

Hele's School

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



Friday, 15 January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

We are now two weeks down of the new term and because of being bogged down with so much essential information to share with you each week, I've realised that I've not yet introduced our new colleagues who joined the staffing team in January. Let me put that right now! A warm Hele's welcome to:

- Chelsea Dyer, Deputy Head of History.
- Nataniel Rogers, Geography Teacher.
- Tori Froud, Geography Teacher and Cover Supervisor.
- Shannon Denfhy and Katherine Denkinson, Learning Support Assistants.
- Catherine Newby continues her teaching within the Science department at Hele's, but from this term will cover Gemma Stewart's maternity leave.

I'm delighted that staff have settled into the new routine of remote learning, in spite of all the challenges that presents. I do hope you will be able to engage with our new colleagues sooner rather than later, even if that is through virtual Parents' Evenings throughout this term.

Remote Learning: please note that we are not delivering live lessons in Active Lifestyles (Core PE), Personal Development (PD), KS4 Core RS (Philosophy and Ethics) and Forensic Reading. Instead, work for these subjects is available at a glance on one sheet, on our website (School Information, Remote Learning), and on the Year Team Curriculum General channel post. Students will be given information about how to submit this work so that achievement points can be issued.

Teacher Absence: if a teacher is absent from work because they are ill, they will be unable to deliver live lessons. In this case, students will receive an email outlining where to find the work to complete independently or directing them to an appropriate Oak National Academy lesson. Parents/carers will also receive a message via In-Touch.

MS Assignments: we are increasingly using Microsoft Assignments during lessons because this enables teachers to check understanding and engagement. If your child is having any difficulties with finding or submitting assignments, they should watch these short videos as a quick refresher:

[How to access an assignment set by your teachers](#)

[How to hand in your assignments](#)

[How to see the feedback from your teachers](#)

Please note that not all assignments will be individually marked, but they will be used by teachers to check understanding, provide whole-class feedback, address common misconceptions and plan future lessons. Individual written feedback will continue in line with departmental policies.

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



Supporting home learning routines: the Education Endowment Fund (EEF) have produced a checklist to support good routines and planning the day during remote learning periods. The graphic here shows the template and it is on the school website for parents and students to download should you find it useful. The EEF have also made a short video (2 minutes) to help parents and carers discuss getting organised and maximising remote learning time - this can be found [here](#).

Ofqual consultation: you may have picked up through the press that teacher assessment in a yet-to-be-defined form will be used in place of the cancelled summer exams to determine final GCSE and A Level grades, as well as vocational outcomes. A consultation is about to launch nationally and is intended to run for 2 weeks. Whilst there is much to consider and agree, there are early indicators that there could be some form of shorter, externally set and internally marked assessment in subjects and that young people will be *'assessed on what they have learnt, rather than against the content they have not had a chance to study.'* It is crucial, then, that students remain motivated, focused and work as hard as possible throughout the months ahead. We will continue to keep families of students in Years 11 and 13 updated on developments via email in the usual manner.

Free School Meals (FSM): the government have reinstated the national voucher scheme for those families in receipt of FSM and will once again use Edenred to distribute these electronically. We anticipate a smooth transition from our current system, but do please contact Carolyn Hamblin at hamblinc@heles.plymouth.sch.uk should you experience an issue with the changeover from next week.

Help with energy bills: Plymouth Energy Community are a social enterprise company working with energy providers to support energy customers vulnerable because of COVID-19, self-isolating or experiencing financial hardship. If you are struggling meet energy costs, it is worth contacting the company to ask for support or advice at www.plymouthenergycommunity.com.

WiFi access: we have just been made aware from some anxious students that Virgin WiFi has gone down in some areas of Plympton this afternoon and is not expected back until 9.30pm tonight at the earliest. Please do not worry if your child(ren) have been unable to engage with live lessons this afternoon - these things are unplanned and out of everybody's control and teachers will be sympathetic to this situation.

Good news: it's always lovely to start the weekend with an uplifting story or two, and we are absolutely thrilled to hear that Rachel Smyth, a talented performer who many of you will have seen over the years in productions at Hele's singing, acting and dancing, has this week been offered a place to read Music at Jesus College, Oxford, in October. Although Rachel flew the Hele's nest in the summer, she deferred her University application for a year to ensure she got exactly what she'd set her sights on - a reminder to us all that hard work pays, but that it is important to remain focused, determined and resilient and keep your eye on the prize! We are all so proud of Rachel's achievements and send our warmest congratulations to the Smyth family.

Another family who are celebrating today and spreading lots of love and joy is that of our very own Mrs Stewart, Science Teacher. I am overjoyed to announce the safe arrival of Baby Stewart just this morning; a bouncing baby boy and the newest member of Team Hele's...and, knowing Mrs Stewart to be ever the professional, just in time for the start of school at 8.27am too! What wonderful news to start the weekend on - here's to a good one!

Kindest regards,

Justine Mason

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

