



Backwell School Weekly Bulletin

Friday 03 October 2025

Dear Parents, Carers, Families and Friends of Backwell School,

As we wrap up another positive, busy, and exciting week at Backwell, there is once again so much to celebrate. From more incredible Duke of Edinburgh success of our Year 11 Silver students in the Brecon Beacons last weekend, to the creativity on display in our school poetry competition, the feeding and caring of new born lambs by Year 13, the energy of rehearsals for *Oliver!* and the Sixth Form production of *Footloose*, and the sports victories achieved—our students continue to shine in every corner of school life. Over 1,200 lessons have been inspiringly delivered this week, but it's also the moments when our students excel quietly, away from the spotlight, that truly stand out. Our term 1 poetry competition winner, Florence in Year 7, writes:

*"There's sixth form bustle, a future yet to know,
And youthful energy, in a constant, vibrant
flow"*

These lines beautifully capture the spirit of Backwell—vibrant, dynamic, and full of promise—and remind us of all what a truly unique school community we are. Florence the words in your incredible poem titled “My First Month at Backwell School” are both poignant and inspirational. You can enjoy this wonderful piece of writing later in the newsletter.

Richie McCaw, the legendary New Zealand rugby captain, once said, “*It's all very well for people to do the right thing for the team when everyone is watching, but what matters is whether every single one of you will do the right thing when no one is watching.*” This, to me, perfectly captures what culture is all about: the behaviours, values, and attitudes that guide a team—or in our case, our school community—even when no one is checking.

I was particularly proud this week to receive a phone call from a bus driver for First Group, whose regular route starts at 8:06am in Long Ashton. He took the time to tell me how our students are “*an absolute credit to the school and themselves.*” Having driven this route for many years, he commented that their behaviour is unlike any other students he transports: *consistently polite, respectful, and a pleasure to be around.* These are the moments that

truly make me proud of our school community and highlight the positive impact of our students' values—supported every day by you, our parents and carers.

We are also delighted to share that Backwell has been awarded the Silver Level Award from the Rail Safe Friendly organisation, in recognition of our ongoing efforts to educate students on all aspects of rail safety. With many of our students using the rail network daily, safety remains a top priority for us. Equally important is the safety of our school community while cycling, especially during the darker winter months. We urge parents and carers to ensure that students wear a helmet, a bright jacket, and have lights on their bicycles as the days shorten. I also ask that you please read the letter from our PCSO, Kate Turner, regarding parking: children should not be dropped off in The Crescent opposite the main school entrance, as this creates disruption and poses a danger to local residents. Your support in keeping our students and community safe is greatly appreciated.

Finally, a huge thank you to The Backwell School Parent Association, who do so much to raise funds that directly enhance the school experience for our students. They support a wide range of events, from school shows and music concerts to quiz nights, by running refreshments, coordinating second-hand uniform sales, and much more. The BSA are always looking for new volunteers—if you would like to get involved, please see the poster later in the newsletter for details on how to sign up!

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

With warmest regards,



Will Penny
Headteacher



National Poetry Day Competition Winner

All Year 7 students were given the brief to write a poem titled 'My first month at Backwell School' for our National Poetry Day Competition.

We received some truly inspiring entries. Florence was selected as our winner. We are confident you will agree that this is an incredible piece of prose for such a young writer.

Congratulations Florence!



My First Month at Backwell School

Upon arriving at Backwell, a new chapter's start,
The blue of jumpers, a fresh canvas for the heart.
The grounds stretch out, a vast and verdant stage,
Upon which nervous first-month memories engage.

The school's known well, a weighty reputation held,
With each new lesson, and every challenge spelled.
From math equations to scientific laws,
A different cadence, a different learning cause.

The hallways fill with strangers' busy feet,
Then friendly faces, with smiles you've come to meet.
The names and lessons, a buzzing, whirring stream,
A tapestry of learning, like a waking dream.

There's sixth form bustle, a future yet to know,
And youthful energy, in a constant, vibrant flow.
You find your footing, a new and steady pace,
Within this grand, and unfamiliar, place.

The initial awkwardness begins to fade,
As friendships form, a bond that's freshly made.
With each new day, a little more at ease,
The month of firsts, a memory you seize.

With blue-blazed shoulders, a first month takes its flight,
At Backwell School, a stage of unfamiliar light.
The morning nerves, a knot inside the chest,
Then finding solace in the school's persistent quest.

The bell's loud ring, a summons to the day,
The busy hallways where the strangers play.
From classroom tables to the field's wide green,
A fresh and daunting, ever-changing scene.

The rules and rhythms, a new and steady beat,
The friendly faces that you start to meet.
Each lesson learned, a small and steady gain,
As hesitant steps conquer worry and the rain.

The reputation known, the grades they strive to meet,
A pressure point, but also a sweet feat.
There's sixth form banter in the hallways heard,
A future glimpsed in every whispered word.

The initial awkwardness, a memory to seize,
As Backwell's spirit starts to put you at your ease.
The path is new, the lessons just begun,
A first month conquered, beneath the autumn sun.

By Florence F-L (Year 7)

Cancellation – Author Visit Elle McNicoll

Unfortunately, we have been contacted by Story Smith to say that due to unforeseen circumstances, Elle McNicoll is unable to visit the school next Friday, 10 October. Elle sends her apologies to all students and families. Story Smith will arrange for refunds to be sent to anyone who purchased a pre-order book to be signed.

We hope to arrange an alternative author visit in the near future.

Book of the Week

A Thousand Feasts by Nigel Slater

From award-winning writer Nigel Slater, comes a new and exquisitely written collection of notes, memoir, stories and small moments of joy.

For years, Nigel Slater has kept notebooks of curiosities and wonderings, penned while at his kitchen table, soaked in a fisherman's hut in Reykjavik, sitting calmly in a moss garden in Japan or sheltering from a blizzard in a Vienna Konditorei. These are the small moments, events and happenings that gave pleasure before they disappeared. Miso soup for breakfast, packing a suitcase for a trip and watching a butterfly settle on a carpet, hiding in plain sight. He gives short stories of feasts such as a mango eaten in monsoon rain or a dish of restorative macaroni cheese and homes in on the scent of freshly picked sweet peas and the sound of water breathing at night in Japan.

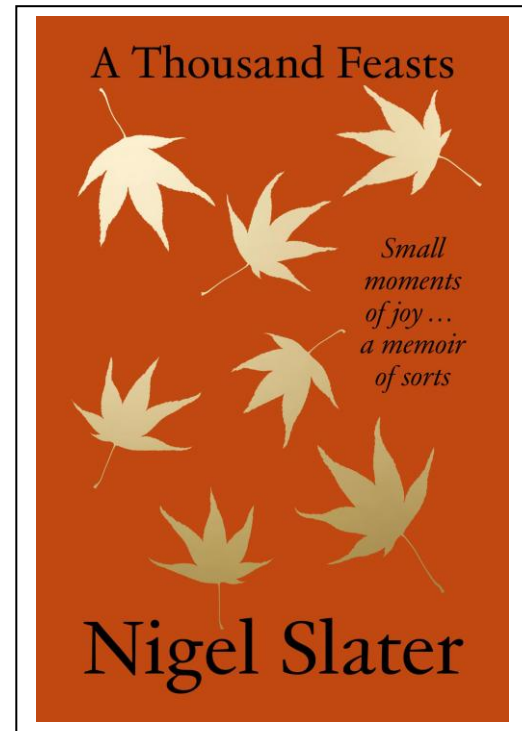
This funny and sharply observed collection of the good bits of life, often things that pass many of us by, is utter joy from beginning to end.

Enrichment Week

During the Summer Term, the normal school timetable is suspended for a week while students take part in trips and activities tailored to their year group. Enrichment Week is an important aspect of Backwell School life, giving students the opportunity to enjoy new experiences, learn different skills and build strong bonds with their peers.

Year 9 parents and carers received information last week regarding the Year 9 residential, which takes place in June. More information about the trip, including a sample itinerary and meal plan, can be found [here](#) .

We look forward to launching the Year 7 and 8 enrichment week communications closer to half term.



Exam Certificates – have you collected yours?

The exams team still have a large number of exam certificates from students who took their exams in Summer 2019. They will be destroying any that remain uncollected by 22 October. These are important documents that you may need for future employment or to access further education. If you think we may still have your certificates (from any year), please email exams@backwellschool.net so we can make arrangements to get them to you. Please note: Exam certificates from Summer 2025 have not been received. We will email about collecting these in due course. Thank you.

Backwell School Association

The Backwell School Association (BSA) is the parent/staff association for Backwell School, and a registered charity. The primary aim of the BSA is to raise funds which go towards projects which benefit the students at Backwell School. The BSA help fund improvements to school facilities such as the school's main Theatre, sports equipment/facilities & more recently outdoor social areas for the students to use at break times plus supporting the rewards scheme for students earning green buttons to exchange for hot Chocolates!

The Backwell School Association (BSA) will be holding their Annual General Meeting on **Tuesday 7th October 6.30-8pm** in the Conference Room at school (just by Reception) and all parents/carers are welcome to attend.

This is a wonderful opportunity to get involved and meet other parents/staff involved with the school and to support the school community - It's a great way to hear about what we've achieved over the last year and discuss future opportunities. Please do come if you can make it.

If you can't make it to the AGM but are interested in helping at some uniform sales, or on the BSA Bar at some schools events, please send us a message on mailbox@backwellschool.net – we would love to hear from you! **Easy Fundraising** - The BSA has already raised over £2000 using **EasyFundraising** and would like to encourage parents to use it when doing their shopping online! Over 6,000 shops and sites will donate to the Backwell School Association (BSA) for FREE when you use **Easyfundraising** to shop with them, including Amazon, Ebay, Booking.com and M&S. These donations really help us and all you have to do is use it when you're ordering the things you'll be buying anyway.

Click [here](#) to sign up



Volunteers for the Backwell School Association (BSA) wanted!

Help run the bar at school events

Help with the uniform sale

Email mailbox@backwellschool.net if you can support.

LAMBS!

On Thursday, a group of year 13 students enjoyed cuddling and bottle-feeding some two-week old lambs.

We hope they found it a bit of light relief during all the hard work of their A Level studies.

The lambs belong to English Teacher Ms. Lowrie and her husband Joe. They have a flock of 270 (and counting!) Poll Dorset sheep. This breed is known for their mothering nature and ability to lamb out of season (hence why they were born in September).

Ms. Lowrie is very grateful to her lovely year 13 tutor group for listening to, and showing an interest in, her stories about the highs and lows of lambing this year. We hope they enjoyed meeting some of the main characters of her tales!



It's fair to say this was a very well received visit!

Thank you to Ms Lowrie and our little visitors.

Quick Links

- [School Uniform and Equipment Guidance](#)
- [Financial Support](#)
- [Year 13 Key Dates](#)
- [Careers Bulletin - 03 October 2025](#)

Letters Home This Week

- [Sixth Form Bulletin](#)
- [Year 7 Music Showcase](#)
- [Backwell Sixth Form Open Evening \(2026 Entry\) - Thursday 23 October](#)

Dates for your Diary

Monday 06 October	School Production of Oliver – Rehearsals in DTH 15:15
Tuesday 07 October	Sixth Form Production of Footloose – Rehearsals in DTH 15:15 BSA Annual General Meeting – 18:30 (School Conference Room)
Wednesday 08 October	School Production of Oliver – Rehearsals in DTH 15:15
Thursday 09 October	Sixth Form Production of Footloose – Rehearsals in DTH 15:15
Thursday 23 October	Sixth Form Open Evening – 17:00-19:15
Friday 24 October	End of Term 1
Monday 03 November	Start of Term 2



Please read the letter below from our local police PCSO, Kate Turner. Thank you.



Dear Parent/Guardian,

We would like to address concerns regarding parking practices in the area. It has come to our attention that some vehicles are being parked in a manner that obstructs driveways, poses safety risks, or causes inconvenience to residents.

We respectfully remind all parents and guardians of the importance of parking responsibly and safely, both to ensure the safety of children attending the school and to maintain positive relations with the local community.

Please be mindful to avoid parking in a way that creates obstructions or difficulties for residents.

I would also like to remind parents that Westfield Drive has a time restriction between the hours of 08:30 – 09:15 and 03:00 – 03:30 where vehicles are prohibited from using the road, in order to ensure the safety of its students.

Please note that parking in the vicinity of Backwell School will be monitored regularly. Any violations of parking regulations may result in enforcement actions, including the issuance of parking tickets.

Thank you for your cooperation.

PCSO 7948 Kate Turner





Backwell School Sixth Form



OPEN EVENING

Thursday 23 October 2025 5pm - 7.15pm

Arrive anytime between 5pm and 6.45pm

Visit curriculum areas, meet teachers and current students, seek advice from the Sixth Form Team

Presentation from Sixth Form Leadership Team at 5pm and 6pm



Application Deadline 5 December 2025

Visit our school website www.backwellschool.net for more information

Our Sixth Form Open Evening for students looking to join in September 2026, will take place on Thursday 23 October 2025 from 5:00pm.

There is no need to book to attend. We hope to see our Year 11 students at this event to learn all about Sixth Form life and the opportunities we can offer you.

We hope you enjoy our **10 top reasons to choose Backwell Sixth Form**





10 Reasons To Choose Backwell Sixth Form



1. Expert Teachers

Every teacher at Backwell Sixth Form is a subject specialist. They are experts but they are also approachable: "I really like that teachers treat us like adults in the sixth form. They go out of their way to help us at lunch time and respond quickly via email. The lessons are really interesting and enjoyable." Meredith, Head student.

2. Flexible Days

'Study Periods' and 'Home Study' give sixth formers the freedom to choose when and where they get their work done. Students can go to the local shops or study at home, our fantastic transport links make it possible even if you don't live close to the school.

3. Sixth Form Facilities

The library is sixth form only during lesson time, the common room, where the canteen is open all day, is reserved for sixth formers only and the sixth form building has its own classrooms, study room and state-of-the-art music studio.

4. Independence

At Backwell Sixth Form, your independence is respected. There is no school uniform and your privileges extend to other areas, such as use of mobile phones and access to wifi across the school site.

5. Community

Years 12 and 13 form one community. Fun and competition are combined in events like 'University Challenge' and the 'Paarlauf', where sixth formers dress proudly in purple, pink and orange to represent their Houses (which are Rock, Paper, Scissors!)



10 Reasons To Choose Backwell Sixth Form



6. Leadership Opportunities

Student leadership matters here. You can join committees focused on areas such as diversity, charity and the environment or on social and sporting events. You can train to be a Peer Educator or even work with the Headteacher and Head of Sixth Form as part of the Head Student team.

7. Performance

There are so many opportunities to get involved in performance be it music, sport or drama, the sixth form Production is the highlight. Every year, students put on a show that they have planned, rehearsed and directed themselves to raise money for a charity of their choice.

8. Trips and Events

From the Sixth Form Ball to the Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award, there are many opportunities that you will remember at Backwell Sixth Form. Some highlights are even part of your subject studies, for example the History trip to Berlin or the Biology trip to We the Curious.

9. Support

Students have a dedicated team of staff that support them in many aspects of their Sixth Form lives and beyond. Students tell us that they feel confident approaching their Head of Year for academic or wellbeing support. Our Careers advisor, Mrs Ball, works closely with the Sixth Form Team and will meet with every student to provide independent advice for Future Plans.

10. Results & Destinations

Year on year, our students attain excellent results and go on to exciting destinations. There is expert tailored support alongside a variety of Careers related events and activities whichever post-18 choice you are considering: Apprenticeship, Gap Year, University, Oxbridge, Medicine/ Veterinary Science or any other pathway.

Events, Clubs and Course in our Community

PQA - October Half Term Workshop

Join us for 3 days of Musical Theatre fun at our Monster Mashup! Learn routines from K-Pop Demon Hunters to the Addams Family, the Monstrous fun is waiting!

Tuesday 28th October - Thursday 30th October

10am - 4pm | Cotham School, BS6 6DT

£135

(Save £10 by using the discount code SCHOOLS)

<https://forms.gle/Ty226BtGHrepdco6A>



Events, Clubs and Course in our Community

Parenting village coffee morning



This is a relaxed and friendly drop-in session where parents and parenting specialists will be on hand to share resources, offer support, a listening ear or just spend time talking about what it's like to be a parent.

"It takes a village to raise a child" comes from an old African proverb. It shares the message that it takes many people to provide a safe and healthy environment in which children can flourish.



When? First Friday of each month
Where? Castle Batch Children's Centre,
Bishop Avenue, Weston-super-Mare, BS22 7PQ
What time? 09:30am – 11:00am



When? Second Tuesday of each month
Where? Oldmixon Family Centre, Monkton Avenue,
Weston-super-Mare, BS24 9DA
What time? 09:00am – 11:00am



When? Third Monday of each month
Where? Clevedon Library, 37 Old Church Road,
BS21 6NN
What time? 9.30am - 11am

Scan here to learn
more about our
advanced
parenting groups

