



Backwell School Weekly Bulletin

Friday 26 September 2025

Dear Parents, Carers, Families, Friends of Backwell School and ‘Hola’ to our friends from Colegio Vera-Cruz in Northern Spain!

Today marks the European Day of Languages, a celebration of the value of learning new languages and the cultural richness they bring to our lives. It feels especially fitting that we are joined this week by our friends from Colegio Vera-Cruz, who are staying within our school community. It has been wonderful to see our Year 11 students engaging with them both in lessons and socially, building friendships and creating lasting memories. Exchanges like this provide our students with unique opportunities and experiences that will stay with them for life. It was also wonderful to have so many European-style baked goods, including bread, cakes and biscuits in our ‘European Bake-Off’ event at lunchtime, today. We are deeply grateful to our dedicated Languages team for organising this programme, and to you—our parents—for your continued support in making it possible.

It seems that not a weekend goes by in these early weeks of the school year without our students heading off on a Duke of Edinburgh expedition! Last weekend, our Bronze Award students took to the Mendips, putting their map reading, teamwork, and camping skills to the test. One of the highlights of my week was receiving an email from a member of the public who had met one of the groups during their walk. They wrote: “I spent some time chatting with the group, they showed me their route, where they were next going, then when they saw the next group approaching the trig point, they clapped and encouraged their friends. It was an absolute joy to see confident children, interested in what they were doing and engaging in conversation. They were an absolute credit to themselves, their parents and their school.”

It is always heartening to hear such feedback. At a time when young people are often unfairly portrayed as consumed by screens and social media, experiences like the Duke of Edinburgh Award help our pupils build skills, confidence, and resilience that will serve them far beyond their time at Backwell. This email also captures what makes our school so

special: our friendly, talented, and hardworking students who, as the message so beautifully put it, are a real credit to you—their parents and carers.

As some of you may be aware at the start of this school year, we have placed a strong focus on “getting the basics right.” This has included a drive on punctuality—both arriving at school on time and moving promptly between lessons—alongside ensuring our uniform is worn smartly, students are well-equipped, and everyone strives to be the very best version of themselves each day. I would like to thank you for your support with this. I have been so impressed by the positive attitude to learning our students have shown during the first four weeks of term. The real challenge, of course, comes as the mornings grow darker and the days get colder—but I am confident our students will continue to rise to it as we push towards half term!

Thank you as always for your continued support and remember that it is by working together that ‘we are Backwell’.

Con los más cálidos saludos,



Will Penny
Headteacher



*Backwell MFL staff
celebrating a selection
of European festivals for
European Day of
languages*

Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Assessed Expedition

Last weekend 10 groups of bronze students completed their assessed expeditions. We had a further 10 groups complete theirs back in May. A total of 124 students have successfully fulfilled the requirements of the expedition section of the award this year which is incredible! Many of these students have now completed the full award and others are close. The Duke of Edinburgh Award is not just about the expedition. Our students have also had to complete a skill, physical and volunteering section and we have been so impressed with the variety of activities that they have been undertaking, and the commitment that they have shown. Well done!



Year 7 and Year 8 Tutor Parents' Evening – Thursday 02 October

Bookings are now open for the Tutor Parents/Carers Evening for students in Years 7 and 8 on Thursday. Please refer to the letter sent on 17 September for detailed information about how to book a time slot with your student's tutor. The letters can also be found by clicking the following links:

[Year 7 Tutor Parent's Evening](#)

[Year 8 Tutor Parent's Evening](#)

Year 10 Work Experience

Year 10 work experience takes place during enrichment week 22nd to 26th June 2026.

Competition for work experience placements has already started, so it is never too early to start asking around.

We will be launching WEX to students in an assembly on 15th October, but they can get an 'agreement in principle' before then.

After the assembly, students will know how to add all the details for their work experience placement on Unifrog so that all the paperwork and communication is in one place.

Placements must be UK based, and work experience is compulsory for all Year 10 students. (there will be no normal school lessons during this week)

Any queries around WEX should go to wex@backwellschool.net

Upcoming Author Visit

Best-selling author and screen writer **Elle McNicoll** will be visiting Backwell school on **Friday 10th October** to talk about her new novel **Role Model** with Year 7 students. Elle is best known for her award-winning book and TV series *A Kind of Spark*, and she's a brilliant advocate for better representation of neurodiversity in publishing. If you would like to pre-order a copy of *Role Model* from Storysmith bookshop ahead of the event you can do so using the link below, and Elle will be able to sign it on the day of the event. Please place your order by **Friday 3rd October**, and please include the pupil's name and class when you check out.

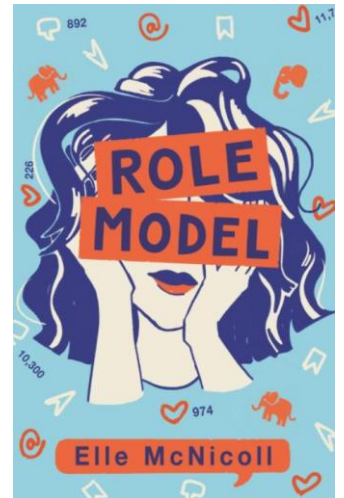


storysmithbooks.com/elle-mcnicoll-backwell

Book of the Week

Role Model by Elle McNicoll

Aerial Sharpe isn't anyone's role model. But, when her mother is elected to be the most important politician in the country (yes, that one), she is thrust into the spotlight. The narrative around her quickly spins out of control, as she's used as the face of neurodiversity against her will. How will she handle the eyes on her, and keep her sense of self? It's not easy being 13, let alone when you're the most famous teenager in the country!



Rail Safety Programme sponsored by Network Rail Western Route

Teaching our children about safety on the railways is of paramount importance. Please take 15 minutes with you child/children to watch the Rail Safety programme via the link below. This has been sent to us from Network Rail Western Route.

<https://learnliveuk.com/nwrwestern-rail-safe-friendly-secondary/>

Tempest Photography – Ordering school photographs

(families of students in Years 7, 10, 12 and new starters)

Have you ordered your school photos yet?

A polite reminder that the closing date for **free delivery** back to school is **Thursday 2nd October 2025**.

Order through the Tempest website using your unique link or visit www.tempest-orders.co.uk

If you need any assistance in ordering your photos, feel free to contact Tempest on 01736 751555 (option 3).

Quick Links

- [School Uniform and Equipment Guidance](#)
- [Financial Support](#)
- [Year 13 Key Dates](#)
- [Careers Bulletin - 26 September 2025](#)

Letters Home This Week

- [Sixth Form Bulletin](#)
- [Year 11 A Christmas Carol Theatre Trip - Mon 15 December 2025](#)
- [Backwell School Sixth Form Ski Trip 2026 - Those taking part in the 2026 ski trip](#)
- [Year 11 GCSE Geography Fieldtrip to Bristol's Temple Quarter](#)
- [Geography Exam Revision Support Materials 2025/2026](#)
- [Year 7 - Sparx Maths](#)
- [Years 8.9.10 and 11 - Sparx Maths](#)

Dates for your Diary

Monday 29 September	School Production of Oliver – Rehearsals in DTH 15:15
Tuesday 30 September	Sixth Form Production of Footloose – Rehearsals in DTH 15:15
Wednesday 01 October	School Production of Oliver – Rehearsals in DTH 15:15
Thursday 02 October	Sixth Form Production of Footloose – Rehearsals in DTH 15:15 Year 7 & 8 Tutor Parents': Evening 16:00-18:00



Backwell School MFL staff enjoying a chance to dress up for European Day of Languages

ADVANCED CODING CLUB

An opportunity for students in Year 8-11 to learn coding and tackle fun problems. A Level Computer Science students will coordinate and guide the group. The club will have a relaxed atmosphere, but the pace of learning will be rapid!

You will need to commit to attending regularly as the content covered will build up.

Bring a packed lunch.

When: Wednesday Lunchtimes

Where: GIT 12:50-13:20

Who: Y8-11

Sign up at Student Services

**Starts
1 Oct**



Events, Clubs and Course in our Community

This is a **free** event designed to help parent carers connect with local services and find out what support is available to you and your family – no diagnosis necessary. To book your tickets visit <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-family-support-fayre-tickets-1436299322939?aff=oddtcreator>

NORTH SOMERSET PCSWT
PARENT CARERS WORKING TOGETHER

The Family Support Fayre

Wednesday 12th November 9am - 5pm Winter Gardens, Royal Parade, WSM, BS23 1AJ

For families of children aged **0-25** with additional needs and/or disabilities

Chat with over **70** professionals from across North Somerset

Take part in **6** training topics!

Connect with local leaders - Ask what matters to you!

Book tickets here!

EDUCATION
HEALTH
SUPPORT SERVICES
MENTAL HEALTH
MEDICAL NEEDS
LEARNING DISABILITY

ACCESS TO THE RIGHT SUPPORT

No diagnosis necessary!

WE HAVE SUPER POWERS!

A LIGHT IN THE DARK

f **fb** **X** **in** @NSPCWT

FREE event for parent carers and professionals in North Somerset!

Events, Clubs and Course in our Community

YATTON U14'S RUGBY

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JOIN THE TEAM

**Open to all abilities.
Whether you're new to the
game or already play, there's
a place for you.**

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**Training on Wednesdays
Matches on Sundays**

**Contact Richie for more info:
richieg244@gmail.com**

NO LIMITS | JUST POTENTIAL



Events, Clubs and Course in our Community


Dear Parents/Carers,

✦ Save the date: Friday 7th November 2025 ✦

We're excited to let you know that HAF will be running Christmas/Winter holiday activities this year. The activity days will take place on:

- Monday 22nd December
- Tuesday 23rd December
- Monday 29th December
- Tuesday 30th December

Children and young people who receive benefits-related free school meals are entitled to free HAF activity days. If you believe your child may be eligible, you can apply here: [Free school meals application](#).

 Bookings open Friday 7th November 2025 — don't forget to pop this date in your diary!

You'll be able to book activities online via: [Eequ](#) · After school. In place of school. Beyond school.

We look forward to seeing lots of children join in the festive fun!

Kind regards

The HAF Team

