

December 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

It has been a very busy term for secondary students and staff and our latest newsletter will give you an insight into some of the wonderful opportunities we have provided for our young people to enjoy. In this letter, I wanted to share some key reminders with you ahead of our return to school in January 2025.

Year 11

We have written separately to parents of Year 11 students regarding important information about upcoming events and these letters can be found here: <https://appletonacademy.co.uk/secondary/year-11/> or in the 'Letters' section of our website.

Spring term will be a busy one for our Year 11 students as they start some of their formal GCSE examinations and begin to prepare for their next set of mocks in February. Students have had visits from a range of local college providers and from January, colleges and 6th Form providers will begin to accept applications for places. Therefore, it is important that your child starts the application process for their chosen courses as soon as possible. If they or you need any help in completing application forms, please let us know, or contact our careers team, led by Sophie Hayward, via email: Sophie.hayward@appletonacademy.co.uk.

Uniform

A reminder that students should return after the Christmas break in full school uniform, including appropriate footwear and outdoor coats. 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 so that we can speak with you about the support we would be happy to provide where possible.

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 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.

This term, we have been focusing on ensuring that you are regularly informed if we have concerns about the attendance of your child, including through letters, texts and meetings in school. This is intended to be a supportive measure to keep you informed that your child may be near to, or reaching, certain thresholds that may trigger further action to improve attendance. We will inform every parent when your child is nearing or has reached this threshold and detail the potential action that this may lead to, regardless of the reason for their absence or what has led to a drop in their attendance.

However, we would also like to reassure you that we will always look at each case individually before deciding which action to take to improve a student's attendance. We also look to work with parents to support improving attendance before taking a more punitive approach and we would ask that you contact us to discuss any concerns you may have. If you are invited to school to discuss our concerns, then it is important that you attend to avoid further action being taken.

Attendance Challenge for the Spring Term

School re-opens to students after the Christmas break on Monday 6 January 2025 at the usual time of 8.45am for Years 7 to 10 and at 8.30am for Year 11.

We will be continuing our attendance challenge next term and details of this can be found in the newsletter.

Holiday Support

Christmas can be a difficult time of year for some of our students and their families. If you feel that you or your child need support over the break, please see our website link here: <https://appletonacademy.co.uk/parents/mental-health-support/> for a range of services that may be able to help.

Newsletters

We are delighted to share our second newsletter of the year, which will give you a more detailed idea of all of the fantastic activities and events that have been happening at Appleton over the last half term. The newsletter also contains a special section called 'Appleton Ambition', which highlights the work undertaken by our careers team this half term. Our newsletter can be found on our website or via this link: <https://tinyurl.com/yyuuat2e>

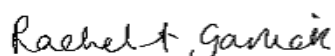
Forthcoming Events

The next half term is a slightly shorter, yet equally busy, one. As ever, full details will be circulated closer to each event taking place and details will also be on our website. However, please find a brief summary of some of our upcoming events below:

- Monday 6 January 2025** – Return to school for all students
- Wednesday 8 January 2025** – Year 11 Progress Evening for Parents and Carers
- Tuesday 28 January 2025** – Learn About Apprenticeships Evening
- Thursday 6 February 2025** – Childhood Immunisations
- Thursday 6 February 2025** – Scholars Programme Presentation Evening
- Wednesday 12 February 2025** – Year 9 Parents' and Carers' Evening
- Friday 14 February 2025** – End of Half term 3

It only remains for me to wish you and your family a restful and enjoyable Christmas break. We look forward to welcoming students back on Monday 6 January 2025, refreshed and ready to work hard.

Yours faithfully

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

Rachel Garlick
Head of Secondary