



Newsletter

November 2022 - Issue 3

Third half term - From The Headteacher

Dear Parents and Carers,

We have been celebrating more significant 'firsts' at The High School Leckhampton recently, not least the official opening of our school that took place last week. Mr Edward Gillespie OBE, Lord-Lieutenant of Gloucestershire, officiated at the event and it was a wonderful occasion, enjoyed by over 100 visitors, staff and pupils. During his speech, Mr Gillespie spoke about the school's vision to be a 'flagship school at the heart of its community' and the occasion provided a timely moment to pause and reflect on both what has been achieved and to look forward to an exciting future ahead. I am certain that the staff and pupils of the school, as well as all the guests who attended, will remember it for many years to come. You can read more about it in this edition of the newsletter.

On a smaller scale, but equally important to our pupils, we have started hosting our first hockey and rugby fixtures at HSL on our fantastic, floodlit astro. We have also ventured 'away' to compete in Netball and Hockey Tournaments. I am delighted by the numbers of pupils involved in sport at HSL (there are clubs on offer 3 times a day, most days of the week!) and our teams are already looking strong, achieving some significant victories against much larger local schools!

A final highlight for me, has been our first local trip up Leckhampton Hill with the fantastic Community Wardens and FOLK volunteers. You can read more about it in this newsletter, but suffice to say our pupils got really stuck in and did some important environmental work.

I do hope you enjoy reading about many of the other events that have been happening since Half Term and hope that many of you will be joining us for our Christmas celebration this Thursday.

With warm wishes,

Helen Wood
Headteacher



Key Dates

| | |
|---------------|--|
| 1st December | Pitt Rivers Art Trip - Year 8 |
| 7th December | Year 8 Eco-Committee Assembly |
| 7th December | Learning Council Meeting (lunchtime) |
| 8th December | Christmas Celebration 7pm |
| 9th December | Headteachers Reward Tea Party - Year 7 (breaktime) |
| 9th December | RRSA Steering Group (lunchtime) |
| 13th December | House Hockey Matches (all day) |
| 14th December | House Gymnastics (all day) |
| 15th December | Headteacher's Reward Breakfast - Year 8 |
| 16th December | Christmas Assemblies |
| 16th December | Christmas Jumper Day |
| 16th December | End Of Term - pupils depart at 12.20pm |
| 3rd January | Start of Spring Term |



Official Opening of HSL

The High School Leckhampton was officially opened by the Lord-Lieutenant of Gloucestershire Edward Gillespie OBE on Wednesday 30th November.

The school held the ceremony to officially open the £35 million, carbon neutral building, and to thank the people who had been involved in the process of building the school – the county council, the contractor Kier, the architect AHR – and those members of the community who have been instrumental in making the school a success in such a short space of time – the staff, parents and not least the pupils.

Guests arrived at the 400-seat auditorium to the sound of Year 8 pupil Finley South playing the grand piano. After speeches from Mr Dominic Burke, the CEO of the Balcarras Trust, and Mrs Wood, the school was officially opened by Lord-Lieutenant Edward Gillespie OBE who unveiled a plaque.

Mrs Wood said: "Good teaching and good facilities are crucial in creating a great school; one that achieves excellent outcomes for every child. The team are all passionate professionals, real advocates for young people, and their dedication will provide a strong foundation upon which we can build a fantastic school. Our wonderful facilities will motivate our pupils to want to come to school and to thrive."

Mr Edward Gillespie said: "I would like to thank and congratulate the Balcarras Trust, the parents and pupils on the founding of this flagship school in the heart of the community. The High School Leckhampton opened its doors right at the start of a new era and this is an opportunity for the pupils, teachers, governors, and the community to be part of something special right from the beginning. I really wish it every possible success."

A vote of thanks was given to Mr Gillespie by Year 8 pupils Holly Hartman and Harry Wallace on behalf of the students. They said, "The opening of our new school marks an important change for Cheltenham and we are confident it is a very positive change indeed. At the High School Leckhampton, we have a very strong sense of community spirit. We hope the pupils from our school, both current and in the future, will go on to achieve great things in our local community."





Official Opening of HSL

Guests were then taken on a tour of the new school by pupils to view the state-of-the-art facilities.

Cllr Philip Robinson, cabinet member for education at Gloucestershire County Council, said: "This ceremony marks the end of the council's flagship school project: building a £35 million carbon neutral secondary school for Cheltenham. However, it is just the beginning for the pupils, staff and wider school community to build a strong foundation for this fantastic school."

Andy Bolas, regional director at Kier Construction, Western & Wales, said: "It is wonderful to be part of the event and to see the staff and students enjoying these fabulous state-of-the-art facilities."

"The project clearly shows our commitment to constructing environmentally sustainable buildings – the secondary school is carbon neutral and supports Gloucestershire County Council's pledge to cut carbon emissions by 2030."

"As a Gloucestershire-based business, we are extremely proud to deliver schemes like this one and we look forward to seeing it positively serve the community now and in the future."





Antibullying Week



On Monday 14th November, the children of The High School Leckhampton took part in 'Odd Socks Day' to kickstart Anti Bullying Week 2022.

The purpose of wearing odd socks was to show the importance of celebrating and embracing difference. The sock choices were particularly brilliant with some brightly coloured, some different lengths and some having very jazzy patterns!

Miss O Riordan delivered an Anti-Bullying Assembly to the pupils as part of their House assembly and reminded them that bullying will not be tolerated at HSL. The definition of bullying was explained to them and pupils looked at four key categories of bullying: Physical, Verbal, Psychological and Online.

In PSHE on Tuesday 22nd November, Year 7 pupils listened to Robert Higgs - an antibullying speaker, who spoke about about bullying and the lasting impact it can have on a person.

HSL is a 'telling school' and it is important for the pupils to notify any member of staff if they notice that a child is isolated, looking vulnerable or someone is being unkind to them. The school will always listen and respond.





Humanities Week

Between 7th and 11th November we invited our students to “Be the change ... and change the world” as part of our very first Humanities Week. Mrs Wood, Mr Newman and Mrs Cox, as teachers of History, Geography and RE, launched the theme of the week with assemblies to both year groups, each speaking about an individual whom they felt had brought about significant change to make our world better.

On Monday we were delighted to welcome Rachel, Bishop of Gloucester, who talked to Year 8 students about her role in the Church and being the first diocesan bishop in the UK and female Lord Spiritual. She spoke about her concerns for young people’s mental health that led to her creating the #Liedentity campaign to open up discussions about the power of social media on young people’s self-esteem.

Later on in the week, students and staff were invited to consider what change they would like to see in the world and suggest one small step they could take towards making it happen. Students also had the chance in History lessons to consider how fashion has brought about big changes in society, explored climate change in their Geography lessons, and came across the theme in some other subject areas, such as English and Music.

Finally, Mrs McAlpine ran a lunchtime workshop where students explored ‘zines’, mini print magazines focusing on one issue, and had the chance to make one during the course of the session.

My thanks to all staff who contributed to a very successful week, and to the students for their enthusiasm and participation.





Supporting Readers

Supporting Readers

Reading is the greatest indicator of future success in children. It is also incredibly enjoyable and beneficial to every aspect of their academic, emotional, and mental development. Everyone knows that reading is incredibly important! However, it can be hard to get children to read at home. Here are 6 steps to create a reading culture in your home.



RELATIONSHIPS



Reading is a great way to develop relationships. Make time to read together, discuss what you have read, and celebrate reading. Consider listening to audiobooks as a family, reading to a sibling, and promote the rich conversations you have about books. Enthusiasm for reading is vital: children who enjoy reading are statistically much stronger readers.

ROUTINES



Children now receive the majority of their reading from in-game communications (video games), and social media messages. So, turn off the Wi-Fi and TV, and make time for reading. Remember, twenty minutes a night is all it takes to maximise academic progress. Set page or time targets to fit in with your home schedule.

RESPONSES



Book talk is an essential part of the reading process. Check in with your child about how their book is going and what is happening. Consider rewards for page progress and celebrate every book your child reads. "Tell me about..." "Are you enjoying..." and "Do you think that..." for example.

RESEARCH



Find the niche! Whatever it is your child enjoys, search for the book, series, or genre to keep them entertained. There IS a book out there for everyone! Look in local libraries, speak to their teachers or other parents, check bookstore websites, and create a buzz about reading with your child related to other topics they enjoy.

REFLECTIONS



Reading is a journey of discovery, which means children are constantly discovering things about what they enjoy and whether books are the right difficulty/interest level for them. Encourage your child to pursue what they enjoy! Work out what motivates your child to read and bottle that magic!

RESILIENCE



Finally, encourage resilience and consistency. If your child doesn't read one night, encourage them and support them to get back into the routine. In a world of distractions, reading can fall down the hierarchy! Encourage returning to an old favourite or begin a brand-new book - whatever it takes to get back on the reading journey.

Year 8 completed a reading project over half term whereby they had to read for 15 minutes every day and record what they read, learnt, discovered etc.

At the end of the project, both the pupils and their parents were asked to reflect on the experience and the large majority of pupils wrote comments such as "I've really enjoyed reading regularly again" and "I really want to keep this habit up" and again the large majority of parents wrote comments such as "It's been so lovely to see them read again" and "I really want to encourage them to continue reading regularly".

We thought it would be useful for parents and carers to have some information about how to encourage reading at home.

[On our website there are some recommended books to read for each year group that may also help.](#)



Mark Ballabon Visit

On Friday November 18th, Year 8 pupils had an exciting visit from Mark Ballabon, an author and environmentalist. He talked to pupils about his new novel for young people, Home. The novel is a thought-provoking reflection on bullying, self-belief and the climate crisis, for today's socially conscious and environmentally engaged young people.

All of Year 8 listened to Mark Ballabon talk about his journey to becoming a writer as well as listening to him read and they asked lots of questions.

The children very much enjoyed the experience and some even managed to get their copy of Home signed by Mark.



MARK BALLABON
ILLUSTRATED BY GRANT MACDONALD



Sports update



House rugby

On 13th November, students from all houses, Chelt, Isbourne, Lileybrook and Windrush took part in House Rugby.

Everyone had a wonderful time and the sun even came out for the occasion.

Congratulations to **Isbourne** who were the overall winners!





Sports update



Netball and Hockey

The Year 7 and 8 girls Netball teams, alongside the mixed Year 7 teams have had a busy couple of weeks.

The school teams have played brilliantly and won matches against Cleeve and Chosen Hill.

The Hockey teams have been equally successful winning against Cleeve and Chosen Hill in Year 7.

Year 7 and 8 had a successful game winning against Bournside but they also saw a narrow 0-1 loss to Chosen Hill.

Well done to everyone involved!



Sports update



County Schools Cross Country Championships

Alicia 8WI and Ben 8CH took part in the County Schools Cross Country Championships this week.

Alicia ran first in the junior girls Year 8/9 3km race. In a field of 32 she finished 14th.

Alicia had a strong start and held her place in the field all through the race. She had also played for her Leckhampton Rovers team in a match beforehand!

Ben ran next in the junior boys yr 8/9 3.8km race. In a field of 22 he finished 10th. Another strong race with a sprint finish for 10th place!

Well done to both Alicia and Ben!



Whilst Year 8 were all on a school trip, six very dedicated Year 7 students braved the fog and frost this week to participate in cross country at 8am.

What great enthusiasm and commitment, well done!

We have lots of sports clubs that start at 8am and it is lovely to see children starting the day with some sport.

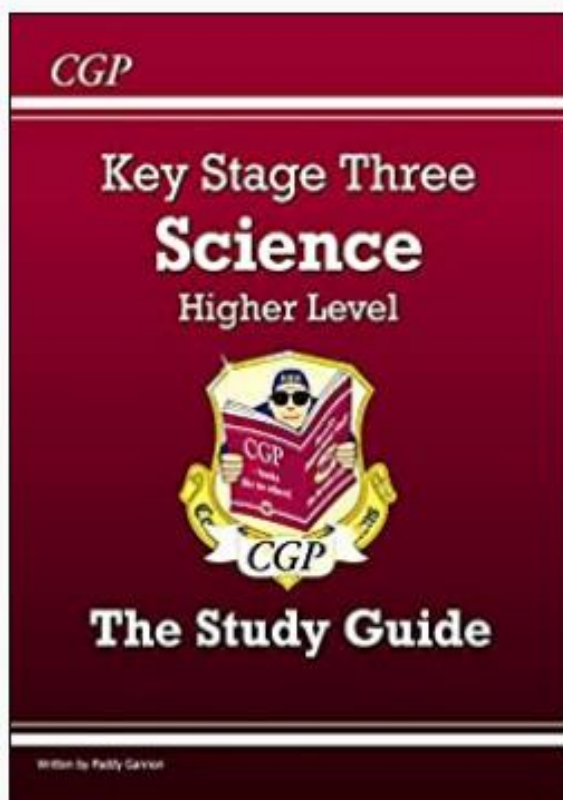
Our clubs include Badminton, Strength and Conditioning, Cross Country and Yoga. All details are on the [website](#).



Science Revision and Review Resources

Every student in Year 7 and 8 has been given a numbered red CGP KS3 Science Higher Level Study Guide. Please encourage your child to use their Study Guide at home to complete their homework, review what they have learned in their lessons, and revise for their assessments. More information regarding how to revise and which page numbers to use can always be found on the VLE in the Task Description for the homework or assessment.

The school will collect these Study Guides back at the end of the KS3 course to pass on to the new cohort of Year 7 students. Students have been told to keep them safe and avoid writing in them at all. If you would like to purchase the Science Study Guide, you can do so via Scopay for £3. If your child has lost the Study Guide and needs a £3 replacement copy, please email admin@hsl.gloucs.sch.uk to let us know.





HSL Eco News

Many eco-related events have taken place this month. Miss Kennedy would like to thank everyone who took part. A summary of each event is below, and there is more to look forward to in the next newsletter!

TG Escapes STEM workshop - Wednesday 9th November

We first learnt about what STEM stands for – Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics – and then discussed the importance of what TG Escapes did for HSL. They built our school building last year with sustainable materials and showed us the benefits of it.

After this we did a fun activity, which was to create a building structure strong enough to hold a 1kg book and, if strong enough, extra weights. We worked in groups of five for this challenge using only 2 pieces of A4 paper, a pair of scissors, a glue stick, and a roll of tape. We could use these however we liked. However, we only had 15 minutes to complete this challenge. We weren't allowed to use any other objects, so it was quite tricky. Every group had their own unique ideas. Some were less fortunate when it came to the testing!

We discovered that the winning group had used the shape of a triangle and used a lot of sellotape.

In our group, we created a dome-shaped structure covered with sellotape and made out of paper, stuffed with smaller balls of paper. We used the sellotape so our structure stayed together.

The workshop was great because not only did we learn about the importance of eco-friendly buildings and what STEM stands for, but everyone had the chance to share their ideas without being afraid of what everyone else thought. The visitors, Mark and Chris, were very friendly and positive.

At the end of the workshop, Mark and Chris told us about a design competition where you design/ create an eco-friendly building connected to nature. The building has to give everyone who visits a sense of the outside inside. If your design wins in this competition, the designers from TG Escapes will virtually create your design as accurately as possible so you can get a sense of what it feels like.

It will be amazing for students to enter because they can explore their creativity and be able to feel a sense of achievement. Even if you don't win it's the taking part that counts, and it would be a massive privilege to see your design come to life!

These opportunities are important because it helps our minds grow and improve.

By Caitlin and Holly H 815





HSL Eco News

Leckhampton Hill Trip - Tuesday 22nd November

On the 22nd of November 2022, HSL's Eco-Committee and other like-minded pupils and members of staff climbed 173 meters up to the top of Leckhampton Hill. We met Wayne and Lucy, Cheltenham's Community Rangers, and walked past the Limekilns and Devil's Chimney on our way up. Wayne told us more about both of these historical sites and it was really interesting!

As soon as we got up the hill we were put to work. We were split into groups, one of them starting out with finding local cows, and one in charge of maintaining and building a new memorial wall.

These two groups rotated the activities. In the memorial wall group we were split up again. One group would work on transferring limestone to the place where the wall was going to be built. Wayne said the wall would be named Jeff's wall after one of the many dedicated FOLK volunteers helping to build the wall. One group trimmed down some overgrown weeds and thorns in some quarry holes in the ground using many tools like a saw and lopper with help from amazing FOLK volunteers Mike and Jenny.

The second group started looking for local cows. We used a QR code which took us to a website called HERITAGE GRAZING to locate some cows on a map with their field outline as a white border and a cow image to show the cow's location. This is also used by the Rangers as an app to help them locate the local cows. Interestingly, Leckhampton Hill was one of the first sites in the Cotswolds that started using online collars to help locate the cows. To reduce unnecessary fencing, the cows stay in allocated areas because of invisible fences programmed into their collars which make a ringing and buzzing sound when they get too close to the boundaries.

After we finished our jobs we all did some maths and worked out that we saved Wayne over £300! We all thanked Wayne, Lucy and the FOLK volunteers then started walking down the hill.

We all had a really fun and amazing day and are very thankful we got this brilliant opportunity!

Written by Constance 8WI and Talia 8WI





HSL Eco News

Leckhampton Hill Trip - Tuesday 22nd November





HSL Eco News

Protecting Our Planet Day - Thursday 10th November

During the day students thought about different ways to protect the planet

Protecting Our Planet Starts with You

Ten simple choices for a healthier planet.



Reduce, reuse, and recycle.

Cut down on what you throw away. Follow the three "R's" to conserve natural resources and landfill space.



Educate.

When you further your own education, you can help others understand the importance and value of our natural resources.

Choose sustainable.



Learn how to make smart seafood choices at www.fishwatch.gov.



Use long-lasting light bulbs.

Energy efficient light bulbs reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Also flip the light switch off when you leave the room!



Bike more. Drive less.



Shop wisely.

Buy less plastic and bring a reusable shopping bag.

Volunteer.

Volunteer for cleanups in your community. You can get involved in protecting your watershed, too.



Conserve water.

The less water you use, the less runoff and wastewater that eventually end up in the ocean.

Plant a tree.

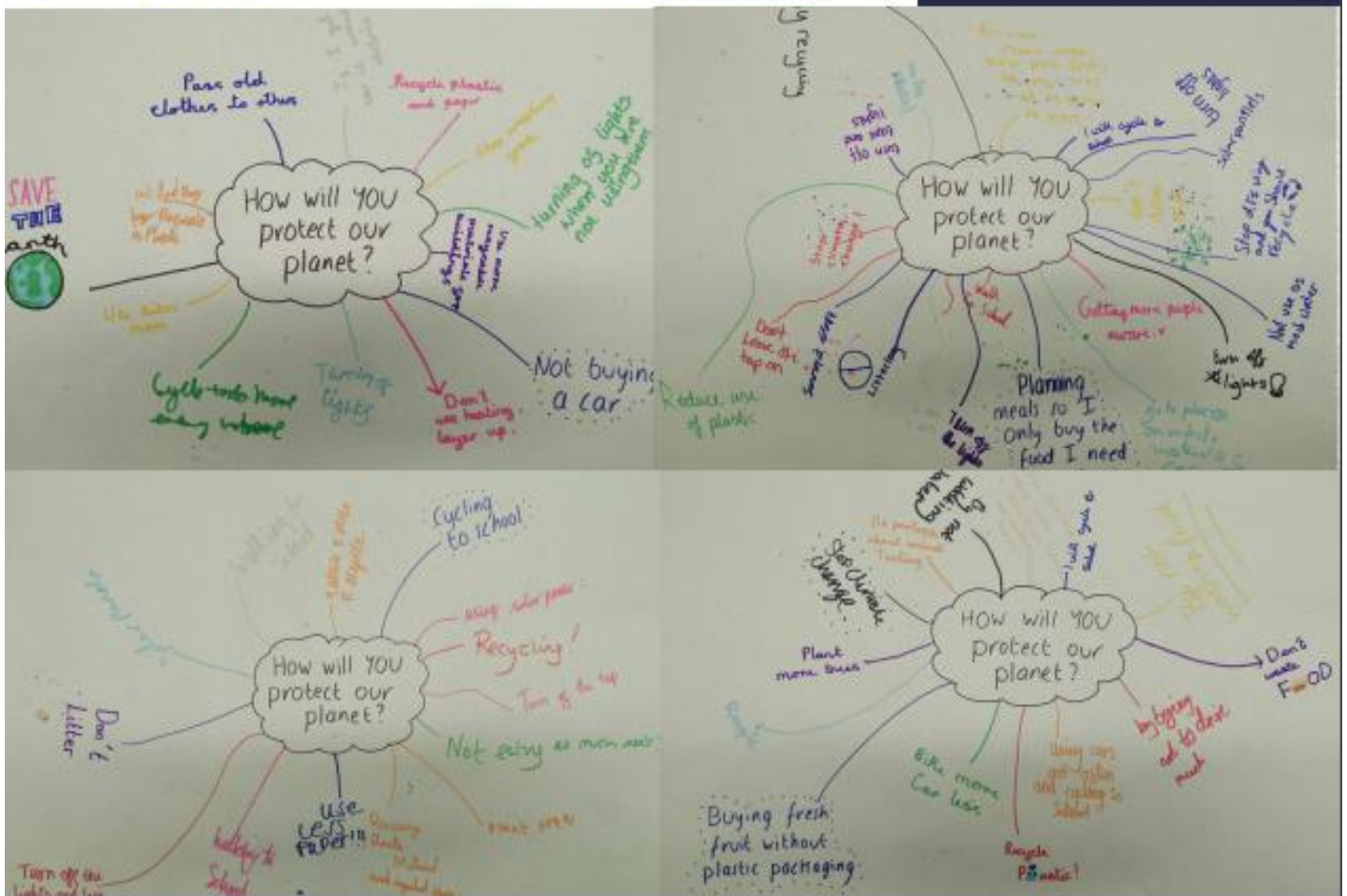


Trees provide food and oxygen. They help save energy, clean the air, and help combat climate change.

Don't send chemicals into our waterways.



Choose non-toxic chemicals in the home and office.





HSL Eco News

Meetings and Webinars

Green Group Meeting - Monday 21st November

This was a voluntary opportunity for staff, governors, students and parents to meet and discuss our school's approach to environmental sustainability, including reducing carbon emissions and developing a climate action plan to achieve our goals.

Please see the agenda on the right for what was discussed this term.

Our next Green Group Meeting will take place on Monday 13th February 2023.

Climate Change Education Research Network (CCERN) Online Webinar - Monday 5th December 3:20 - 4:20pm

HSL is participating in a research project led by the University of Bristol, entitled Secondary Leadership in Climate Education (SLICE). The project is now at the midway stage, and CCERN is hosting an online event to share some of the findings of the project so far. If you would like to watch this event from home, please register for a free ticket [here](#).



Leckhampton

The High School Leckhampton
Green Group Meeting

AGENDA

Monday 21st November 2022
3.45pm – 5pm in the LRC

| | | |
|----|---|-----|
| 1. | Apologies | KBC |
| 2. | Introducing the Eco-Schools Seven Step Overview | KBC |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Eco-Committee 2. Environmental Review 3. Action Plan 4. Curriculum Links 5. Informing and Involving 6. Monitoring and Evaluation 7. Eco-Code | |
| 3. | Environmental Review Topic Results | KBC |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity • Energy • Global Citizenship • Healthy Living • Litter • Marine • School Grounds • Transport • Waste • Water | |
| 4. | Action Plan for 2022-2023 | KBC |
| 5. | AOB | KBC |
| | Date of next meeting: Monday 13 th February 2023 | |



Important Reminders

Second Hand uniform

We would really welcome any second-hand uniform donations, which can be dropped off at reception. The PTFA will be putting a rail of second-hand uniform out for parents to purchase at the Christmas Celebration on 7th December.



Christmas Celebration

Our Christmas Celebration is on Thursday 8th December from 19:00 – 20:00.

Please remember that performers need to be at school by 18:15 and should come straight to the main hall. Audience members will be admitted to the hall from 18:40. We expect the celebration to last approximately 1 hour from 19:00 – 20:00, but it may over run.



We hope that you will join us for some mince pies and mulled wine after the concert, provided by the PTFA and staff at HSL. We would welcome a small donation for the refreshments.

Safeguarding Spotlight

In this edition we would like to shine a spotlight on one aspect of the school's safeguarding work: PREVENT. All schools have a duty to prevent young people being drawn into terrorism or radicalisation.

Prevent is about identifying people who may be at risk of radicalisation and supporting them to change direction in a way that will help them. Prevent covers all forms of terrorism and extremism and some aspects of non-violent extremism.

At HSL we teach aspects of Prevent in our PSHE sessions. We would encourage all our parents and carers to read the following 'Prevent' leaflet from Gloucestershire Children's Safeguarding Partnerships. A link to it is below.

[The Prevent Strategy](#)

