

August 2025

Dear Parent/Carer

I hope that you and your families have had a restful summer break and are ready for the return to the routines and normality that a new school year brings. Over the summer, we wrote to you with a link to our summer survey where we asked that you took the opportunity to share any concerns that you may have, or support that you and/or your child may need ahead of September. Thank you to everyone who has completed the form thus far. I have included the link below if there is anything else you would like to share. You only need to complete this form if you have any worries or concerns that you want us to consider ahead of the return to school: <https://forms.office.com/e/kCe6cGhnjw>

As we get ready to start the new academic year, I am also writing to provide some key reminders for the year ahead. We will have a phased return to school for secondary students next week and I would like to provide a reminder of these below:

September Return and the Re-opening of School

- Monday 1 September and Tuesday 2 September – staff INSET Days and school is closed to all students
- Wednesday 3 September – Induction Day for **Years 7 and 11 only** (Year 7 to arrive at 8.40am and Year 11 to arrive at 11.15am. Both finish at the normal time end of day time of 3.20pm)
- Thursday 4 September – **Years 7 and 11 arrive at 8.40am, Year 8 to arrive at 9.15am, Year 10 to arrive at 10.45am and Year 9 to arrive at 11.30am**

Next week we will aim to call as many of our families as possible to check in with you and ensure that children are ready to return to school. These 'check-in' calls will be undertaken by various staff in school, such as the Attendance Team, the Assistant Heads of Year, or other members of our pastoral staff.

Uniform

We expect that parents and carers will now have purchased items of school uniform ahead of our return next week. We would ask that you familiarise yourself with our uniform requirements - a copy of our Uniform Policy is available on our website. Should you be unsure, please contact us for further advice by emailing info@appletonacademy.co.uk in the first instance. A change for next year will be the expectation that students in Years 7, 8 and 9 will come to school in their PE kit on the days that they have PE and we will message you to let you know if your child has PE on their first day back next week. As a reminder, students are expected to wear the Appleton PE kit on these days and must also wear their Academy blazer and bring other school equipment with them as usual to use in other lessons.

On your child's first day back at school next week, we will be checking the uniform of all students to ensure it meets the standards set out in our Uniform Policy and we will call you if there is a concern. Our policy around footwear has not changed and if your child comes to school in inappropriate footwear they will be expected to change into footwear provided by school.

Mobile Phones

As we wrote to inform you in our recent letter, which can be found via this link or on our website here: <https://appletonacademy.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Phone-Pouch-Parent-Letter-July-2025-2.pdf> our policy around student use of mobile phones is changing from September.

We would therefore be most grateful of your support in ensuring the following:

- That your child is fully aware of the new policy prior to their return to school in September.
- That you have discussed and clarified our reasons for making these changes with your child and that you let them know that you support our decision.
- That should you need to contact your child during the school day, you do this through Arbor, our parent app, or a telephone call or email to school and we will ensure the message is passed on.
- You are aware that If students are found to be non-compliant with our new mobile phone policy, a sanction commensurate with those set out in our Behaviour for Learning Policy will be issued to your child, up to and including suspension from school, as needs dictate.

We will be holding assemblies with all students during their first day back in school, during which we will go through expectations around mobile phones with them.

Use of Arbor Parent App/Portal

We are extremely pleased that the significant majority of parents and carers are now using the Arbor app or portal to access information and letters regarding their child's education. During the new academic year, we will look to make even more use of Arbor, including using this to manage parents' evening and book appointments with staff, paying for school meals and trips. Therefore, it is vital that all parents and carers sign up to use the app or portal as soon as possible before the start of the new school year (if you have not already done so). Our website has an Arbor section, where details about how to sign up and other helpful information can be found: <https://appletonacademy.co.uk/arbor-parent-app/>.

We will write to parents and carers in plenty of time to inform you of any future changes we are making to how we use Arbor. If you are having difficulty accessing the app please contact us by emailing info@appletonacademy.co.uk so that we can support you to manage this.

Attendance

Improving attendance and punctuality continues to be a significant priority for all schools, as there are still too many children with poor or intermittent school attendance. We are focusing on ensuring that you are regularly informed if we have concerns about the attendance and punctuality of your child, including through letters, texts and meetings in school. All parents will receive a letter in the next week outlining your child's current level of attendance and whether we will be monitoring this in the new academic year. This is intended to be informative. Some parents may receive a further letter informing them that their child was classed as a persistent absentee last year (attendance under 90%) and as such will be subject to automatic attendance monitoring when they return to school. Any children who were already part of attendance monitoring last year will continue to be monitored this year.

We will write to you or invite you into school to discuss your child's attendance if we become concerned. We will always seek 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. We also ask that you do the following to support us:

- Ensure that your child attends school on time at 8.40am every day.
- If your child is going to absent due to illness, contact the Attendance Team on 01274 421053 (call or text), send a message through Arbor, or email on every day of the absence.
- Avoid booking appointments, e.g. dentists or opticians during the school day wherever possible. Any appointments taken during the school day will need evidence to be provided or they will be classified as an unauthorised absence.

Your support in this matter is greatly appreciated and will significantly contribute to your child's success in school. Should you wish to discuss this matter further, please contact the Attendance Team by emailing attendanceteam@appletonacademy.co.uk.

All that remains for me to do is to thank parents and carers for your support. We look forward to welcoming you and your children back to school next week.

Yours faithfully

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

Rachel Garlick
Head of Secondary