



# Backwell School Weekly Bulletin



Friday, 30 January 2026

Dear Parents, Carers, Families and Friends,

As February begins, there's a wonderful sense of positivity in the air at school. The days are slowly growing lighter, half term is on the horizon, and our school community is buzzing with energy and enthusiasm. From sporting triumphs to cultural exchanges, and with exciting events like Raising and Giving Week just around the corner, it's inspiring to see our students embracing every opportunity and making the most of each lesson and experience.

I want to start the newsletter by highlighted the vital role that Parent Governors play in the life of the school. Meeting once a term, visiting the school and working closely with senior leaders to help shape the strategic direction of Backwell. Being a governor is a rewarding opportunity to contribute your perspective, support our students and staff, and be part of decision-making at a whole-school level. We currently have our Parent Governor election process open that closes on Monday. If you would like to apply for the role then please do so via the email that was sent to parents / carers last week, finally thank you to those who have already put themselves forward.

We are incredibly proud of our Backwell chess team, who competed in the Regional Challengers Section of the English Chess Federation Senior Team Chess Challenge this week at Bristol Grammar School. This prestigious competition is open to under-19s in secondary schools, and we are thrilled to report that Backwell entered the Challengers section and came first place! The winning Year 8 team consisted of Cinar E, Elliot L, Elliot and Seth R. Congratulations to all involved — a fantastic achievement. Their next tournament takes place in two weeks' time, and we look forward to sharing how they get on.

Today we welcomed back our Year 11 students who have been on the Spanish exchange in Northern Spain visiting their friends from Colegio Vera-Cruz. Our students have stayed with their partners and been part of the Spanish school community as well as visiting local sites. It has been wonderful to hear how our students engaged so positively with their partners, both in lessons and socially, building friendships and creating lasting memories. Experiences like this offer invaluable cultural and linguistic opportunities that stay with students long after they leave school. We are extremely grateful to our dedicated Languages team for

organising the exchange, and to our parents for their continued support in making it possible.

Looking ahead to next week, we are excited to be hosting our inaugural Raising and Giving or RAG Week. Throughout the week, students will take part in a range of fun activities to raise money for several local charities, including The Alfie Nick Foundation, The Backwell Environmental Trust, Bristol Refugee Rights and Children's Hospice South West. Activities will include sending Valentine's gifts, a clothes swap event, lunchtime fair games such as hook-a-duck, and the much-anticipated "Sponge the Teacher" event on Friday lunchtime. All activities will require cash, so we would appreciate your support in ensuring students bring some coins with them. Friday will also be a non-uniform day, with a £2 contribution payable via ParentPay, with all proceeds going to Children's Hospice South West.

Thank you to all parents and carers who attended the Year 9 GCSE Courses Options Evening. It was wonderful to see such strong engagement, with families visiting subjects, asking thoughtful questions and discussing next steps with staff as students begin to consider their future pathways at Key Stage 4.

Finally, congratulations to our Under 14 girls' football team, who secured a fantastic 2–1 victory against Lydiard Park Academy, progressing to the last 16 teams in the ESFA English Schools Competition — a tremendous achievement. Their next match will be played at home against either Torbay or Penryn next week, and we wish them the very best of luck in their quest to reach the last 8 of this national competition.

Finally, as I have said before, we simply could not do what we do as a school without your continued support.

Thank you, and I wish you all a wonderful weekend.



**Will Penny**  
**Headteacher**



## Book of the Week

### Witch Hat Atelier by Kamome Shirahama

A beautifully-illustrated story about a girl who longs for magic in her life and learns that, on the inside, she already is what she wishes she could be. Reminiscent of Studio Ghibli, this lushly-drawn story was voted one of the top 10 manga of the year in 2018 by the Japanese manga industry.

Chess Challenge @ BGS



In a world where everyone takes wonders like magic spells and dragons for granted, Coco is a girl with a simple dream: She wants to be a witch. But everybody knows magicians are born, not made, and Coco was not born with the gift for magic. She's resigned to her un-magical life, until a travelling magician passes through her village, and Coco learns what everybody 'knows' might not be the truth.

## Overdue Library Books

At the mid-point of the academic year, students who have received three library messages about their overdue library books (in addition to weekly tutor reminders) will now be receiving the cost of the missing book/s charged to their ParentPay account. If the book is found and returned the charge will be removed. Please contact Mr Brooks, the Librarian, if you wish to discuss this further.

## RAG Week this coming week (04-06 February)

If you would like to take part in the non-uniform day on Friday, 06 February, raising funds for Children's Hospice South West, your £2.00 donation can now be made through your ParentPay account.

### [ParentPay](#)



**Wednesday 04 February** – Clothes Swap

**Thursday 05 February** – Bake Sale and Games

**Friday 06 February** – 'Sponge the Teacher' and Non-Uniform Day

**The Sixth Form Charity Committee will also be selling Valentine's Day Love Hearts throughout the week, raising money for the Alfie Nick Foundation**





Backwell students receiving a warm welcome to the City Hall in Vitoria Gasteiz, whilst on their Spanish Exchange.

## **Term dates and Inset Dates 2026/2027**

Please find a list below of the confirmed Term dates and Inset dates for the next academic year – 2026/2027

### **Term Dates 2026/2027**

**Term 1** - Thursday 03 September to Friday 23 October 2026

**Term 2** - Monday 2 November to Friday 18 December 2026

**Term 3** - Monday 4 January to Friday 12 February 2027

**Term 4** - Monday 22 February to Thursday 25 March 2027

**Term 5** - Monday 12 April to Friday 28 May 2027

**Term 6** - Monday 7 June to Friday 23 July 2027

### **Inset Days 2026/2027**

Thursday 03 September 2026

Friday 04 September 2026

Friday 18 September 2026

Friday 20 November 2026

Monday 22 February 2027

Monday 12 April 2027

**Please note that Monday, 07 September will be a staggered start for Years 7 and 12 only. All other year groups will start term 1 on Tuesday, 08 September 2026**

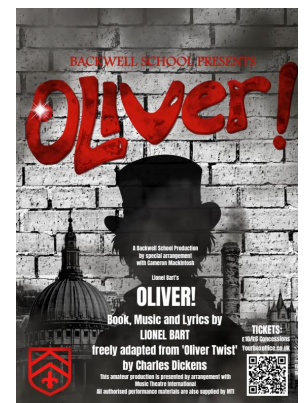
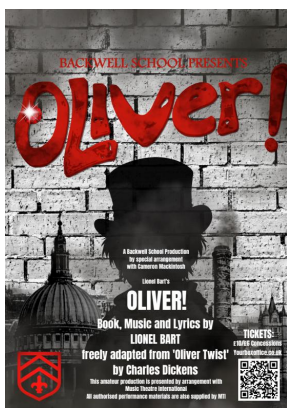
## Backwell School Production of “Oliver!” – Tickets on sale now!

Rehearsals for our school production of “Oliver!” are going brilliantly and the scaffolding and staging is now up!

Tickets are selling very fast. If you are yet to buy your tickets, please click on the link below, before it is too late!

The show runs from Tuesday, 10 February to Friday, 13 February. Tickets are priced at £10 for adults and £6 for concessions.

### [Your Box Office - Ticket booking for Oliver!](#)



## Summer 2026 examination entries

Thank you to students and parents who have checked and confirmed their Summer 2026 exam entries by our deadline of 26th January.

All entry queries (e.g. tier changes) have been given to the relevant curriculum leader to review.

There is a further opportunity to discuss any Year 11 entry queries at the parent/carers evening which on Thursday 26th February.

Once all final decisions have been agreed we will action any changes and notify you of the outcome.

If you have any other questions, please contact the exams team at:

[exams@backwellschool.net](mailto:exams@backwellschool.net)

## Year 9 Boys Football Success

Yesterday, our Year 9 Boys Football team travelled to Crispin Academy in Somerset to continue their defence of the Somerset Cup.

Winning 4-1, the team showed a disciplined and strong display of great passing football, teamwork and resilience. Our goal scorers were Arthur G (2), Greg P, Oli H.

Player of the match was Casper C – our hero in goal. Making some great saves, including a penalty save!

Well done to all of the players as they continue their quest to lift the trophy again!



## Quick Links

- [School Uniform and Equipment Guidance](#)
- [Financial Support](#)
- [Careers Bulletin - 30 January 2026](#)
- [Sixth Form Bulletin](#)

## Letters Home This Week

- [Year 11 Parents' Information Evening - Preparation for Exams](#)
- [Year 11 GCSE PE classes](#)
- [Year 11 Parents and Carers Evening: Thursday 26 February 2026](#)

## Dates for your Diary

<b>Thursday 05 February</b>	Year 13 Parents' & Carers' Evening (online) 16:00-18:45
<b>Friday 06 February</b>	Non-Uniform Day – Fundraising for RAG week
<b>Tuesday 10 – Friday 13 February 2026</b>	School Production 'Oliver' Performance in DTH 19:00-22:00
<b>Friday 13 February</b>	<b>Inset Day 5 – School closed to pupils End of Term 3</b>
<b>Thursday 26 February</b>	Year 11 Parents' & Carers' Evening (online) 16:00-18:45

### LAST CHANCE!

### YEAR 11 PARENTS – PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO ORDER A LEAVERS HOODIE FOR YOUR YEAR 11

This year, the students' hoodies will be an 'over the head' style with black writing, the colour choice is Ash (light grey) which has been decided by a student survey that was conducted on frog.

#### Sizing as follows:-

Small -	34 to 36 inch chest
Medium -	38 to 40 inch chest
Large -	42 to 44 inch chest
Extra Large -	46 to 48 inch chest
XXL -	50 to 52 inch chest

Students wishing to buy a hoodie will have their names (forename and surname – as appears on our school records) shown in the number '26' design on the back. The cost of each hoodie, including printing is **£20.00**

If you would like to order a hoodie for your young person, please make payment via [www.parentpay.com](http://www.parentpay.com) **by 4 February 2026 - please note that LATE ORDERS CANNOT BE ACCEPTED.** In addition to this, **please indicate in the notes box the size you would like to order.**

#### Pupil Premium

If you are in receipt of Pupil Premium allowance to place your order, please email [studentservices@backwellschool.net](mailto:studentservices@backwellschool.net) with the student's name and size by **4<sup>th</sup> February 2026.** Please note that **NO LATE ORDERS CAN BE ACCEPTED.**

### [Leavers Hoodies Letter](#)

**BACKWELL SCHOOL PRESENTS**

# **OLIVER!**

A Backwell School Production  
by special arrangement  
with Cameron Mackintosh

Lionel Bart's



## **OLIVER!**

Book, Music and Lyrics by  
**LIONEL BART**

freely adapted from 'Oliver Twist'  
by **Charles Dickens**

This amateur production is presented by arrangement with  
Music Theatre International  
All authorised performance materials are also supplied by MTI

**TICKETS:**  
£10/£6 Concessions  
[Yourboxoffice.co.uk](http://Yourboxoffice.co.uk)





## Cycling Sessions For Young People



We have availability on Saturdays for FREE 1:1 Cycle lessons for young people.

These sessions are perfect for young people needing an extra bit of support to develop their cycling skills

These 30 minute sessions take full advantage of our fantastic range of bikes, trikes & adaptive bikes to introduce cycle skills & develop further confidence.

**Email [strawberrylineprojects@gmail.com](mailto:strawberrylineprojects@gmail.com) for more information**

RESET WSM



RESET WSM COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANY

# NORTH SOMERSET YOUTH AWARDS

**DO YOU KNOW AN OUTSTANDING YOUNG PERSON AGED 8 TO 18 THAT LIVES OR RECEIVES EDUCATION IN NORTH SOMERSET?**

**We might just have something for you and for them...**

**WE ARE BACK FOR 2026...RESET ARE RUNNING THE NORTH SOMERSET YOUTH AWARDS TO CELEBRATE AND SHARE THE EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES THAT HAVE BEEN OVERCOME, HARDSHIPS THAT HAVE SHOWN GREAT RESILIENCE AND THE MAGNIFICENT WORK AND ACHIEVEMENTS CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ACROSS NORTH SOMERSET HAVE HAD. THE CATEGORIES ARE...**

- Superhero
- Arts and Culture
- Learning
- Caring
- Team/Group
- Service to Children
- Environmental
- Sporting
- Fundraising



## NOMINATIONS OPEN NOW



**HOW TO APPLY.... EMAIL US FOR AN APPLICATION FORM OR JUST SEND US THE DETAILS OF THE YOUNG PERSON, WHO THEY ARE, PARENT/CARER DETAILS, HOW YOU KNOW THEM, WHAT CATEGORY AND WHY THEY SHOULD WIN.**

**WWW.RESETWSM.CO.UK  
ADMIN@RESETWSM.CO.UK  
01934 707810**

**17th July 2026 @  
The Grand Pier**



# CAREERS FAIR

## TUESDAY 3RD MARCH

### 12:50PM - 4:00PM, NEW SPORTS HALL

Discover your career possibilities, and get connected with top employers.

Ideal for work experience, post 16, post 18 options and future careers.



Over 40 Employers



Nationwide Universities and Colleges



Local Training Providers

All students can attend at lunch and after 3:10pm.

Year 9 and 11 will be visiting during scheduled lessons.

Sixth Form Students Welcome Anytime.

Parents and Carers welcome after 3:10pm.





Holiday, Activities and Food Programme  
Strategy & Policy Team – Town Hall – Weston-super-Mare – BS23 1UJ

## Help Young People Get Active - Bursary Scheme open

We all know how important sport and physical activity is for the health and wellbeing of children and young people, and how life-changing access to a favourite activity can be. Unfortunately, the cost can often be a barrier. That is why we have introduced a bursary fund, to help remove that barrier.

### What's Available?

Grants of up to £50 are available to help children and young people (aged 18 or under) access the sport or physical activity they love. The bursary can be used to cover:

- Sports kit or equipment
- Membership or annual fees for clubs and activities
- Entry fees for events or competitions related to their sport or activity

### Who's Eligible?

Applicants must:

- Live in North Somerset
- Be aged 18 or under
- Come from a low-income family or be experiencing financial pressures



All applications need to be supported by a sponsor/referrer – someone who knows the young person well and understands their circumstances and goals.

More information and how to refer someone is available here:

<https://www.betterhealthns.co.uk/information/pabursary/>