BACKWELL SCHOOL WEEKLY BULLETIN

FRIDAY 12 JUNE 2026

Dear Parents, Carers, Families, and Friends,

It has been another vibrant and inspiring week at Backwell, with the Performing Arts Showcase delighting audiences, our ongoing French exchange broadening horizons, and impressive success in area sports highlighting the talent across our community. Above all, it is the continued commitment to learning both in and out of classrooms every day that truly defines the spirit and energy of our school.

Next week marks the final stretch of the examination season, and I would like to commend all of our Year 11 and 13 students for the resilience, focus, and quiet determination they have shown. Exams are as much a test of character as they are of knowledge, and it has been a privilege to see our young people rise to the occasion with such maturity – I am so proud of all of them and thank you, their support system at home, for all of your patience, encouragement and support over the past 6 weeks.

Thank you to all of you who took the time to complete our Lighthouse Schools Partnership Trust parent survey; your feedback is invaluable in helping us continue to shape and improve our school. We were particularly pleased to see strong recognition of our dedicated and hardworking staff, with many of you highlighting the quality of teaching and the genuine care shown for students' success. It was also encouraging to read such positive comments about our pastoral support, with students feeling safe, well-supported, and known as individuals. Parents value the wide range of opportunities we offer—from clubs and trips to enrichment activities—which help provide a well-rounded experience beyond the classroom, alongside a strong sense of community where pupils feel included and socially supported.

I also greatly appreciate the constructive feedback provided, which highlights important areas for development and will help guide our next steps as a school. Some parents shared concerns around communication and consistency, and we recognise the importance of ensuring families feel well-informed and confident in the quality of provision across all

subjects. There were also thoughtful reflections on levels of academic challenge, and the consistency of support for pupils, all of which we are continuing to review carefully to ensure every student can thrive. Importantly, we welcome comments about responsiveness and organisation, as they reinforce our commitment to listening, improving systems, and ensuring that concerns are acted upon. We see this feedback as a valuable opportunity to strengthen what we do, and we are fully committed to addressing these areas in a positive and purposeful way. Overall, it was heartening to see that many families view the school as a supportive and effective environment, and we are grateful for your continued trust and partnership as we build on these strengths.

This week, our Year 12 geographers enjoyed a highly successful three-day field trip to West Somerset, an invaluable experience that will underpin both their NEA investigations and their examined studies in the year ahead. Immersed in real-world environments, students were able to bring classroom learning to life—collecting data, testing hypotheses, and deepening their understanding of key geographical processes in a way that simply cannot be replicated in school. The trip not only developed their practical and analytical skills but also reinforced the relevance and application of their studies, highlighting the true value of fieldwork in building confidence, independence, and a deeper appreciation of the subject.

Tuesday's Year 7–10 Performing Arts Showcase was a truly memorable evening, celebrating the creativity, confidence, and talent of our students while powerfully reflecting our school value of being ambitious. The programme featured an impressive range of performances, from thoughtful interpretive pieces—including a powerful Year 8 take on *Lord of the Flies* and a lively Year 10 *Mean Girls* adaptation—to engaging scenes from *Sherlock Holmes*. The audience was also treated to a series of energetic and polished dance routines from our after-school clubs, alongside the winning Year 7 drama performance developed through their work across the year. Each performance demonstrated students stepping beyond their comfort zones, striving for excellence, and proudly showcasing their achievements—bringing learning to life and embodying the ambition we champion as a school.

Our Year 7 to 10 students enjoyed outstanding success at the North Somerset athletics championships on Tuesday winning the overall competition, whilst achieving podium finishes in almost every event—a remarkable accomplishment that reflects both their talent and determination. In their respective year groups, the Year 7 boys and Year 8 boys finished first overall, our Year 7 girls, Year 8 girls and Year 9 girls all finished second with the Year 10 girls finishing third. Beyond the results themselves, it was the dedication, effort, and exemplary attitude of our pupils that truly stood out, with several other schools commenting on their commitment and sportsmanship throughout the day. The event provided a powerful illustration of our values in action, with students demonstrating ambition in striving to perform at their very best, alongside kindness in the way they supported and encouraged one another while competing against some of the strongest athletes from across Somerset.

Staying with sport, it's fantastic to see Backwell alumnus Alfie Jones representing Canada at the Football World Cup. He kicks off his campaign this evening against Bosnia—a proud moment for both Alfie and our school community. Alfie, who now plays for Middlesbrough in the EFL Championship, is a brilliant example of what can be achieved through determination and ambition. His journey is a reminder to all our students to *dream big*—because anything truly is possible. We wish Alfie every success tonight and throughout the tournament as Canada goes on to face Qatar and Switzerland, aspiring to reach the latter stages. Good luck, Alfie—we'll be cheering you on!

Finally, with the weather set to turn very warm again this weekend, we would like to remind students and families of the importance of water safety. Entering cold water—such as local quarries, rivers, or lakes—can be extremely dangerous, even in hot weather, due to cold water shock and hidden hazards. In tutorial this week, we have shared clear guidance with students: if they get into difficulty in water, they should remain calm, float on their back to regain control of their breathing, and signal for help. Tragically, there have been a number of serious incidents nationally during recent warm spells, and we would greatly appreciate parents reinforcing this message at home to ensure all of our young people stay safe while enjoying the sunshine.

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

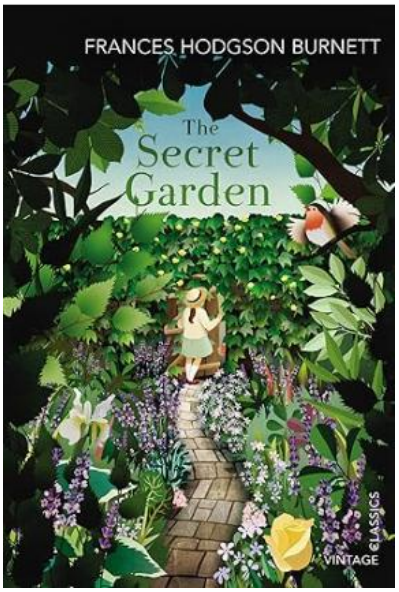
Will Penny
Headteacher

Sports Awards Evening - 2026

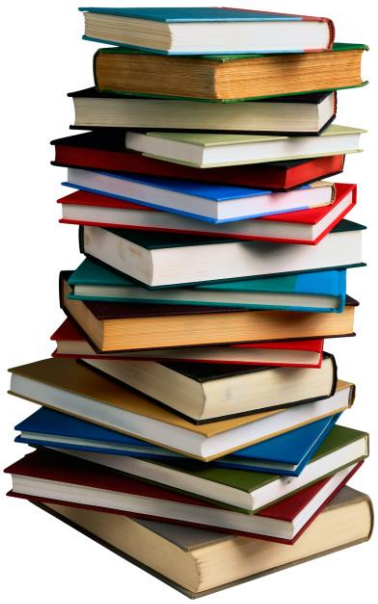
The 2026 Sports Awards Evening will take place on **Thursday, 16 July 2026**. Invitation letters will be sent out towards the end of next week to students who have made a significant contribution to extra-curricular sport. These letters will include full details on how to purchase tickets.

BACKWELL SCHOOL SPORTS AWARDS EVENING

Book of the week
The Secret Garden - Frances Hodgson Burnett



Mary finds the door to a secret garden, neglected and hidden for years. When she decides to restore the garden in secret, the story becomes a charming journey into the places of the heart, where faith restores health, flowers refresh the spirit, and the magic of the garden, coming to life anew, brings health to Colin and happiness to Mary.



Year 10 Anatomy Drawing in Art

Thanks to the Science department for letting our Yr10 Art and Photography students use hearts as drawing references as well as for macro photography. Some of the hearts had been dissected by the same students who ended up drawing and photographing them, and they could describe them scientifically while developing their art skills.
Thanks also to the Food department for letting us store the hearts in their fridge!

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 week.

Backwell School Summer Music Concert

Our summer concert is this 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 available via your ParentPay account

Students involved will need to be in school by 6:30pm please

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 19th June.
There are still tables available for this event! It would be great to have a few more teams to add to the competition (and the fundraising of course).
As well as the quiz itself, there's a raffle with some splendid prizes.

Backwell School Association Quiz Night - June 19th 2026 – Fill in form

??????????????

Year 11 and 13 leavers

If you have a credit balance remaining on your ParentPay dinner money account, please complete the following form, before ***Tuesday 30 June 2026:*** ***Dinner Money Refund or Transfer Request Form Summer 2026 – Fill in form***

Please fill in this 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

SWAP YOUR CALCULATOR FOR A BAR OF CHOCOLATE!

Once you are finished with your old calculator, bring it to the maths office to swap it for a bar of chocolate before Friday 3rd July (Y12 transition day!).

Do not swap if you plan on doing one of the following subjects:

- A Level Maths*
- Core Maths*
- Biology
- Physics
- Chemistry
- Psychology
- Geography

*You MUST HAVE a special calculator to study both A Level and Core Maths. Either the Casio FX-991CW (it has a GOLD button) or the old-style Casio Classwiz 991ex. So you may want to swap your old one.

Crisis and Resilience Fund Vouchers (Formerly known as Household Support Fund)

North Somerset Council have now confirmed the issuing of a One Off £65 Evoucher (Wonde) for all qualifying free school meals children attending school.
Therefore, later this month, the school will issue a **one-off** voucher of £65 FSM Evoucher (Wonde), based on the free school meals report sent to us by North Somerset Council.
Vouchers will be issued by email and only to those students who qualify.

Lost Property – Glasses!

Student Services have several pairs of glasses that have been handed in. If your young person has lost a pair, please direct them to us for collection.

Tall Ships Expedition

Year 12 student, Sam spent his half term break sailing from Portsmouth to Poole and back with the Tall Ships Youth Trust, which is funded by our local Rotary Club.
Sam, who had no previous sailing experience, said it was a "fantastic experience, I learnt a lot and met other young people from all over the country".
Well done Sam for getting out of your comfort zone... and thank you to the Nailsea and Backwell Rotary club for providing this opportunity now for some years to our sixth form students.
Two more Year 12 students are due to set sail in the summer holidays.

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 - if you would like to discuss any aspect of our Personal Development Curriculum in more detail.

All students have taken part in tutor time sessions about Water Safety and how to remain safe around open water areas including streams, lakes, canals, rivers and our coastal areas. This is particularly important for young people in times of sunny, warm weather.

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 last 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

Dates for your Diary

Tuesday 16 June	Summer Music Concert 7:00pm in DTH
Thursday 18 June	Year 12 Parents' and Carers' Evening (online)
Monday 22 – Friday 26 June	Enrichment Week / Y10 Work Experience / Y12 Future Plan Week
Tuesday 30 June	Year 6 – 7 transition day at Backwell School
Thursday 02 July	Year 10 Parents' and Carers; Evening (online)
Tuesday 07 July	Additional Music Evening 7:00pm in DTH
Wednesday 22 July	Last Day of Term 6 Students finish school at 1.15pm. School buses will depart at 1.30pm

BSA SECOND HAND UNIFORM SALE

BACKWELL SCHOOL

Wednesday 1 July
4 - 6pm
6th Form Theatre
Cash or card

Donations gratefully received in Reception anytime and up to Friday 26 June

BRANDED ITEMS ONLY - NO TROUSERS PLEASE
CLEAN & GOOD CONDITION

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.

HAF NORTH SOMERSET Holiday Activities & Food

For families with primary school children…

Join the Holiday Fun at Backwell School this Summer! Book by Sunday, 19 July to receive 20% off using the code: Early Booker.

We have loved seeing so many children come along to Shine Holiday Clubs and look forward to welcoming more of you.

For children at any school from Reception – Year 6, days run from 09:00-15:30 with (early and late hours) available if you need them.

There are loads of different activities such as; Mega Mash Up, Pop Dance, Creative, Cookery, Gymnastics with Cheer, Cricket and Football Fun Days - there really is a day your child will love.
Shine are Ofsted Registered so you can pay via Childcare Vouchers and the Tax-Free Childcare Scheme.

Click here:
Shine Holiday Clubs | Sports and creative activities

to see what's on and use the code
Early Booker to get 20% off.
See you at Shine!

Shine HOLIDAY CLUBS

Shine
HOLIDAY CLUBS
STEP INTO SUMMER
With Shine Holiday Clubs
BACKWELL SCHOOL
Book Now
20% OFF
MyShine.co.uk
Use Code:
Early Booker
Offer ends 19/07/2026 *Conditions apply