

December 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

As we approach the Christmas holiday season, I would like to wish each and every family a wonderful Christmas. We are sure it will be a time for joy, celebration and hope for the New Year to come.

I would particularly like to thank parents and carers for their support in my first term as Head of Secondary. I have had some lovely conversations and meetings with parents and look forward to meeting many more of you over the coming term. I would also like to thank the staff for their dedication and commitment to our students, they have worked incredibly hard to provide students with a vast array of opportunities both inside and outside the classroom.

Our students continue to be wonderful ambassadors for the Academy and we are so proud of the positive impact that they make. It has been a very busy term with lots happening, far too many things to mention here. Our dedicated twitter feed, Facebook page and our website (though still in development) all share the wonderful work that has taken place this term. Please also take a look on the website for our Christmas newsletter.

Year 11 Mocks

The recent mocks gave our Year 11 students the opportunity to begin to prepare for their end of year exams. Their conduct during the mocks was exemplary and I am hopeful that they have learnt the value of early revision. I would urge all parents and carers of Year 11 students to continue to encourage a consistent approach to their studies, by ensuring that students attend school 100% of the time, attend all enrichment sessions on offer, complete their homework and have a regular planned programme of revision as we move towards their final 15 weeks of school. In January, we will be holding our next parent support revision evening, where you can find out how to support your child in the final weeks before exams. In the meantime, all revision resources can be found on our revision website: www.appletonrevision.weebly.com.

Behaviour and Attendance

Thank you to all families for their support as we continue to raise standards at Appleton – particularly with regard to our high expectations regarding behaviour and ensuring students are safe, respectful and being their best at all times. As testament to their hard work so far this term, 350 of our students have achieved their Bronze badge for reaching 1000 Excellence Points; 223 have achieved their silver badge (2000 points); 56 have achieved their gold badge (3000 points) and 3 have already achieved their Platinum badge.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind you that all students should have their planner every day as this is a vital way of ensuring students are organised, as well as a key way for you to find out how your child is doing in school. We record excellence points, attendance, behaviour issues, homework and any other notices in the planner. School uniform is a crucial way we make a statement about the importance of learning and pride in our student's achievements so your continued support with this is also greatly appreciated. Can I remind you that our uniform stipulates grey trousers and formal shoes and we would ask you to support us in ensuring that students have the correct uniform on their return from the Christmas break.

Attendance and punctuality continues to be a priority and I would like to remind you that next half term we are running an attendance challenge that is open to everyone – the 'New Year, New Start' initiative. We are looking for as many students as possible to achieve at least 96% attendance (or over) in the 6 weeks of next half term. For those that do, they will be eligible for entry into a prize draw, with students who have achieved 100% attendance being able to win a £100 shopping voucher (one prize per year group) and those with 96% attendance (equivalent to one day of absence) eligible to win a £25 shopping voucher (two prizes per year group).

We hope you will back this initiative by encouraging your child to attend school regularly and on time. We also really appreciate parental support in making medical appointments outside of school time wherever possible. Unless your child has a serious illness or it is recommended that they are absent (as was the case with the recent outbreak of norovirus), please send them in to school and we will look after them, contacting you if necessary.

Important Dates

- Year 11 Mock Results day – Friday 17 January 2020
- Year 11 Parents' Evening – Monday 20 January 2020, 2.30pm to 5.00pm (this will mean a slightly early closure of school and we will provide more details about this in the New Year) followed by a parent support revision session.
- Year 9 Parents' Evening (rescheduled) – Tuesday 28 January, 4.00pm to 6.00pm
- Year 8 Parents' Evening – Wednesday 12 February, 4.00pm to 6.00pm

The online booking system will be open at least 3 weeks before Parents' Evenings in order for you to book appointments.

New Staff

I am pleased that we have appointed Mr Andrew Bennett as our Assistant Headteacher for behaviour, attendance and welfare and he is looking forward to working with our students and parents. We have also appointed a new science teacher, Ms Samina Yasin.

We know the holiday season will be a joyous occasion for many but for some the stresses and strains can be a challenge; help and support for mental health and wellbeing for students can be accessed through www.kooth.com (we have placed stickers in student planners). This is an online, free, safe and anonymous chat service validated by the NHS.

Next term, myself and members of the Senior Leadership Team will be holding parent drop in sessions to allow parents to come into school and discuss any issues that that you may have. I will also be consulting with parents about starting a 'parent forum' once per term. More details on both of these initiatives will follow early in the Spring Term.

Start of Spring Term Arrangements

Students will return to school for normal lessons on **Monday 6 January 2020 (Week B Timetable)** and should arrive in school **before 8.55am**. Students will go to their Form Tutors for their first lesson of the day. Please ensure your child is in school on time, with the correct uniform and their planner so that lessons can commence with the minimum of disruption.

Once again, I would like to thank you for your continued help and support. I hope you and your family have a restful break and enjoy the holiday period. I look forward to seeing your children refreshed and ready to learn in January.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Rachel R Garlick'.

Mrs R Garlick
Head of Secondary