



# Backwell School

An Ofsted Outstanding School  
A National Teaching School

## Sixth Form Prospectus



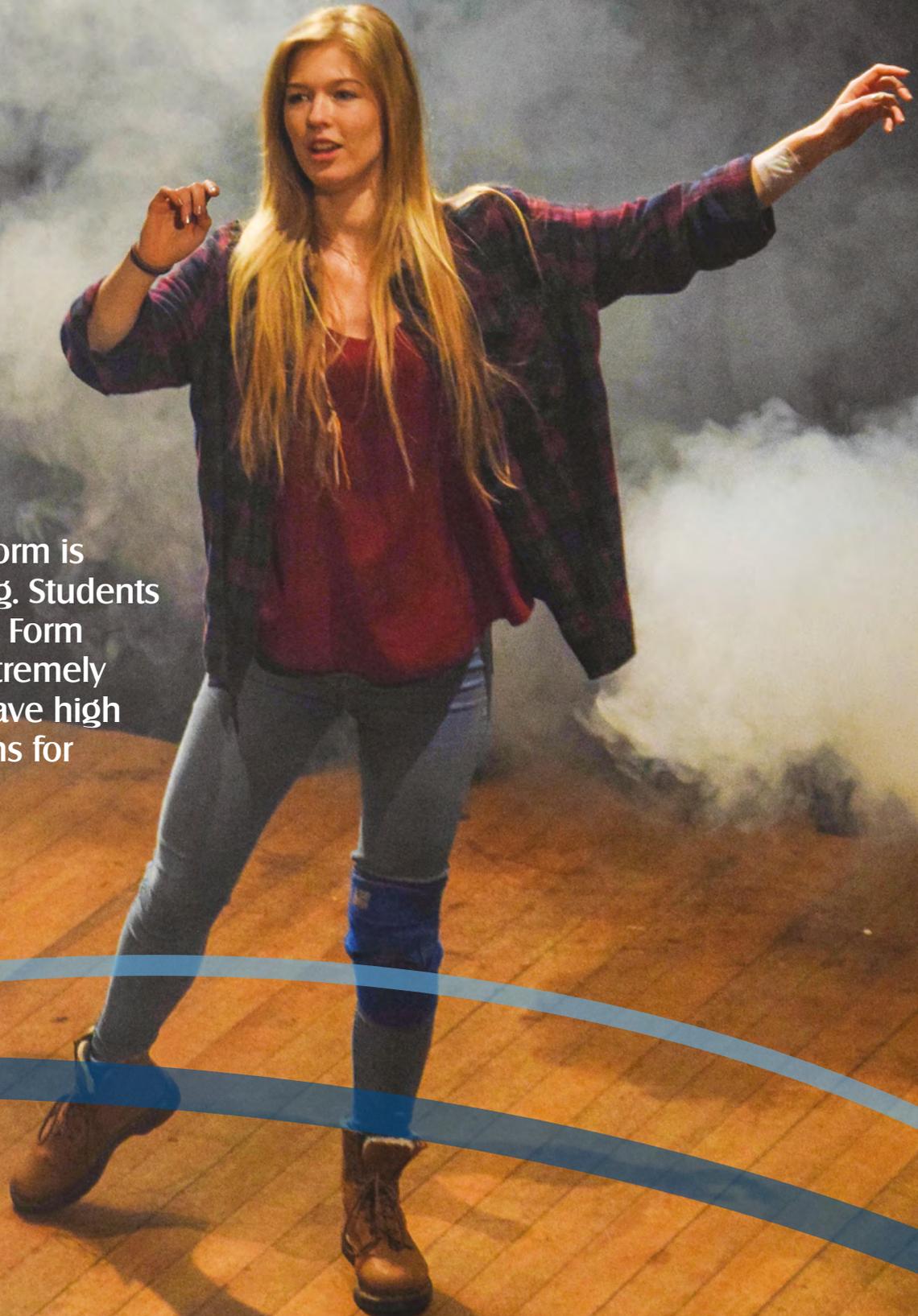
In this outstanding school, all groups of students thrive, achieve highly and are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.

(Ofsted 2013)



The Sixth Form is outstanding. Students in the Sixth Form achieve extremely well and have high expectations for the future.

(Ofsted 2013)



# Welcome to Backwell School



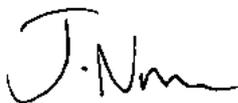
**O**n behalf of our staff, students and governors, I am delighted to introduce **Backwell School Sixth Form**.

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. 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.

I am extremely proud of our Sixth Form Team. They are tireless in helping their students in their studies, providing tailored individual support where necessary. They are committed to encouraging participation in a wide range of hugely valuable and exciting opportunities from 'University Challenge' to 'World Challenge' and they have a superb track record of enabling students to reach the destination of their choice.

Most of all, I am proud of our sixth formers. They demonstrate the enthusiasm, dedication, creativity and commitment to their community that gives me great optimism for the future.



**Jon Nunes**  
Headteacher

# Welcome to Backwell Sixth Form



**A**s Assistant 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 – over a quarter 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 often 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.



**Rose Haywood**  
Assistant Headteacher



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

(Ofsted 2013)

## Learning

**W**ith an average of 400 students, Backwell Sixth Form is a consistently popular choice for both external and former Backwell students. 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 170 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 four different Art A levels (Art, Craft and Design, Textile Design, Product Design and Photography). There is also breadth beyond A level, including the Extended Project Qualification, Applied A levels, other Level 3 courses and the opportunity for GCSE re-takes in English Language and Maths.



**The amount of support available at Backwell Sixth Form shows that the needs of the students really are at the heart of the school. The teaching is engaging and the passion that the teachers have for their subject is infectious.**

(Jemma, Head Student)





The dedicated teachers at Backwell provide so many opportunities that make school life engaging and interesting all year round.

(Caitlin, Deputy Head Student)

## Support

**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 two dedicated Sixth Form Student Advisers, is always available to students – and parents – to discuss the issues that our Sixth Form students face.



**There's no end to the opportunities at Backwell to get involved in what you love or to develop new skills, with all the support you could wish for from staff and peers.**

(Joel, Deputy Head 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

**T**here is far more to **Backwell Sixth Form** than study.

We offer a huge range of trips and 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 inter-house sport competitions and the amazing Paarlau relay race. Our Sixth Form sports teams are very successful in competition with other schools and colleges and we run a very popular ski trip. You can join in whole school drama, dance and music events and there are a number of student-led clubs such as MedSoc.



**Competitions** – You can join in with inter-tutor group debating, take part in the University Challenge contest, or you can represent Backwell School in the model United Nations.

**Volunteering** – This is an integral part of life at Backwell as students are encouraged to work with younger students through the Sixth Form Help Scheme and also to volunteer in the community. Students also regularly carry out fundraising events for their chosen charities.



### Careers Information, Advice and Guidance

– Students have access to dedicated careers advice, regular careers events and talks from industry experts. We are able to help students take advantage of a number of enrichment activities such as summer schools, work experience placements 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.

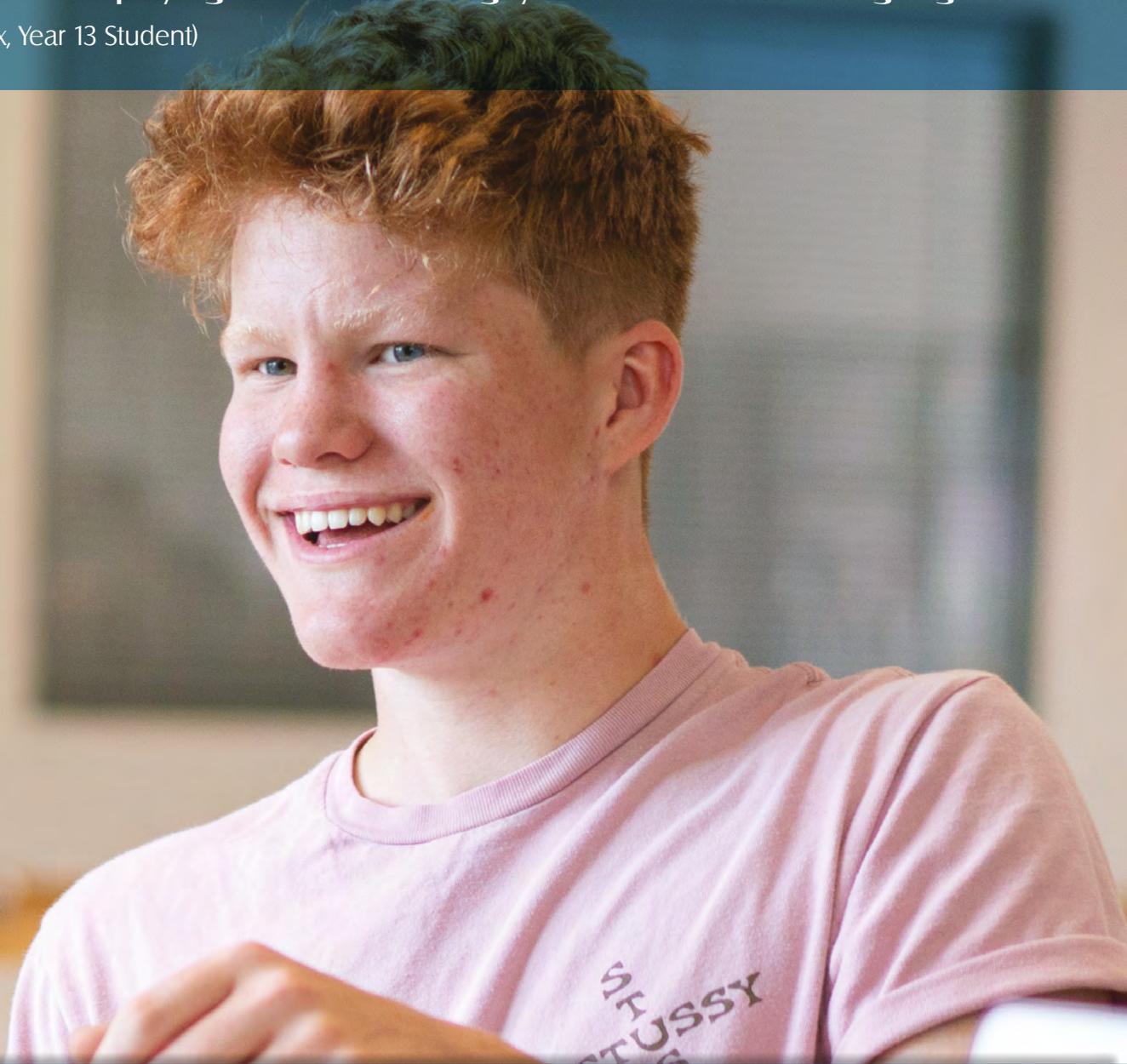
The Committee has real independence and real responsibility. While the organisation of the Leavers' Ball may be the most prominent of their activities, the committee, elected by their peers, also manages a budget of thousands of pounds, leads the School Council, liaises with the Head of Sixth Form on 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.





I feel extremely fortunate at Backwell for the extensive enrichment opportunities available; I was able to go to Indonesia for a month this summer on World Challenge which was an unbelievable experience! I also love playing for the school rugby team and the coaching is great.

(Max, Year 13 Student)



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