BACKWELL SCHOOL WEEKLY BULLETIN

FRIDAY 02 October 2026

Dear Parents, Carers, Families, and Friends,

I am incredibly proud start this bulletin by sharing a wonderful example of kindness, compassion and community spirit shown by two of our students. Earlier this week, a local resident contacted the school after witnessing an elderly lady collapse in the street. Two of our Year 13 students, Noah and Ted, immediately stopped to help, assisting the lady, helping to manage traffic where necessary, and remaining at the scene until the ambulance arrived. The resident wanted to ensure that the school knew what a credit they were, describing them as “very helpful and kind.” While we are always proud of our students' achievements, it is moments like these, when no one is watching and there is no expectation of recognition, that truly reflect their character and values. Noah and Ted demonstrated maturity, selflessness and genuine care for others, and we would like to congratulate them on their actions. They are a wonderful example of the young people we are proud to teach at Backwell School.

A message I continually reinforce to students is that every day in school matters. Our latest GCSE data shown in the table demonstrates a clear link between attendance and achievement, with students who attended school regularly (90%+) achieving an average GCSE grade of 5.67, compared to 4.39 for those with attendance between 80% and 89.9%, and 1.42 for students with attendance below 80%. This means that students with strong attendance achieved, on average, more than four grades higher in each subject than those who were persistently absent. These figures highlight the enormous impact that attending school every day can have on future success. We are incredibly grateful to parents and carers for their support in ensuring students attend school regularly, punctually and ready to learn, helping every young person maximise their potential and achieve the very best outcomes. If you are having any issues with getting your child to attend school in the morning this, please contact their Head of House or Year and we will work together to build a plan to rectify this. In short, if students attend school every day, they will achieve wonderful things at Backwell whilst opening exciting doors for their future.

Attendance Group	GCSE Average Grade
0 – 79.9%	1.42
80 – 89.9%	4.39
90-100%	5.67
All	5.25

On Wednesday afternoon our Under 16 girls' rugby XV put in a phenomenal performance despite narrowly going down 27-19 to a hugely powerful Oasis Academy Brislington side. The game was played at a tremendous standard, with both teams producing some outstanding rugby. In fact, Mr Newell described it as "*the best game of U16 girls' rugby ever seen at Backwell*"; praise that was richly deserved. The match was packed with flowing attacking rugby, courageous tackling and relentless determination from start to finish. What made the performance even more impressive was that many of our players were competing a year above their age group. They showed incredible resilience and maturity against strong opposition, never taking a step backwards and competing for every ball until the final whistle. There were standout performances all over the pitch, with several players catching the eye of Bristol Schools selectors who were in attendance. While the result didn't quite go our way, the quality of rugby, team spirit and commitment on display made everyone associated with the team immensely proud. It was a fantastic advert for girls' rugby at Backwell and an exciting glimpse of what this talented group can achieve in the future.



It was fantastic to hear that our Year 7 girls made a dream start to their netball journey in Backwell colours, securing a superb 40-2 victory over local rivals St Katherine's in their very first fixture for the school. The girls have trained exceptionally hard since the start of term, and their commitment, teamwork and determination were clear for all to see. Every player contributed to an outstanding team performance, demonstrating excellent skill and sportsmanship throughout the match. A special congratulations goes to Daisy W, who was deservedly voted Players' Player of the Match by her teammates for her outstanding contribution. Well done to all involved on a fantastic achievement. We look forward to following the team's progress and celebrating many more successes throughout the season!



Our new Dining Centre continues to go from strength to strength, and it has been fantastic to see so many students making use of the wide range of food on offer throughout the school day. Breakfast is available from 8:15am, with free porridge, fresh fruit, hash browns and pastries helping students start the day ready to learn. At breaktime, there is a variety of snacks and hot food available, including popular favourites such as pizza, paninis and cakes. At lunchtime, the freshly prepared meals produced in our new kitchen are proving more popular than ever. As the weather begins to turn more autumnal, we would encourage students to take advantage of the excellent hot food options available each day, from delicious lasagne on Tuesdays and traditional roast dinners on Wednesdays to the ever-popular Fish and Chip Friday. The food is fresh, wholesome, nutritious and represents excellent value, ensuring that students are well-fuelled for a successful day of learning.

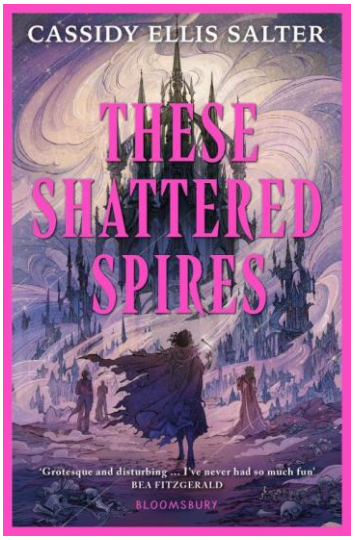
Thank you once again for your continued support. It is this shared commitment to our students and to one another that lies at the heart of our community and the spirit behind the words I so often say and write: *We Are Backwell*.

Will Penny
Headteacher



MFL staff enjoying our recent European Day of Languages

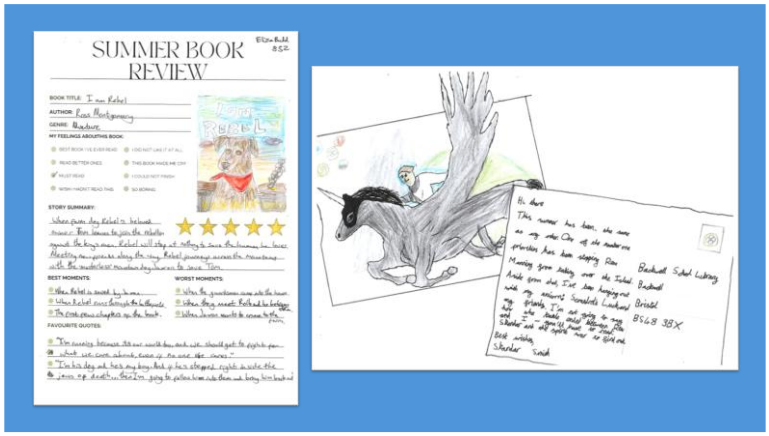
Book of the Week



These Shattered Spires by Cassidy Ellis Salter
In a rotten and bloody world, four magical rivals are forced to work together to avoid certain death in a deadly competition. Gothic, visceral and utterly compelling, These Shattered Spires is the first book in the Wyrdos trilogy.
Beneath a tooth-filled sky, the world rots.
At the heart of the decaying world is Fourspires Castle, home to arcanists from across the four magical disciplines: bone, blood, botany and stone.
When the king is assassinated, chaos erupts. To seize the crown, arcanists and their human familiars are dragged into the Slaughter - a deadly competition, where survival means killing and death is the only escape.
Amidst the bloodshed, four rival familiars must work together … Taro, a bone witch still obsessed with her ex. Nixie, a botanical familiar with a ghost living in her bedroom. Elliot, a cursed and vengeful blood familiar and Alix, banished from the stone arcania tower and shrouded in secrets.
Together, the four Wyrdos are not just fighting to survive, but to lift the curse upon their world. There must be more to the sky than a dome of teeth and spittle; there must be something beyond the decay of Fourspires …

Library Competition Winners

The library team are happy to announce the winners of the two summer competitions. The first winner for the best book review is Eliza Budd 8S2 for her excellent review of 'I Am Rebel' by Ross Montgomery. Eliza's review captured the many compelling elements of the story and will be a great resource to help recommend the book. The second winner for best postcard, a competition exclusive for new Year 7 students, is Evan Howell 7Q2 for his excellent postcard written as Skandar Smith, the protagonist of the very popular Skandar Series written by A.F. Steadman. The library team want to thank all students who entered, both Eliza and Evan will receive a prize for their entries.



Personal Development at Backwell School

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.

Personal Development covers all aspects of Relationships and Health Education, as well as Careers and wider Learning Skills and British Values and Citizenship.

This school year we are changing our delivery model for the Personal Development Curriculum.

- Years 7, 8 and 9 will now be taught Personal Development in fortnightly timetabled lessons.
- Years 10 and 11 will continue to be taught in tutor time, twice weekly as well as in fortnightly SMSC lessons.
- Years 12 and 13 are taught in tutor time sessions.

As a result of the new Relationships, Sex and Health Education guidance for Years 7-11, and in response to our Parent consultation, we have updated our curriculum plans. Please find

the outlines for Term 1 lessons by clicking on the link below – this should help in developing conversations at home as required. We are in the process of updating our website so that Parents will better be able to track what their child is learning about across the full school year, and this should help us all to work together in supporting your child.

Personal Development at Backwell School

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.

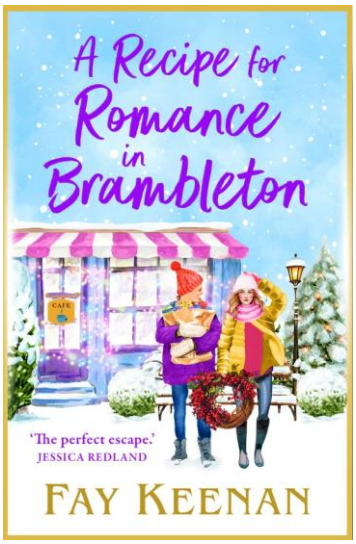
Jewellery and PE Lessons - A Polite Reminder:

Students and parents/carers are reminded that all jewellery must be removed for PE lessons. This is to ensure the safety of all students. A new piercing is not a sufficient reason to not remove earrings or nose studs. As previously communicated, any new piercings should be done at the start of the summer holidays, thus giving sufficient healing time.

New Book from Mrs Jessop

Fay Keenan (better known as Mrs Jessop to us all) has released her next novel.

Lauren Hope likes her life perfectly measured and 'just so'.



Running her cosy café in the idyllic Somerset village of Lower Brambleton provides all the fun and friendship she needs - from the safe side of the counter. But when her mother and long-time sounding board heads off on an adventure of her own, Lauren sees a chance to shake things up, especially when a mysterious new neighbour moves to the village.

Marc Hathaway is desperate for a fresh start. Still reeling from the loss of his wife, he's moved to his dream house with his energetic six-year-old twin boys. Juggling single parenthood, a house that needs a makeover as much as he does and the approaching winter holidays, the last thing Marc expects to find is comfort in a bustling village café, not to mention a sudden, irresistible attraction to its kind-hearted owner.

As Lauren tentatively steps out of her comfort zone and Marc learns to open his fiercely guarded heart, could a touch of Lower Brambleton magic give them both the new beginning they deserve?

Curl up with the new novel by Fay Keenan. Be whisked you away to the winter wonderland of frosty Brambleton for this uplifting story of second chances and unforgettable romance, perfect for fans of Milly Johnson, Cathy Bramley and Veronica Henry.

Quick Links

- School Uniform and Equipment Guidance
- Financial Support
- Careers Bulletin - October 2026

Letters Home

- IMPORTANT - Free School Meals Information
- Year 13 Parents and Carers Information Evening Presentation
- Year 13 Biology Visit to Belmont Estate, Watercress Farm
- A Level Biology Revision Resources
- Bronze Duke of Edinburgh – Year 9
- Year 10 GCSE P&R Revision Guide (Sept 2026)

Dates for your Diary

Tuesday 06 October	**Year 13 Biology trip to Belmont Estate – AM ONLY**
Tuesday 13 October	**Iceland trip information evening 6.00pm**
Thursday 15 October	**BSA AGM Meeting – 6.00pm**
Monday 19 – Tuesday 20 October	**Year 7 Music Concert 4pm-5pm**
Friday 23 October	**Last day of Term 1**

Could you tell if your child was being exploited online?

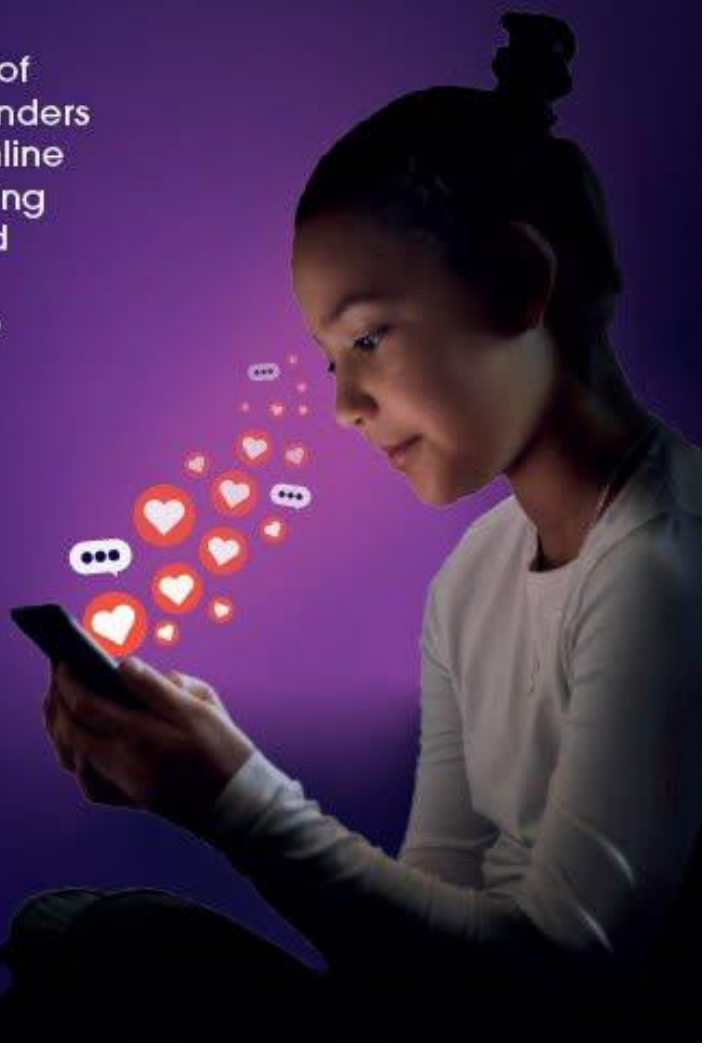
Join one of our free online sessions led by Child Exploitation Prevention Officer **Andri Nicolaou**

29 September 19:00 - 20:30pm **06 October** 13:00 - 14:30pm

Learn about the different forms of child exploitation and how offenders groom/exploit children both online and offline. We'll highlight warning signs a child may be at risk and practical steps you can take to keep them safe and respond to any concerns.

Visit the **Avon and Somerset Police Eventbrite page** or scan the QR codes below

29 Sept **06 Oct**




West of England
MUSIC
& ARTS
WEMA Youth Orchestra
2026–2027 Season
Two full courses and a concert at St George's, Bristol, conducted by Daniel Hogan and supported by our WEMA tutors.
COURSE DATES
30 & 31 October 2026
9.30am – 4.00pm · Wellsway School, Keynsham
15 & 16 February 2027
9.30am – 4.00pm · Wellsway School, Keynsham
16 March 2027
6.45 – 9.15pm · Little Stoke Primary School
23 March 2027 - concert
7.00 – 9.30pm St · George's Bristol
£85 per course — free for students entitled to Pupil Premium
Apply by Thursday 1st October
wema.org.uk/youth-orchestra
Registered Charity Number 1204508
create@wema.org.uk · 01454 863147
• Ages 12–21
• Wind, brass & percussion grade 7+
• Strings grade 5+