



# Backwell School

An Ofsted Outstanding School  
A National Teaching School

## Sixth Form Prospectus



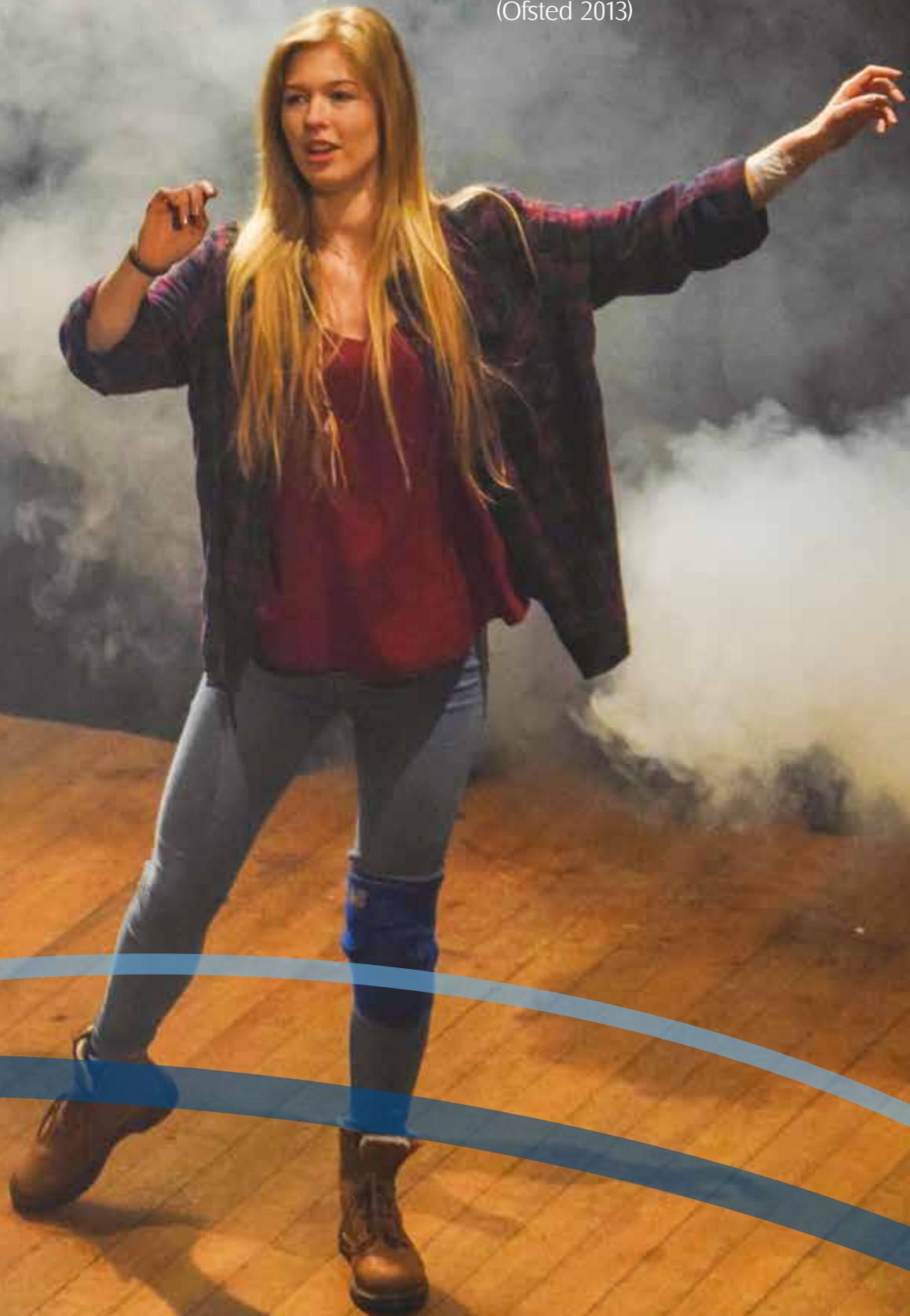
In this outstanding school, all groups of students thrive, achieve highly and are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.

(Ofsted 2013)



Teaching in the Sixth Form is outstanding.

(Ofsted 2013)



# Welcome to Backwell School



**O**n behalf of our staff, students and governors, I am delighted to introduce **Backwell School**.

Backwell has long been well known for all-round educational excellence. The most recent Ofsted inspection in May 2013 confirmed Ofsted's findings of 2008 – Backwell School and Backwell Sixth Form were both judged to be 'outstanding', not just in overall terms, but in every category measured.

Each stage of education has its own challenges and rewards and after Year 11 there are so many different courses and places to choose from. It can be quite confusing. This brochure is for young people and their parents who are making decisions about what to do next. It is designed to give you an idea about our ethos and students' experiences here at Backwell Sixth Form, but please feel free to visit us and find out how Backwell Sixth Form can help you achieve your ambitions (and have some fun along the way!)



**Julian Baldwin**  
Headteacher, National Leader in Education

# Welcome to Backwell Sixth Form



**A**s Deputy Headteacher, leading **Backwell Sixth Form**, it is my privilege to work with colleagues who are talented, inspirational and committed and with students who are intelligent, creative and dedicated.

At Backwell we value excellence in all areas and regularly help sixth formers to achieve stunning academic excellence, moving on to study at Oxford or Cambridge or to tackle other highly competitive courses. However we also believe in an inclusive, comprehensive approach to education; therefore the curriculum and the support offered in the Sixth Form is designed for the varying needs of all our students.

We celebrate the headline successes of course – almost a third of A level entries are at A or A\* each year – but we place even more emphasis on the progress made by each student. That is why we are so thrilled to note that Backwell Sixth Form's "value-added" measure for all students' progress shows our sixth formers consistently meeting and exceeding their targets.

Please come along and see the Sixth Form in action: You will see students involved in a host of valuable and exciting opportunities outside the classroom, and you will see young people developing the skills, confidence and knowledge needed for life in the 21st Century.



**Jon Nunes**  
Deputy Headteacher

# Learning



Teaching is characterised by very high expectations, not just in terms of achievement, but in the amount, complexity and challenge of tasks.

(Ofsted 2013)

**B**ackwell's Sixth Form has grown from 300 students to over 400 in five years. A major reason for this is the attraction of a wide, varied curriculum set in the context of consistent academic rigour.



Traditional A levels remain popular and successful at Backwell. For example, we have 180 students annually studying Mathematics A level as well as large cohorts in other 'facilitating' subjects particularly desired by universities and employers, such as Physics, Chemistry, History and English Literature.

The number of A levels on offer ensures a genuinely personalised choice for our students: for example we offer three different modern languages at A level (French, German and Spanish). There is huge variety available in creative subjects: we offer A levels in Music, Music Technology, Drama and Theatre Studies, Performing Arts, and three different Art A levels (Fine Art, Art Graphics and Photography). There is also breadth beyond A level, including the Extended Project, Applied A levels, other Level 3 courses and the opportunity for GCSE re-takes in English Language and Maths.



**I love being in the Sixth Form at Backwell School. It's a really positive environment, and the teachers are really helpful and encouraging. They are all very enthusiastic about their subjects.**

(Anna Jones, Year 13 student)

## Support



The school is fantastic in supporting us through our time here and encouraging us to make the most of all the opportunities available to us.

(Molly Bridgeman, Head Girl)

**A**t Backwell, we are aware of the great challenges that sixth formers face. Over a two or three year period they must adjust to the differing conditions and demands of Sixth Form study; they must achieve their best academically while also preparing for their future in a competitive world. We therefore place a high value on the information, support and guidance that we give to our students. In our tutor and assembly programme we target key issues such as study skills, transition to the Sixth Form and life skills, including health and financial planning.

Backwell has an excellent record of helping students to find a place at their chosen university. We pride ourselves on our expertise in relation to higher education, but also know that this may not be the only option for all students. We work closely with employers, Bristol University and Apprenticeship providers in order to give our students access to up-to-date information on all career paths: employment, training, apprenticeship, gap year activities and higher education.

There is a regular programme of individual tutor interviews to provide academic mentoring for each sixth former. The Sixth Form Team, including our dedicated Sixth Form Student Adviser, is always available to students – and parents – to discuss the issues that our Sixth Form students face.



All of the teachers will go that extra mile to make sure you achieve your best.

(Emma Harper, Year 13 student)





Students enjoy many opportunities to reflect on spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues (and)... the very wide range of clubs and activities beyond lessons.

(Ofsted 2013)

## Enrichment

There is far more to **Backwell Sixth Form** than study. We offer a huge range of activities – sporting, artistic, vocational and outward bound – to suit the ambitions of every student.

We expect all our sixth formers to take part because, not only are activities enjoyable and rewarding, but equally importantly they complement the work done in lessons and are seen as extremely valuable by future employers and universities. Here are just a few examples:

**Sport and Culture** – You can take part in the annual Sixth Form drama production, Sixth Form competitions and the amazing Paarlaf relay race. You can join in whole school drama, dance and music events. Our Sixth Form sports teams are very successful in competition with other schools and colleges.



**Competitions** – You can join the Young Enterprise Scheme, inter-tutor group debating or University Challenge contest, or the Woodspring Parliamentary Debating Tournament.

**Volunteering** – This is a huge part of life at Backwell through the Sixth Form Help Scheme and charity fundraising, or outside school through the 'Community Action' programme.

**Academic Enrichment** – We help students take advantage of summer schools, work experience placements, essay writing competitions and university seminars and workshops.



**The Sixth Form Committee** – At Backwell the Sixth Form Committee is typical of the huge role that sixth formers play in the wider life of the school, and the opportunities they have outside the classroom.

The Committee has real independence and real responsibility. While the organisations of the Leavers' Ball may be the most prominent of their activities, the committee, elected by their peers, also manages a budget of thousands of pounds, leads the School Council, liaises with the Head of Sixth Form on Sixth Form matters and even plays an important role in the appointment of staff. As with all the other enrichment opportunities at Backwell, being a member of the committee is fun, but also a hugely valuable experience too.





Young Enterprise gives the invaluable opportunity to learn about business through running one of your own. It gives you a chance to make money and even win awards and prizes.

(Rob Gall, Head Boy)





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Backwell, Bristol BS48 3BX

Tel: 01275 463371

Fax: 01275 463077

Email: [mailbox@backwellschool.net](mailto:mailbox@backwellschool.net)

Web: [www.backwellschool.net](http://www.backwellschool.net)

Backwell School is a limited liability company, registered in England, No 07545681.  
Registered office: Station Road, Backwell, Bristol, BS48 3BX

