



Backwell School Weekly Bulletin



Friday, 15 May 2026

Dear Parents, Carers, Families and Friends,

On Thursday, we marked the final day for our Year 13 students—an important milestone that, for many, represents the culmination of seven years of hard work and dedication to learning at Backwell. With A Level examinations already underway, the day was a joyful celebration, as students arrived in fancy dress and came together one last time as a year group. Within that gathering were friendships built over many years—some spanning their entire journey from Reception and primary school through to Sixth Form.



We are incredibly proud of this year group and wish them every success for the future. In their final assembly, I spoke to them about the challenges that inevitably lie ahead and encouraged them to draw on what they have learned at Backwell: to embrace challenge and, as a former teacher of mine used to say, to always “stay in the fight” and never give up. As they move on, we hope they carry with them our core values of kindness, curiosity and ambition, while exploring the wider world beyond our corner of Somerset. Go out, make memories, and have an adventure. We very much look forward to hearing about their next chapters and hope to welcome them back in the future to inspire the next generation of Backwell students.



Last weekend a number of Year 9 and 10 students from Backwell proudly represented their local scout troops in the renowned Ten Tors Challenge on Dartmoor. The groups successfully completed an impressive 35-mile or 45-mile routes, navigating independently across the rugged landscape and camping overnight without any outside assistance. This remarkable achievement follows months of dedicated training throughout the winter, with early starts at dawn for long hikes and overnight expeditions designed to build both their experience and endurance. The challenge proved to be a true test of teamwork, resilience, courage, and navigational skill—and our students rose to it brilliantly. Facing Dartmoor’s demanding terrain and unpredictable weather, they set off early on Saturday morning and returned on Sunday afternoon, having pushed themselves both physically and mentally. Not only did they overcome the challenges of the route, but the experience also brought the team closer together. Notably, the Year 9 group were among the youngest groups taking part in this year’s event, making their accomplishment all the more impressive.



We are incredibly proud of Edward O, Oliver H, Sam R, Will C and Alfie C in Year 9, who took part in the Bristol 10km race on Sunday, raising vital funds for St Peter's Hospice, a charity close to their hearts. The boys embodied our school values of being ambitious and kind, pushing themselves around the city-centre course and achieving some seriously impressive finishing times. An outstanding effort and a wonderful example of our students making a positive difference.



As we head into the final week of term and look ahead to the bank holiday weekend and half term, it is worth remembering that every day really does count in education. Each day in school builds understanding, confidence and momentum, and even a single missed day can mean an important piece of learning is lost. This was powerfully reflected in a conversation I had this week with a Year 13 student, who spoke with great pride about having missed just one day of school in seven years—an extraordinary achievement. It is this consistency that deepens learning and opens doors to possibilities students may never have imagined. As we enter the final eight weeks of the school year, let's keep showing up, "stay in the fight," and fully embrace both the challenges and the joys that every day at school brings.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Will Penny'.

Will Penny
Headteacher

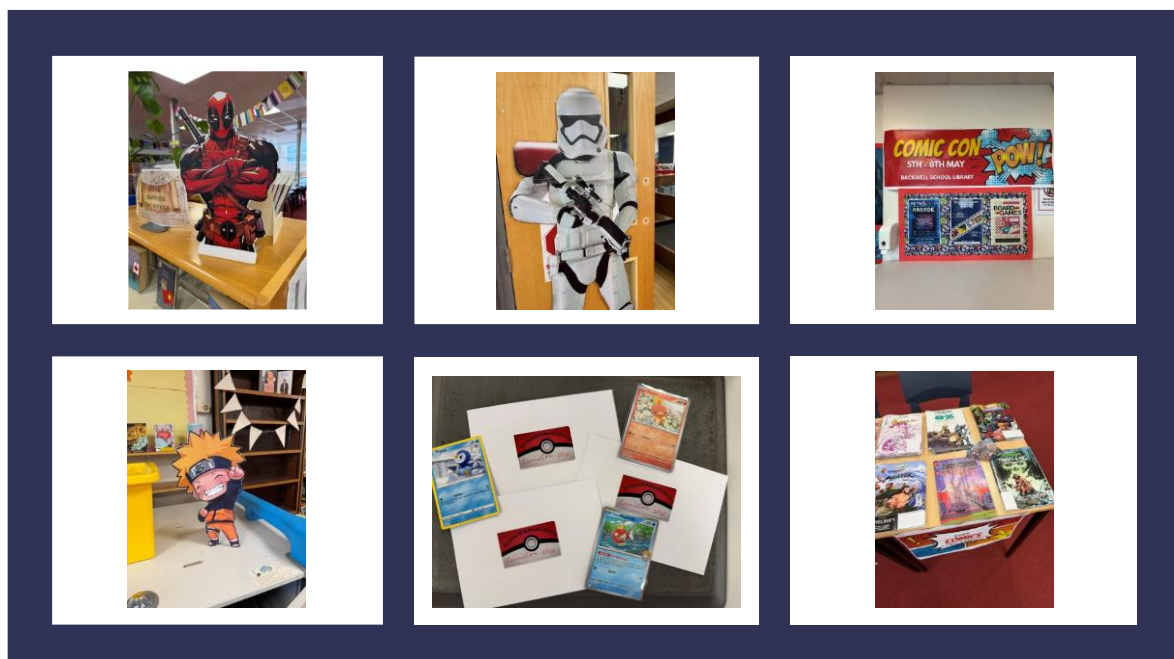
Backwell School Library Comic-Con

Last week, Backwell School Library hosted the school's first ever Comic-Con. During the week students engaged with multiple different activities including retro gaming, where students experienced games from the SNES, Gameboy, Atari and old arcade machines; and board games throughout the week which allowed students to try their hand at Top Trumps, Cluedo and Cranium.

Students also were treated to daily films, Spiderman - Across the Spider-verse, The Lego Batman Movie, The Pokémon Movie and The Dark Crystal. Student engagement soared this week, with many students attending the screenings who previously had not visited a weekly film club session.

Furthermore, students were able to grab free comics during the week, featuring their favourite characters like Spiderman, He-Man, Batman and Jem and the holograms. With comic and graphic novel readership rising over recent years, it was incredible to be able to provide free resources to students and introduce them to a different form of reading. This, paired with the immensely popular Pokémon card giveaway has resulted in the library issuing over 590 books in four days, a record. This event helped to highlight the increased use of the school library, with Backwell School going against the national trend of reduced readership, which has seen book borrowing increase across all year groups for the past three years.

The library team would like to say a big THANK YOU! to all students and staff who made the event possible and look forward to making the Comic-Con an annual event.

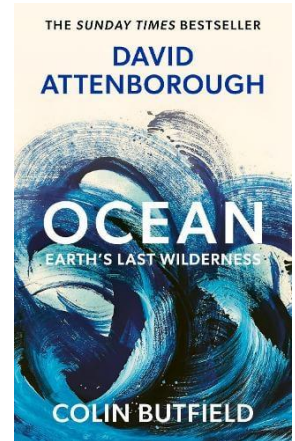


Book of the Week

To celebrate the 100th birthday of Sir David Attenborough

Ocean: Earth's Last Wilderness by Sir David Attenborough and Colin Butfield

From the icy seas of our poles to remote coral islands, David Attenborough has filmed in every ocean habitat on planet earth. Now, with long-term collaborator Colin Butfield, he shares the story of our last great wilderness - the one which shapes the land we live on, regulates our climate and creates the air we breathe.



Dive into eight unique saltwater habitats, swim through kelp forests, mangroves and coral reefs and down almost 11,000 feet to the deepest corners of the most unexplored ecosystem on our planet.

Experience a journey of wonder and discovery, populated by green turtles and blue whales; clownfish and bioluminescent jellyfish; the vampire squid and the 'head-less chicken monster' - a strange form of sea cucumber that lives at the very bottom of the ocean.

With the warmth, intelligence and awe that characterises all of David Attenborough's landmark series, Ocean shows us a world which is both desperately fragile yet astonishingly resilient, with an extraordinary capacity to repair itself. It's not too late to restore our most vital habitat. If we treat it with respect, our marine world will be even richer and more spectacular than we can imagine.

A book almost a century in the making, but one that has never been more urgently needed.



**Happy 100th
Birthday Sir David!**

Backwell School Summer Music Concert

Advance notice that our summer concert is on Tuesday, 16 June at 7pm. All of the usual choirs and ensembles and then something a bit more ambitious in the 2nd half where we've put together 10 (very different!) songs for solo singers with big band / orchestral backing.

Tickets will be available from midday on Tuesday, 19 May on ParentPay.



Backwell School Association Quiz Night – Friday, 19 June at 7:30pm

Back by popular demand... the BSA is running another quiz night. Put your team together (maximum of 6 humans) and fill in the form below to book your table. Tickets will be £5 per person, and we will set this up on Parentpay for you once you've signed up. The event has sold out in the last 2 years so book your table quickly to avoid disappointment! Over 18s only - there will be a bar!

Send any queries to Steve Clarke (sclarke@backwellschool.net)

[Backwell School Association Quiz Night - June 19th 2026 – Fill in form](#)



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

If arriving to school via the Leisure Centre gate at the rear of the school, please be reminded to arrive before or by 08:45, as the gate will shut promptly after this time.

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.

Year 11 Ball Tickets – Please make your ball ticket purchase as soon as possible, before it is too late! Tickets will be available to purchase on ParentPay until Midnight on Sunday, 17 May 2026. Tickets are £36.00 per student.

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.

Thank you to all those who have signed up to attend the parent/care consultation meeting (via MS Teams) on Tuesday, 19 May (5.45pm – 6.30pm). An invite and link to join this consultation meeting will be sent on to you on Tuesday morning.

RSHE Parent & Carer Consultation Survey

Please click on the link below to complete the RSHE Consultation Survey

[Click here to complete survey](#)

Please complete the survey by Friday 05 June 2026. This survey is anonymous and information will only be shared with staff members directly involved in the consultation process.

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](#)
- [Current Year 11 and 12 Students - Backwell School Sixth Form Ski Trip 2027](#)
- [Spanish Exchange 2026/2027](#)

Dates for your Diary

Tuesday 19 May	Year 7 Musical Theatre Final in SFT 13:30-15:10 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
Tuesday 02 June	Year 10 P&R and History Shepton Mallet trip (trip 1 of 3)
Wednesday 03 June	Year 10 P&R and History Shepton Mallet trip (trip 2 of 3)
Friday 03 June	Year 10 P&R and History Shepton Mallet trip (trip 3 of 3)
Monday 22 – Friday 26 June	Enrichment Week
Monday 29 June	7:00pm Year 11 Celebration Ball at Ashton Court Stadium (Ticketed Event)
Tuesday 30 June	Year 6 – 7 transition day at Backwell School



Mental Health Support Team (MHST)



Hi, I'm Hayley!
Your school's Education Mental
Health Practitioner



The MHST is a partnership between the NHS and Off The Record (OTR). We are an early intervention service that focuses on prevention and supporting young people's mental health. I attend Backwell Secondary School on a Tuesday. I work with young people and their families to deliver Low-Intensity Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) over a course of 6 to 8 sessions and can offer 1:1 or group work. I also support the Whole School Approach to mental health and wellbeing, creating and engaging in activities that increase awareness and reduce stigma.

Ways that I have supported Backwell Secondary School over the last year:

- Transition support for Year 7's worried about their move to secondary school
- Therapeutic group work for children struggling with Low Mood or Anxiety
- Working with key staff members
- Sharing mental health resources
- Signposting to appropriate organisations and services
- Assemblies
- Lunchtime Hubs



'It was easy to understand all the tasks and it was fun. I feel happier now.'

'Hayley tailored the sessions to our needs and was a great understanding ear each week.'

'Hayley was very supportive and understanding, I really appreciate it'

If you are a young person struggling with your mental health and you may be interested in having support from the MHST, please contact your class tutor or Martin Sills. Parents / Carers can make a referral too.

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](#)



SIXTH FORM ADMINISTRATOR

**Permanent, 30 to 37 hours a week
Monday to Friday
47 weeks a year (inc 6 days holiday
working & 5 INSETs
JG5 £25,777 (min pro rata salary)**

Closing date 3 June





Codingbug

INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION OF CODERS & MAKERS

Python Club Term 6

Learn to code in Python while building games, apps, and simulations. Develop problem-solving skills that boost creativity and confidence. Explore machine learning, and discover how to work with data and visualise it.

Python opens a door to many career opportunities.

Suitable for students in Years 7-11.

IN PERSON

5-6pm
WEDNESDAYS

Hangstones Pavilion
Stowey Road, Yatton,
BS49 4HS


HOW TO JOIN 

Scan the QR code to book
Limited spaces available

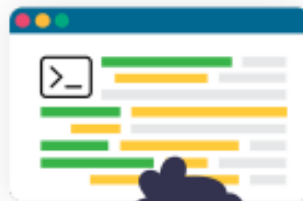


ONLINE

5-6pm
MONDAYS after school

HOW TO JOIN 

Scan the QR code to book




Python



VISIT OUR WEBSITE
codingbug.co.uk



 info@codingbug.co.uk

HAF NORTH SOMERSET
Holiday Activities & Food

#HAF2026

SAVE THE DATE

Bookings go live **Friday 12th June at 9am**

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

BEST START IN LIFE

Funded by UK Government

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

This summer we have a wide range of activities on offer across North Somerset, including a variety of sports activities, swimming sessions, family activities, farm visits, arts and crafts, gymnastics, teenage-specific activities, and sessions at Mendip Activity Centre, alongside many other exciting opportunities for children and young people.

HAF NORTH SOMERSET
Holiday Activities & Food