



Dear Parents/Carers

As we approach the end of a very different, and extremely busy Term 1, I am reflecting on how the school has adapted so far to the challenges we are facing due to the ongoing pandemic; I am very proud of how our students and staff have taken in their stride the changes to the way the school currently operates.

Layers and warm clothing

As the days get longer and the weather cooler a reminder that students should be coming to school appropriately dressed. This includes a coat for travelling to and from school, moving around the site and break times and their Backwell School jumper. Students who are already feeling the effects of the additional ventilation in classroom are welcome to wear extra layers to school; for example a plain white/nude T-shirt or vest under their polo shirt. They can also wear long sleeve 'skin' thermal layers as well should they wish under their polo shirt and school jumper.

Non-Uniform Day

The last day of term (Friday 23 October) will be a non-uniform day. For a minimum £1 donation students will be permitted to wear non-school uniform to raise money for our COVID-19 fund. Students need to dress appropriately for the weather, and the school day; so, as always, we would ask that no inappropriate clothing or hair dye is worn. Those students who have PE that day are able to wear appropriate non-uniform sports/workout clothing on this date.

We will be holding two further non-school uniform days before Christmas; one on Friday 13 November for Children in Need and one of the last day of Term 2 to raise money for local food banks in the area. Please pop these dates in your diary.

Examinations Summer 2021

The government has announced that the Summer 2021 exams will be delayed to allow extra teaching time for GCSE and A level students. Therefore the exam season for almost all AS and A levels, and GCSEs will start on 7 June and end on 2 July 2021. However, it is also planned that one maths and one English GCSE exam will be held just before the May half-term.

We have also had confirmation from AQA and OCR that the summer timetable for the vocational qualifications (CNATs, CTECs and Applied Science) will be adjusted to align with the GCSEs and A-levels. (both exam dates and results dates).

Results days for A and AS levels will be on Tuesday 24 August and GCSEs will be on Friday 27 August.

We do not yet have detailed timetables from the exam boards, but will make them available once we do, and we have also not yet been advised whether there will be a contingency day in addition to the dates above.

Anti-social behaviour in Yatton precinct

I was disappointed this week to receive a call from a local business in Yatton High Street who has been suffering from large groups of students, in Backwell School uniform, blocking the path around his premises, running up and down outside as well as being rude to staff and customers when challenged about this behaviour. This occurs when the children disembark from their coach home and it is a large group of children engaging in this behaviour, not a few.

I ask that parents ensure they know where their child(ren) are if they do not go straight home after getting off the bus. Any further anti-social behaviour will be reported to the police. When wearing school uniform all students are representing the school and poor behaviour in the community leads to a negative perception of our students by the public.

If your child does not head straight home after school please ensure they are socialising in a safe space and maintaining social distancing.

Mr J Nunes
Headteacher

OTHER MESSAGES ...

Coronavirus Absences – A Quick Reference Guide

We thought it might be helpful to share with you a handy reference guide regarding coronavirus absences which you may find useful. It gives a quick overview of what to do in various scenarios related to Covid-19.

Click [here](#) to open the Coronavirus Absence quick reference guide.

New ePlatform for Backwell School Library

We are pleased to announce that our library has acquired an ebook platform for students and staff. It can be accessed, free of charge, on a phone or tablet via the **ePlatform by Wheelers app**, or via <https://backwellschool.eplatform.co/> on a laptop or PC. Students and staff just sign into the Backwell account once for access to over 1400 books (mainly fiction).

We have placed the necessary links and instructions for use on the Library Frog Page - under the 'Backwell eBook Platform Tab', at the top. The ebooks can be downloaded for a fortnight at a time. The platform operates like a real library, so only one reader can have the book at one time, but others can reserve it for later use.

One of the highlights is that all users can choose the typeface (including *opendyslexic*), layout and background colour settings and save to their account. Then all downloaded books will look the same. We are hoping this will make books much more accessible to some of our readers and could make the reading experience more comfortable for others. If you have any questions about this, please email librarystaff@backwellschool.net

Clubs and Courses Booklet

The [Clubs and Courses Autumn-Winter 2020-21](#) booklet was distributed to students in Years 7 - 9 during Tutor Time earlier this week. A reminder that booking for fee-paying clubs will open on [ParentPay](#) at 3.30 pm this afternoon. There are limited places and payment on ParentPay will serve as registration for the club.

To register interest for the free clubs, please email bgibson-patteux@backwellschool.net in Student Services providing the following information: Name and Tutor Group; club preference; whether a place on the late bus is required.

Further information:

- Clubs will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Clubs will operate in year group bubbles and may be on alternate weeks to accommodate multiple year groups.
- At the end of the activity pupils must leave the school site immediately.
- The late bus will be running at 4.30 pm for Year 7 on Wednesday, Year 8 on Thursday and Year 9 on Monday.
- The late bus covers the regular school bus stops only. Depending on passenger destinations, it will run all the way through to Kingston Seymour before turning round and heading to Long Ashton and south Bristol if needed. Students will be required to register their name and inform the driver of their stop when they get on the vehicle.

Data Check – Year 11

Just to make you aware – our Student Services team will shortly be undertaking a data check exercise to ensure that our record of students' personal data is accurate. Next week we plan to email parents of all Year 11 students with a link to an online form for completion. So please keep an eye out for this. It is important that this is completed at your earliest possible convenience. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Backwell School Association (BSA) AGM

The BSA will be holding their Annual General Meeting on Thursday 22 October at 4.00 pm. This year it will be held online to comply with Covid-19 restrictions. All parents/carers are invited to join the meeting and the BSA would love to see new members with fresh ideas on the committee or just helping at events.

If you are interested in joining the meeting and would like to be sent the TEAMS link via email, please complete the form via the link below:

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=T_CfXMny-E--kLKiwUOtJyEzaVfgeC5AsmxvdmK7bpNUNUNBTlg0SThVVTZDN0ZVQjJUWkxMUVA0Ni4u

Instrumental Lessons – Autumn 2020

Instrumental lessons are running at school and we are now accepting new applications from students in all year groups, for all instruments. If you would like your child to learn to play an instrument, please fill out an application for a January start. The application form can be found in the letter below.

Alternatively please email vcooper@backwellschool.net for more details.

[Instrumental Lessons Autumn 2020](#)

[Pupil Premium Funding for Instrumental Lessons](#)

Careers Bulletin

Please find below a link to the Careers Bulletin on our school website. This bulletin includes a section on online and virtual careers resources, including the school's online careers platform, Unifrog.

[Current Careers Events and Information \(16 October 2020\)](#)

If you have any queries regarding future plans Mrs Ball can be contacted on her school email cball@backwellschool.net.

Upcoming Events

Thursday 22 October	Year 13 Parents' Evening (bookings now open)
Friday 23 October	Last day of Term 1
Monday 2 November	First day of Term 2 (it will be a Week 2B)
Thursday 19 November	Sixth Form Virtual Open Evening (<i>postponed from 12 November</i>)
Thursday 26 November	Year 11 Parents' Evening (<i>postponed from 15 October</i>)

LETTERS HOME

[Sixth Form Bulletin \(week commencing 19 October 2020\)](#) – Parents/Carers of Sixth Form students

[Parent Governor Election - Nominations](#) – All Parents/Carers

[GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition](#) – Parents/Carers of Year 10 Food and Nutrition students

[Year 9 - German Pen Pal Project](#) – Parents/Carers of Year 9 German students

[Pupil Premium Funding for Instrumental Lessons](#) – Parents/Carers of students in Years 7 – 11 entitled to PP funding.

[Instrumental Lessons - Autumn 2020](#) – All Parents/Carers