



Backwell School Weekly Bulletin



Friday, 13 February 2026

Dear Parents, Carers, Families and Friends,

There is only one place to start this week's newsletter, and that is with the celebration that has been *Oliver!*

Following the outstanding Sixth Form production of *Footloose*, our whole-school production of *Oliver!* showcased the incredible talents of over 120 students from every year group. I'm running out of superlatives for our school shows, but anyone fortunate enough to see this one would agree that it was nothing short of magical. From performers on stage to the backstage crew and those managing lighting and special effects, the production highlighted the breadth of skill and dedication within our school community. One of the joys of such a production is seeing our youngest cast members in Year 7 interact with our Sixth Form theatrical scholars — some of whom are destined for drama schools or university ensembles. The guidance and inspiration these senior students offer their younger peers is truly remarkable. I am also immensely grateful to our remarkable team of staff, led by Mr Clarke, whose dedication, creativity, and hard work have shaped, inspired, and brought the production to life. We truly are fortunate to have such an exceptional team at our school.

Particularly special was the opportunity to perform for pupils from Backwell CofE Junior School. For those cast members who had once been part of the Junior School themselves, this was especially magical. Some of the cast are now looking forward to returning 'up the hill' later this year to support Year 6 pupils with their leavers' production — a wonderful example of community spirit in action.

Beyond the stage, our students continue to achieve in sports. Our Year 9 girls' football team have reached the final eight of the English Schools Football Association Cup and will travel to Brighton in early March for their quarter-final match. Whatever the outcome, we are incredibly proud of their efforts. Meanwhile, our Year 8 chess team eagerly await results from regional matches, hoping to secure a place at the National Championships in Nottingham. Also in action this week were our U14 girls' rugby team, who competed at the Millfield Schools Rugby 7s tournament and more than held their own against strong local

independent school opposition. The girls are now looking forward to representing the school at the prestigious Rosslyn Park Rugby 7s in London next term.

I also want to provide an update on our inaugural Raising and Giving (RAG) Week. Organised by our Sixth Form Committee, the week was filled with creativity and generosity, raising over £3,000 for local charities including The Alfie Nick Foundation, The Backwell Environmental Trust, Bristol Refugee Rights, and Children's Hospice South West. Activities ranged from Valentine's gifts and a clothes swap to lunchtime fair games and the ever popular "Sponge the Teacher" event. The week was a tremendous success and a wonderful reflection of our students' commitment to serving others. The success of the week was further celebrated on Thursday when we hosted the annual LSP Student Leadership Conference at Backwell, welcoming student leaders from our partner secondary schools in the LSP, Gordano, Chew Valley and Churchill. The conference provides a valuable opportunity for students to share their experiences and the great initiatives they lead at their schools, inspiring one another to enhance the school experience for all. The event also featured a keynote address from our local MP, Sadik Al-Hassan, for which we are very grateful.

With half term upon us, and beyond the halfway point of the academic year, it is important that we all take a moment to pause and recharge. The coming terms promise a range of exciting opportunities — from enrichment week and trips both locally and internationally, including the ski trip to Italy and the German Exchange, to the important milestone of GCSE and A Level examinations for Years 11 and 13.

For many young people, screens provide a much more tempting distraction than a book, but why not encourage your child to pick up a book over the half term? Reading for pleasure at this stage has a remarkable impact. Research shows that a young person who reads for just 20 minutes a day is exposed to around 1.8 million words per year, compared with only 280,000 words for someone who reads for five minutes a day. This exposure strengthens vocabulary, which underpins success across the curriculum. International studies, including OECD research, indicate that students who read regularly for pleasure are, on average, over a year ahead academically compared with those who rarely read, regardless of background. By age 16, regular readers can have vocabularies thousands of words larger than their peers — a crucial advantage for GCSE texts and examinations. Even small amounts of daily reading can make a meaningful difference to achievement, confidence, and enjoyment.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. This term has truly reflected all that we value at Backwell and has been a wonderful embodiment of our school values: being kind, curious, and ambitious. I wish you all a restful and enjoyable half term and very much look forward to welcoming everyone back for the start of Term 4 on Monday 23rd February. Let us remember that it is by working together that **“we are Backwell.”**



Will Penny
Headteacher



Backwell School – A week in pictures!





Term 3 - Personal Development

In Personal Development at Backwell School, we work together to nurture the whole child, preparing them to be responsible, respectful, active citizens for life in modern Britain, focusing on character, resilience, wellbeing, and developing readiness for the next steps in education, training, or work. Students complete some of this work in specialised timetabled sessions and in tutor time. To help guide parents in their conversations with their children on these topics we are now including an outline of the areas that your child has been talking about at school in the Newsletter. Please do contact us via the school email - mailbox@backwellschool.net - if you would like to discuss any aspect of our Personal Development Curriculum in more detail.

What has happened in Term 3

Years 7, 9 and 10 – looked at Careers during their tutor time sessions. Year 7 focussed on job roles and job sectors, Year 9 on making successful GCSE choices and Year 10 on preparing for interviews. In addition, all Year 10 students participated in a Mock Interview with a real employer to gain first-hand experience of the interview process and how it feels to be interviewed. This was a truly invaluable experience, and we are very grateful to the employers who kindly donated their time to make this event so impactful.

Year 10 also looked at recognising healthy and unhealthy behaviours in relationships during their SMSC lessons. As part of this, all year 10 students attended a presentation from

Collaborate Digital on the subject of violence against women and girls, misogyny and positive action. Students learned about the national and local statistics on the issues raised, the disinformation spread by social media influencers and the session finished by considering role-models and the positive actions we can all take to create a safe and inclusive culture.

Year 8 – have been thinking about maintaining mental wellbeing during their tutor time sessions this Term.

Year 11 -have focussed on physical health and wellbeing during their tutor time sessions, as well as looking at the influences on close relationships as part of their SMSC lessons.



Year 8 chess team regional matches

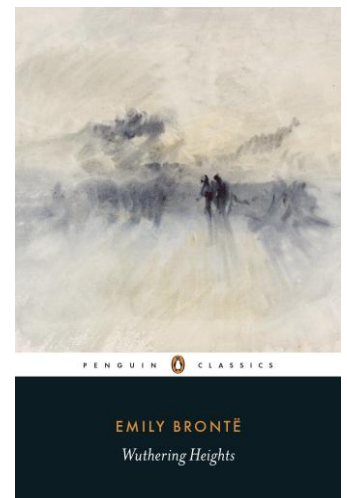
Rugby 7s – Our Girls rugby team visited Millfield school on Wednesday, 11 February for the Millfield Rugby 7s Festival. The girls all showed great teamwork and skill, playing against other teams such as Coleg Gwynedd and Kingsbridge

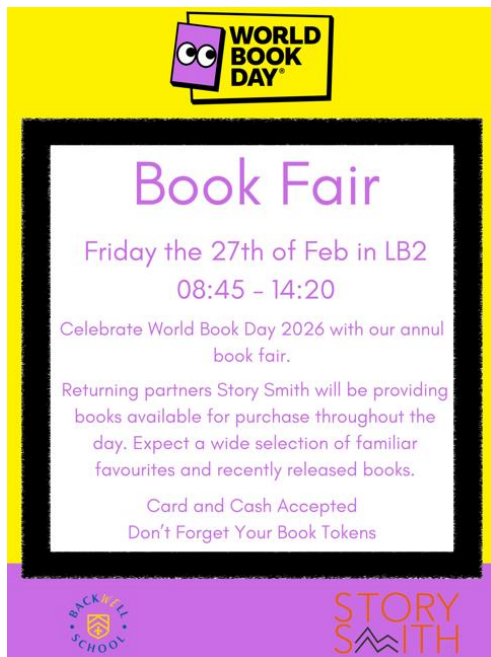


Book of the Week

Wuthering Heights By Emily Brontë

Emily Brontë's only novel, a work of tremendous and far-reaching influence, the Penguin Classics edition of *Wuthering Heights* is the definitive edition of the text, edited with an introduction by Pauline Nestor. Lockwood, the new tenant of Thrushcross Grange, situated on the bleak Yorkshire moors, is forced to seek shelter one night at *Wuthering Heights*, the home of his landlord. There he discovers the history of the tempestuous events that took place years before; of the intense relationship between the gypsy foundling Heathcliff and Catherine Earnshaw; and how Catherine, forced to choose between passionate, tortured Heathcliff and gentle, well-bred Edgar Linton, surrendered to the expectations of her class. As Heathcliff's bitterness and vengeance at his betrayal is visited upon the next generation, their innocent heirs must struggle to escape the legacy of the past.





Quick Links

- [School Uniform and Equipment Guidance](#)
- [Financial Support](#)
- [Careers Bulletin - 13 February 2026](#)
- [Sixth Form Bulletin - Week Commencing Monday 23 February](#)

Letters Home

- [Y11 Exam Preparation Evening Presentation - Planning for success](#)
- [Year 10 Trial Exams](#)

Dates for your Diary

Monday 23 February 2026	Welcome back! Start of Term 4 for all students We are returning on timetable week 1
Thursday 26 February	Year 11 Parents' & Carers' Evening (online) 16:00-18:45
Friday 27 February	Story Smith Book Fair for Students – 08:45 – 14:20 in LB1 (card and cash accepted, along with World Book Day tokens)
Tuesday 03 March	Backwell School Careers Fair: 12:50 – 16:00 (New Sports Hall)
Thursday 19 March	Year 7 Parents' and Carers' Evening (online 16:00-18:45)



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.



Candlelight
to **Dancefloor**



Friday 20th March 2026

Charity Fundraising Concert

- Orchestra performing 90s-00s dance classics
- Premium drinks and cocktails
- Red carpet, glitter ball and glow sticks
- Charity raffle with great prizes

Sit • Sip • Dance

7pm-11pm
St Andrew's Church
Backwell, BS48 3JJ

For more info/tickets
scan QR code:



<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/friday-night-candlelight-to-dancefloor-charity-event-backwell-nsomerset-tickets-1980361581801?aff=oddtcreator>

