



15 January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

Remote Learning

Thank you for all the support and feedback so far as we all continue to adjust to remote learning. We have created a survey to gather parents' views on our provision so far. This is a short and simple survey and your participation would be much appreciated. We will also be issuing students with a survey via Frog to gather their opinions as well.

I would be very grateful if you could complete this by Friday 22 January (please note if you have more than one child at the school you will need to complete the form for each child)

[Click here to access the survey.](#)

We would strongly suggest that mobile devices (not being used to access remote learning) should be off and inaccessible during school hours. This is so students can focus on their studies without distraction. This replicates our expectations of students when in school: mobile phones should be off and in their bag.

Disappointingly we have had a few reports this week of students taking photographs of their classmates or teacher which are then used to ridicule on social media/in messaging. Should we receive reports of unacceptable or unkind comments to others we will contact parents to address this behaviour.

'Trial Exam' assessments

Year 11 students have now been sent their packs of examinations – please encourage students to open and check their packs as soon as possible. They should not, however, begin any of the assessments until told to by the relevant subject teacher. These assessments will be done in the fortnight beginning Monday 18 January.

Thank you in advance for helping us by returning the completed Year 11 assessments by Wednesday 3 February. We will ensure that drop-off is socially distanced and safe. We will contact families where papers have not been returned to help get all these assessments handed in.

A Level and AS trial assessments will be sent out and submitted electronically wherever possible. However there will be different arrangements for some subjects: students will be

contacted directly about this ahead of time. These assessments will be done in the fortnight beginning Monday 25 January.

We understand that the prospect of some kind of school assessed grading system this year will cause anxiety for some students and parents. Nevertheless, I would ask you not to contact teachers directly at this time to discuss forecast grades: once the assessment system is announced the school will set out how we will implement it.

In-school supervision

We continue to offer in-school supervision for our vulnerable students and children of critical workers. We will endeavour to offer this support to as many students as possible however due to social distancing restrictions, and teachers operating full teaching timetables remotely, supervision is extremely limited and we are very close to capacity. A [Trust-wide prioritisation policy](#) has been drawn up which we will use if we have more requests than spaces.

After School Year 11 Catch-up Programme

Year 11 after school catch-up sessions will be restarting next week, but in a slightly in a different format due to the cancellation of exams.

The sessions will be subject-based drop-in surgeries, where students can join a MS Teams group to ask additional questions and may use breakout room to have smaller supportive discussions where needed.

The sessions are not taught lessons covering additional content, so students should not worry about missing any content by not attending. However they are a great opportunity to ask questions of subject specialists within areas they wish to improve on.

The sessions will be happening at 3.30 pm on the same evenings as scheduled before, and will be topic-based like they were before the Christmas holidays: please see Frog for the details of which session is running when.

As always, the first port of call for students should always be their class teacher and hopefully with this additional layer of extra support we can replicate some of what would normally happen onsite for our students.

Jon Nunes
Headteacher

* * * *

OTHER MESSAGES ...

Year 12 Parents' Evening

We apologise for the inconvenience caused by the system failure at our Year 12 Parents' Evening last night. We have received an apology from School Cloud, the company we use for our online bookings and video appointments, as follows:

"SchoolCloud provides parents' evening software to over 5,000 schools, and experienced an outage on 14th January affecting the parents & teachers accessing video calls at that time. An update to the system in December caused a web page to perform slowly and this ultimately took the system offline. This wasn't up to the high standard of service that schools expect of us, nor that we expect of ourselves. We have already made changes, and continue to take further steps to ensure that you can continue to enjoy this new format of parents' evenings."

Year 10 Parents' Evening – Thursday 21 January

A reminder that bookings for Year 10 Parents' Evening opened on Wednesday evening this week. The [letter](#) regarding the parents' evening was sent home in the email bulletin last week (8 Jan) and can be found on the [Letters Home](#) page of the website.

North Somerset Instrumental Lessons

Parents of students who receive instrumental tuition from North Somerset Music Service will have heard from us earlier this week asking for consent for details to be given to North Somerset Music Service so that lessons that start online. Please ensure you have sent this information back. The following arrangements will then be put in place:

- You will be contacted by instrumental teachers over the next week to arrange these lessons which will take place over Teams (wherever possible). Please make sure you have familiarised yourself with the Safeguarding agreement which was sent out.
- Lessons will take place in the school day as normal. Pupils will need to excuse themselves from remote lessons using the chat - teachers have been told about this.
- If there is a significant reason why lessons cannot continue (or start) in this way, please let me know as soon as possible.

Sorry for the delay in sending this information out and thank you for your continued support of music making at the school - we are determined to ensure that pupils can keep learning as smoothly as possible.

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 Opportunities \(15 January 2021\)](#)

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

Upcoming Events

Thursday 21 January	Year 10 Parents' Evening - Now open for bookings.
Wednesday 27 January	Information re Year 9 options for GCSE subject choices available to view online on Frog from Wednesday 27 January
Thursday 4 February	Year 9 Parents' Evening (<i>more information coming soon</i>)
Thursday 11 February	Year 8 Parents' Evening

LETTERS HOME ...

[Sixth Form Bulletin \(week commencing 18 January\)](#) – Parents/Carers of Sixth Form students

[North Somerset Music Service – Online Music Lessons](#) – Parents/Carers of students who have instrumental tuition via the NS Music Service

[Year 11 Trial Examinations](#) – Parents/Carers of Year 11 students