

# Hele's School

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



Thursday, 31 December 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

## Changes to the start of Term 3

I hope you and your family have had an enjoyable Christmas, if slightly different to originally planned, and that this letter finds you well. May I also take this unexpected opportunity to wish you a very Happy New Year!

As you will no doubt be aware, late yesterday afternoon the Government amended its approach to the re-opening of secondary schools in England regarding the start of term in January. Further guidance was released to schools late last night. Should you be interested in reading this full guidance, the link to it is [here](#).

In summary, the Government has stated that secondary schools will be open from Monday 4 January 2021 to 'vulnerable' children and children of critical workers **only**; all other students - now including those in examination groups (Years 11 and 13) who were initially due to return for face-to-face learning from 4 January - will work remotely at home, following their normal timetable.

There will follow a phased return to on-site provision for Years 11 and 13 from 11 January, leading to a full return from all year groups from 18 January.

Adjustments to all secondary school opening arrangements for the New Year have had to be made, and hence the return dates I shared with you in the final week of term have changed. The updated arrangements for return to Hele's School in light of this guidance are as below:

Year	Remote learning start	On-site, face-to-face start
7	Monday 4 January 2021	Monday 18 January 2021
8	Monday 4 January 2021	Monday 18 January 2021
9	Monday 4 January 2021	Monday 18 January 2021
10	Monday 4 January 2021	Monday 18 January 2021
11	Monday 4 January 2021	Monday 11 January 2021
12	Monday 4 January 2021	Monday 18 January 2021
13	Monday 4 January 2021	Monday 11 January 2021
Vulnerable children and children of Critical Workers (all years)	The w/b Monday 4 January 2021 will see on the school site <b>only</b> 'vulnerable' children and those children of Critical Workers previously requesting supervised remote learning	

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### Principal: Justine Mason

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**Face coverings from January:** from the start of the Spring Term, the Westcountry Schools Trust is now strongly recommending that all students and staff (unless exempt) wear face coverings in all classrooms. The requirement for face coverings to be worn in all corridors and communal spaces (inside and outside, unless eating) remains in place, as previously communicated. This is in response to the new, much more highly infectious, coronavirus variant that is sweeping across the country. Our priority remains keeping all students and staff as safe as possible in these challenging circumstances.

**Lateral Flow Testing (LFT):** as well as a change to arrangements for return to secondary schools in January, the Government briefing last evening and the updated school guidance also makes clear that Lateral Flow Testing (LFT) in all secondary schools will be expected as a means to regularly test the staff and children on-site and support existing control measures.

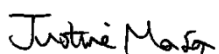
We will be seeking to provide our families with details of LFT arrangements and procedures as soon as we have had sufficient time to strategically plan, resource and train a workforce and have agreed a protocol across all secondary schools in the Westcountry Schools Trust. Please be assured that we anticipate having everything in place for safe and efficient testing on-site for all consenting students and staff by the end of January. Let me assure you that we will not, under any circumstances, issue a test to any young person without appropriate consent.

We appreciate you will no doubt have a number of questions in respect of Lateral Flow Testing but we would politely request that you await further communication (likely to be around mid-January) ahead of you contacting School regarding any queries specifically about testing; this is new and unexpected territory for schools and I'm sure you can appreciate that there is much to plan for and there are many questions yet to be answered for schools to enable this to happen seamlessly and safely.

**Finally:** as is always the case, we will endeavour to do all we can to support you and your child. Please may we ask you to continue to monitor all communication via the Hele's School website and email over the coming days for any updates; the School site remains closed to all staff until Monday 4 January 2021, so any messages left on the School answerphone or email will not be picked up and answered before then. If you have any urgent questions or concerns, please contact your child's Head of Year in the first instance, and we will do our very best to reply to you as soon as we can.

We continue to be grateful for the support that our families provide and we appreciate your understanding and patience in respect of the changes being communicated to you today.

Kindest regards,



Justine Mason

**Principal**

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