

# Hele's School

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



Friday, 13 November 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

For the superstitious amongst us, Friday 13<sup>th</sup> is usually a date that raises an eyebrow or two, but add to that the heady combination of 2020, the year of the coronavirus, then we'd be forgiven for being especially cautious today!

**Dealing with a positive COVID-19 case:** you will know from my communication earlier in the week, we sadly had a confirmed case of COVID-19 in Year 10, and consequently have 38 children self-isolating at home and accessing their education remotely, in line with advice from the SW Public Health Authority and Department for Education.

I appreciate it is unsettling for all when we are alerted to a positive case in the community, but let me assure you there are very clear actions to take and our systems are clear and robust when we receive news of a case; we will and have acted swiftly to ensure any risk is mitigated for the wider community to ensure traced closed contacts self-isolate as a precautionary measure.

Sadly, until a vaccine is readily available, which could still be some time yet, the rhythm of schooling across the nation will continue to be disrupted as we see groups of children and staff moving in and out of school for periods of self-isolation, dictated by confirmed cases and subsequent tracking of close contacts.

Yesterday, the government updated their guidance for parents and carers. This can be found [here](#). The updated guidance includes information on the national restrictions by adding a 'national restrictions' section and updating the relevant information about face coverings, clinically extremely vulnerable children and extracurricular activities.

**Lest we forget:** Thank you to Major Kevin Randall, Contingent Commander, and his wonderful team of Cadets and staff for delivering the Hele's School CCF Remembrance service on Wednesday. To overcome the restrictions of congregating for our usual annual ceremony in the East Quad, this was delivered virtually and streamed live to the whole school, leading into a 2-minute silence at 11am and a poignant Last Post played expertly by Liv Kennedy in Year 12. Hannah Duckworth and Morgan Lewis, both in the Sixth Form, attended the Remembrance service in Plympton last Sunday to lay wreaths for The Fallen on behalf of Hele's School and the CCF. The video can be seen on the Hele's YouTube channel, here: <https://youtu.be/l-4hgy7Y10k>.

**Mental Health Support:** As part of the Whole School Approach Offer over the last 4 years, Progeny has delivered Parent/Carer Mental Health Awareness sessions in conjunction with Young Devon and CAMHS, with positive feedback from those who have attended. These sessions have been adapted this year due to COVID restrictions and delivered virtually. Hele's are pleased to host a resource pack on our website [here](#), which was updated this year to give a wealth of resources and services available locally and nationally. A 20-minute long parent/carers information and training session from Livewell Southwest is also accessible via this link.

**Christmas cheer:** 2020 has been a very difficult year for everyone in our community, but Plym Chamber CIC - a local gateway for the UK Government's Kickstart scheme - is looking at ways of bringing a bit of Christmas cheer to us all! They plan to light up the Ridgeway with lights and trees and are preparing an exciting virtual event for everyone to enjoy in the comfort of their own homes, which will be streamed on FaceBook on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> November and shared amongst other social media platforms. Local schools have been asked to get involved and contribute to a pre-

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recorded Christmas song to be incorporated into the virtual event, and as you know we have a great number of talented and enthusiastic children at Hele's who would just love to be involved! Mr Jones and Mr Cartwright have been tasked with ensuring the Hele's voice is loud and proud, and I've no doubt they will absolutely deliver! I will write with more details of the virtual event when I receive them.

In the meantime, some COVID-secure events are running today at school as we raise money and awareness for Children in Need. Mufti day for all, with the odd bit of fancy dress thrown in for good measure. So far this morning, I've come across a dinosaur, Bart Simpson, countless pairs of Pudsey Bear ears and even a great many students opting to wear their pyjamas – a reminder that in these tough times, we can still put the fun into fundraising!

Thanks for your ongoing support.

Kindest regards,



Justine Mason  
**Principal**

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