



1 December 2023

Dear Parents/Carers

Link Ethiopia

Since 2005, Backwell School has been partnered with Angereb Secondary School in Gondar, Ethiopia. This link is facilitated by a registered charity called **Together We Learn** which is based in the UK and Ethiopia. Our students have had the chance to learn about the fascinating culture of Ethiopia and we recently welcomed Elsa Kebede, the country director of 'Together We Learn' in Ethiopia for a visit and she hosted a traditional coffee ceremony.

I am writing to let you know about the student sponsorship programme run by 'Together We Learn'. This programme supports students from low-income families who are at risk of dropping out of education by providing their parents or guardians with money to help with costs like rent, food, and other necessities. This removes the pressure for children to work to support their families and instead encourages children to go to school and to keep learning. In addition to direct financial aid, each student receives a package of school materials at the beginning of the academic year to help with their schoolwork as many children otherwise wouldn't even have a pen or exercise book to study with. Students and their families also have access to medical care to support the family's overall health and further training opportunities to help students thrive in their schooling. All of this support is provided through your sponsorship which costs £19 per month and on the condition that the sponsored student remains in education. As a sponsor, you and your family will receive annual updates on your sponsored student to learn about their progress, life in Ethiopia and how your sponsorship is supporting them and their families as well as the opportunity to write to your student.

This recent blog also has recent information about the impact of sponsorship:

<https://twlethiopia.org/blog/2023/10/27/student-sponsorship-in-2022/>

If you are interested, please see the [attached letter](#), and If you would like to find out more about becoming a sponsor, please visit the website - www.twlethiopia.org/our-projects/student-sponsorship/ or contact Elle Harris, Sponsorship Coordinator at 'Together We Learn' - sponsorship@twlethiopia.org - who would be more than happy to provide more information and answer any questions you may have.

Upcoming Events

In House Assemblies this week, pupils in Years 9-11 have been treated to a sneak preview of this year's sixth form production, 'Alice in Wonderland'. Not only does it look like it will be a fabulous show, totally created by the students, but also all profits will go to [1625 Independent](#)

[People](#) a charity which helps young people who are at risk of, or are already homeless or leaving care.

Tickets are available now at <https://yourboxoffice.co.uk/backwell-school/1000-sixth-form-production-of-alice-in-wonderland>

While you are planning your calendars, a reminder to keep the date of Tuesday 19 December free to attend the Backwell Winter Concert, which promises to be the usual eclectic, festive highlight of the end of term!

I would like to wish good luck to all our Year 13 students, who are undertaking their trial exams next week.

Yours sincerely

Mr J Nunes
Headteacher

MESSAGES

Year 13 Trial Exams Week from Monday 4 to Thursday 7 December

All Year 13 students have Home Study from Monday to Thursday next week, so there will not be any tutor time or assembly on those days, and they are only required to be in school for their exams. They are welcome to study in school rather than at home around their exams if they prefer. However, if they choose to study in school, they must sign in and out using the Year 13 sign in book.

Transport

Network rail have made us aware of planned strikes on Thursday 7 December, which will affect rail travel. It is the responsibility of North Somerset Council to provide alternative safe transport for Backwell students whose home-to-school travel is currently via train. North Somerset Council will email parents of students who have council-issued home-to-school transport train passes to detail the contingency arrangements for the upcoming rail strikes.

If your child uses the train to get to school, funded by yourself, then they will need to make alternative arrangements to get to school on this strike day. Those who use public buses may also find the vehicles busier than usual. More details on the planned strike action can be found on [the GWR website](#)

Winter Concert - Tuesday 19 December 7.00 pm to 9.30 pm

The Music department's Winter Concert will take place on Tuesday 19 December at 7.00 pm in the main theatre. The evening will be a showcase for our choirs and instrumental ensembles and will feature performances from students from Years 7 to 13. Refreshments will be sold by the Backwell School Association during the interval. It'll be a lovely way to start your Christmas!

Tickets, priced at £5 for adults and £3 for concessions are available to buy from Your Box Office: <https://yourboxoffice.co.uk/backwell-school/1018-backwell-school-winter-concert>

If you have any queries about the event, please do contact Steve Clarke (Leader of Performing Arts) by emailing sclarke@backwellschool.net

West Side Story

The cast and crew are hard at work, rehearsing for the upcoming school production of West Side Story (Tuesday 6 - Friday 9th February 2024). Currently, we are fundraising to purchase a new set of radio microphones, to support this show and future events. We will be holding a raffle during show week, culminating in a draw after the last performance.

We already have some great prizes, however, we would like to have more, and appeal to the kindness of parents and carers, to ask if you would be willing to donate a raffle prize to support the project.

Do you work for, or own a business that could support this? In exchange, we can promote your company in our show programme and in our weekly school bulletin, when we announce prize winners.

We anticipate reaching an audience of more than 1200 people.

Please email emerry@backwellschool.net if you can help.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Coding Club

Codingbug are pleased to say that due to the success of the new in-person '[Coding with Python](#)' club they plan to continue it in Term 3. At the club, the students learn principles of computer programming using Python and professional tools. The club is suitable for both beginners and more advanced coders. It takes place on Wednesday after school from 5.00 – 6.00 pm at the Hangstones Pavillion in Yatton. If your child is interested in joining, all the details about the club can be found on the Codingbug website at: <https://codingbug.co.uk/coding-with-python-club/>

Careers Bulletin

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

[Current careers events and opportunities – 1 December 2023](#)

Please visit our dedicated Careers website to read all about our Careers programme, including information on work experience, careers guidance, mock interviews and post-16 and post-18 study options. Careers website: <https://lspcareers.org.uk/backwell-school-2/>

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

UPCOMING EVENTS

4 – 7 December	Year 13 Trial Exams
Monday 4 December	Year 10 and 11 House Matches (Rugby/Netball) (<i>moved from 6 December</i>)
Thursday 7 December	Year 11 GCSE P&R trip to sacred places, Bristol Year 7 House Match (Football/Netball) Year 9 House Match (Rugby/Netball)
Friday 8 December	Year 8 House Match (Rugby/Netball) (<i>moved from 5 December</i>) Year 11 trial exam results issued.
Thursday 14 December	Year 12 Parents' Evening , 4.00 – 6.45 pm online
Tuesday 19 December	A Level Certificate Presentation , 5.30 pm in 6th Form Theatre Winter Concert , 7.00 pm in the main theatre
Wednesday 20 December	Last day of Term 2 and non-school uniform day in aid of the foodbank
Thursday 4 January	First Day of Term 3
10 – 12 January	Sixth Form Production of 'Alice in Wonderland' Tickets on sale here .
Thursday 11 January	Year 9 Parents' Evening
Monday 15 January	Year 12 Drama/Performing Arts trip to see 'Metamorphosis' in the Bristol Old Vic
Monday 22 January	GCSE and A Level Art Textiles trip to the V&A Museum

Thursday 25 January	Year 9 Options Evening
Wednesday 31 January	A Level Sports Science trip , to University of South Wales. Year 11 Parents' Information Evening, 6.00 pm

For further trips and events, please see the ['Calendar' page](#) on the school website.

Quick link to [Parents' Handbook 2023-24](#).

LETTERS HOME

[Sixth Form Bulletin for week commencing 4 December](#) - Parents/Carers of Sixth Form students

[Year 12 Parents' Evening: Thursday 14 December](#) – Parents/Carers of Year 12 students

[Year 11 GCSE Art Textiles Day and Exam](#) – Parents/Carers of Year 11 GCSE Art Textiles students

[Year 11 GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition Revision](#) – Parents/Carers of Year 11 GCSE Food Prep and Nutrition students

[Ex Year 11 GCSE Exam Certificate Collection Arrangements](#) – Parents/Carers of last years' Year 11 students

['Together We Learn', Ethiopia – Sponsorship Opportunity](#) – All parents/carers