



# Backwell School Weekly Bulletin



Friday, 13 March 2026

Dear Parents, Carers, Families and Friends,

As always, there has been a great deal happening at Backwell this week. Alongside some important updates about school systems and our continued work to create a distraction-free learning environment, our students have been extremely busy representing the school in a wide range of sporting events. Their commitment, teamwork and success continue to make us very proud, and I am pleased to share some of these achievements with you in this week's newsletter.

I'd like to begin this week by sharing some sad news about a former member of staff, Mr Duncan Crawshaw, who sadly passed away last week. Mr Crawshaw taught Geography and German at Backwell for 35 years, serving nearly 30 of those as Deputy Headteacher. One former colleague described him as *"a truly inspirational teacher who really set the culture for the school—a culture deeply rooted in kindness."* It is fitting, then, to think that Mr Crawshaw would have approved of our school values today—the values that guide life at Backwell: we are kind, curious and ambitious. A celebration of Mr Crawshaw's life will take place at Leigh Court from midday on Friday 20th March, and former pupils who may be reading this would be very welcome to attend. Our thoughts, prayers and best wishes are with his family, friends and the many former pupils whose lives he influenced.

Next week I will be writing to parents about the launch of mobile phone pouches, which will make Backwell a truly phone-free environment for Key Stage 3 and 4 students. From the beginning of Term 5, students will be expected to place their mobile phone in a lockable pouch for the duration of the school day. This enhancement to our current rule — which requires students to switch off their phone and place it in their bag — further strengthens our position that mobile phones should not disrupt learning during the school day. The development of this policy has also been informed by growing research into the impact of mobile phone use on young people, including the research project led by the University of the West of England, to which many of you contributed during the last academic year. The

policy also aligns with the Government's directive that all schools should prohibit the use of mobile phones during school hours.

This week we also received an email from our local MP, Sadik Al-Hassan, inviting parents and students to attend a public meeting on 19 March from 6:30–8:00pm to discuss the challenges around whether social media should be banned for under-16s. A potential social media ban has become one of the largest campaigns among residents in North Somerset. Further details about this invitation can be found later in the newsletter.

Earlier this week we also wrote to you about signing up to our new system, **MyChildAtSchool**, which is linked to our new Management Information System, Bromcom. This is the system we use to hold and manage key information about pupils and parents, including attendance, timetables, reports and communications. One of the major benefits of Bromcom is that it provides live data sharing for parents and carers through a secure website and mobile app. This means you will be able to access up-to-date information about your child quickly and conveniently. We see this as a positive step forward in strengthening communication between home and school, giving you clearer insight into your child's school life and helping us work together more effectively. In time, **MyChildAtSchool** will replace several other systems as we streamline how we communicate with parents. Until then, please continue to keep your Frog and ParentPay logins so that you can still access home learning, behaviour information and payments.

Away from these logistical updates, we have had an incredibly busy and successful few weeks of sport, and I would like to share just some of the highlights. At the start of the term, we took part in the North Somerset Swimming Gala, held at Hutton Moor Leisure Centre. Chinonso and Finley (Year 7) and Mori (Year 8) each won gold medals in the U13 boys' 100m individual medley, 50m backstroke and 50m breaststroke respectively. Amy (Year 7) and Eva (Year 8) also won gold medals in the U13 girls' 50m breaststroke and 50m backstroke. The U13 squads also dominated the team relays, winning gold in both the boys' and girls' races. There were also several podium finishes in the U15 competition, meaning that Backwell was the most successful school on the day.

We have also continued to enjoy success in the Somerset County Indoor Cricket competition, with the Year 8 and Year 10 boys' and girls' teams each progressing to the area finals. Despite some strong performances, it is the Year 8 boys who have progressed to the county finals, which will be played at the indoor cricket school at the Somerset County Cricket Ground later this month.

At the end of Term 3, Backwell hosted Bromsgrove School as part of their rugby tour to the Bristol area. On a very wet and muddy Friday afternoon, over 50 Year 7 and Year 8 boys performed admirably against a very strong independent school. One Year 7 team drew their match, while the other games were narrow victories for our visitors. Bromsgrove have already asked to play a Year 10 fixture next season when they tour South Wales, and it has been wonderful to build new sporting links with schools beyond our local area.

The rugby season is not quite finished, as the Year 8 and Year 9 boys still have another touring school to play later in March, when we welcome back Bolton School, whom we have hosted previously. Finally, on Monday, our U14 girls will compete at the prestigious Rosslyn Park National Schools Sevens tournament in London. The girls have prepared extremely well and are looking forward to what will be a fantastic experience.

This week the Year 11 girls were crowned champions of the North Somerset Schools Tournament after winning all six of their matches. Earlier this month the Year 10 girls finished as runners-up. As the Year 8 girls won their tournament before Christmas, both they and the Year 11 team will now compete in the Bristol & Avon Schools Championship Finals later this month.

The Year 9 girls were unfortunately knocked out of the National Cup at the quarter-final stage by Weydon School in Surrey last Friday. However, they quickly bounced back with a 7–0 victory over Wellsway School in the Somerset Cup on Monday. Their achievements this season have been outstanding, and they now look ahead to the Somerset Cup semi-final. The Year 8 and Year 9 boys have also enjoyed success in the Somerset Cup. The Year 9s reached the quarterfinals, while the Year 8 team face St Katherine's School in the semi-final today. We are also very proud that seven of our Year 9 boys have been selected for the North Somerset District Schools team. Congratulations to Ted CS, Bertie d-L, Edward O, Gregg P, Arthur G, Oli H and Lenny B, and we wish them the very best in their upcoming fixtures.

Finally, we are delighted and extremely proud to share that Emilia in Year 9 has been selected for the GB Junior Gymnastics team competing at the Luxembourg Open. Some of you may remember Emilia performing at the 2025 Sports Awards Evening. In April she will compete in four disciplines — floor, uneven bars, vault and beam — and we wish her every success in what is a fantastic achievement for both her and her family.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. By working together, we ensure that 'we are Backwell'.



**Will Penny**  
Headteacher



## COTSWOLD HOUSE CHOCOLATE RAFFLE

The biggest chocolate raffle the school has seen yet!  
Cotswold House is raising money for Red Nose Day – Friday 20 March

### Raffle Details

Friday 20 March  
Lunchtime  
Cotswold Common Room  
£1 per entry

★ Don't forget to bring your money for a chance to win lots of chocolate prizes! ★

Cotswold House  
are hosting the  
**BIGGEST  
CHOCOLATE  
RAFFLE**  
THE SCHOOL HAS SEEN YET!  
to raise money for  
**RED  
NOSE  
DAY**  
ON MARCH 20<sup>TH</sup>  
Can you and your young people help  
by donating some chocolate to the event?  
All donations welcome - big or small!  
Please bring chocolate donations to  
**Mrs Whitehouse in M2**  
or to **Reception**,  
ideally by **Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March**.

## Book of the Week

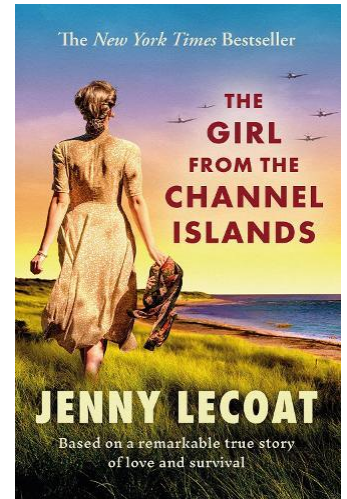
### The Girl from the Channel Islands - Jenny Lecoat

Based on a remarkable true story of love and survival.

In June 1940, the Channel Islands are occupied by Hitler's forces.

Hedy Bercu, a young woman who fled from Vienna to Jersey to escape the Occupation, finds herself once more entrapped by the Nazis, this time with no escape. Concealing her Jewish status, she finds translation work with the German authorities and embarks on secret acts of resistance.

Most extraordinary of all, Hedy falls in love with a German lieutenant – a relationship on which her survival comes to depend.



### Home Sweet Home in Brambleton – By Fay Keenan

Backwell English teacher, Mrs Jessop, has just had her latest novel published.

Following a less-than-picture-book childhood, Bella West has got used to moving around – putting down roots opens you up for disappointment and heartbreak. But since arriving in the idyllic Somerset village of Lower Brambleton, something has changed.

Bella loves her job at Purrfect Paws cat rescue, and the many residents love her back. So, when one particularly grumpy Bengal named Monty proves hard to charm, Bella is determined to find out his story.

When Noah Hathaway's beloved Grandpa Jack passes away it falls to him to deal with his estate including his charming but run-down cottage in Lower Brambleton, not forgetting Jack's cantankerous cat Monty. Busy with a life in London, Noah wants to settle things quickly, but countryside life has its own pace and slowly but inexorably the charms of Lower Brambleton begin to work their magic on Noah.

Can one morose moggy, one perfect English village and one endless countryside summer teach Bella and Noah the meaning of home and the joy of taking a chance on love?

**Escape into the English countryside for this joyful tale of friendship and family, revelations and romance. Guaranteed to make you smile!**



## PE Fixtures Notifications:

Please note: if your student is involved in a PE Fixture, this will be noted in FROG, in the assignment section for the day of the fixture. This will include information such as finish time / pick up time from school.

## [ParentPay - Spring Music Concert Tickets](#)



**SPRING CONCERT**

**Backwell School Spring Concert 2026**  
**24th March 7pm - 9:30pm**  
**Main Theatre**

**Get your tickets via ParentPay**  
**link in the weekly bulletin**

## Quick Links

- [School Uniform and Equipment Guidance](#)
- [Financial Support](#)
- [Careers Bulletin - 13 March 2026](#)
- [Sixth Form Bulletin](#)

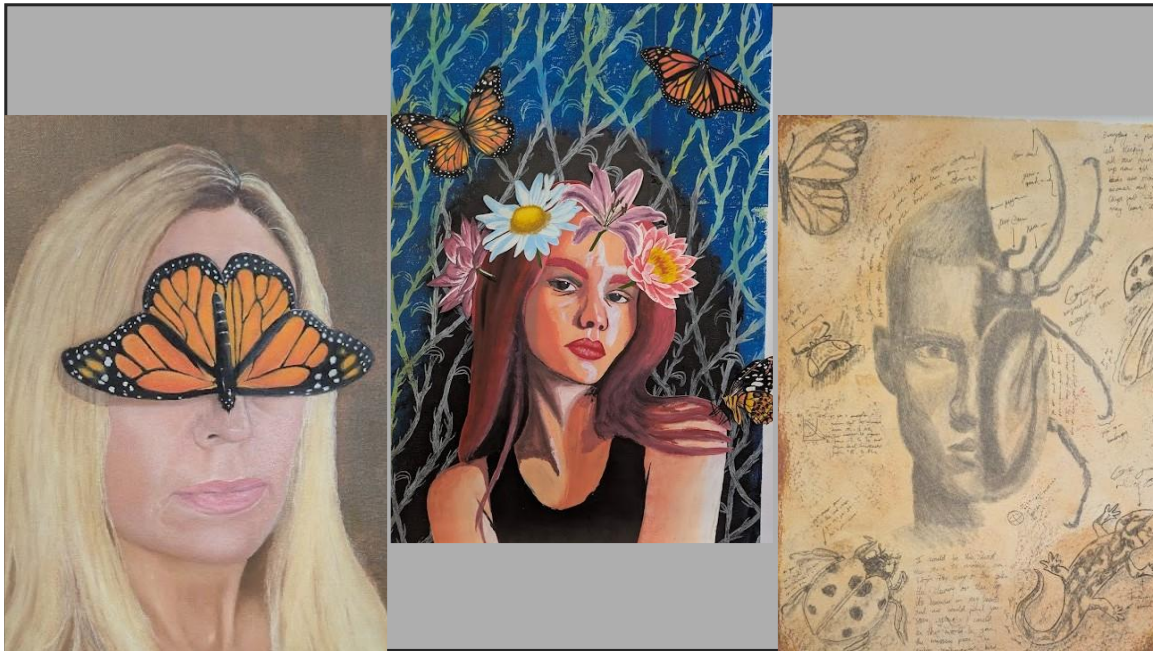
## Letters Home

- [Year 10 Trial Exams](#)
- [Year 12 Trial Exams](#)
- [My Child at School Site & App](#)
- [Year 7 - North Somerset Dance Festival - Tuesday 21 April](#)

## Dates for your Diary

<b>Monday 16- Friday 20 March</b>	Year 10 Trial Exams
<b>Thursday 19 March</b>	Year 7 Parents' and Carers' Evening (online 16:00-18:45)
<b>W/C Monday 23 March</b>	Year 12 Trial Exams – See linked letter above
<b>Tuesday 24 March</b>	Spring Music Concert 7pm Main School Theatre
<b>Wednesday 25 March</b>	Year 9 Meningococcal ACWY and Diphtheria, Tetanus & Polio Vaccinations
<b>Thursday 02 April</b>	Inset Day – School closed to students End of Term 4
<b>Monday 20 April</b>	Start of Term 5





## Year 12 – Natural Form

This week we are featuring a selection of art from our Year 12 students.

Students began their A Level course by developing their drawing and media skills through the observation of natural forms. They explored a range of processes including printmaking, cyanotypes, watercolour and ink, which encouraged them to move beyond conventional approaches and experiment with more expressive and confident mark-making. We then explored portraiture and painting, focusing on colour theory and strengthening their understanding of proportion and form. Their final outcomes were developed from their previous explorations, demonstrating their ability to plan, refine and successfully realise an idea within a set timeframe.



## **Term 4 - 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](mailto:mailbox@backwellschool.net) - if you would like to discuss any aspect of our Personal Development Curriculum in more detail.

### ***What is happening in Term 4:***

Years 7 and 10 – are looking at Online Safety during their tutor time sessions. Year 7 are focussing on the opportunities and risks presented by the online world, as well as considering the implications of digital footprints and what our rights and responsibilities are online. Year 10 students are looking at the dangers and laws around both online gambling and sharing images online, as well as the benefits and risks of targeted advertising.

Year 10 - will also be discussing issues around consent and recognising sexual harassment during their SMSC lessons.

Year 8 – are talking about knife crime in tutor time, including recognising how this can impact young people.

Year 9 – in tutor time are continuing their work from Term 3 on Career Sectors including looking at job families in both the Creative Sector and the Public Sector.

Year 11 – are exploring aspects of Financial Security including how to budget, how to interpret household bills and the difference between purchasing on credit and debit cards in their tutor time sessions. In addition, in their SMSC sessions they will be looking at the impact of online pornography on wellbeing, as well as the laws around this.

### **Sixth Form:**

Year 12 tutor times students are looking at Transport & Travel, Understanding online misinformation, Alcohol & binge drinking, Recreational drugs, Gambling, and Dangerous and emergency situations.

Year 13 tutor times students are looking at financial choices (working and earning), What makes an employer 'good' to work for, Setting online boundaries, 4<sup>th</sup> industrial revolution, using social media for job searching and Networks and support for future plans.



# CHERRYTHON



The “Cherrython” is a series of running challenges designed for all abilities. Created in loving memory of one of our parents, James Cherry, who sadly passed away last summer aged just 52 years old. James left behind his wife Charlotte, and their 2 children, Jasmine & Alfie who both currently attend Backwell School.

The “Cherrython “brings together friends, family, and colleagues to celebrate James’ passion for life, running, his spirit of togetherness, shared stories and experiences, and his commitment to making a difference. That certainly lives on in his son Alfie, - who was inspired to raise money in tribute to his dad, and the reason why the “Cherrython” was created. It starts with the half marathon (run over 3 stages) on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March before some of us tackle the Bristol 10km in May.

James’ family and friends will be raising crucial funds in his memory for St Peters Hospice who supported James and his family so well. Sadly only 20% of their costs are covered by the NHS - they need these crucial funds raised by supporters like us to carry on the wonderful work they do.

If you’d like to support the cause, please share or donate to our team page

<https://www.justgiving.com/team/cherrython>

## Thank you



## Recommended for students in Years 10 and 11



<https://tobaccofactorytheatres.com/shows/macbeth-3/>

**"Blood will have blood." – Act III, scene 4**

Shakespeare's *Macbeth* is a ruthless exploration of ambition, power, and the cost of forsaking the greater good. When Macbeth hears a prophecy that he is destined to rule, his desire for power overrides loyalty, love, and reason. Together with Lady Macbeth, he steps over the threshold of conscience – and into a world where guilt festers, trust is shattered, and violence begets violence.

This is the story of a man who betrays his own moral compass in pursuit of status – and finds that once ambition replaces love, there is no way back. Set against a backdrop of political turmoil and supernatural dread, *Macbeth* speaks urgently to our own times: when individualism triumphs over community, the consequences are irreversible.

Directed by Tobacco Factory Theatres' Artistic Director Heidi Vaughan, this bold new production is charged with her signature ensemble approach – rooted in collaboration, humanity, and emotional depth. Darkly pagan in tone, the soundscape beats with the rhythm of ritual and prophecy: "A drum, a drum! *Macbeth doth come!*" And though the play descends into shadow, Heidi's work always seeks out the spark of resilience – leaving audiences provoked, moved, and unexpectedly uplifted.

★★★★

"...this show was of a quality to match anything I have seen of late at Stratford."

– StageTalk Magazine on *The Winter's Tale* at TFT

★★★★

**RUNNING TIME** 2 hours 30 minutes (incl. interval)

**AGE RECOMMENDATION** 12+

**VENUE** Factory Theatre

**Evening performances** 7.30pm

**Matinee performances** 1pm (Schools only) & 2pm

*Click on Buy Tickets for all performance times*

**TICKET PRICES:**

**Give the Gift Tickets** from £22 / **Standard Tickets** from £18 / **Concession Tickets** from

**Schools Tickets** from £15 (see below for further information)

**GIVE THE GIFT TICKETS:**

In the last year Tobacco Factory Theatres Charitable Arts Trust have seen thousands of people take part in our Get Involved programme, whether it's through subsidised tickets for young people from Bristol to enjoy live theatre for the first time or the many sessions we offer to learn new skills and get creative. We deliver invaluable experiences to people of all ages and backgrounds, particularly those who might not otherwise be able to afford to do it. By purchasing a **Give The Gift Ticket**, you'll help us ensure all our community can enjoy some much-needed theatre magic. [Read more about our pricing, including concessions](#)



## Volunteer in the Scouting County of Avon

[volunteer@avonscouts.org.uk](mailto:volunteer@avonscouts.org.uk)

[www.avonscouts.org.uk/join](http://www.avonscouts.org.uk/join)

**#SkillsForLife**

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Volunteer, your way evenings, weekends, or behind the scenes. Pick a role that fits your life

We're looking for

- Trustees
- TeamLead Volunteers
- Section Volunteers
- Treasurers
- Chairs

No experience needed. Training provided for every role

Sound good? Scan the QR code or follow the link below





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**7-10 & 14-17 APRIL**

**THE DOWNS PREP SCHOOL**

**COURSE DATES**  
**7TH - 10TH APRIL CRICKET**  
**14TH-17TH APRIL- TENNIS**

**TIMES: 10.00AM - 4.00PM**  
**EXTENDED HOURS 8.30-10AM & 4-5.30PM**  
**AGES: 5-14 YEARS**



**BOOK ONLINE @**  
**WWW.PRO-COACHING.CO.UK**  
**SUMMER 2026 DATES ALSO AVAILABLE TO BOOK ONLINE**

## HAF Bookings



**SAVE THE DATE**

Bookings go live  
**Friday 13th March at 9am**

#HAF2026

Young people who receive benefits related free school meals are invited to book onto our free HAF Spring Activities.



**HAF** NORTH SOMERSET  
**Holiday Activities & Food**



For more information about HAF please visit: [About the HAF programme | North Somerset Council](#)

**Sadik Al-Hassan MP**  
**Member of Parliament for North Somerset**  
**House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA**

On the 19th of March 2026, from 6:30pm-8pm, I will be holding a public meeting to discuss the challenges around whether to ban social media for under-16s.

School staff, parents, and students are very welcome to attend and can secure a free spot:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/should-social-media-be-banned-for-under-16s-portishead-venue-tbc-tickets-1983263058195>

Over the past few months, I have seen a Social Media Ban become one of the largest campaigns for North Somerset residents, many of whom have contacted me directly.

The case for a change is clear - Social Media use is damaging to children's brains. But what is the best action to take?

Australia introduced their world-first social media ban last year. Now France and Norway are following suit.

Residents are sharing their stories and struggles with children and social media and are desperately calling for protection against these harms.

Whether you support a ban, favour tighter regulation, or think education and parental controls are the solution, join me to share your views.

I am also running a survey to collect views on this topic. Have your voice heard here:

<https://buff.ly/4kLVNYI>

## **Details**

Young people are very welcome, with those aged 13-16 accompanied by a parent/guardian.

Event location in Portishead will be emailed to you 48 hours before event date. Please check your spam folder and use a valid email address.

## **Accessibility**

The event is wheelchair accessible and has a disabled toilet. There is also a hearing loop. If you have any particular requirements, please do notify us in advance.

Want to know more about me or my work? Visit my website: <https://www.sadikalhassan.org/>

Kind regards,  
Sadik

[sadik.alhassan.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:sadik.alhassan.mp@parliament.uk)