



# Backwell School Weekly Bulletin



Friday, 05 June 2026

Dear Parents, Carers, Families, and Friends,

Welcome back to the final half of the summer term. I hope you all enjoyed the half-term break and had the chance to spend some lovely time together as a family.

Fittingly, Monday was the UN Global Day of Parents – a day to recognise and appreciate the important role parents and carers play in providing love, care and support. It's a nice opportunity to pause and reflect on what being a parent or carer truly means. It's not just the big milestones, but all the small, everyday moments that quietly add up – the early mornings, the clean shoes, the gentle reminders, the listening ears and the constant encouragement.

Families come in all shapes and sizes, and that's something we're very proud to celebrate in our Backwell community. I would like to take a moment to say a heartfelt thank you to all our parents and carers – for the school runs, the freshly washed uniforms, the kind words, and the hugs in the tougher moments. It's those small, thoughtful things that make such a big difference.

I'm delighted to share more exciting news from the Backwell School Equestrian Team. After narrowly missing out in winning their previous event, on Saturday 23rd May the team showed real determination, as we took five riders and eight horses to the final direct qualifier for the National Championships. With large classes and strong competition, the riders showed exceptional teamwork at every height, supporting one another through some challenging rounds. I'm thrilled to report that they secured victory in all three team events. Clem E joined the team for the first time, Hattie M successfully qualified teams on both of her rides, and Lola B was undoubtedly the standout performer, riding all three of her horses. As a result, all active members of the Backwell team have now qualified for the National Championships at Stoneleigh, where they will proudly represent the school.

This week, our Year 9 students took part in the Blunt Truth knife crime awareness sessions, delivering a powerful and thought-provoking message about the realities and consequences of carrying a knife. The sessions were both informative and impactful, helping students to understand the serious legal, personal and social implications of knife crime, as well as the devastating effect it can have on individuals, families and communities. Delivered in an engaging and age-appropriate way, the talks encouraged students to reflect on their choices, challenge misconceptions, and build the confidence to make safe, positive decisions. We are grateful for the opportunity to provide such an important learning experience as part of our ongoing commitment to safeguarding and student wellbeing.

Year 10 students had a highly engaging and meaningful visit to Shepton Mallet Prison as part of their GCSE studies in both Philosophy and Religion and History this week. The trip brought classroom learning to life, offering powerful insights into the realities of the criminal justice system, punishment, and rehabilitation—key themes in both subjects. Students were able to explore the historical development of prisons while also reflecting on the social, moral and personal consequences of crime, directly linking to their studies around decision-making, responsibility and the law. These trips undoubtedly deepen understanding and strengthen their preparation for their GCSE courses and are experiences we uniquely offer here at Backwell.

Continuing the theme of trips and also as we build up towards Enrichment Week, I would like to wish all of our Year 10 French students and the accompanying staff the very best as they embark on their exchange visit to Dinan in Northern France next week. This is a fantastic opportunity to bring their learning to life, building confidence in their spoken French and deepening their understanding in preparation for their GCSE studies. Beyond the classroom, the experience will immerse them in French culture, from daily life to traditions, while also giving them the chance to form meaningful and lasting friendships with their exchange partners—connections that can last a lifetime. Backwell is particularly proud to be unique among local schools in offering exchange programmes across all three of our taught languages, providing our students with rich and authentic international experiences. We hope they embrace every moment, represent the school with pride, and return with both enhanced language skills and memories that will stay with them for years to come.

I would also like to celebrate the outstanding A Level Artwork that I had the privilege of seeing that was presented for moderation this week. While we are unable to share images due to exam regulations, we want to recognise the exceptional talent, creativity and

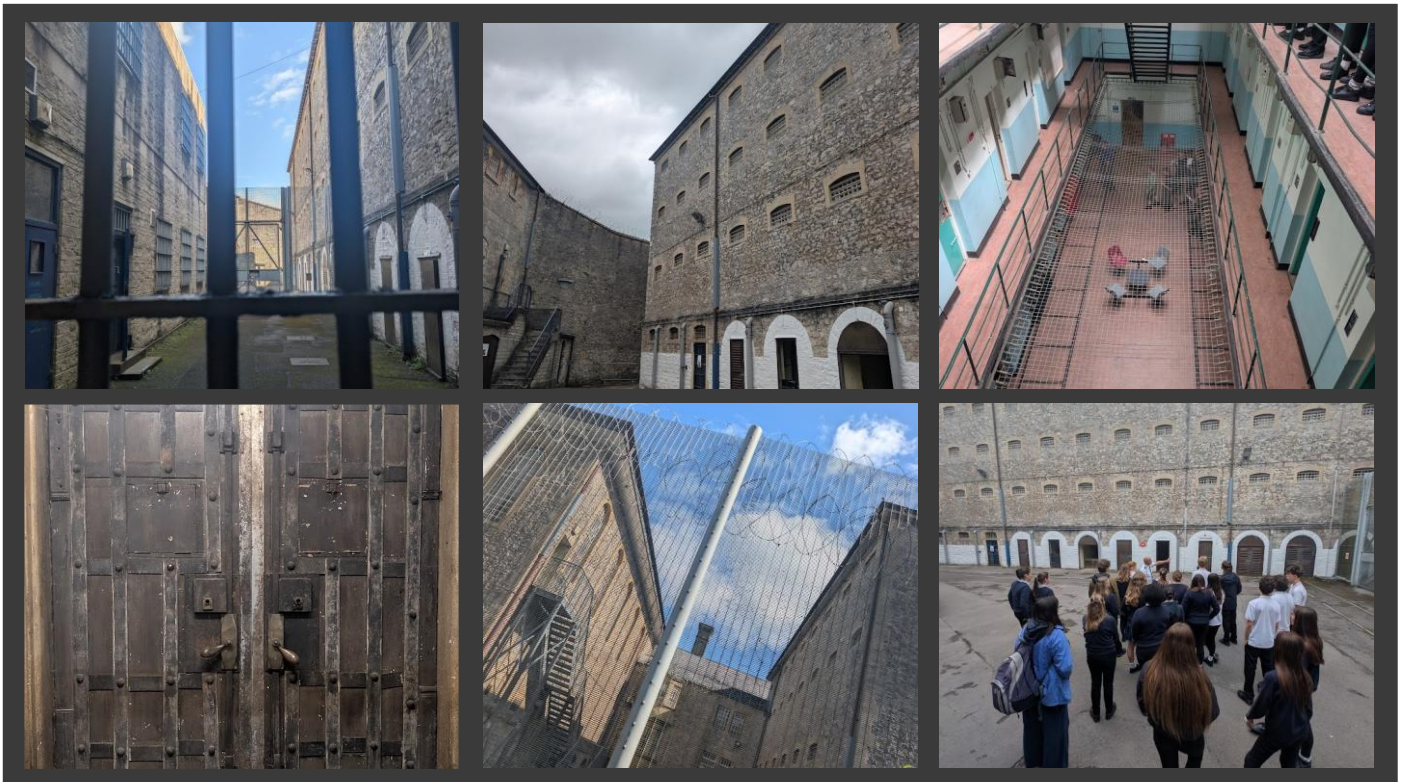
authenticity evident in the students' work. Each piece reflects not only technical skill, but also significant dedication, thought and personal expression developed over time. I would like to congratulate our students for their commitment and hard work and extend my thanks to the Art team for their expert guidance and support in bringing such a fabulous body of work to fruition.

Finally, I would like to wish our Year 11 and Year 13 students—and the families supporting them—the very best as they continue through their formal exam period. Keep working hard, maintain your routines, and stay focused; your dedication and resilience will pay off, and it will all be worth it in the end. As a reminder: *“Perseverance is not a long race; it is many short races one after the other.”*

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



**Will Penny**  
**Headteacher**

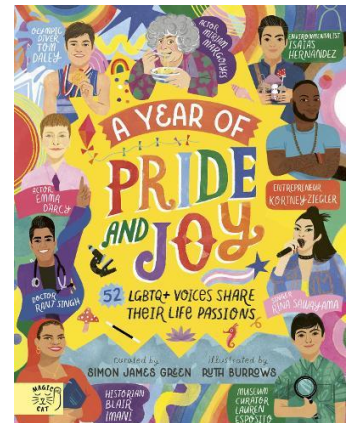


A few pictures from the Year 10 P&R and History trip to Shepton Mallet Prison

## Book of the Week

### **A Year of Pride and Joy by Simon James Green and Ruth Burrows**

An uplifting anthology of joyful contributions from 52 contemporary LGBTQ+ voices, including BAFTA-winning actor Miriam Margolyes, Olympic gold medallist Tom Daley and NHS paediatrician and TV presenter Dr Ranj Singh.



- Discover the joy of old films with actor Stephen Fry, then find out what his favourite films are
- Find the joy of magic with magician Nathan Jones, then learn his vanishing coin magic trick
- Experience the joy of drawing comics with cartoonist Lewis Hancox, then learn how to draw your own comic strip
- Read about the joy of dancing with TV presenter Dr Ranj Singh, then discover six dazzling dance moves from the Strictly floor
- Learn about the joy of swimming with actor Emma D'Arcy, then read her guide to swimming in different ways on different days

Whether you read an entry a week, or dip into it whenever you are feeling in need of joy, this is a book to treasure all year round.

A donation to Stonewall will be made for every copy sold. Stonewall is a charity who promote equality and human rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people.

Perfect for readers aged 7+:

- A joyous tribute to LGBTQ+ achievement today, bringing together 'own voices' to share their life passion. The laughter, joy and power in these pages will leave readers feeling hopeful about their future
- Written by award-winning author of books for children and young adults, Simon James Green
- Divided into months, each joyful piece is tied to a particular season, event, international day or week, and sits alongside a non-fiction component.

# SUMMER READING Challenge

@Backwell School Library

**TAKE PART IN THE SUMMER 2026 READING CHALLENGE**

- 1. COLLECT THE SUMMER CHALLENGE WORKSHEET FROM THE LIBRARY**
- 2. READ OVER THE SUMMER**
- 3. TAKE A PICTURE OF YOU READING**
- 4. SUBMIT YOUR WORK TO THE LIBRARY BY FRIDAY 11<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER**

**PRIZES FOR: BEST BOOK REVIEW  
BEST READING PHOTO  
BEST BOOK BINGO SHEET**



## Clubs

There will be the opportunity for a fresh intake of students to sign up to Graffiti Club, Clay Club and Photography Club for Term 6. Please sign up on ParentPay. The payment item will go live at 4pm today and will be on a first-come, first-served basis.

Please note there is no Year 7 Table Tennis Club in Term 6. Thank you to our volunteer Table Tennis England coach Mr Fitzpatrick for this year's sessions!

Clubs' schedules can be found on the website:

<https://www.backwellschool.net/page/?title=Clubs+and+Courses&pid=36>

## Year 9 Enrichment Week

Thank you to the parents and carers who joined us for the Osmington Bay information evening on Wednesday evening. For those who couldn't make it, we have saved Mr Sill's presentation on the website – please take a few minutes to review the slides as there is important information about behaviour expectations.

We have also compiled a Frequently Asked Question documents based on some of the questions asked, which also includes some important reminders.

The following documents have been saved for you here:

### [Year 9 Enrichment Week 2026](#)

- Y9 Enrichment Week Parents/Carers Info Evening Presentation
- Osmington Bay - Frequently Asked Questions
- PGL Kit List

**The BSA will be holding a uniform sale on the 1  
July**

**4-6pm.**

**Details to follow.**

**If you have any branded uniform, you would like  
to donate (trousers not required!) please bring  
them to school reception.**

## **Additional Music Evening – Tuesday, 07 July at 7pm**

With the sheer number of bands and soloists who want to perform at our events, we've put on an additional music concert for Tuesday, 07 July at 7pm. This will give opportunities to more students who want to get up and showcase what they can do.

Students wanting to get involved can audition a piece to a member of the music department in the next two weeks.

## **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 2<sup>nd</sup> half where we've put together 10 (very different!) songs for solo singers with big band / orchestral backing.



Tickets available via your ParentPay account

## **Backwell School Expressive Arts Showcase**

This will be held on Tuesday, 09 June with two performances, 4:00pm and 5:30pm in the Sixth Form Theatre. Tickets are £2.50 each and are available via your ParentPay account. These are limited, so please purchase as soon as possible.

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

Thank you to those who have signed up to the BSA Quiz Night on 19<sup>th</sup> June. We still have some places left to fill so get in quickly if you want to enter a team. If you want to get involved but don't have a team of 6 people, we can bring some people together to make new quiz friends!

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



## Year 11 leavers

If you have any PE uniform/kit that you no longer want/require, we will gladly accept donations (especially girls branded PE tops). We also welcome any old trainers/ football boots/rugby boots in all sizes! Students are welcome to drop off in the PE Dept when they next have an exam. Many thanks in advance.



## SPORTS AWARDS EVENING

As we begin preparations for our Sports Awards Evening in July, we would love to celebrate the achievements of our students who are performing at a high (representative) level outside of school. If your child competes at county, regional, national or higher level, please could you send in any relevant information and, if possible, photos showcasing their involvement. We look forward to recognising and celebrating the successes of our elite performers. Please email [mailbox@backwellschool.net](mailto:mailbox@backwellschool.net) with any information.



## Term 6 - 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.

We have now finished our consultation on the changes we will be making to the Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) curriculum from September 2026. We have been delighted with the depth and breadth of responses, and have had feedback from over 150 Parents, and will now be using this feedback to further develop our taught curriculum to ensure that it aligns with both the updated statutory government guidance and our school priorities and values.

### What is happening in Term 6:

**Year 7** - are continuing to look 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 8** – are talking about Healthy Lifestyle Choices, and the influences upon this, including how to ascertain whether information is accurate and unbiased.

**Year 9** - will be looking at Basic First Aid. They have also all done some work on Knife Crime this week with Blunt Truth.

**Year 10** - in tutor time will be focussing on Preparing for Work Experience Week and then following up on what they learn during that week. In SMSC Year 10 will be looking at the British Value of Diversity – focussing on diversity in society, preventing extremism and the rights to protest

### **Sixth form:**

During Year 12 tutor times learning is centred around careers - job applications, negotiation skills, resilience skills. The centrepiece is Future Plans week (during enrichment week) where they will be focussed on careers/university related activity.

## Quick Links

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

## Letters Home

- [Year 9 Enrichment Week - 22 June to 26 June 2026](#)
- [Year 8 Enrichment Week – 22 June to 26 June 2026](#)
- [Year 7 Enrichment Week – 22 June to 26 June 2026](#)
- [Year 10 Parents/Carers Evening - Thursday 02 July](#)

## Dates for your Diary

<b>Tuesday 09 June 2026</b>	Expressive Arts Showcase 4:00pm and 5:30pm in SFT
<b>Tuesday 16 June</b>	Summer Music Concert 7:00pm in DTH
<b>Thursday 18 June</b>	Year 12 Parents' and Carers' Evening (online)
<b>Monday 22 – Friday 26 June</b>	Enrichment Week / Y10 Work Experience / Y12 Future Plan Week
<b>Monday 29 June</b>	Year 11 Celebration Ball at Ashton Court Stadium ( <b>Ticketed Event</b> )
<b>Tuesday 30 June</b>	Year 6 – 7 transition day at Backwell School
<b>Thursday 02 July</b>	Year 10 Parents' and Carers; Evening (online)
<b>Tuesday 07 July</b>	Additional Music Evening 7:00pm in DTH

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

#HAF2026

## SAVE THE DATE

Bookings go live **Friday 12<sup>th</sup> 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**

## Important Update About Free School Meals (FSM) and HAF Eligibility

We wanted to share an important update about changes to Free School Meals (FSM) that will begin from September 2026, and what this means for the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme.

From September 2026, there will be two different types of Free School Meals eligibility:

- **Targeted FSM** – this is the current eligibility criteria used for HAF programmes.
- **Expanded FSM** – this is a new, wider category that will allow more children and young people to receive free school meals in school.

## What does this mean for HAF?

Although more children may become eligible for free school meals through the new Expanded FSM category, the government has confirmed that HAF eligibility will continue to be linked to **Targeted FSM only**.

This means:

- Some children may receive free school meals at school but may not automatically qualify for HAF-funded holiday activities.
- Children who meet the Targeted FSM criteria will continue to be eligible for HAF.

## Why is there a difference?

The HAF programme is designed to support children and young people experiencing the highest levels of financial disadvantage. The government has therefore decided to keep HAF linked to the existing Targeted FSM criteria.

## Could this effect families already accessing HAF?

Potentially, yes. Some families who previously qualified for HAF through temporary protections under the old FSM system may no longer automatically qualify from September 2026 if their circumstances have changed. We understand this may be worrying or disappointing for some families and we are committed to supporting families as much as possible during this transition.

## What happens next?

Schools and local authorities will begin using a new system from June 2026 to check whether children qualify under Targeted FSM or Expanded FSM. We will continue to provide updates and clear guidance as more information becomes available. We will also continue to explore how local discretionary support may help families who may be affected by these changes.

If you have any questions, please contact your school or local HAF team.



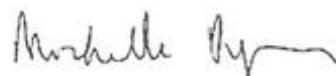
# Thank you

Backwell School / Sixth Form Students

Thank you for raising  
**£1,081.98**

From your production of Footloose Fundraising

**Michelle Dyson CB**  
Chief Executive, Alzheimer's Society



**Alzheimer's  
Society**

It will take a society to beat dementia



Alzheimer's Society is a registered charity in England and Wales (296645); the Isle of Man (1128) and operates in Northern Ireland.

## Silver STEM Futures: University Pathway

STEM Futures: University Pathway (previously known as Virtual Insight into University) is a comprehensive virtual experience that helps students explore STEM degrees, apprenticeships, and related careers. It offers access to university life, STEM projects from top UK universities and global companies, first-year lectures, and live sessions with academics, admissions tutors, apprentices, employers, and current students.



*"I absolutely loved the course. It has helped me discover my true passion, and love which I hope to pursue in the future."*

### Course topics

- Hear from STEM professionals at top UK companies, from early-career apprentices to senior leaders and recruiters, about their journeys, inspirations, and projects.
- Join exclusive live Q&A sessions with STEM professionals, admissions officers, students, and professors in a supportive environment.
- Get expert advice on university applications, interviews, admissions tests, student finance, and support services.
- Take part in hands-on STEM activities like bridge building, creating an academic poster, and flight experiments.

100%

of students increased their awareness of STEM opportunities available to them

92%

of students felt the skills and knowledge gained from the course would have a positive impact on their future studies or career.

### Course requirements and registering your interest

This course is open to all students aged 16+ who have a genuine interest in STEM subjects and is suitable for all abilities. To apply, please visit our website [here](#).



www.etrust.org.uk



COATES	HOUSE
NAILSEA	

WEDNESDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> JULY 7 - 9 PM



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