

# Hele's School

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



17<sup>th</sup> July 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

It is with mixed emotions that I write my final communication to you as an academic year like no other comes to an end today. Reflecting on this year, it is quite incredible that the significant challenges we faced and overcame back in the autumn term when we experienced a significant cyber-attack on our IT network have all but paled into insignificance in the light of a coronavirus global pandemic – yes, the '19-'20 academic year has certainly tested our mettle in all manner of ways and I, as I've no doubt many of you will, shall be glad to draw it to a close!

I am immensely proud of our community for the manner in which we have navigated the storm of the past 20 weeks, in particular, for how we have pulled together and tackled head on the challenges that very few, if any, of us had ever considered possible. Out of these challenges has come a strengthened desire to support each other and safeguard the learning and emotional wellbeing of our children, families and staff, and the resilience, flexibility to adapt and determination shown by so many throughout this time has been impressive. I, for one, am looking forward to a period of calm waters as we take to harbour for the summer break, and to prepare for setting sail together once more in September as we embrace our 'new normal'.

**September full return:** a reminder that the details for September opening, as well as the expectations for full uniform for all, were shared in last week's parent/carers update and can be found on the School website along with important FAQs, but the logistical summary is as below:

Year group	Start date	Entry point	Start time	End time	Tutor base & Tutor	Learning Zone	Head of Year	Pastoral Support Manager	Senior Leader Link
7	Tues 8 <sup>th</sup> Sept.	East gate, Seymour Road (Stonebarton end)	8.40am	3.00pm	To be confirmed in separate letter.	Maths block and ramp/car park area (no cars)	Mrs Crosley	Mrs Keen	Mrs Crawford
8	Weds 9 <sup>th</sup> Sept.	Plymbridge Road gate	8.40am	3.00pm		Science block and Main Hall	Mrs Skingle	Mrs Parker	Mrs Crawford
9	Thurs 10 <sup>th</sup> Sept.	Plymbridge Road gate	9.00am	3.20pm		English, top playground & Piazza	Miss Prifti	Mrs Adamson	Mrs Clapham
10	Weds 9 <sup>th</sup> Sept.	West gate, Seymour Road	8.40am	3.00pm		West Quad classrooms and front play area	Mrs Aldersley	Miss Glasspoole	Ms Clapham
11	Thurs 10 <sup>th</sup> Sept.	East gate, Seymour Road (Stonebarton end)	9.00am	3.20pm		East Quad classrooms & middle play area	Mr Carwardine	Mrs Watts	Ms Clapham
12	Tues 8 <sup>th</sup> Sept.	Trelawney Road gate (side entrance)	9.00am	3.20pm		P16 Block	Mrs Curtis		Mr Stone
13	Weds 9 <sup>th</sup> Sept.	Trelawney Road gate (side entrance)	8.40am	3.00pm		P16 Block	Mrs Curtis		Mr Stone

A link to a video from your child's Head of Year was sent to all students and parents/carers on Wednesday this week to talk through some of the key aspects of their return to School. We hope that this, in addition to the information sent to you last week, will ensure you and your child feel fully briefed on what to expect in September. I would strongly encourage you to watch this video along with your child, both now and prior to the return.

**Principal: Justine Mason**

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**Staff farewells:** we say a fond farewell today to valued colleagues today as they head off to pastures new:

Nick Norton, Head of Art & Duke of Edinburgh Leader (retired)

Jane Lee, Music teacher (retired)

Paul Blake, Biology Subject Leader (retired)

Rachael Lee, Deputy Head of Maths (Callywith College, Cornwall)

Josh Clarke, English teacher and Leader of Gifted, Talented and More Able provision (Furze Platt School, Maidenhead)

Heather French, Maths teacher (Eggbuckland Community College)

Carol Roberts, Pastoral Support Manager (retired)

Jayne Barstow, Pastoral Support Manager (retired)

Whilst we have been unable to gather as a staff body to pass on our thanks in person and give colleagues the Team Hele's sendoff we usually do, our love and best wishes follow each of them into the next chapter of their life and we thank them for their tremendous support of students, families and staff throughout their time with us.

**GCSE and A Level results:** a letter was sent to all Year 11 and Year 13 students yesterday, and also to their parents/carers, from Ms Clapham, Assistant Principal. This contains important information about the arrangements for distributing the summer exam results and I would urge you to read this and ensure you fully understand the process for our students this summer. We wish the Class of 2020 the very best of luck for results day and for their next steps. We are so proud of the manner in which our Leavers have conducted themselves throughout a time of such turmoil, uncertainty and disappointment, and I repeat my pledge that we will ensure that every child has support to access an appropriate progression route after receiving their results. Ms Clapham's letter contains further details of this support on offer.

**Summer food support:** eligible families (including those with children in Year 11) should readily receive their food vouchers for the summer from Edenred, but should there be any questions then please contact Mrs Hamblin at [hamblinc@heles.plymouth.sch.uk](mailto:hamblinc@heles.plymouth.sch.uk) and she will endeavour to help you. Alongside this support, is the continuation of the fully inclusive Plympton Team Ministry Community Foodbank, which remains open and available to all households in need of food in Plympton over the summer break and into the future. All emails and referrals are dealt with in the strictest of confidence.

**Road safety:** as part of the Council's road safety programme, new signs will be installed on Larkham Lane by the end of August. There will be an advisory speed limit of 20 mph when lights flash, with the times coinciding with the start and end of the school day. This will help to improve road safety in the vicinity and the Council hope this will encourage more journeys to be made to school on foot and by bicycle. The Council will be monitoring traffic speeds in the area in the autumn term to assess the effectiveness of the system in reducing traffic speeds. If you have any questions about this initiative please contact the Council's Road Safety team at [TrafficManagementInbox@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:TrafficManagementInbox@plymouth.gov.uk).

**Parent and carer mental health awareness workshops:** these sessions will be delivered virtually as a partnership between The Zone, Young Devon and CAMHS. Topics covered will include: Mental Health and Adolescence, Resilience and Transitioning Back into School. Each session is 1-hour long and includes an opportunity to ask questions and to gain support and signposting information. Sessions run on: Tuesday 18th August (10.30am), Tuesday 25th August, (1.30pm) and Thursday 27th August (6pm). To book a place, please contact: [Jodie.frost@thezoneplymouth.co.uk](mailto:Jodie.frost@thezoneplymouth.co.uk)

**NCS 'Keep Doing Good' (KDG) Programme:** as you will be aware from previous communication, the traditional NCS Programme was repurposed to offer young people from Year 10 upwards the opportunity to socialise with like-minded people, make a difference to their community and have fun. Besides exciting workshops, fun activities, volunteer opportunities and safe, social mixing, I am informed there will be plenty of free pizza! KDG is at Hamoaze House, Mount Wise, Plymouth from Monday 27<sup>th</sup> July – Friday 31<sup>st</sup> July. Students from age 15 upwards can still sign up online at: <https://wearencs.com/keep-doing-good>.


**Finally:** I offer my sincere thanks to parents and carers for your ongoing support throughout this year. I appreciate that at times I have asked you to trust that the strategic and operational decisions we have made have been done with the interests of our young people and wider community at heart, even if it has meant compromises have needed to be made, and I thank you for the positive manner in which you have delivered on this. As I have written before, not all decisions made will have been popular, but they have been considered carefully with changing government and public health guidance and implemented sensitively in the difficult and unexpected context we have all found

ourselves in because of COVID-19 throughout the lockdown and wider reopening period; we are in this together and we will continue to be in this together.

The weekly updates I have written since March will cease today and I will ceremoniously archive the communications on our School website and remove the 'COVID-19' alert banner as we move into a new beginning after the summer. I will write again in September to welcome everyone to the new academic year and to introduce the twelve new teaching and support staff we have joining Team Hele's, but in the meantime I wish you and your family a restful summer, with plenty of time for relaxation and recovery after what has been a truly unforgettable school year.

I look forward to seeing you all in September.

Kindest regards,



Justine Mason  
**Principal**

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