requirements or ask for advice about sizes. Alternatively, please contact Mrs Castle in Hele's Reception on 337193.

On another note, we have invested heavily in an excellent resource from PiXL - a network we at Hele's belong to. It is a national Year 6 transition project based upon the books 'Be Awesome' by Matthew Syed and 'Go Big' by Matthew Burton, and is based around 9 sessions specifically for Year 6 on things such as: *Being Awesome; Unlocking Your Mind; Dare to Take Risks; Making The Change; Lost but Not Lost; 'Bouncebackability'; What is Normal Anyway; Friendships and Fallouts; Living Well.*

All students joining us will receive free, personalised copies of both books as a welcome to Hele's and to help with transition to secondary school. We have contacted all our primary schools to ask them to support the project, but don't worry if your school isn't taking part – you won't be disadvantaged and we will create a dedicated place on the Hele's School website to house links to the project resources for children and parents so you can access them from home. The work is optional, but we highly recommend it! Our Year 7 Tutor programme and our Maths and English Year 7 schemes of learning will be amended to support the project too, so as to ensure a smooth pastoral and academic transition to Hele's.

We will also be setting some optional Maths & English transition tasks for you to complete throughout the summer break. Given we will have no SATs results this year, we strongly encourage you to complete these tasks to the best of your ability and bring them with you to your first lesson in September. This, along with internal assessments we will run, will help give a sense of your ability in these core subjects.

I am sure there will be some anxiety around missed learning, but it is important not to dwell on this. The most important consideration at the moment is the happiness, wellbeing and safety of all our children. We will make sure that over time, all students receive the support they need, not only to adjust to a new school, but to readjust to a new routine.

Please be assured we will not allow the current situation to hinder your transition and we will do everything in our power to make your experience rewarding, enjoyable and purposeful. Our new Year 7 cohort are uppermost in our minds at the moment, and we are committed to ensuring every student has the most positive start to their time at Hele's School as possible.

We are looking forward to meeting you all in person, hopefully very soon, and until that is possible, stay safe and well.

Kindest regards,



Justine Mason
Principal

Principal: Justine Mason

Seymour Road, Plympton, Plymouth, Devon PL7 4LT
Telephone: 01752 337193 Fax: 01752 331460
email: heles.school@plymouth.gov.uk website: www.heles.plymouth.sch.uk

Hele's School is part of Westcountry Schools Trust. Registered address: Harford Road, Ivybridge, Devon PL21 0AJ
A charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales. Company number: 07398467

