

May 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

The last half term has been a longer one than that which went before it and it has been a very busy one for secondary students and staff. Our latest newsletter will give you an insight into some of the wonderful opportunities our young people have had this half term and in my end of term letter I want to share with you a few brief highlights and some key information in readiness for the summer term.

### Year 11

Year 11 GCSE examinations are well under way and our students' conduct during their exams has been impeccable. By the end of this half term, students will have sat up to twelve examinations with another twelve to go for some of our students after half term. This period can certainly be one that places a lot of pressure on students, but I am proud of how well they are coping so far. We have a number of revision sessions planned during the half term break, details of which can be found by following this link: <https://appletonacademy.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Y11-May-half-term-24.pdf>

In the last two weeks, it has been difficult to manage the number of Year 11 students wishing to go home or being collected by parents after exams. Our reception staff cannot continue to manage the number of students and parents arriving in reception for this purpose. Therefore, as we move towards the latter end of this exam period, I have taken the decision that from next half term, students must attend school each morning for exams or revision sessions and they will then be able to leave site at 12.30pm each day **unless they have revision sessions or exams scheduled in the afternoon**. Leaving at 12.30pm will allow us to ensure students can exit school in a supervised and orderly manner through the student entrance, rather than reception, which will minimise disruption for reception staff. Students must opt in to the afternoon revision sessions if they are intending to stay in school past 12.30pm and can do this each morning during form time.

If a student has an afternoon revision session and chooses not to attend, then they risk their place at the prom unless there are very specific circumstances that have prevented them from doing so. Decisions made about the behaviour and engagement of Year 11 students during their remaining time in school, and whether this will impact on them being invited to attend end of year celebration events, including the prom, will be made at the discretion of staff. They will not be subject to appeal or debate and we would ask parents to speak with students in order to have them understand that they have almost reached the end of their time at Appleton Academy and should do their utmost to make the most of the period left before they leave us.

Parents will receive the prom invitation letters at the end of this week. I would like to take this opportunity to remind parents that the prom is not an automatic entitlement for students, and it is a privilege reserved for those that have met and exceeded our expectations, which have been made clear all year. The decision on whether or not to invite a student to the prom is final and we will not enter into any discussions with parents about our decision. It is with regret that we will be unable to run an end of year trip. The cost of coach travel has become extremely prohibitive and means that we cannot subsidise such a trip in the way we have done in the past.

### **Opportunities and Events**

We have been fortunate enough to offer a range of opportunities to our young people this half term and details of these can be found in our newsletter. I will also provide some additional details about one of these initiatives below.

#### *The Scholars Programme*

A number of students in Years 9 and 10 were invited last term to be part of our very first Scholars Programme. The Scholars Programme at Appleton Academy identifies students with the potential to go onto a higher level apprenticeship or university degree course and gives them an opportunity to build their knowledge, attitudes, skills and learning habits. The programme also stretches and challenges them in order to provide them with the skills and confidence they will need to succeed in a higher education environment. Students have already taken part in a number of exciting opportunities both inside and outside the Academy and have plenty more to come next term. We look forward to launching the programme with Year 8 students in the autumn term.

### **National Thank a Teacher Day**

National Thank a Teacher Day will be celebrated on Wednesday 19 June 2024. We would love your help in celebrating all of the amazing teaching and support staff in our school – from lunchtime staff to classroom assistants, our librarians and of course our teachers. They deserve a day to be recognised for the incredibly hard work they do and you can make someone's day with your positive feedback if you would be kind enough to share it. If you know a special teacher, dedicated support staff member or even a whole school team, let them know how grateful you are by sending a free e-card via this link <https://thankateacher.co.uk/thank-a-teacher/thank-a-teacher-form/> or if you prefer you can fill in our form here: <https://forms.office.com/e/HRQ5dtLe8g> and we will make sure your message is shared with the relevant staff member or team.

### **Uniform**

A reminder that students should return after the half term break in full school uniform including appropriate footwear. Please can we remind you that hoodies and non-school jumpers are not permitted. Blazers are a mandatory item of uniform and the expectation is that these are worn at all times, unless otherwise directed by staff. Where students do not comply with our expectations, we will continue to impose sanctions, which will escalate if non-compliance persists. If you are struggling to afford uniform, shoes or other items for your child please contact us in school so that we can offer support.

### **Mobile Phones**

We have had a very clear policy around the use of mobile phones in school since September and this has not changed. Mobile phones and other electronic devices such as headphones are not expected to be seen or used in the Academy at all during the school day. Students who are seen using their phone or other electronic devices will have them confiscated and they will need to be collected by parents at the end of the school day. Students will then be expected to hand their phone or other devices into the pastoral team at the start of each day. Government guidance about the use of mobile phones in school is very clear and we would ask parents to support us in reinforcing this by not calling or texting their child during the school day.

### **Attendance**

Improving attendance is continuing to be a significant priority for us, as there are still too many children with poor and intermittent school attendance. Regular school attendance is essential for your children if they are to maintain and develop their friendship groups, and to leave school with good qualifications. It is unfortunately the case that if your child is not in school, they struggle to keep up with friendships when they return, which often leads to social problems.

Poor attendance is a common factor in every case where parents raise concerns about their child and their social times. Please read the guidance on our website around attendance and support us in ensuring that your child attends school regularly and on time. You will receive a letter updating you about your child's attendance via email at the end of this half term.

### **Summer Attendance Challenge**

School re-opens for students after the half term break on Monday 3 June 2024. The Attendance Team are delighted with the success of the 'Perfect 10' attendance initiative we have been running, which sees the attendance of every student involved monitored every two weeks.

In order to continue to maintain these good attendance habits, our summer attendance challenge will continue and there will be a second prize draw on the last day of term. For each 'Full 5' your child achieves (i.e. a full week that your child attends school), they will receive a prize draw entry for the chance to win £50.00 worth of shopping vouchers. For each 'Perfect 10' they achieve, students will receive a prize draw entry for the chance to win £100 worth of shopping vouchers (in addition to being entered into the prize draw for the smaller prize). Finally, for each further week a student achieves 100% attendance, they will also gain an entry into a prize draw for the chance to win £150 worth of shopping vouchers. The details of this initiative are explained in more detail in our newsletter. Some students are also part of an attendance challenge called the '100 Club' and Miss Earl, our Attendance Lead, will write to you separately about this.

The prize draws will take place on Friday of this week for the first two of our draws and will feature the entries of everyone who has qualified for the chance to win these prizes so far by building good attendance habits. It has been pleasing to see the number of students who have sustained good attendance or improved their attendance considerably in this half term. We will hold our final prize draw on the last day of the school year on Friday 19 July 2024, when we are planning a very exciting last day of term with lots of chances to win small prizes and rewards as well as being entered into the main prize draw.

### **Newsletter**

We are delighted to share our sixth newsletter of the year, which gives you a more detailed idea of what has been happening at the Academy over this half term. Our newsletter can be found on our website and by following this link:

[https://issuu.com/appleton\\_academy/docs/newsletter\\_7\\_24.05.24?fr=sY2VhYTY2ODU3Nzc](https://issuu.com/appleton_academy/docs/newsletter_7_24.05.24?fr=sY2VhYTY2ODU3Nzc)

### **Forthcoming Events**

The next half term is another longer term of seven weeks, and unbelievably is the final part of the school year. It has come around so fast. Our final half term will be one of the busiest for students, as we have our GCSE examinations continue for Year 11, as well as mock examinations taking place for Year 10. I have provided a brief overview of the events still to come in the remainder of the school year below and, as ever, full details will be circulated closer to each event as well as being shared on our website.

Monday 3 June – Return to school for all students

Tuesday 4 June – Age of Wonder research project Year 9 blood tests for those who opted in

Tuesday 4 June – Careers fair for students and parents from 3.30pm

Thursday 5 & Friday 6 June – Year 10 Duke of Edinburgh assessment

Monday 10 June – Age of Wonder research project CKAT tests for Year 9 (every Monday for 3 weeks)

Tuesday 11 June – Year 10 mocks begin

Wednesday 19 June – National Thank a Teacher Day

Friday 21 June – Year 10 Bradford College visit

Together with our community we achieve extraordinary things



Friday 21 June – Year 11 leavers' assembly  
Thursday 27 June – Anthology/Arts launch event for invited students and parents  
Tuesday 2 July – Year 10 mock interview workshops  
Thursday 4 July – Year 10 mock interviews  
Friday 5 July – Year 9 options taster day  
Monday 8 July – Years 7-10 activity week  
Friday 12 July - Secondary sports day  
Friday 19 July – End of the school year

I hope you all have a restful and enjoyable break and we look forward to welcoming students back refreshed and ready to work hard.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rachel Garlick".

Rachel Garlick  
Head of Secondary