

Hele's School

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



Friday 12 June, 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

After the government dropped its 'ambition' this week to get all Primary children back to school before the summer, Boris Johnson's latest education announcement on Wednesday was that the government has planned a "massive catch-up operation" over the summer and beyond to help young people "make up for lost time".

Please note that there has been no further information or detail released to schools about what this plan may be or how it may be delivered, other than the government previously stating that teachers would not be asked to deliver this through the summer holiday – an assertion reiterated by Rob Haring, CEO of WeST, in his letter to parents and carers on 5 June 2020.

School leaders are being told to expect news of this plan 'sometime next week'. As vague as this may sound, please be assured that my WeST Headteacher colleagues and I, along with the WeST Board of Trustees and our own Local Governing Bodies, will continue to respond to guidance as soon we receive it and in a measured and pragmatic way, with the wellbeing and safety of our school community at the heart and the educational purpose of actions taken clear. Of course, I will update you with any news of the government's education plan and what that will mean for Hele's School students when I am able to do so. I appreciate your ongoing patience in the interim.

Wider re-opening: after an intense period of meticulous planning and preparation, we are really excited to be able to welcome back Year 10 and some Year 12 students from Monday 15 June. We are confident that this provision will be both safe and meaningful, and that students and staff will embrace the new routines to ensure strict social distancing and good hygiene.

All families with children in those year groups have been contacted with further details of the provision. A reminder for all families that the general FAQs for re-opening can be found on the Hele's School website in the COVID-19 section.

Please do continue to feed your constructive comments back to us throughout this period so we can refine systems where necessary. Thanks for your tremendous support to date in working with us to develop our delivery model.

Remote learning: thank you for your overwhelmingly positive feedback received so far this term on the introduction of narrated PowerPoints for some year groups, and some online seminars for Year 12. It is heartening to hear the positive impact that these developments are having on engaging students, and it has been uplifting to hear just how much our young people have valued seeing and hearing their teachers. This provision will remain a core part of our remote learning delivery model for this term and beyond, and we will continue with the roll out to ensure all year groups benefit from this over the coming weeks.

School calendar update: confirmation that the Staff Training Day calendared at the start of this year for 26 June has been cancelled and that all provision (in-school and remote) will continue as usual on this day. Whilst we could undoubtedly make use of this day for virtual staff training and development, it would be unfair on families who continue to deal with the ongoing disruption to learning to run with this pre-planned staff training day. We will find creative ways to deliver our staff training throughout this term through a different model so in the meantime, learning can continue as 'normal' throughout the rest of the summer term.

Principal: Justine Mason

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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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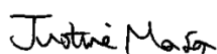
Emotional wellbeing and mental health: a reminder that contact details of key services for children, young people and families can be found on the school website. Should your child(ren) require further support around wellbeing or mental health, please make contact with the appropriate Head of Year/House should you need guidance on accessing services available.

Uniform update: I'd like to revisit the plans around a compulsory gold logo tie for years 8 – 10 from September as we move back to horizontal year groups and away from the House system and reassure parents that, whilst I'd encourage as many families as possible to purchase the new tie, I do appreciate that this may be an unnecessary expense for many, exacerbated by the current economic climate. Therefore, please be advised that students in Year 8-10 need only buy the new tie at the point that their current school tie needs replacing; there is no obligation to purchase a new tie for September. I trust this will be well-received by parents/carers.

As always, we continue to work together to ensure our young people are safe, happy and learning in these challenging times. Please keep talking to us – we'll get through this together.

Stay safe and well.

Kindest regards,



Justine Mason
Principal

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