

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to the first newsletter of the academic year. As usual, it contains reminders, updates, and information about events that have taken place at school recently. We hope you find it to be an interesting insight into life at HSL - please remember to check the school website regularly for news items and the school calendar.

It has been fantastic to welcome our pupils back after the summer, alongside over 180 Year 7 pupils. Our new teachers and support staff have also settled in quickly, and the school is buzzing with life. This week has been particularly busy as we have welcomed hundreds of prospective families to the school as part of our Open mornings and Open evenings. Our Year 8 and 9 pupils have done a superb job in guiding round our visitors, and I'd like to thank all our pupils, across all the year groups, who supported the evening by helping in departments. We are very proud of them and it was great to hear them talking with such enthusiasm about their experience of HSL!

As we move into the darker nights of the Autumn term, please can I ask for your support in ensuring all cyclists have lights on their bikes and cycle sensibly on the designated paths, both to and from school. Please remind your child to dismount before coming on to the school site. If you are dropping your child off by car, we would prefer parents to use the designated drop off point at the front of the school. If you have to use the staff carpark, please ensure that you drive slowly and do not obstruct others. Please encourage your child not to walk through the staff carpark, but to stay on footpaths and use the designated pupil entrances. Thank you very much for passing these messages on to your child.

Warm wishes,

Helen Wood
Headteacher





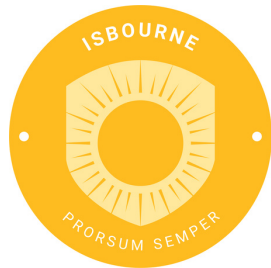
Key Dates - Autumn Term 2024

Thursday 26th September	Open Evening. School closes to pupils at 1.20pm
Friday 27th September	Macmillan Coffee Morning and Bake Sale
Thursday 10th October	Year 7 Parents' Evening with Tutors (in person)
Wednesday 23rd October	Autumn Recital
Friday 25th October	Non-school uniform day - local charity fundraiser





Heads of Houses



This term, we have welcomed Ms Pike, Mr Collins, Ms Nelmes and Mrs Bull as our Heads of Houses. At The High School Leckhampton, the Heads of Houses play a crucial role in supporting your child's journey through school. Each Head of House is dedicated to fostering a sense of belonging and helping students thrive both academically and personally. They are committed to ensuring the well-being, growth, and success of every student, offering guidance, encouragement, and support throughout their school experience. The HSL community is truly fortunate to have such passionate and caring individuals on board, working to create a nurturing environment where every student can reach their full potential. Continue reading to find out a little more about them!





Heads of Houses

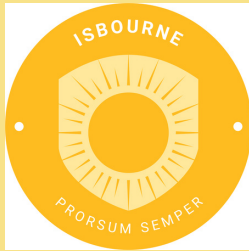
My name is Ms Nelmes, and I am thrilled to be joining the school community as a History teacher and Head of Chelt House. With 25 years of teaching experience within Gloucestershire, I have had the privilege of working across both the curriculum and pastoral aspects of education. Having grown up in this beautiful county and later studying at the University of Swansea, I feel a deep connection to our local area and its schools. Outside of the classroom, I am passionate about the outdoors and wildlife, with a particular fondness for hedgehogs. I cherish spending time with my two beloved dogs and enjoy being around friends and family. I look forward to bringing my enthusiasm for History and my commitment to student well-being into our school environment, and I am excited about the opportunity to work closely with you all. Thank you for welcoming me into the HSL school community.



My name is Mr Collins and I'm really excited to be joining HSL and to be Head of Lilley Brook! I've recently moved down from the Midlands and love this area of the country. I really enjoying spending my time keeping active at gym classes and playing sports specifically Squash. I'm also a big fan of crosswords especially cryptic ones, it gets highly competitive in my household! When I was at school my favourite subjects were PE (obviously!) and Science. Thank you to all existing students for being very welcoming and 'Let's go Lilley Brook!'



Heads of Houses



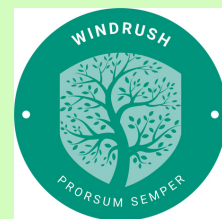
I am Ms Pike and am excited to join such a vibrant and supportive school. Having spent the last 16 years at The King's School, Gloucester, this is the next step in my teaching journey, and I am looking forward to being part of this wonderful community.



Outside of school, I like to stay active and enjoy taking long walks with my four-legged best friend, Bert, and my family. Another passion of mine is cooking—I love trying new recipes and, of course, eating the food I prepare! Thai food is my absolute favourite, and I'm always looking for new dishes to try.

I'm eager to get started, and I can't wait to meet and work with all the fantastic staff and students here!


I am Mrs Bull and a self-confessed Geography fanatic! With many years of teaching experience at Balcarras School, I have been part of HSL's journey since the start, including teaching some of the current Year 10s when they were in Year 7. I am passionate about the world in which we live and ensuring it is still preserved for future generations. I like to spend time outside and enjoy walks with dog and more adventurous activities such as paddleboarding with my family. I am a keen advocate for the Duke of Edinburgh Award having been involved in the scheme for many years. I am looking forward to getting involved in the life of HSL, establishing Windrush House within the pastoral system and can't wait for house events including the much-anticipated Silly Sports Day!



Safeguarding update


Safeguarding is integral to keeping our students safe at The High School Leckhampton. Below is our safeguarding team for this academic year, alongside some key safeguarding information that we hope will be helpful to you and your child.

HSL Safeguarding team




Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Rebecca Vaughan
rkv@hsl.gloucs.sch.uk


Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads: Heads of House



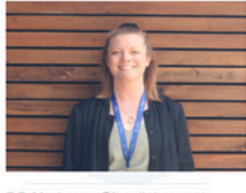
DDSL: Vicky Bull (Windrush)



DDSL: George Collins (Lilley Brook)



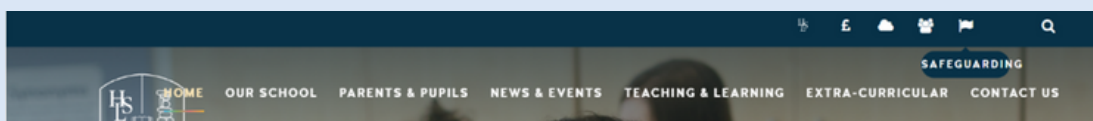
DDSL: Kathrynne Nelmes
(Chelt)



DDSL: Laura Pike (Isbourne)

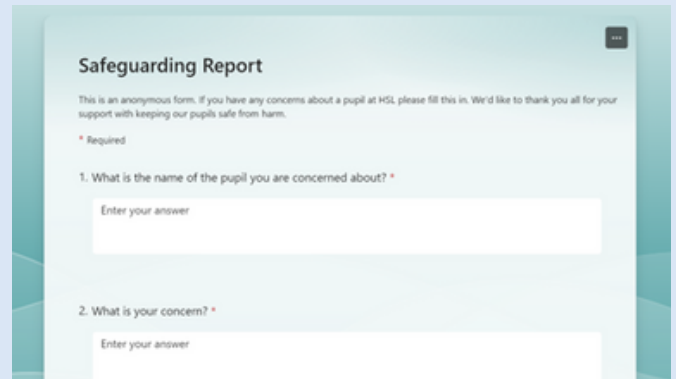
How to report a concern?

- Speak directly to the DSL or DDSL
- Speak to a trusted adult
- Use the Safeguarding Flag on the VLE page to report anonymously



Safeguarding update

Hover over the flag on the front screen, it will come up as 'Safeguarding'. Click on the flag and complete the 'Safeguarding Report'.

A screenshot of a web form titled "Safeguarding Report". The form has a light green header and a white body. Below the title, there is a short introductory paragraph: "This is an anonymous form. If you have any concerns about a pupil at HSL please fill this in. We'd like to thank you all for your support with keeping our pupils safe from harm." Below this, there is a red asterisk and the word "Required". The form contains two numbered questions: "1. What is the name of the pupil you are concerned about? *" and "2. What is your concern? *". Each question is followed by a white text input field with the placeholder text "Enter your answer".

Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility at HSL; all staff have undergone safeguarding training and students are learning about key issues and topics through the PSHE programme that will equip them to recognise ways to keep themselves safe both in school, outside of school, in the wider community and digitally.

In our first PSHE day this year students have looked at some key safeguarding topics in greater depth, with the Year 8 students focusing on the topics of grooming and exploitation through the medium of a theatre company performing the powerful play 'Chelsea's Story'. The Year 9 pupils discussed some key societal issues about discrimination, followed by a talk from PC Candice Palmer about hate crime.

All students will discuss and learn about age-appropriate topics as part of the Personal Development programme.

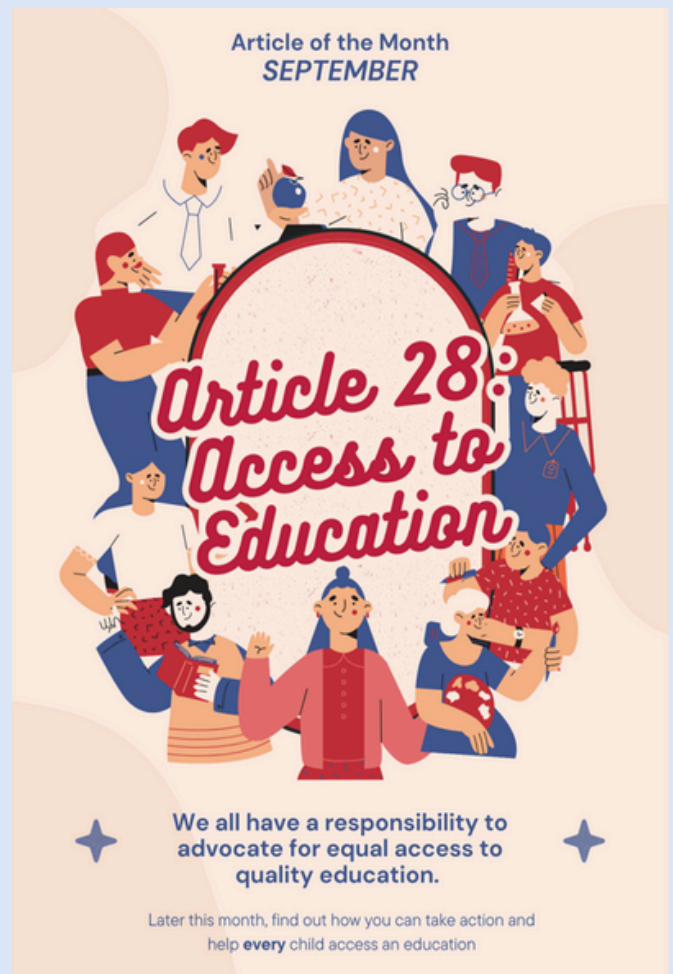
If you would like any advice or support, we have a comprehensive VLE Pastoral Support page <https://www.hsl.gloucs.sch.uk/pastoral-support> which has lots of information and support links for mental health, bereavement, radicalisation, internet safety and many more important topics. Please also get in touch if you would like any further help or guidance.

Rights Respecting Round-up

This month, our article of the month is number 28 - Access to Education. In tutor times, pupils have been considering the aims and importance of education, and how access to education around the world is not equal. With an estimated 264 million children globally not receiving an education this is a significant issue.

This month, the steering group and Mrs Cox have planned the monthly foci and chosen which articles we will focus on as a school this year. Look out for the Article of the Month on our news feed.

It has also been a pleasure to reward some of our most committed steering group members with the title of 'Rights Ambassador'. They will take on additional responsibilities in promoting rights across the school, lead teams of younger students in the steering group and help plan our rights outreach work. There will be more from some of these students in next month's newsletter!



WOW newsletter

September marked the launch of the WOW newsletter. This draws students' attention to the World of Wonders that surrounds us. Everything from looking at fun points about pyramids, facts about flags or philosophical questions. It is also a great opportunity for ePraise! This can be found by students in their tutor rooms but also on the VLE and they are encouraged to contribute their own WOW facts to be included in future editions - just email hih@hsl.gloucs.sch.uk. Next edition coming soon!



World of Wonders



<p><u>Something to ponder:</u></p> <p>Can you dip your finger in the same piece of water twice?</p> 	<p><u>WOW!</u></p> <p>September 21-29 is the celebration of Mabon</p>  <p>Both Wiccans and Pagans use this day to celebrate the autumnal equinox, a day when the amount of sunlight and darkness is the same. This represents both balance and harmony.</p>	<p><u>WOW...!</u></p> <p>The name "September" comes from an old Roman word, "septem," which actually means 7! September was the seventh month of the year on the Roman calendar – It did not become the ninth month until the advent of the Gregorian calendar.</p>  <p>What is the Gregorian calendar? Why, when, how did it originate? Find out and email hih@hsl.gloucs.sch.uk for an epraise.</p>
<p><u>Did you know...</u></p>  <p>On September 22nd it is IronMan Wales in Pembrokeshire. Competitors will swim 2.4-miles, cycle 112 miles and then run 26.22 miles!</p>	<p><u>WOW!!!!</u></p>  <p>Two American astronauts, Barry Wilmore and Sunita Williams) went on a test mission to the International Space Station on 5 June and were expected home 8 days later.... But they might be stuck there until 2025! Find out why and email hih@hsl.gloucs.sch.uk for an epraise.</p>	<p><u>I wonder...</u></p> <p>Whose flag is this... It is the only national flag with a tree on it!</p> 
<p><u>Did you know...</u></p> <p>The first Olympic Games took place in 776BC.</p>  <p>The original Olympics began as part of an Ancient Greek festival, celebrating Zeus, the Greek God of sky and weather. The competition lasted up to six months, and included games like wrestling, boxing, long jump, javelin, discus and chariot racing.</p>	<p><u>Can you see the hidden word?</u></p> 	<p><u>Wow... that is OLD ...</u></p> <p>The universe could be twice as old as current estimates, according to a new study that sheds light on "impossible early galaxies" spotted by the James Webb Telescope.</p>  <p>The universe could be 26.7 billion years old, and not 13.7 as previously estimated!</p>
<p><u>Did you know...</u></p>  <p>Sudan has more pyramids than Egypt. While 138 pyramids have been discovered in Egypt, Sudan boasts around 255.</p>	<p>Each Olympic Games must have a fun yet symbolic mascot to represent the spirit of the host country. Liberty and freedom are at the heart of French identity so Paris chose an anthropomorphized Phrygian cap. This headgear – originally worn by freed Roman slaves – is best known from depictions of <i>Marianne</i>, an allegorical figure symbolizing liberty which is found in every French town hall.</p> 	

HSL awarded the Eco-Schools Green Flag with Distinction!



We are delighted to announce that once again HSL has been awarded the Eco-Schools Green Flag, this time with Distinction!

Our application received the following feedback from our Eco-Schools assessor:

"It is evident that young people in your school are aware of environmental issues and passionate about protecting our planet. Thank you for sharing your meeting minutes with the Eco-Schools' Team. They really helped to provide an insight into your Eco-Schools' work, and the dynamics of your pupil-led Eco-Committee!

You chose to work on topics that mattered to you, and this is a sensible approach that will lead to increased engagement and bigger impacts. This approach places them at the heart of your Eco-Schools work and will lead to increased engagement. We enjoyed reading about your many actions, such as making posters to promote recycling and your tree planting! It is great to see how you incorporated environmental issues into all aspects of your school activities. Your Action Plan contains a diverse range of activities aimed at creating positive behaviours, making an immediate difference to your local environment, and expanding your Eco-Schools' initiatives into your local community.

We enjoyed reading about your range of activities within your curriculum, such as your zipper pouches for recycling – what a fantastic creation with strong links to geography and science! These examples clearly demonstrate that staff members in your school are willing to go above and beyond to include these important issues in pupil's learning! Pass on a thank you to them from the Eco-Schools' Team.

We love your collaborative approach to creating an Eco-Code, this approach has allowed young people to take ownership and create a final code that will be treasured by everyone at your school!

It was also wonderful to read you had supplemented your environmental learning with a trip to Leckhampton Hill in Cheltenham to carry out essential conservation work – this sounded brilliant! It was amazing to see your Eco-Schools work recognised in your local press – this is testament to your achievements!

Thank you so much for submitting such a terrific application. We have loved reading about your journey and are incredibly impressed by all you have achieved. We have no hesitation in awarding you an Eco-Schools Green Flag with Distinction – congratulations!"

Miss Kennedy would like to thank all who contributed to our application, especially Ms Agombar and the Eco-Committee. We look forward to achieving even more this academic year as we start work on our 2025 Green Flag application.

At The High School Leckhampton, we are committed to looking after our environment and building a sustainable future for all.

Please see below for a list of what we do at HSL to protect our environment:

- Walk or cycle to school
- Turn our engines off in our car park and drop-off zone
- Bring our own water bottle to school
- Eat all our lunch
- Eat less meat
- Do not drop litter
- Pick up litter that is not ours
- Do not waste paper
- Recycle the correct items in the correct bins
- Turn off electrical appliances (e.g., lights, computers, monitors) when not needed



The Eco-Committee meets every Monday at 13:30 in GW3 if students would like to get involved.

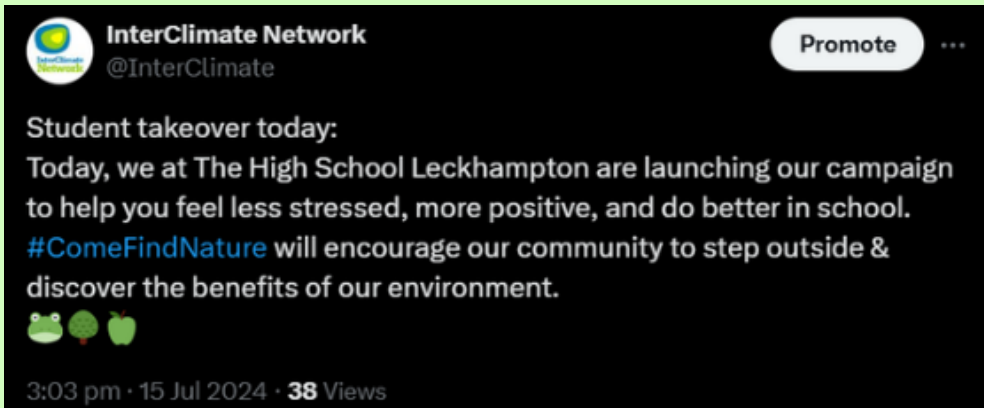
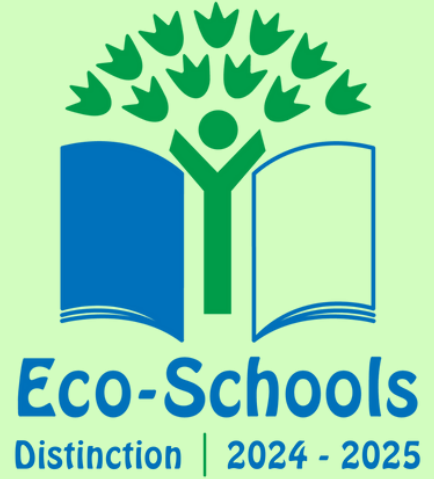
All staff, students, parents and governors are invited to attend Green Group Meetings once a term and discuss our school's approach to environmental sustainability, including reducing carbon emissions and developing a climate action plan to achieve our goals. The next Green Group Meeting will take place on Monday 14th October 2024 in the Library from 15:45 - 16:45.

Eco-Committee Visit to Benefact House

On Monday 15th July last term, some of our Eco-Committee members attended a communications and media training session at Benefact House, hosted by the InterClimate Network. We were joined by some of the Eco Group from Balcarras School.

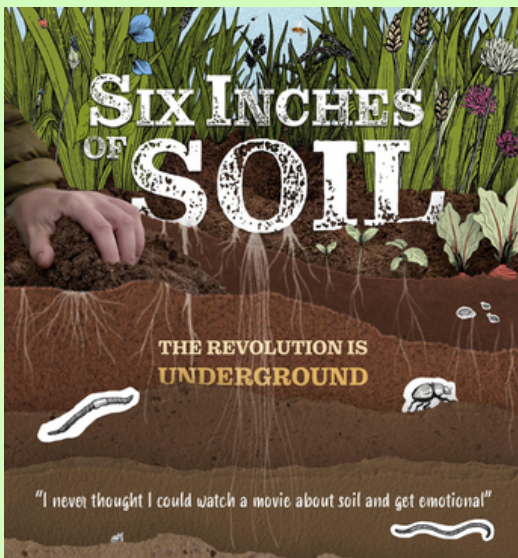
During the session, the Eco-Committee decided on a name and slogan for a campaign they will run at HSL this academic year. They created a short campaign video and social media post to launch their campaign #ComeFindNature

Miss Kennedy would like to thank all those that attended and we hope you look forward to taking part in our #ComeFindNature campaign this academic year.



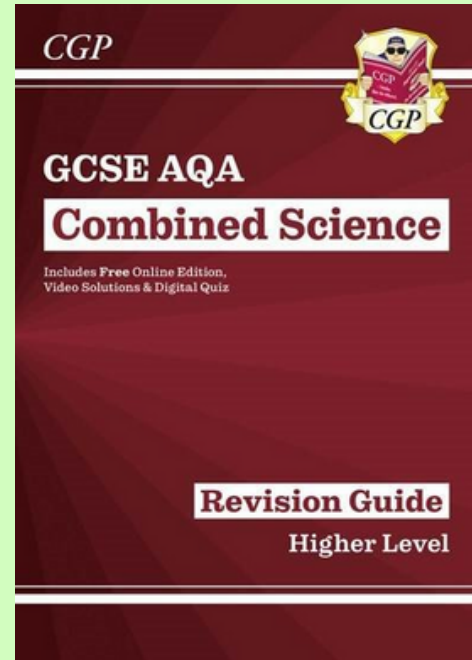
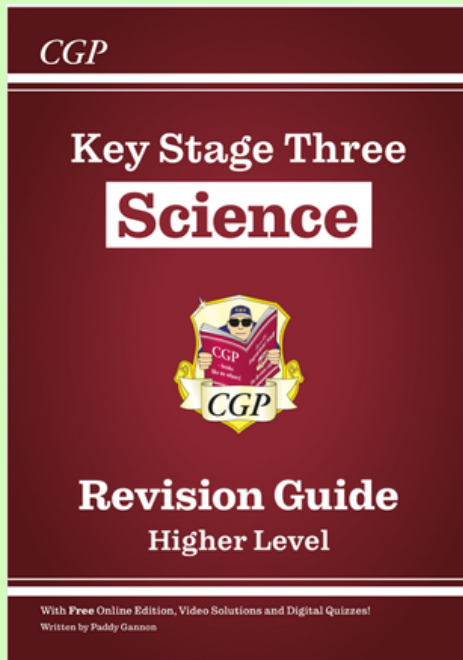
Six Inches of Soil Documentary

At the very end of last term on Thursday 18th July, HSL hosted a viewing of the documentary Six Inches of Soil followed by a Q&A session with soil and climate experts, organised by Cheltenham Borough Council's Green Space Development Team.



Science items

Science Revision Guides



Every Year 7 student will be receiving a numbered red CGP KS3 Science Revision Guide from their Science teacher.

Every Year 10 student will be receiving a numbered red CGP GCSE AQA Combined Science Revision Guide from one of their Science teachers.

Please encourage your child to use their Revision 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 (Firefly) in the Task Description for the homework or assessment.

The school will collect these Revision Guides back at the end of Year 9 and Year 11 to pass on to the new cohort of Year 7 and Year 10 students. Students have been told to keep them safe and avoid writing in them at all.

If you would like to purchase your child's copy of the Revision Guide, you can do so via Scopay. If your child has lost the Revision Guide and needs a replacement, please contact the school to let us know.

Bat Walk—High School Leckhampton

Wednesday 9th October, 6:30pm—8:00pm

Following the previous successful bat walks in March and May, join us again for an informal stroll around the grounds of High School Leckhampton. Armed with bat echo locators we will see how many different species of bats we can locate and identify.

WE ARE NOT EXPERTS, but we will look at the various habitats and hopefully learn a bit about bats (!) – how do bats see in the dark, how they find their food?

As we will be walking around the local fields, please wear warm waterproof clothing and footwear, and bring a torch!



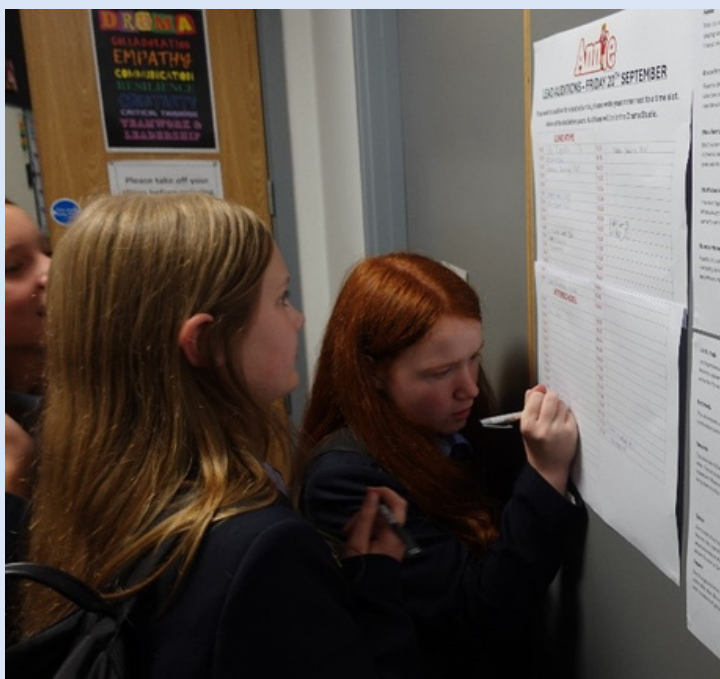
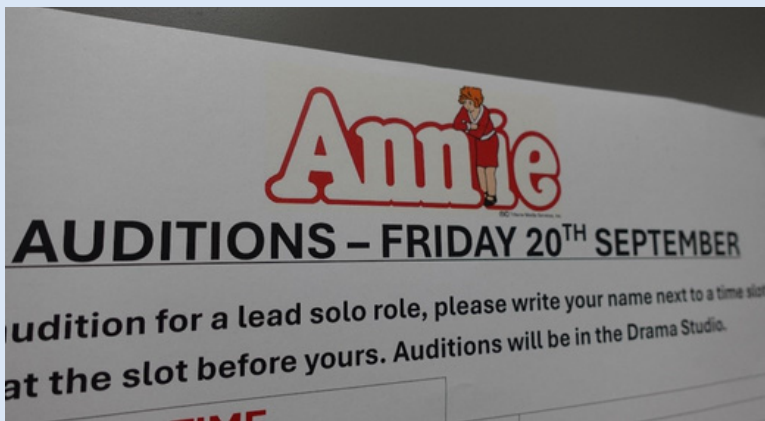
Meet at:
Outside the front entrance
High School Leckhampton
Farm Lane
Leckhampton
Cheltenham
GL51 3FS

For further information please email:
greenspacedevelopment@cheltenham.gov.uk

HSL School Production



We are so excited to announce this year's production is going to be Annie! After months of speculation and rumours, the show was announced to the students in a whole school assembly using a HSL staff trailer which the students absolutely loved. The buzz around the Drama department and wider school has been fantastic as students have eagerly signed up for auditions and used their break and lunchtimes to rehearse. We cannot wait to see what new talent has joined us in Year 7 and we look forward to announcing our cast soon! Break a leg!



GCSE Drama trip



On Thursday 19th September, Miss Winters and Ms Agombar took 24 students from the GCSE Drama class and Year 9 to see Wonderboy at The Bristol Old Vic. The students thoroughly enjoyed the production and the GCSE students engaged in mature and sophisticated conversations on the coach home as they made notes in preparation for a practice live theatre review. It is always a pleasure to take students from HSL to the theatre; they represent the school brilliantly and are a credit to us all. Keep an eye out for more trips that will be available for students to attend throughout the year!

HSL Book of the Month

This month, we are suggesting all Year 9 and 10 pupils read *Where the Heart Should Be* by Sarah Crossan.

Ireland, 1846 Nell is working as a scullery maid in the kitchen of the Big House. Once she loved school and books and dreaming. But there's not much choice of work when the land grows food that rots in the earth. Now she is scrubbing, peeling, washing, sweeping for Sir Philip Wicken, the man who owns her home, her family's land, their crops, everything. His dogs are always well fed, even as famine sets in.

Upstairs in the Big House, where Nell is forbidden to enter, is Johnny Browning, newly arrived from England: the young nephew who will one day inherit it all. And as hunger and disease run rampant all around them, a spark of life and hope catches light when Nell and Johnny find each other.

This is a love story, and the story of a people being torn apart. This is a powerful and unforgettable novel from the phenomenally talented Sarah Crossan.



Careers - Year 10

The PSHE curriculum for Year 10 is currently focusing on careers. As the students embark on their GCSE courses, this is an excellent time for them to be thinking carefully about their next steps, considering their post-16 options and looking at possible career paths.

Work experience is an important part of this process, and this was launched to all students by our careers adviser Mrs Lewis in a special assembly held on Friday 20th September. Further information was provided at the GCSE parent talk the following Tuesday and tutors brought everything together in tutor time, providing the students with a booklet to help guide them through the work experience process.

If you have any questions about work experience, please contact Mrs Lewis via email - JL@hsl.gloucs.sch.uk.

The Balcarras Trust Careers Fair

On Thursday 3rd October Balcarras School will host a careers fair for students in key stages 4 and 5. More than forty employers will be attending, and the fair provides an excellent opportunity for our students and parents to explore careers options in more depth.

HSL students in Year 10 and their parents are welcome to attend the fair, held at Balcarras, between 6pm and 7.30pm. We would encourage as many as possible to attend. Please see the poster below for more details.

The Balcarras Trust
CAREER FAIR
2024

Thursday - 3rd October 2024
5.00pm until 7.30pm
** HSL students are invited to attend between 6.00pm and 7.30pm **

Balcarras School, East End Road, Charlton Kings, Cheltenham, GL53 8QF

Speak to experts from over 30 Universities, Colleges and Apprenticeship Providers
&
Discover your limitless career possibilities and get connected with top employers.

Speaker Sessions

- 5.00pm - Introduction to Higher Education - Sheffield University
- 5.30pm - Making the most of University open days - Cardiff Metropolitan University
- 6.00pm - Royal College of Psychiatrists
- 6.30pm - T-Levels Cirencester College

PE updates

We are excited to announce that Old Pats Rugby Club are hosting additional rugby sessions at HSL on Mondays after school from 3.35-4.45pm throughout the Autumn and Winter term.

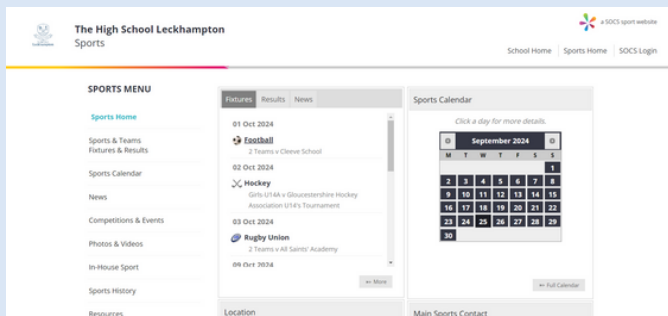


The aim of the sessions are to further enhance the rugby offer at HSL for both boys and girls and to encourage our students who enjoy the sport to look at joining a club outside of school.

The first session was on Monday 23rd September and was attended by over 40 students.

If your child is interested in participating in this club please contact Mr. Powell-Jones.

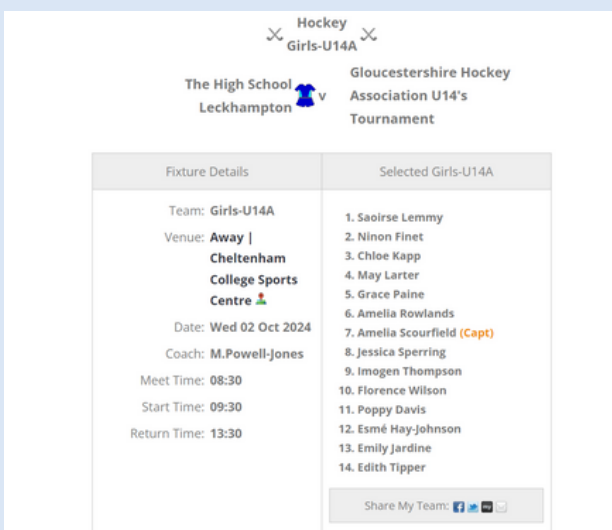
We are pleased to inform you that the PE department is launching a virtual fixtures system on the SOCS platform which will support the fixtures notice board to streamline our fixtures this academic year.



This platform will allow us to post our latest fixtures calendars, post team sheets and record results. It ensures that you are able to see this information along with kick-off times and return schedules. Access to the HSL page is through this link:

<https://sport.hsl.gloucs.sch.uk>

and will also be available as a link on the PE VLE page.



The PE department will continue to post paper copies on the fixture boards outside the PE office and we encourage students to continue with this form of communication in school.

We hope you will find it a useful tool in supporting your child to navigate arrangements around fixtures.

PE updates

Xcountry

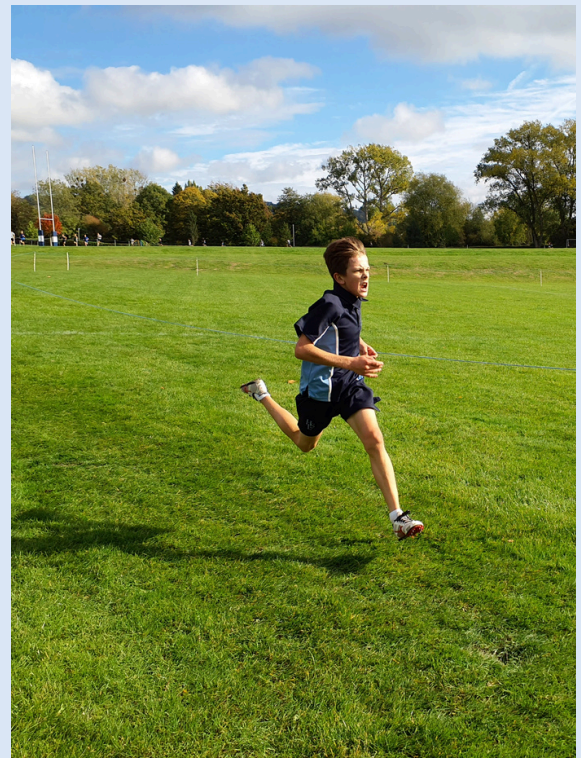
Excitement has been building for our legendary HSL House X Country which is due to take place on 4th October.

To prepare, all year groups participated in a practice run during their PE lessons, taking the course and making their way through burrows field. It was wonderful to see our students start with such enthusiasm, and a special congratulations to those who found it more challenging.

Your resilience and perseverance truly stood out. Local walkers also noticed the superb and courteous behaviour of our pupils, with many commenting on their politeness and commitment to the run. To everyone, Remember to take each step as it comes and push to the end!

Extra-curricular clubs

The PE department at HSL has been buzzing with activity as extra-curricular clubs are in full swing. Thank you to everyone who has been attending and showing such dedication to staying active beyond the classroom. For those not yet signed up, there's still plenty of space, so don't hesitate to join in! If you have any questions, feel free to ask any member of the PE department.



Sporting Excellence



Over the summer, some of our HSL pupils achieved great success in Athletics.

Henry Longden and Zac Litman were both part of the relay team who qualified for the National Relay Championships in Birmingham. Henry was part of the the U15 4x 300m relay and ran a fantastic leg which meant the team came 4th overall and are now 4th in UK. They also beat the Cheltenham & County Harriers Club record by an impressive 7 seconds.

At the YDL National Championships in Manchester Cheltenham & County Harriers were the smallest team there competing against some huge clubs from around the UK.

Firstly, Lachie Hart competed in the U15 800m and he ran a stunning race to finish first and claimed himself a fantastic gold medal. What a superb achievement!

Following in his footsteps was Zac Litman running in the U15 300m who also ran a speedy race and finished an amazing 5th. Zac's race was very hotly contested and he ran brilliantly.

In the field events, Ocean Makiri competed in the U15 boys shot put. Ocean threw some really impressive distances and came an amazing 2nd gaining an awesome silver medal - super throwing!

Henry Longden competed in the U15 Hammer, he is only in Year 8 so competing against boys in Year 9, he did brilliantly to get some amazing throws in and came an impressive 5th place. He will get to hopefully compete again next year!

Finally there was the U15 relay in which both Henry and Zac competed in the 4 x 300m with two other club mates, they ran two superb legs of the relay helping to bring the team home to an impressive 4th place.

All four boys have worked so hard over the summer to achieve these amazing results, it is very exciting to see what they will all achieve next summer.

Congratulations to Henry, Zac, Ocean and Lachie!



The High School
Leckhampton

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