



Backwell School Weekly Bulletin



Friday, 08 May 2026

Dear Parents, Carers, Families and Friends,

As Year 11 and Year 13 begin their exam season, I would like to wish them and you the very best of luck. You have prepared superbly for this moment through your hard work, commitment and resilience, and you should be proud of how far you have come. While these exams are important, they do not define who you are or the futures ahead of you — what matters most is that you approach each paper calmly, give it your best effort, and trust in your preparation. Please remember that support is always available: if you need advice, reassurance or help of any kind, contact your teachers or speak to a member of staff at school. Just as importantly, look after your wellbeing during this period — get plenty of sleep, take time for fresh air, eat well and make sure you have breakfast on exam days! We believe in you and wish you every success over the coming weeks.

I am delighted to share that, during Terms 3 and 4, our school was placed in the top 25% of schools nationally for attendance. This is a fantastic achievement and reflects the strong partnership between the school and yourselves. Thank you for prioritising attendance and supporting us so consistently — it truly makes a difference. Every day matters in school: research consistently shows that pupils with attendance above 95% achieve significantly better outcomes at GCSE than those with lower attendance. For example, pupils who miss just two weeks of school a year can fall behind by the equivalent of a whole grade across several subjects. Strong attendance supports learning, routines, wellbeing and confidence, and it plays a vital role in exam success and future opportunities. We are proud of this achievement and grateful for your continued support in ensuring students are in school, on time, every day possible.

I am delighted to celebrate the success of our students at the MFL Spelling Bee regional final, held at Kingswood School in Bath. Amy O (Spanish), Ellis P and Georgie P (both French) competed against schools from across the region in what was very tough competition, including a tense tie-break. Thanks to their hard work, commitment and impressive language skills, Georgie finished 2nd in French, Ellis 3rd in French, and Amy 4th in Spanish. As a result, all

three students have qualified for the national final at the University of Cambridge in June — a fantastic achievement. Congratulations to them all and to the MFL team for their support.



I would like to congratulate all the Year 7 boys who took part in the Revel Somerset Tournament over the recent Bank Holiday weekend. The U12 Nailsea and Backwell Rugby team competed in this two-day event, camping with their families and teammates at Mendip Basecamp. The boys produced an outstanding performance, finishing the tournament unbeaten to bring home two trophies. The team, made up of students from Backwell School, Nailsea School and Churchill School, not only excelled on the pitch but also demonstrated excellent sportsmanship throughout, showing support for one another, respect for their opponents and great pride in representing their schools. Their attitude and commitment made both coaches and families extremely proud, and this fantastic achievement is richly deserved.

I was delighted to hear that our U15 boys' tennis team enjoyed an outstanding day in the Avon Schools Tennis League on Thursday, securing three emphatic 6–0 victories against Clifton College, Clifton High School and QEH. Each fixture comprised four singles and two doubles matches, all of which were won by Backwell. The team was represented superbly by Isaac W and Brandon B (Year 10), Kenez G (Year 9) and Chris C (Year 8). With two matches still to play against Ralph Allen School and Beechen Cliff School, the boys are in a very strong position in the league – a truly *ace* achievement.



I am also delighted to share more success from our equestrian team. Holly M has double-qualified on her pony Dancer to represent Backwell at the National Show Jumping Championships in Stoneleigh this August, delivering superb double clears to place in the top three against strong competition. Meanwhile, Briony W achieved an outstanding result by winning a national Cotswold Cup one-day event with her horse Beryl, producing an excellent dressage test, double clear show jumping and a fault-free cross-country round in optimum time. A fantastic achievement from both riders — well done Holly and Briony!



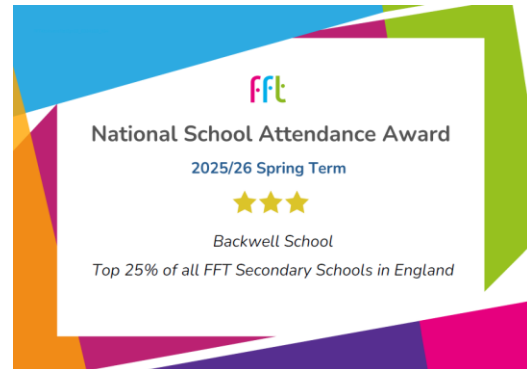
It was lovely to spend time watching our girls' rounders fixture against St Katherine's on Tuesday, with teams from Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 all taking part. The atmosphere throughout the afternoon was brilliant, with students showing great teamwork, enthusiasm and encouragement for one another across all age groups. The spirit and positivity on display, combined with plenty of fun and enjoyment of the game, made the fixture a real pleasure to watch. Well done to all involved for representing the school so positively. Please do continue to encourage your children to take full advantage of the wide range of extra-curricular opportunities available. These activities play a vital role in helping students develop confidence, teamwork and resilience, while also nurturing our school values of being curious — by exploring new interests and skills — and ambitious, by challenging themselves beyond the classroom and striving for personal excellence.



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



Will Penny
Headteacher



Photography Visitor

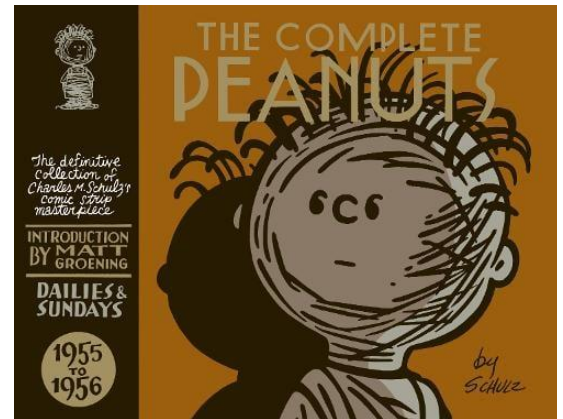
A Yr11 Photography student went above and beyond by bringing in her pony and trap to photograph on the field for her GCSE Photography project. She took her horse Tyson for a few laps around the school fields! Thanks to the Site Team and her dad for their support.



Book of the Week

The Complete Peanuts 1955-1956: Volume 3

The third volume in Canongate's acclaimed series, with a specially commissioned introduction from The Simpsons' Matt Groening. We travel into the mid-1950s as Linus learns to talk, Snoopy begins to explore his eccentricities, Lucy's unrequited crush on Schroeder takes final shape, and Charlie Brown becomes ... well, even more Charlie Brown-ish.



...as powerful a comic art-piece as anything out today...will delight Peanuts aficionados.

- *Observer*

...these timely re-issues illustrate not only the skill and subtle brilliance of his work but also the origins of the form beyond simple merriment. - *The List*

Beautifully designed ... One of the high-water marks of post-war popular culture. - *Daily Telegraph*

Canongate has had the brilliant wheeze of reprinting Charles Schultz's strip cartoon from the beginning in hardback volumes... - *Herald*

The Complete Peanuts is beautifully bound, a comprehensive resource and, with an index and introduction, a useful contextualisation of a modern legend. - *The Skinny*

Peanuts is unequivocally the most important comics strip in the history of graphic narrative. It is also the most deeply personal . . . This third gargantuan landscape hardback compendium offers in potent monochrome the fifth and sixth years in the life of Charlie Brown and Co: an ever-evolving bombardment of cruel insight and biting barbed hilarity . . . This volume offers the perfect example of a masterpiece in motion: comedy gold and social glue gradually metamorphosing in an epic of spellbinding graphic mastery which became part of the fabric of billions of lives, and which continues to do so long after its maker's passing - *Now Read This*

...in these first volumes (1950-54), we can already see what will appeal to 21st century readers. - *Sunday Times*



To all parents/carers of Year 11 & 13 Leavers students:

Please check your ParentPay accounts. If there are any outstanding debts/payments, they must be cleared and paid. Failure to do so, will prevent your child from receiving a Leavers' Ball ticket. If you have a credit balance remaining on your ParentPay dinner money account, please complete the following: [Dinner Money Refund or Transfer Request Form Summer 2026 – Fill in form](#) to organise a refund or transfer to a sibling's dinner money account. Any queries or issues, please contact the Finance team via their email: finance@backwellschool.net

Library Returns

With the last days for Year 11 and Year 13 students fast approaching, we ask that any resources that students have borrowed from the library be returned by Friday 22nd May. Failing to do so will result in a fine placed upon your child's ParentPay account, which will prevent your child from purchasing a ball ticket until it has been settled.

Term 5 - 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.

We will also be launching a consultation on the changes we will be making to the Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) curriculum from September 2026 to ensure that this aligns with both the updated statutory government guidance and our school values. Please see the [letter](#) on ways in which you can contribute your views.

What is happening in Term 5

Year 7 are looking at Health and Wellbeing including the importance of exercise for physical and mental health as well as the importance of a healthy diet and the impact of healthy choices on mental wellbeing.

Year 9 are also looking at Health and Wellbeing including revisiting what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and a healthy weight and exploring the links between an inactive lifestyle and ill health. **Year 10** will be discussing issues around the benefits of diversity within our society during their SMSC lessons. In tutor time they will be talking about Health and Wellbeing including the physical

and psychological consequences of addiction, the health risks associated with tobacco and the dangers of prescribed drugs.

Year 8 are talking about Internet Safety and harms including the similarities and differences between online and physical world, the risks of over-reliance on online relationships and how to identify harmful behaviours online and where to access support if you are the victim of this.

Sixth form

During Year 12 tutor times students are looking at Relationships, including Consent, Trust and Intimacy and Ending Relationships.

Quick Links

- [School Uniform and Equipment Guidance](#)
- [Financial Support](#)
- [Sixth form Bulletin](#)
- [Backwell School Careers Bulletin - May 2026](#)

Letters Home

- [Year 11 GCSE Exams Information](#)
- [Year 11 Celebration Ball – Monday 29 June 2026](#)

Dates for your Diary

Wednesday 13 May	French Exchange Parents' Information Evening – (17:30)
Thursday 14 May	Year 13 Leavers Day
Tuesday 19 May	RSHE Online Parent/Carer Consultation Meeting (via Teams @ 17:30)
Friday 22 May	Year 11 Leavers Day Term 5 Ends
Monday 01 June	Start of Term 6

Backwell School is looking for a
JUNIOR TEACHING ASSISTANT

PERMANENT CONTRACT

32.5 HOURS A WEEK

TERM TIME ONLY + 5 INSET DAYS

JG4 £26,403 TO £28,142

(PT £20,370 TO £21,712)

BE BOLD

**MAKE YOUR APPLICATION BY
MIDNIGHT MONDAY 18 MAY**

Backwell School is looking to appoint a Junior teaching Assistant on a permanent basis. Working with the Educational Support department, the post holder will work within a fabulous team that supports students with additional needs. Full job details and candidate pack, as well as the link to make an application, can be found via the

[Lighthouse Schools Partnership Trust vacancy page](#)



Message to our students from Dame Rachel de Souza - Children's Commissioner

Under the Children Act 2004, it is my role to promote the views and interests of children in England, and I have done this so far by conducting the two largest ever children's surveys: The Big Ask and The Big Ambition.

Now, for the first time, hundreds of thousands of children will be eligible to vote in the next general election, the biggest change to the franchise in half a century. Yet just one in five children say politicians listen to them. That's why I'm launching my final survey, The Big Future.

Students should complete the survey here:

<http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/thebigfuture>.

I want to make sure that I hear from as many children as possible, aged 0-18, from all backgrounds, in all schools and colleges, and in every part of the country.

I am asking children about the changes they want to see in their communities, their biggest concerns, and their hopes for the future. More than anything, I want to know what they think a good childhood should look like today.

I will be publishing my findings next year, and they will be used to advocate at the highest level for solutions that children want to see, to the problems that they tell me are most important to them.

Thank you for your support.