October 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

As we approach the end of our first half term, I thought it would be a good opportunity to share some of the highlights of the year to date, as well as providing some reminders and information about upcoming events in the busy run up to Christmas.

Our New Students
It has been our pleasure to welcome new students into Year 7 and we are really pleased with how well they have settled into our school. It has also been lovely to see our older students being such excellent role models and supporting our new students to find their way around, as well as facilitating some of our extra-curricular activities. We know that there is always a lot of information to take in when starting at a new school so if you have any questions or worries, please get in touch with one of the team. Mrs Crookes is the Head of Year 7, and Mrs Wykez is our Assistant Head of Year 7. You can also contact Emily Chesterman, our Parental Involvement Officer.

Year 6 Choices Evening
It was fantastic to see so many prospective students for September 2027 and their parents & carers at our choices evening, which was held this month. Feedback from the evening was excellent with some wonderful comments about our staff and students. Thank you to all of our current students who supported these events and made them so successful, they were a credit to parents, carers and the school.

Enrichment
Our lunchtime and after-school enrichment programme is now well underway. We have had over 20 clubs taking place this half term, with students enjoying a wide range of options including mountain biking, singing, and drama among many other exciting activities. We would encourage students to play a full and active part in life at Appleton and enjoy everything we have to offer. Our timetable can be found on the website and the sign-up window for clubs taking place in the next next half term will open during the first week back after the break.

Careers Events
We are delighted to be continuing our careers programme for all year groups, with a particular focus this half term on Year 11 and their next steps. We have hosted visits in school with a number of Sixth Form and College providers coming to speak to our students about what they can offer. We also held an information and revision workshop event for students and parents/carers, along with a mini careers fair with a range of college and sixth form providers in attendance. This was well received by parents, carers and students.

Uniform
Thank you for your support in ensuring that our uniform standards remain high. The overwhelming majority of our students look very smart and are a credit to you and the school. Unfortunately, we still have a small number of students who do not meet our uniform standards. 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. As the cold weather arrives, it is important that students bring a coat to school as they will spend some of their break and lunchtime outside.

Mobile Phones
The introduction of our phone pouches has been an overwhelming success and students have commented on how they appreciate the lack of distraction during school time. Thank you to parents & carers for supporting this initiative, it really has made a significant difference to the wellbeing of our students.

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 & carers 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. Some parents & carers may feel that we over-communicate about attendance, whether that be in a negative or positive way. However, it is important that parents & carers are aware of their child's attendance over time so that, should issues arise, we can work together to address them quickly. We will be writing to all parents & carers with an end of half-term update on their child's attendance and would ask that if you have any queries you direct them, in the first instance, to the Attendance Team.

Newsletters
We are delighted to share our first newsletter with you, which gives an overview of the events that have taken place this half-term in secondary. The link to the newsletter is here: https://tinyurl.com/5n6rfs92.

We will aim to share a newsletter regularly, which will provide insights into daily life at the Academy, along with good news stories about the wonderful opportunities our children have had over the term. As part of our newsletter, we would like to have an alumni feature where we share what students who have attended Appleton in the past are doing now and celebrate their achievements with them. If you know someone who attended Appleton Academy who would be interested in coming to visit school or share their story in our newsletter, please get in touch via info@appletonacademy.co.uk. We would love to hear from them.

Forthcoming Events
The second half-term is always full of exciting events in the run up to Christmas. As ever, full details will be circulated closer to each event and details will also be found on our website. However, please find a list of some of these events below:

Monday 2 November 2026 – 'No Days Off in November' Attendance Challenge begins
Monday 2 November 2026 – school immunisations take place
Friday 13 November 2026 – Children in Need – wear something yellow/spotty for a 50p donation
Monday 16 November 2026 – Year 11 mocks begin for two weeks (mock timetable available on the website and emailed to parents/carers and students)
Tuesday 1 December 2026 – 14 Days of Christmas Attendance Challenge begins
Wednesday 2 December 2026 – Flu immunisations take place
Tuesday 8 December 2026 – Ex-Year 11 Awards Evening
Thursday 10 December 2026 – Christmas Jumper Day
Monday 14 December 2026 – The Winter Showcase
Tuesday 15 December 2026 – Year 11 Families' Evening and distribution of reports
Friday 18 December 2026 – Secondary Panto
Friday 18 December 2026 – Last day of school term –finish at 2.00pm

I hope you all have a restful and enjoyable break next week and we look forward to welcoming students back refreshed and ready to work hard over the next half term.

Yours faithfully

Rachel Garlick

Mrs Rachel Garlick
Head of Secondary