



26 March 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

I would like to begin this week's email with more expressions of thanks. Thank you to all our students who have adjusted to new demands around testing and face masks with incredible positivity and understanding. Thank you to our testing team who have carried out their work with such professionalism, thus providing reassurance to the school community about the safe full reopening of the school. Thank you to all parents and carers for your continued support of the school during this period and for your great skill in helping our young people adjust to the latest challenges to the way their education and lives have been affected.

I would like to remind parents of the following school expectations:

- Mobile phones should be off and in your child's bag from the moment they arrive on the school site until they are dismissed at the end of Lesson C. They cannot be used during social time. If a child urgently needs to contact home, or vice versa, this can be done via Reception and/or Student Services. We appreciate that students may need a mobile phone for safety and communication requirements when travelling to and from school which is why we have the above expectation in place. We strongly believe that they should be socialising with their friends, without the distractions of social media. This is particularly important as many of them have been isolated from their friends over the past few months - school is an opportunity to strengthen relationships face-to-face.
- Our uniform expectations are very clear and [full details can be found on our website](#). Hoodies are not acceptable either as a coat or a jumper and will be confiscated if worn on the school site. Students should be wearing/bringing their Backwell School jumper to school with them for warmth and they can wear either a Backwell PE hooded top (if they already own one) or a Backwell PE mid-layer top on days on which they have PE. All branded school items are purchased online through [Price and Buckland](#), and have a quick delivery time. We understand that the closure of non-essential shops has made it difficult to purchase certain new items of uniform. Hopefully these will be able to reopen, as planned, in the second week of the Easter holidays to allow families to ensure all children have suitable uniform for the new term.

We will be reminding students of these expectations over the next few days and would appreciate you reiterating these message at home. Those not meeting these expectations will be challenged as per our behaviour policy.

Exam Grading for GCSE, AS, A Level and Vocational Subjects

At yesterday's parents' evening, parents and carers of Year 11 students heard from subject teachers about the content and nature of the assessments that will be taken in Term 5. Year 13 parents will have similar conversations next Wednesday. At the end of next week we will publish a written summary of the plans for the Term 5 assessments, including a timetable and information about 'exam access arrangements' and special consideration.

COVID-19 Home Testing for Students from Sunday 28 March

All students have now been given their home testing kits as outlined in our [letter last week](#). Students are encouraged to test at home twice a week, ideally on a Sunday and Wednesday evening, including over the Easter holiday. All results (Positive, Negative or Void) need to be reported to both the School and NHS Track and Trace. This must be done via the [Parents' Portal](#), where there is also a handy link to the NHS reporting page.

Full guidance and instructions on how to report the results can be found on [our website](#).

If, for any reason, your child did not receive their three test kits this week, they can always collect them from the Student Services office at break or lunchtime next week.

Thursday 1 April – Last day of term

A reminder that next Thursday is now a teaching day rather than an INSET day as originally planned. It is the last day of term and I can confirm that it will be a non-uniform day to raise money for the Backwell School Association. Students are asked to donate a minimum of £1.00 to take part. As always, we would ask that no inappropriate clothing or hair dye is worn.

Mr J Nunes
Headteacher

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OTHER MESSAGES ...

Year 13 Parents' Evening: Wednesday 31 March

Just a reminder that Year 13 Parents' Evening bookings opened on Wednesday this week. If you haven't yet done so, appointments can be made by [clicking here](#) to open the booking system. You will find full details how to book and attend your appointments online in the [Year 13 Parents' Evening Letter](#).

Covid Winter Grant Scheme extended to cover Easter

North Somerset Council have contacted schools this week with further details of the Covid Winter Grant Scheme, which comes from the Department for Work and Pensions. We are pleased to advise that the scheme is being extended for the Easter Break. Before the Easter holiday we will be issuing families of students eligible for free school meals with a one-off voucher for £30 per student.

Please note, this £30 voucher will be issued to eligible families via Wonde vouchers.

Should you have any questions about this scheme, please get in contact with Student Services via studentservices@backwellschool.net

Group Music Theory Lessons

I am writing to let you know of an opportunity for group music theory lessons being offered by Mrs Hansford, one of our peripatetic Music teachers. The lessons will be held at school.

The Grade 5 theory examination is a requirement to be able to take the ABRSM Grade 6 practical examination, but in addition to this is a useful tool to help with the complexities of GCSE Music and A level Music.

Theory lessons will be offered in a group of three students for 30 minutes each week for 30 weeks of the academic year. The cost of these weekly lessons will be £7.00.

If you are interested in a place, then please contact Mrs Hansford by email directly on tchansford@outlook.com. Requests made before the end of May will result in a place for September, but there may be a waiting list for requests made after this time.

If you would like to discuss this matter further, then once again, please email Mrs Hansford on the above email address.

*Mrs V Cooper
Head of Music*

Lost Property

We have accumulated a large amount of lost property, particularly coats, PE kits and football boots, which was left behind before the last lockdown. We would urge students to check the lost property racks outside the Student Services Office to claim their belongings please. We will be sorting through and disposing of items (ethically) after the Easter break.

Red Nose Day

We are delighted to report that the non-school uniform day in aid of Comic Relief raised a magnificent £2,100! Thank you so much to parents for their generous donations!

Careers Bulletin

Please find below a link to the Careers Bulletin on our school website. This bulletin includes a section on online and virtual careers resources, including the school's online careers platform, Unifrog.

[Current Careers Events and Opportunities \(26 March 2021\)](#)

If you have any queries regarding future plans Mrs Ball can be contacted on her school email cball@backwellschool.net.

Upcoming Events

Sunday 28 March	Start of Covid-19 testing at home
Wednesday 31 March	Year 13 Parents' Evening
Thursday 1 April	Last day of Term 4 and non-school uniform day
Monday 19 April	Start of Term 5
25 and 26 May	Year 9 Meningitis (MenACWY) and Diphtheria/Typhoid and Polio (DPT) vaccinations

LETTERS HOME ...

[Sixth Form Bulletin for week commencing 29 March 2021](#)- Parents/Carers of Sixth Form students