Appleton Academy

Autumn newsletter 1



Featuring:

- Kevin Sinfield visit
- The IRL trial phase 2
- Through our lens
- National Cadets Week
- Y6 Open Evening

Part of the Exceed Academies Trust
Together we Exceed

Together with our community, we can achieve extraordinary things.

Welcome

Welcome to our first newsletter of the year, celebrating some of the fantastic work taking place across Secondary.

As always, life at Appleton has been incredibly busy, with a wide range of trips, visits, activities and enrichment opportunities taking place. It has been wonderful to see our students embracing these experiences and making the most of everything our wider curriculum has to offer. Throughout the year, our newsletters will give you a flavour of life at the Academy, from memorable experiences beyond the classroom to the fabulous learning taking place within it. In this special edition, we are particularly proud to share the visit of **Kevin Sinfield**, who stopped at Appleton during a rest break on Day 4 of his **7 in 7 marathon challenge**, raising vital funds for MND. It was a real privilege for our Academy community to support such an important cause and be part of this memorable occasion.

We are also incredibly proud that the fantastic photographs featured were taken by our **Year 10 student photographers**, who captured the day brilliantly.

I hope you enjoy this first glimpse of another exciting year at Appleton.

Mrs Garlick

Head of Secondary





A VERY SPECIAL VISITOR: KEVIN SINFIELD



A moment our school community will remember



COURAGE, FRIENDSHIP AND COMMUNITY

Appleton Academy was proud to welcome Sir Kevin Sinfield as he passed through our school on Day 4 of his 7 in 7: The Grand Finale. Students and staff gathered to cheer him and his team on, creating a memorable atmosphere of encouragement, admiration and community spirit.

The Grand Finale is Sir Kevin's seventh and final challenge for the MND community. Across seven consecutive days, the team is completing an ultra-marathon each day, travelling through rugby league communities across the north of England and visiting all 12 English Super League grounds before finishing at Old Trafford.

The challenge continues the remarkable legacy inspired by Sir Kevin's friend and former Leeds Rhinos teammate, Rob Burrow CBE. Since the first 7 in 7 challenge in 2020, the campaign has raised awareness of motor neurone disease and vital funds to support people living with MND, their families and research towards effective treatments and a cure.

For our students, the visit was more than a sporting occasion. It was a powerful example of loyalty, resilience and using your platform to make a difference. We were honoured to play a small part in this extraordinary journey and to show Sir Kevin and the team the warmth of the Appleton community.







Kevin and his running team arriving at the school gates.





Such a warm welcome by our students and staff!



Appleton Academy SPORTS
NEWS | FIXTURES | ACHIEVEMENTS | OPPORTUNITIES


Making
every day
matter.







APPLETON GOES In Real Life (IRL)... AGAIN!

Our students help shape a national conversation about phones, social media and wellbeing







BBC Look North filming students in Appleton Academy's library as part of this year's IRL trial coverage.

A SECOND YEAR OF STUDENT VOICE

Appleton Academy is proud to be involved in the IRL trial for the second year running, continuing our commitment to helping researchers understand young people's relationship with mobile phones and social media.

This year, BBC Look North and The Sunday Times visited the Academy to interview students taking part in the trial, alongside students who participated last year. The visits gave our young people an important opportunity to share their experiences, views and reflections in their own words.

BBC Look North journalist Amy Garcia joined students in our library, where filming included group discussions and interviews about the trial. Our students represented Appleton with maturity and confidence, contributing thoughtfully to a wider national conversation about technology and young people's wellbeing.

"Our students are not simply hearing about important research. They are helping to shape it."

We are incredibly proud of every student who has taken part and shared their experiences. Their contribution ensures that young people's voices remain at the heart of this important work.



Filming and group interviews took place in the Academy library.

£5,000 FOR APPLETON

In September, we were delighted to receive a cheque for £5,000 in recognition of our contribution to last year's trial. The cheque was presented by Dr John Pickavance.



Students mark the £5,000 presentation at the Academy.

WATCH NOW **View the IRL trial video on YouTube**

Click the link in the editable digital newsletter.

APPLETON STUDENTS TAKE CENTRE STAGE

FEATURED IN THE SUNDAY TIMES

The Academy's young people share thoughtful, honest views as Bradford hosts a landmark trial exploring social media and teenage wellbeing.



APPLETON VOICES IN A NATIONAL CONVERSATION

A PROUD MOMENT FOR APPLETON

Appleton Academy students have been featured in The Sunday Times as part of national coverage of the IRL trial, a major Bradford study examining how restrictions on social media access may affect young people.

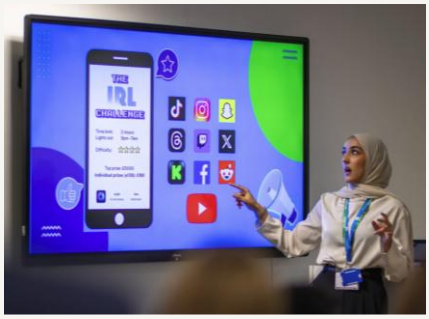
The article placed student voice at the heart of the debate. Pupils spoke openly about friendship, learning, misinformation, sleep and the challenge of finding a healthy balance online. Their responses showed that young people understand both the opportunities and the risks of social media.

"Their voices are helping to shape the evidence."

REAL-LIFE EXPERIENCES. REAL-LIFE RESEARCH.



Students who previously took part reflected on how limits changed everyday habits, including evening phone use, reading, walking and sleep.



Researchers introduced the trial in school and explained how participants' social media use, wellbeing, exercise and sleep would be studied.

THE IRL TRIAL

6 WEEKS

of monitored social media use

The research is exploring possible links with wellbeing, physical activity and sleep.

We are incredibly proud of every student who contributed. By speaking with honesty and maturity, Appleton pupils ensured that young people were represented not as a headline, but as informed participants in research that could influence future decisions about social media.

Photography: Andrew McCaren for The Sunday Times | Newsletter article: Appleton Academy and The Sunday Times

THROUGH OUR LENS

Students invited to tell their stories through photography



A creative photography project is giving Appleton students the chance to capture the people, places and everyday moments that matter to them.

SEEING THE WORLD DIFFERENTLY

As part of the IRL trial led by the Born in Bradford team, students are being invited to take part in Through Our Lens, a photography project designed to put young people behind the camera and give them space to tell their own story.

Working with internationally recognised photographer Carolyn Mendelsohn, participants will explore how photography can communicate identity, experience and the details of everyday life. No previous photography experience is needed.

The project begins with a practical workshop offering ideas, guidance and tips for taking exceptional photographs with a mobile phone or a disposable camera supplied by the project. During a second workshop, students will review their work and select the images that best communicate what they want to say.

> ***"We want to see the world from their perspective: what their life is like, the things that are important to them, and the kind of things they do."***
>
> THROUGH OUR LENS PROJECT

FROM CLASSROOM TO EXHIBITION

Selected photographs may feature in publications connected with the study and could become part of a future exhibition, giving students the opportunity to see their creative work reach a wider audience. Photographs will not be used commercially; only a student's first name and, where appropriate, age will accompany selected images.



MEET THE PHOTOGRAPHER

CAROLYN MENDELSOHN

An internationally recognised photographer who has worked extensively with young people. Carolyn developed Through Our Lens as a workshop and mentoring programme and is artist in residence for Born in Bradford. Carolyn's work with young people has also received an international award from the Royal Photographic Society.



A CAMERA. A PERSPECTIVE. A STORY WORTH SHARING.

Through Our Lens gives young people a creative way to notice, reflect and show what life looks like through their eyes.

YEAR 6 OPEN EVENING

A brilliant evening at Appleton

TUESDAY 13 OCTOBER 2026



Exciting science demonstrations captured everyone's attention.



A warm welcome to our future students

Appleton Academy welcomed Year 6 pupils and their families for our Open Evening on Tuesday 13 October. Visitors explored the academy, met staff and students, and took part in a wide range of activities across our classrooms and specialist spaces.

From dramatic science demonstrations and hands-on design work to sport, climbing and tours led by our student ambassadors, the evening offered families a real taste of life at Appleton. It was wonderful to see so many young people getting involved, asking questions and discovering what their next chapter could look like.

Thank you to every student and colleague who helped make the evening such a success, and to all the families who joined us and shared their feedback.

WHAT PARENTS SAID

"Pupils and staff were so welcoming. It felt like a real community."

"The students who showed us around were brilliant and very knowledgeable."

Parents also praised the academy's facilities, engaging staff and the warmth shown by students throughout the evening.



ADVENTURE



CREATIVITY



SPORT

INSPIRE • NURTURE • DEVELOP

APPLETON ACADEMY CCF

National Cadets Week at Appleton



Celebrating service, teamwork, leadership and the growing Appleton Academy Combined Cadet Force

A PROUD FIRST YEAR

Appleton Academy officially launched its Combined Cadet Force in April 2026, with an inaugural intake of 20 cadets supported by four members of school staff. Badged as Royal Signals, the contingent is one of around 500 school-based Combined Cadet Forces across the UK.

The programme has already grown to around 40 cadets in the Army section. Victor Troop is completing its basic qualification, while Kilo Troop has begun the first stage of training. Four Cadet Forces Adult Volunteers and three Probationary Instructors support the contingent.

National Cadet Week gives us the opportunity to celebrate the commitment of our cadets and adult volunteers, and to recognise the confidence, discipline and practical skills being developed through the programme.

APPLETON CCF

FIRST PARADE
22 APRIL 2026

ROYAL SIGNALS

40	2	4	3
CADETS	TROOPS	ADULT VOLUNTEERS	PROBATIONARY INSTRUCTORS

Together with our community, we can achieve extraordinary things.

TRAINING AND OPPORTUNITY

Skills for life

Cadet training combines practical challenges with personal development. Every activity is designed to help young people become more capable, confident and ready to contribute.

DRILL
Discipline and attention to detail

MARKSMANSHIP
Safety, focus and responsibility

LEADERSHIP
Decision-making and initiative

RESILIENCE
Confidence through challenge

FIRST AID
Practical skills that help others

NAVIGATION
Planning, maps and expedition skills

TEAMWORK
Working effectively with others

COMMUNICATION
Clear, calm and purposeful

THE ROYAL SIGNALS CONNECTION

Supported by the Royal Signals, Appleton cadets will have opportunities to explore communication information systems, STEM in the communications industry, ISTAR and cyberspace communications. These experiences broaden horizons and show how technical, leadership and teamwork skills connect to future study and employment.

Cadets do not have to join the Armed Forces. The skills developed are valued by colleges, universities and employers across many different sectors.

CADET VOICES

Why we joined

Our cadets joined for different reasons, but their reflections share common themes: challenge, belonging, confidence and the chance to learn something new.

CADET PRANGIGI



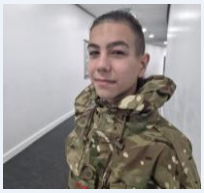
Joined the inaugural intake after hearing about family experiences in the Army. A highlight has been shooting, while future ambitions include developing the skills to take over a family cricket shop.

CADET JOHNSON



Joined in September, seeing cadets as a positive way to build self-regulation and direction. Patrolling in formations has been a highlight, alongside an ambition to work in music.

CADET PEARSON



Joined to develop leadership and teamwork beyond normal lessons and to meet cadets from other year groups. Future ambitions include a career in public service.

CADET BROADBENT



Joined the inaugural parade to learn both practical and personal skills. Shooting has been a highlight, with a longer-term ambition to become a mechanic.

CADET DODDS



Had wanted to join cadets for a long time. Fieldcraft, camouflage and shooting have stood out, alongside recognition that cadet skills will matter to future employers.

CADET VOICE: "Teamwork and communication are really important."

ADULT VOLUNTEERS

Experience that inspires

Our Cadet Forces Adult Volunteers bring a wide range of military, outdoor, educational and professional experience. Their commitment makes every parade, training session and opportunity possible.



2ND LT BELL

Royal Signals service and extensive Air Cadet experience, including navigation, mountain leadership, climbing, mountain biking and adventure training. Career highlights include supporting more than 1,000 Duke of Edinburgh Awards and training over 400 Ten Tors participants.



SGT SROKA

A journey through Polish scouting and national service in the Polish Army developed a strong commitment to structure, teamwork and outdoor challenge. The CCF provides a platform to pass on practical skills, resilience, self-reliance and leadership.



SGT MURPHY

Served in the Parachute Regiment from 2013 to 2019, including detachments across East Africa, Jordan, the Falkland Islands and Europe. Joined Appleton CCF to share experience and help develop resilience, confidence and self-discipline.

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

Their time, expertise and encouragement are helping Appleton cadets develop skills and experiences that will last a lifetime.

APPLETON ACHIEVEMENT

GOLD IN DENMARK!

Year 9 student delivers a winning performance at the HSK Box Cup



CHAMPION • THREE ROUNDS WON • GOLD MEDAL

1

HSK BOX CUP
GOLD MEDALLIST

A proud Appleton sporting success

Congratulations to Jo-e Jor-dan from 9.4, who represented the academy with distinction at the HSK Box Cup in Denmark this weekend.

Jo-e won all three rounds and secured the gold medal in the relevant age and weight category. The achievement reflects considerable preparation, focus and determination, as well as the confidence to perform on an international stage.

Everyone at Appleton Academy is delighted to celebrate this outstanding success. Well done, Jo-e!

ABOUT THE HSK BOX CUP

A UNIQUE TOURNAMENT
First held in 1985, the HSK Box Cup was created at a time when there were few European competitions offering boxers of every level the opportunity for a fair and suitable contest. Its inclusive approach has since influenced other tournaments.

FAIR, DEVELOPMENTAL MATCHING
The competition welcomes participants from beginners through to elite level. Bouts are matched carefully using factors including age, weight, experience, number of contests and previous results. The aim is to create evenly matched contests that provide challenge, learning, personal development and success.

GOLD FOR AKIM!

Five fights. Five wins. One outstanding achievement.



A CHAMPION PERFORMANCE

A huge congratulations to Akim, who has won **gold at the British Minors Judo Championship**.

Akim delivered a flawless performance across the competition, winning all five of his contests to take the top place on the podium.

This is an incredible achievement and a brilliant reward for his dedication, discipline and hard work. Everyone at Appleton Academy is extremely proud of his success.

5	5	GOLD
FIGHTS	WINS	MEDAL

Congratulations, Akim — a true Appleton champion!

Sport at Appleton



A Fresh New Look for PE!

This term, our PE department is stepping out in style with brand-new PE kits for both students and staff!

Designed with comfort, performance, and school pride in mind, the new kits give everyone a smart and professional look while supporting participation in all areas of physical activity. Whether it's PE lessons, school teams, sporting competitions, or extracurricular clubs, the new kits are ready for action.
Since their introduction, the new PE kits have made a fantastic impression around school. Seeing students and staff wearing them with confidence has brought a fresh energy to PE lessons and sporting activities. The smart appearance and sense of togetherness they create have been hugely positive, and we are delighted with how well they have been received by our school community.

Here's to an exciting year of sport, teamwork, and success! ⛹️ 🎨 🏅





Duke of Edinburgh's Award

Y9 Bronze DofE

In early September, our Year 9 students were introduced to the DofE Award through several presentations in form time. Interested students were then invited to a presentation at lunchtime and given an expression of interest form. Interested students then attended a selection day on Wednesday 30th October and took part in a number of challenges related to DofE. We are pleased to announce we have now recruited a full cohort for Bronze DofE and students have been busy completing their eDofE sections. Students will continue to work on their sections between now and the expedition section at Easter.

Key dates for activities within the Academy are listed below:
For the volunteering section we are offering a range of activities that will take place during school time. These will be delivered during weeks commencing **18 and 25 January, 1 and 8 February 2027**. Students will need to attend two of the above dates and will be told in advance which dates they need to attend.
For the skills section, a first aid course will be delivered on **Saturday 23 or 30 January**. Students will only need to attend one day and will be told in advance which date they need to attend.

For the expedition section, we are offering several training days during school time. These will be delivered during weeks commencing **8 and 15 March 2027**.
We are organising two trips to accommodate the large number of students completing the award. These trips will take place during the first week of the Easter holidays, **Friday 26 – Saturday 27 March 2027 and Monday 29 – Tuesday 30 March 2027**. Students attending the second trip will need to come into school on **Sunday 28 March 2027** to collect their equipment. Further detailed information will be provided closer to the time.

Duke of Edinburgh's Award

Y10 Silver DofE Training Expedition

Our Year 10 Silver students took part in a training expedition on Friday 25th - Sunday 27th September. Students travelled from Appleton to the start point in Grassington village in the Yorkshire Dales on Friday morning. After a quick sort out of equipment both groups set off in search of their campsite for Friday night. Both teams had a few navigational mistakes long the way but showed great resilience and kept going until they reached their campsite in Kettlewell.

Once the tents were pitched, sleeping matts and bags sorted the attention turned to food. Pasta was a popular choice among everyone and no one had leftovers. Some snacks of chocolate and biscuits for pudding left everyone feeling good about day 1.

Day 2 saw both groups ascend a nearby summit followed by a walk from Bucken down the valley back to camp. Everyone was tired form the day and ready for their evening meals. An early bed in anticipation for an early morning was welcomed. All students were wide awake early to pack up and come home. Well done to everyone in involved.

Key dates for Silver:
Volunteer section – February half term 2027- **15th - 17th February** based at Harewood House taking part in conservation tasks.
Assessed expedition: **21st - 23rd May 2027** based in the Yorkshire Dales.






Outdoor Adventurous Activities

Year 7 Mountain Biking Club

We have run two Mountain Biking clubs this half term for Year 7 and the students involved have responded with enthusiasm and commitment during each session. Both groups have been focusing on bike handling skills and safety considerations before tackling the trails here on offer at Appleton. The Academy has three purpose-build mountain biking trails and students have been progressing their skills each week using these facilities. The students have had fun tackling the obstacles, twists and turns of the trails looking at body position, cornering and effective braking. Well done to all those involved.









Year 7 Climbing Club

We have had a keen group of Year 7 climbers join the Appleton Climbing Club this half term They have been pitting themselves against the challenges posed by the Academy's extensive climbing wall during weekly sessions. Alongside improving their climbing skills, students have learned the technical skills to keep themselves safe including putting on a helmet and harness and keeping a climber safe using the rope system. Well done to all who have attended and gave it your best!

Sport at Appleton

We have had a brilliant start to the school year with our sports teams. Our Yr 10 boys football team have played 5, won 4 and are sitting top of the Bradford schools league.

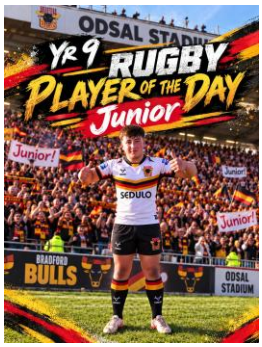
Our Yr 9 boys have also had a great start beating Tong 2-1 in their opening game of the season.





Our Yr 8 and 9 boys rugby team have played their first game against Rastrick. This was a very tough opening friendly match but our students worked really hard and actually scored first despite the very experienced opposition. We are hoping for a very successful year of rugby.





Between now and Christmas we have a very large number of football fixtures across all year groups and our rugby and badminton teams will commence their seasons. Good luck to everyone involved and remember to follow us on bluesky for all the latest news and updates.

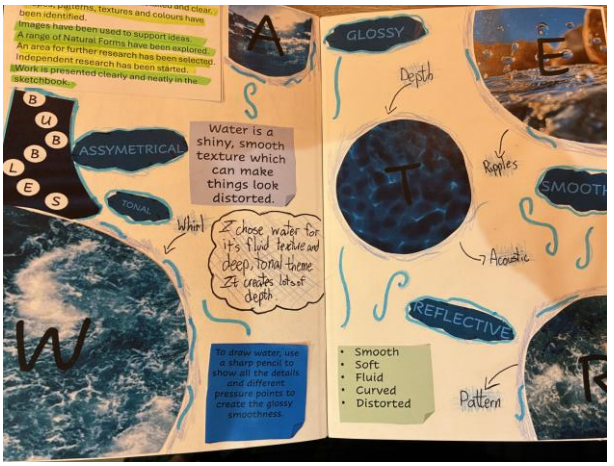
Mr Young.

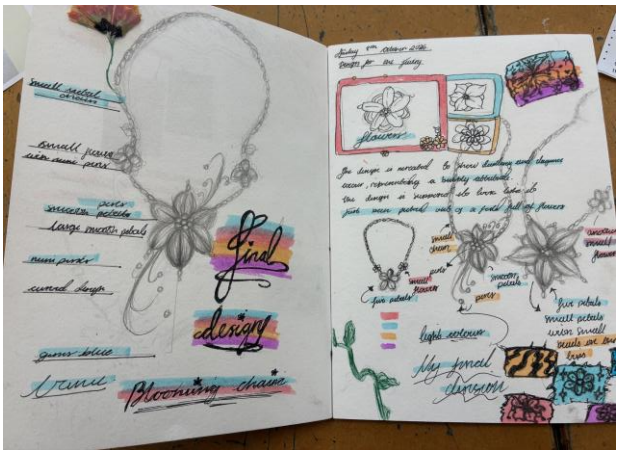
Appleton Academy SPORTS
NEWS | FIXTURES | ACHIEVEMENTS | OPPORTUNITIES

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Art and Design at Appleton

Design and Technology



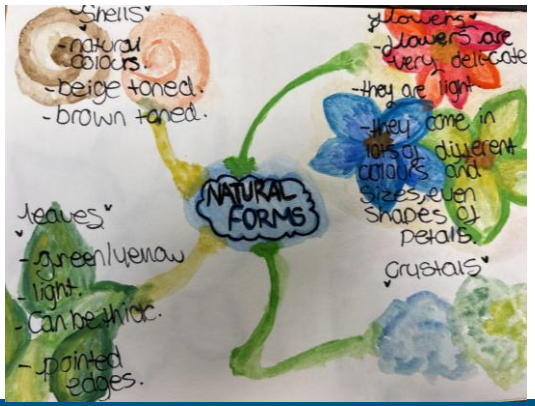








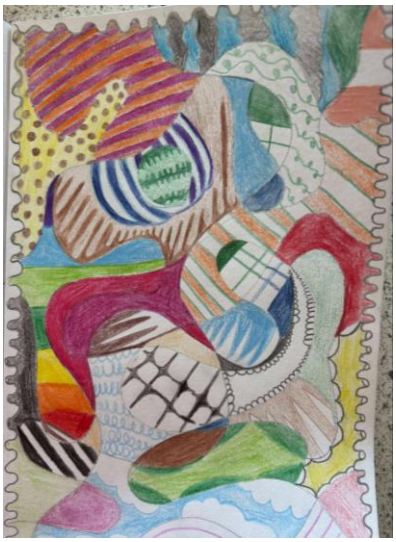




Year 7 3d design students have been exploring the Memphis design movement, investigating its bold colours, geometric shapes and playful patterns. They are using these ideas to develop their own creative designs for a sound amplifier, considering how colour, shape and pattern can be combined to create an eye-catching and functional product. Year 8 3d design students have been exploring street art, focusing on the work of Banksy to inspire their lamp designs. Year 9 3d design students have been exploring the theme of natural forms, taking inspiration from artist Judith Brown and her use of organic shapes and textures. They are applying these influences to their jewellery box project,

Art at Appleton

Year 7 Art















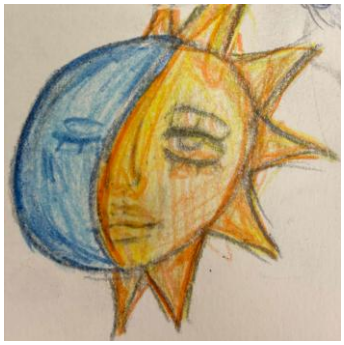




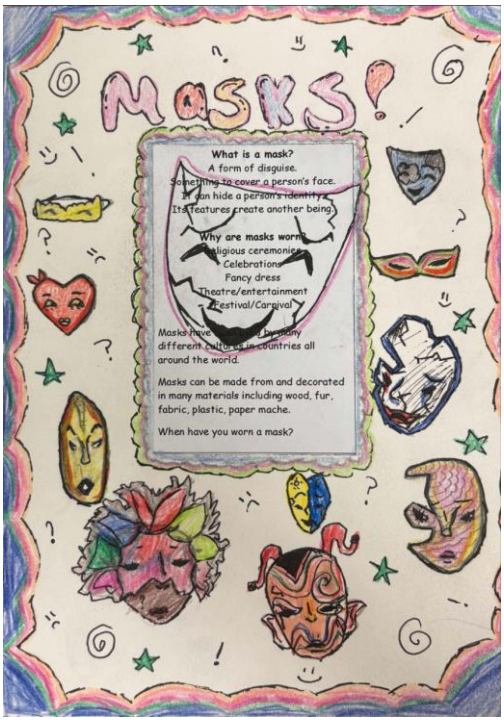
Students have started to explore the formal elements of line, tone and texture, taking inspiration from the expressive artwork of Vincent van Gogh. They have started to investigate how Van Gogh used directional lines and mark-making to create movement, depth and atmosphere in his work. Students are looking at developing their pencil skills by experimenting with a range of shading techniques and marks to create different tones and textures. They will apply these skills to observational drawing, building confidence in their ability to create detailed and expressive artwork.

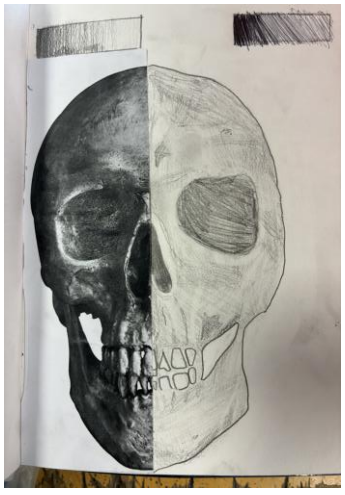
Art at Appleton

Year 8 Art



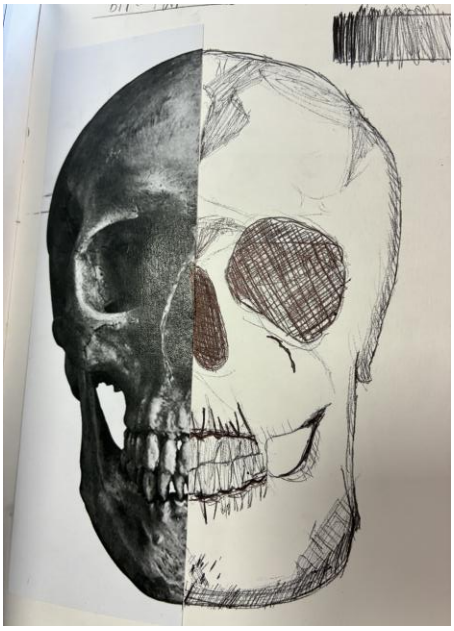








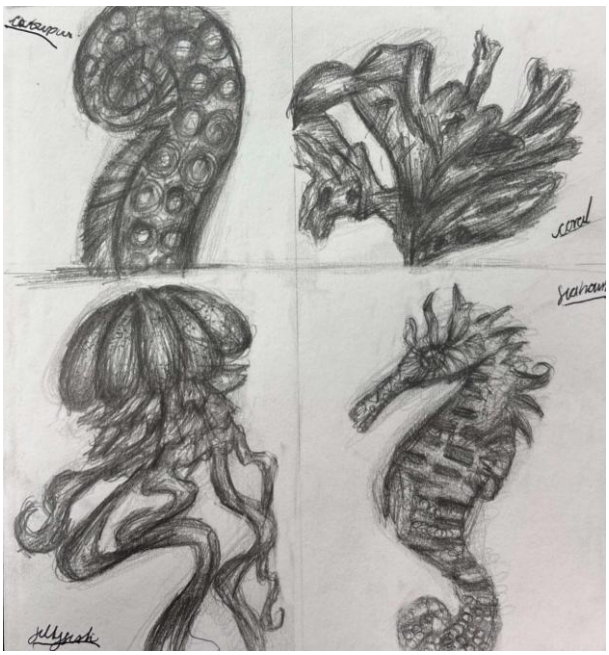




Students have been exploring cultural masks, with a particular focus on Mexican masks and their vibrant designs, patterns and symbolism. They have developed their drawing skills by studying skulls, focusing on shape, detail and structure. Students have also investigated how facial features, patterns and colour can be used to portray different emotions in animal masks. Through these activities, they are developing their understanding of cultural influences in art and building confidence in creating their own expressive mask designs.

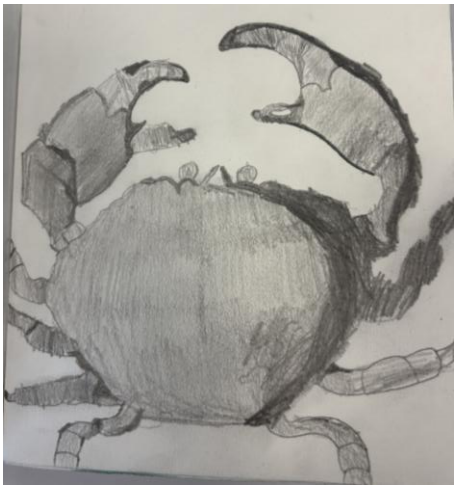
Art at Appleton

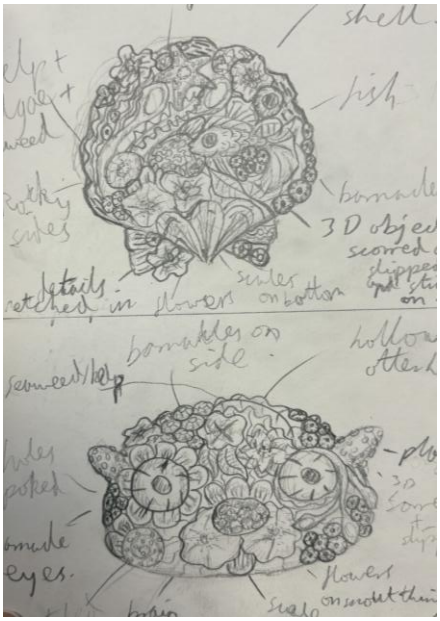
Year 9 Art











Year 9 students have been exploring the work of artists Yellena James and H.R. Giger to inspire their own underwater world illustrations. They have developed their drawing skills by studying and creating detailed sections of underwater environments, exploring organic shapes, patterns, textures and imaginative forms. Students are now beginning to develop their own designs, which will be transformed into three-dimensional clay artworks

Appleton Academy

Inspire Nurture Develop

Mental Health Support

You are not alone

It's OK to ask for help

NHS Bradford District Care NHS Foundation Trust

School Nurse

Text for support

07312 263223

You can text our school nurse for confidential advice and support about your health and wellbeing.

Soluna

Here for your next chapter

Free, safe and anonymous online support for your mental health and wellbeing.

- Chat to trained counsellors
- Read helpful articles and resources
- Join online communities
- Get support whenever you need it

Visit **www.solunaapp.com**

APPLETON ECHO EVERY VOICE COUNTS

Scan the QR code to tell us about a worry, concern or something you would like support with.

You can report anonymously

childline

0800 1111

Visit **www.childline.org.uk**

You can talk to Childline about anything. It's free, confidential and available 24/7.

Whatever you're going through, Childline is here to listen.

Choose from a range of support

Play connect — Ages 0–5

Delivered by Family Action

Play Connect provide warm, play-based sessions for babies, young children and their parents and carers.

Spring — Ages 6–25

Delivered by Brathay Trust

A group programme that uses outdoor learning, creative activities and teamwork to support young people's emotional wellbeing and personal development.

Safety Nets — Ages 11–16

Delivered by Invictus Wellbeing

Safety Nets uses sport, movement and team activities to support emotional wellbeing in a fun and engaging way.

Create, Express and Explore — Ages 6–25

Delivered by All Star Ents

A creative programme using music, media and the arts to support emotional wellbeing and self-expression.

Thrive — Ages 5–11

Delivered by Invictus Wellbeing

A creative and playful space to explore and express yourself through activity and movement whilst building relationships with others.

Decider Life Skills — Ages 11–25

Delivered by Barnardo's

A group programme that helps young people build practical skills to support their emotional wellbeing and resilience.

YOUTH IN MIND CONNECT

Supporting children, young people and families across Bradford District.

Find out more about these activities and request support at **www.bdcmind.org.uk/connect**

Looking to the future: Alumnae appeal



At Appleton Academy we highly value our connections with former students. We like to celebrate their achievements and experiences with students, staff and the local community.

We would love to hear from former students and hope to be able to work with them, in the capacity of volunteer, mentor and/or inspirational speakers. If you are a former student and would like to be contacted about the possibility of working with us, please complete the form on the link below or alternatively contact info@appletonacademy.co.uk and state alumnae in the subject.

https://forms.office.com/e/uxFvJNr54E

