

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we approach the end of another fast-paced half term, I am delighted to introduce the May 2025 edition of our school newsletter. It is filled with highlights from a busy and exciting few weeks at The High School Leckhampton.

This month's issue showcases the incredible achievements and spirited participation of our students across a wide range of activities. A particular mention must go to all those who took part in Silly Sports Day – an morning full of fun, laughter, and house spirit. From egg and spoon relays to the famously competitive tug of war, our pupils embraced the day with energy, good humour, and a fantastic sense of community spirit. In addition to this, you'll find updates on the recent PSHE day, the Cheltenham Performing Arts Festival success of Theo Allen in Year 7, and exciting announcements about our 2026 school production: We Will Rock You! Auditions and involvement opportunities are open to all students.

Please do take time to explore the upcoming key dates for June, including the Year 7 Science Festival Trip, the Performing Arts Showcase, and House Tennis Week. We hope these events continue to inspire and engage our students as we head toward the final stretch of the academic year. Thank you for your continued support in encouraging your children to participate in all areas of school life.

I hope you all enjoy a lovely half term break.

Warm regards,

Helen Wood
Headteacher





Key Dates - Spring Term 2025

Tuesday 3rd June

Year 7 trip to Science Festival

Wednesday 11th June

Performing Arts Showcase

Thursday 19th June

Year 10 Parents' Evening - in person

Monday 23rd June

House Tennis - all week





Safeguarding update

Following the PSHE day this term please find some information that will hopefully allow for some discussions with your child about how they can continue to keep themselves safe and make good choices over the half term.

Top tips to support young people online this half term

- Talk to your child about what they are playing/watching/sharing
- Encourage them to use their devices in open spaces and not to be secretive or in their rooms alone on devices for too long
 - Be a good digital role model
- Discuss the difficult content – what are their views and opinions? where are they getting their information from?

Where to go if you have concerns about your child online

- Speak to your child's tutor or Head of House for support and guidance
- Use the NSPCC support page for online safety <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/online-reporting/>

Year 7's learnt about what Grooming and Exploitation is, and how to keep themselves safe online

Year 8's learnt about the Impact of Smoking and Vaping

Year 9's learnt about Discrimination and Racism

Year 10's learnt about Drugs and the Law and the impact of taking drugs





HSL production 2026

The secret's out!

Our school production next year is going to be We Will Rock You! All of our students gathered on Tuesday afternoon for the big reveal and it's safe to say, it went down a treat! With a fantastic trailer created by Mr Bunting & Miss Winters, featuring so many of our staff (and a special guest appearance too!) the students thoroughly enjoyed hearing about what is to come.

Even though the show is being launched now, we will welcome our new year 7s into the production family in September should they wish to join the show – everyone is welcome!

The auditions for lead solo roles will begin after half term with Year 7 on Wednesday 4th, Year 8 on Wednesday 11th and Year 9 and 10 on Wednesday 18th of June.

Information about auditions will be on the VLE under Music and students should express their interest by signing up in the Drama studio corridor. This includes backstage, dancers, gymnasts and ensemble cast. We hope you are looking forward to joining us in February 2026 where I'm sure 'we will rock YOU'!





Subject Spotlight - Music

Music at HSL continues to thrive, and this past term is a testament to that! We've hosted a number of events while also working on some exciting projects in the classroom.

All year groups spent the latter half of the spring term focusing on music from around the world, making use of our World Showcase. This is an interactive Google Earth file that allows students to listen to different styles of music from various countries. It is now also being contributed to by other subjects, enabling students to make cross-curricular links between the music of a country and its art, religion, food, or history. Each year in KS3, our students revisit this topic to deepen their understanding and build on prior knowledge.

After Easter, we began new modules. One of these sees Year 7 working on Music for Movies. Students have spent the first part of the module learning about diegesis and leitmotif in film music. This will lead to them creating their own piece of film music using Mixcraft for a scene from a movie.

Year 8 are currently exploring Music for Musicals, a topic designed to help students understand the typical conventions of musicals. After studying some fundamental types of musical songs—from opening numbers, overtures, and entr'actes to eleven o'clock numbers and exit music—we move on to lyric analysis, focusing especially on the musical Hamilton and what we can learn about the lead character in the show's opening number. This also gives us an opportunity to explore a bit of American history!

Year 9 have begun working on cover songs, creating their own versions of existing tracks. This project makes extensive use of the VLE, where students can access tutorials recorded by Mr Bunting to help them learn the pieces.

Year 10 continue to develop their composition skills, and each student has now created three pieces of music since September in preparation for their GCSE coursework. We are currently wrapping up the Film Music area of study and will soon move on to the final topic: Music for Ensemble.





Subject Spotlight - Music

Extra-curricular music continues to offer students a wealth of exciting opportunities, including:

Voices (our singing group)

Music theory

Jazz

Wind group

String group

Orchestra

Senior Choir (a chance for both students and teachers to sing together!)

Jazz Combo (a smaller group for more advanced jazz musicians)

Next year, we're excited to launch a few additional clubs, including a drumline and a keyboard club.

Our performance opportunities have also been superb over the past month, including:

A GCSE recital shortly before the Easter break

Our Summer Recital on 14th May

A performance at the Cheltenham Jazz Festival

We're also looking forward to performing at the Summer BBQ on 11th July.

As always, lessons with our specialist instrumental and vocal teachers are available. We encourage as many students as possible to take music lessons—the academic, social, and mental health benefits are well documented, and it's fun!

For more information about starting lessons, please contact Mr Bunting at mpb@hsl.gloucs.sch.uk





Pupil achievement

We're delighted to share that Theo Allen (7WI2) has been awarded First Place in the Years 7–11 Creative Writing category at this year's Cheltenham Literature Festival.

Theo's powerful short story, *Concussion*, impressed the judges with its vivid language, emotional depth, and sharp narrative control.

Written from a first-person perspective, the piece explores the confusion and isolation of suffering a head injury during a football match. The adjudicator praised Theo's "cleverly focused" writing, highlighting the balance between tense action and reflective introspection, as well as the "convincing air of spontaneity" that runs through the story.

Theo was thrilled to win and is pictured proudly holding his trophy.

We are incredibly proud of his success and look forward to seeing where his writing takes him next.

Well done, Theo!

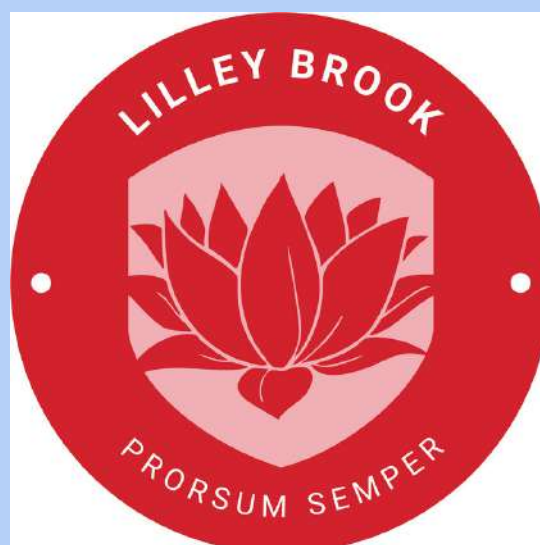




Silly Sports Day

On Friday 16th May, all of our pupils took part in Silly Sports Day. We had amazing participation and some great leadership skills on show throughout the day. The tug of war is always a keenly contested event with plenty of effort and determination on show. The egg and spoon race, the sack race and the blindfold race all required great levels of concentration. It was great to see everyone enjoying themselves and the weather was fantastic for us. We hope you enjoy looking through the photos. Bring on next year!

Silly Sports Day winners 2025:





Silly Sports Day





Silly Sports Day





Silly Sports Day





Silly Sports Day





PE update

High School Leckhampton (HSL) produced a spirited and successful performance at the 2025 District Swimming Championships. With a strong showing from the Year 7 and Year 8 swimmers in particular, the team demonstrated exceptional potential and determination.

In the Year 7 relays, HSL secured 1st place in both the 4x25m Medley (1:14.74) and Freestyle Relay (1:05.01) events, each earning 5 valuable points. These victories were key to HSL's overall position and highlighted the strength of their younger squad.

Individually, Edward N (Y8) was outstanding. He won the 50m Backstroke with a time of 34.26 seconds, and followed up with another 1st place in the 50m Breaststroke (42.80). He also swam 30.75 in the Frontcrawl, placing a respectable 4th overall.

Fraser W (Y9) had a particularly busy and successful day, scoring highly in all his races. He earned:
2nd place in the 50m Backstroke (33.45),
4th in 50m Breaststroke (38.87),
2nd in 50m Butterfly (34.38), and
1st in 50m Frontcrawl with an impressive 29.50.

In Year 7, Onur D took 2nd place in the 25m Backstroke, while Seth L claimed 2nd place in the 25m Butterfly (16.75). Theo A and Morgan W both placed top 5 in the 25m Breaststroke, adding vital points.

Our Girls Year 7 4x25m Medley Relay, HSL team swam a fast 1:15.39 to secure second place, just behind Balcarras. This early performance earned HSL four points and set the tone for the rest of the meet.

In individual races, Year 8 swimmer Sophia K impressed in both backstroke and breaststroke. She took second place in the 50m Backstroke (37.50) and followed that with a victory in the 50m Breaststroke, finishing first in 44.57. Teammate Olivia T also swam well in the same breaststroke event, earning joint fifth place with a time of 49.32.

For Year 9, Poppy D had a busy afternoon across all of the events, finishing 2nd in both the frontcrawl and the butterfly, both by mere hundredths of a second.

In the Year 7 25m Backstroke, Elena P was a standout performer, winning the event in 16.94 – a time that was just over half a second off the championship record. Teammate Isla K also swam well in her heat with a strong 18.94.

In the 25m Breaststroke for Year 7, Duyga D came second overall with a time of 19.87, narrowly missing out on first place. Poppy C and Lilly HL also added depth to the HSL team with strong efforts in this event.
Well done HSL!



Science updates

UK Biology Challenge 2025

On Friday 2nd May, Year 9 students took part in the annual UK Biology Challenge along with 42,000 other 13–15 year old students nationwide. They were challenged to complete two 25-minute papers containing GCSE and A-Level Biology content that they needed to read about and then use to answer the questions.

Congratulations to all students who participated the Biology Challenge this year, and especially to the students listed below who received awards for their results:

Awarded Bronze for the highest overall result in Year 9:
Jimmy Stow

Awarded Highly Commended:

Nate Long
Eric Shannon
Humphrey Burlison
Maisie Brown
Saoirse Lemmy
Finlay Murphy
James Tomlinson
Freddie Hyde
Ben Gleeson
Matilda Siddons
Edith Tipper
Maisie Williams

Awarded Commended:

Joseph Bolton
Dex Wildsmith
Milly Whittle
Gabiella Bramworth
Chloe Kapp
Jessica Sperring
Daragh Whelan
Grace Paine
Alex Piper
Ella Lake
Charlotte Deacon





Science updates



CEP ChangeMakers at the Wilson Gallery: Wednesday 25th June 2025

This year, four Year 10 students (Elijah Callaghan, Constance Grant, Henry Taylor and Justin Collier) and three Year 9 students (Jacob Freer, Molly Hannaford-George and Charlotte Deacon) have been taking part in the Cheltenham Education Partnership's (CEP) ChangeMakers program. Together they have attended 5 workshops across this academic year which has supported them in planning, carrying out, and evaluating their own environmental project in school linked to Air Quality and Active Travel.

Our ChangeMakers are being given the opportunity to present the results of their Air Quality project to members of the public at the Wilson Gallery (51 Clarence St, Cheltenham GL50 3JT) between 6pm and 7:30pm on Wednesday 25th June. It is a fantastic opportunity for our students to take part in and they would like to invite everyone in our school community to come and see what they have been working on this year.



Science updates

InterClimate Network Climate Action Survey Results

We are pleased to be able to share the results from the InterClimate Network (ICN) Climate Action Survey that students were invited to complete during the Eco-Schools Environment Enrichment Day on Tuesday 8th April.

ICN, who processed our survey results and created our report, said it was the highest response rate they've ever had to their survey! The report clearly shows lots of engagement from HSL students and higher than other schools surveyed is that HSL students know what our school is doing to become more sustainable and feel there is a clear way to get involved in school action.

Key findings

At The High School Leckhampton, **554 students—96% of everyone on roll (577)**—completed InterClimate Network's online Climate Action Survey, sharing insights about their climate action. This is a fantastic response! The key findings here and overleaf provide a comprehensive snapshot of how students engage with climate issues and can positively inform and influence climate action planning in the school.

Students support climate action



2 in 3 students expressed concern regarding climate change.



7 in 10 students are engaging in climate action, focusing mainly on **energy use, travel, and waste**.



1 in 3 would like to get more involved in school climate action.



Actions students are most willing to start:

- Reduce energy use
- Reduce use, reuse and recycle
- Help protect and improve nature

Leadership and fairness matter



Students have varying views, priorities, and opportunities to participate in climate action.



Almost 2 in 3 thought that government should take stronger action on climate change. There was a clear strand calling for **greater awareness and structural reforms**, including laws and incentives.



There was widespread belief that **collective action** is necessary, with a strong emphasis on the role of corporations and the wealthiest in society as well as government's responsibility.

Climate actions are not consistent



Most action is happening at home, but this is not always translating into broader efforts in school or the community:

64% report reducing energy use at home, dropping to **33%** at school.



Some actions have low take-up:

3 in 4 had not taken steps to make their diets more environmentally friendly or help protect and improve nature.

9 in 10 had not participated in campaigning.



Over 1 in 5 believed that the **threat faced by climate change is exaggerated** and the impact won't be as bad as people say.



Science updates

Students want greater opportunities to act



Barriers to individual climate action were most frequently said to be:

- **Lack of time**
- **Uncertainty** about how to take action
- **Not caring strongly enough** to want to do it.



Over 2 in 3 indicated that the following **behaviour change techniques** would help motivate them to act:

- **Incentives** to encourage action (rewards/competitions)
- **Change the environment** to make actions easier and more fun
- **Linking climate action** to other campaigns.

Students want their voices heard



Many respondents believed **their age group should have a greater say in climate action**, as they will be the most affected generation by decisions being made now.



1 in 2 students said **they don't feel included in school decision making**.



A supportive community is essential



Inspiration and empowerment to act came from **seeing those around them actively engaged and showing that change is possible**.



School was the most trusted source of climate information. Student action was most inspired by:

1. School
2. Family
3. Friends



Family behaviour plays a significant role in influencing youth action:

- **Almost 9 in 10** young people who are taking action had families already making positive changes, whilst
- **4 in 10** young people not taking action said their families were engaged.

Students' view of school action

It is positive that **8 in 10 students** are aware of what their school is doing to become more sustainable. **Over 1 in 3 (38%)** of students would like to get more involved in action in school.

Students were asked about how their school tackles climate change and their responses are summarised below and shown fully in Appendix 4 (p. 23). Going forward, **including students in decision making and allowing students to spend more time with nature** would serve as good places to focus.



How do students see climate action in school?



Summarising what students said about how school tackles climate change. See Appendix 3 for student comments.

| | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Positive engagement | Eco-club and teachers are supportive, informative and enthusiastic. "The eco committee is really successful, not much they could do better." |
| Practical action | Strong infrastructure (e.g. solar panels), actions such as meat-free days, litter picking alongside awareness raising days are praised. "Great, they do litter picks every Friday." |
| Areas to improve | There was frequent discussion about increasing opportunities for outdoor learning. Additionally, suggestions for waste reduction and improved recycling systems—particularly in the canteen—were recurring themes. Many also emphasised the need for more hands-on action and wider engagement beyond just the eco committee. "I think we do lots but we need to spend more time in nature and use the nature garden/ going outside and look at climate change from outside." |





Science updates

Appendix 2: Open comments - influences for climate action

Respondents were given the opportunity to respond to **who had a big difference to their views on climate change**. Here is a selection of their comments.



"Mr Power-Jones in Geography because it shows how sustainable our school is and how sustainable we can be."

"Miss Kennedy exposes how bad climate change is and the impacts of it and so does my Mother, making us go litter picking and recycling."

"My family because they try to help the environment and it inspires me to as well."

"My school has spoken about climate change and made me more informed about climate change."

"Greta Thunberg since I have read about her in books that she has protested about climate change and I found that really inspiring."

"My teachers' relentless advocacy for the fight back against climate change."

"School has been my main positive influence over my views on climate change, by providing me with reliable information that I trust, and presenting it in an informative way, inspiring and encouraging me to get involved and take action."

"David Attenborough."

"My friends have made me inspired to eat less meat and on social media I got inspired to litter pick around my street."

"My school has helped me notice what problems climate change can cause if we refuse to do something."

"The News shows the reality."

"Personally, my school has made a big difference because of enrichment days and other educational opportunities related to climate change."

"Mainly just charities who work to help save those impacted by climate change."

"TikTok, its not reliable but does address issues in ways people want to see."

"My school has influenced me the most to be sustainable and eco-friendly to help stop climate change and put the world right again."

"Climate change charities because they inspire loads of people to get involved including me."

"My parents, they were the people that got me walking and biking to places when I was young and I'm glad that they did."

"I think that most teachers when it comes to any lesson about climate change, show great detail in what it is, why it is happening and how to tackle it."

"The news and television because it showed me what climate change is."



LRC Update

The mini-librarians and DofE bronze and silver students have been busy in the LRC reorganising our fiction books by genre. When finished, students will be able to browse the shelves looking for genres that interest and inspire them. It has been a useful activity to identify the type of books we already have and to understand where we have gaps. We are looking for more poetry books, and all donations are greatly welcomed!

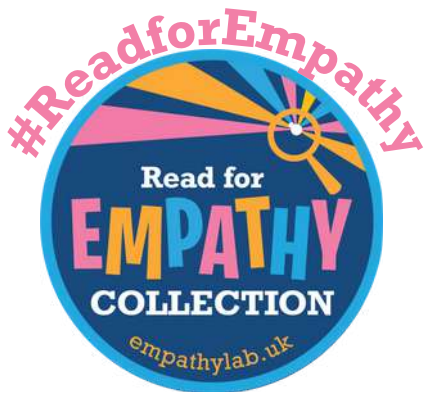
Our inspiring reading canons are organised by subject area. Please encourage your young people to take a look at the books their teachers have recommended!

We'd be grateful if parents and students can have a look under beds, behind sofas and on shelves for any books belonging to HSL library (they have stamps or paper inserts.) Please return any library books to the LRC for 3 epraise points for each lost book returned. Thank you!

"Look out for our "Read for Empathy 2025 collection" coming in June. Chosen by the Empathy Lab, these books hope to inspire children to learn about empathy, put it into action and develop key empathy skills. We will be hosting some 'pop-up' library events in June. Do come along!

The LRC Team

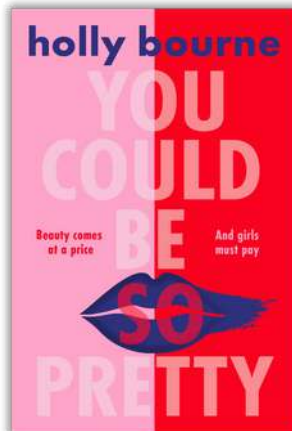




Read for

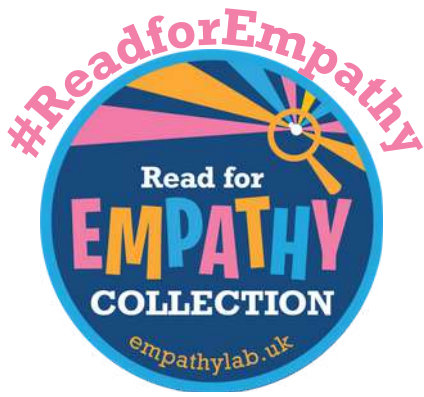
EMPATHY 2025

collection



12-16 Novels

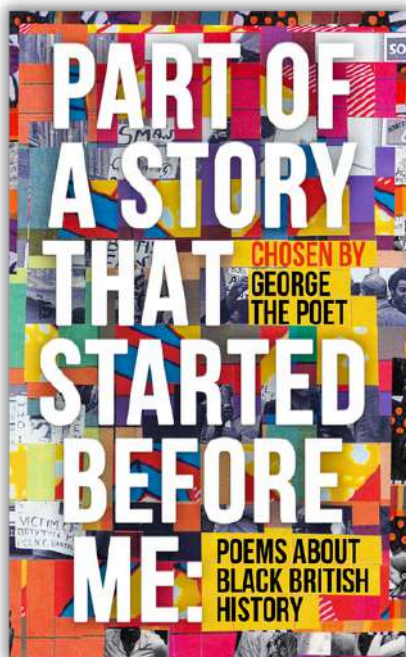
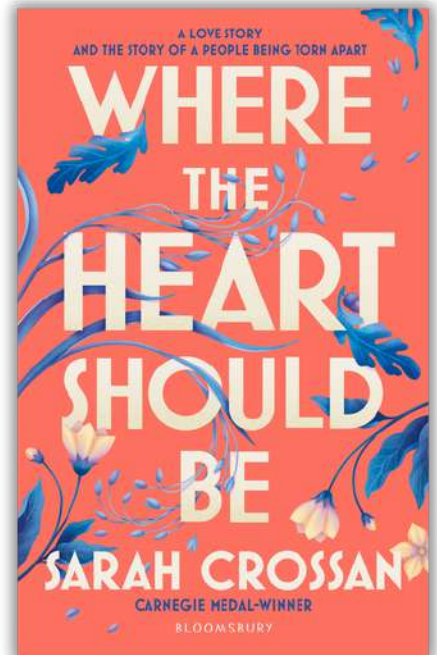
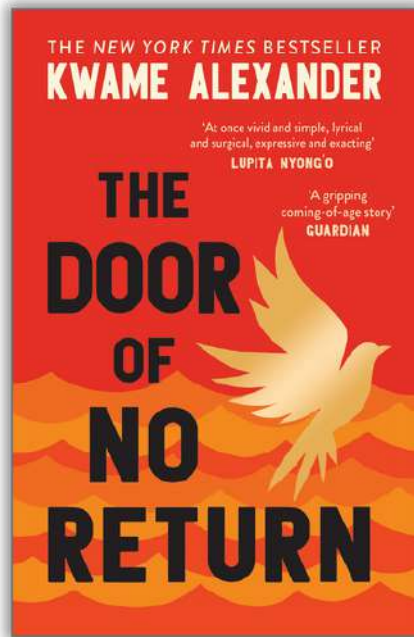
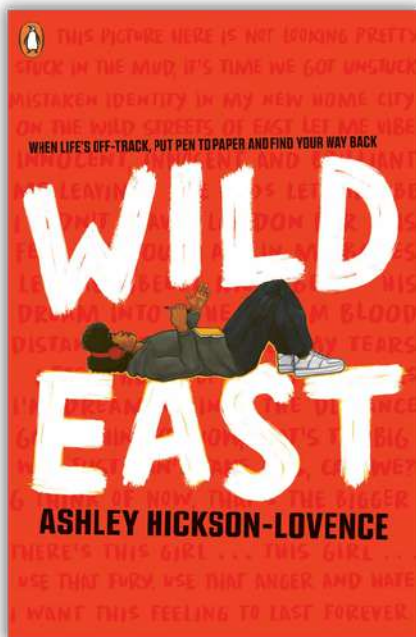




Read for

EMPATHY 2025

collection



12-16 Poetry





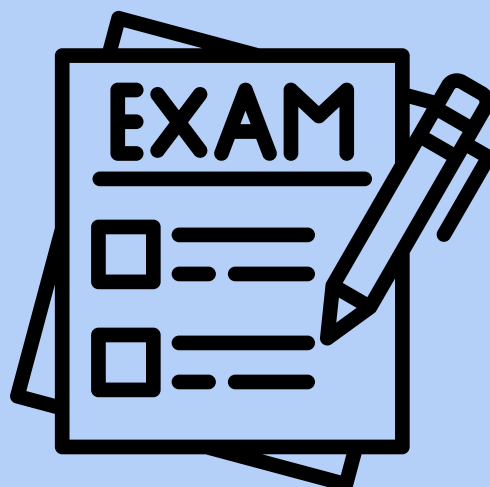
Exam Invigilators Wanted

From September, The High School Leckhampton will have students in all year groups and will be running a full programme of internal mock exams and external public examinations. We are currently looking to expand our team of exam invigilators to support the smooth and fair running of these assessments.

This is a casual role and ideal for anyone looking to earn some extra income during term time. Full training will be provided.

If you, or someone you know, may be interested in joining our invigilation team please contact us at exams@hsl.gloucs.sch.uk with a brief CV.

Thank you to those who have already been in touch.



PTFA News

The High School Leckhampton Parents Teachers & Friends Association



DIARY DATES



Tuesday 24th June 6-8pm: Preloved Uniform Shop

Come and view a range of preloved uniform on the sports hall balcony, open 6-8pm, run by our fantastic PTFA volunteers.

Friday 11th July: THSL Summer Fair & BBQ, 6-8.30pm

Join us for an evening of delicious food (BBQ, pizza, ice cream), live music, student-run stalls, a tuck shop and plenty more!
Keep an eye out – full details coming soon!



Quiz & Chip Night Raises a Record £2,367!

We were thrilled to welcome 120 enthusiastic quizzers on 9th May for a fantastic evening of fun and friendly competition! After a nail-biting finish, The Quizzly Bears clinched first place by just *one* point!

A huge thank you to everyone who came along and helped make the night such a success. Special shoutout to our brilliant quizmasters, Rich and Jon 'Moose', for keeping us entertained, and to our incredible volunteers - we couldn't hold these events without you!

Every penny raised will go towards essential equipment and materials for the children. ***Your support makes a real difference!***



Winning team: The Quizzly Bears



We're looking for friendly faces to join the PTFA!

Whether you can spare an hour at an event or help behind the scenes, every bit of help makes a big difference. It's a great way to support our school, meet others and have fun!

Scan the QR code to join our team! 



Volunteers
needed



FGR Community Soccer Camps

FGR Community Soccer Camps are back this May half-term

Taking place at The New Lawn Stadium on 27th, 28th, 29th, and 30th May, our camps provide a fantastic chance for girls and boys of all abilities aged 5-13 to enjoy football in a fun, inclusive environment.

Children will have the opportunity to stay active, learn new skills, make new friends, and develop their football knowledge – all under the guidance of our qualified and experienced coaches.

We're also pleased to announce that Tuesday 27th May will be a Girls Only Day, offering a supportive space for girls to build confidence, enjoy the game, and play alongside their peers.

Parents can use the code Earlybird to receive a discount if they book within the next week - <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/fgr-community-soccer-camps-ages-5-13-nailsworth-may-tickets-1354848501339?aff=oddtcreator>



Community

FIND OUT MORE

FGR COMMUNITY

✉ Community@FGR.co.uk

🌐 www.fgr.co.uk/fgr-community

FGR community is wholly owned subsidiary of the Green Britain Foundation charity registration number: 1148783

Need a cheap healthy recipe to make this weekend?

At Beezee Families, we work with hundreds of families who want to eat healthier, but struggle with time AND finding something everyone will eat. Sounds familiar?

Check out our healthy pizza below for a taste of our recipe selection!



Ingredients:

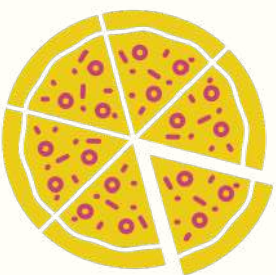
1x8 inch tortilla wrap (or you can use pitta bread)

Tomato passata

30g grated light mozzarella or cheddar

Toppings of your choice, such as:

- Peppers
- Mushrooms
- Sweetcorn
- Pineapple
- Ham
- Spinach
- Tomatoes



Method

- Place tortilla/pitta bread on a plate and spread tomato passata over it
- Add your chosen toppings
- Sprinkle with the grated cheese
- Microwave on high until the cheese is just melted (45 seconds), or place in a pre-heated oven at 200/gas mark 6 for 5-10 minutes
- Leave to cool for a few minutes and then enjoy!

Want more help with recipes?

We run FREE healthy lifestyle programmes to help families like yours make healthy habits, and have fun while doing so. Secure your spot today

Our courses are for families with children aged 4+ and above their ideal weight.

Scan the code

...or click here to find out more

Sign up today!



glo.maximusuk.co.uk

Beezee

FAMILIES



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