



The Appleton School

Parental Curriculum Booklet

Year 9

Achieving Excellence





Be Here to Achieve at The Appleton School

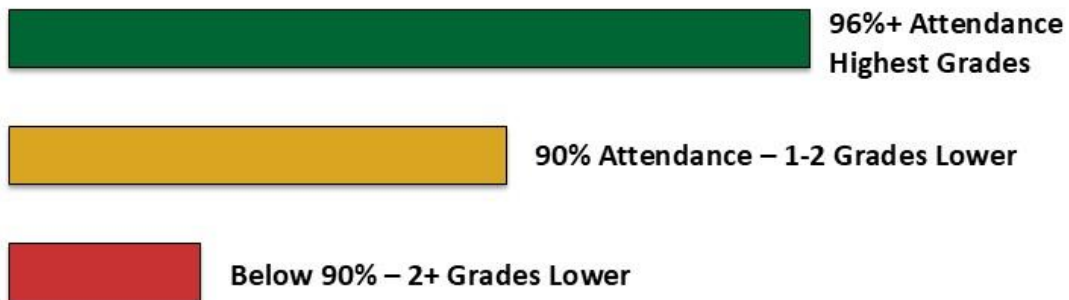
+0.6

Over half a grade higher than their target grades when they have 96% attendance

26%

Students with 96% attendance achieved grades at 7-9, which is above the national average of 21.8%

Attendance = Achievement



**“When you’re in front of your teachers —
you succeed!”**

Aim for 100% – Strive for Excellence
Every day counts. Every lesson matters.



Key Dates

2025/2026

Autumn Term 2025

Monday 1st September Non-pupil day

Tuesday 2nd September **Year 7 and 12 only**

Year 7 Welcome Assembly - Main Hall - 11:00am

Year 12 Welcome Assembly - Main Hall - 11:30am

Wednesday 3rd September **Whole school returns - 8:30am**

Friday 19th September Non-pupil day

27th October – 31st October Half term

28th November Non-pupil day

Friday 19th December Last day of term

Spring Term 2026

Friday 2nd January Non-pupil day

Monday 5th January **Students Return**

16th February – 20th February Half Term

Friday 6th March Non-pupil day

Friday 27th March Last day of term

Summer Term 2026

Monday 13th April **Students return**

Monday 4th May Bank Holiday

25th May – 29th May Half Term

Friday 17th July Last day of term



The Appleton School

Specific Key Dates for Year 9

Date	Event
13 th October	Year 9 Parent Curriculum Evening
22 nd October	Year 9 Data Home
12 th January – 23 rd January	Year 9 Assessment Week
26 th January - Onwards	Subject information talks in lessons
29 th January	Year 9 Options Presentation Evening (5:00-7:30pm)
2 nd – 12 th February	After-school GCSE Taster Sessions (students sign up to these)
5 th March	Parent Consultative Evening
6 th March	Options Form goes live
16 th March	Deadline for Options Submission
19 th June	Year 9 Data Home
W/B 13 th July	Rewards Week



The Appleton School

Who to contact

To ensure we can monitor the communications effectively and that parents get a timely response we ask all emails go through to info@theappletonschool.org, our communications policy states that staff will respond within 48 hours (this excludes holidays, weekends and bank holidays).

Mark your email for the attention of the following:

Issue	Who to contact
Pastoral concern Settling in concern/friendship concerns Uniform issues	Form Tutor
Issue with subject specific homework Issue within a lesson Pupil progress in a subject	Class teacher
Set changes Exam specific question Persistent subject concerns	Head of Department/Faculty
Persistent Absence Concerns at home Persistent concerns outside of the lesson e.g. social time	Head of Year
SEN Support One plans and EHCPs	SEND Team
Lost property General attendance concerns Absences	Student Services

Students, parents, members of our community, can also log concerns through our Never Acceptable portal here – <https://swgfl.org.uk/whisper/tas1/> here concerns can be reported anonymously.



Values and Ethos

There is a welcoming culture in this school. Staff develop positive relationships with pupils. They know the pupils very well. This ensures pupils are happy and feel safe here.

OFSTED, 2024

The Appleton School is committed to **'Achieving Excellence' together**; providing an ordered, inclusive and stimulating learning environment in which all students are encouraged to achieve at their highest level. It is determined that all students should be valued through the provision of a broad, relevant, balanced and challenging curriculum properly catering for individual needs. Such valuing is encouraged within an atmosphere of mutual respect amongst all those involved in the learning process. The school recognises its role within the broader community. It identifies learning as a lifelong process and values the contribution made by parents and others to the creation of a partnership. Within this partnership, and through the learning programme, students will develop skills, attitudes and values that properly prepare them to accept the challenges and responsibilities of adult life.



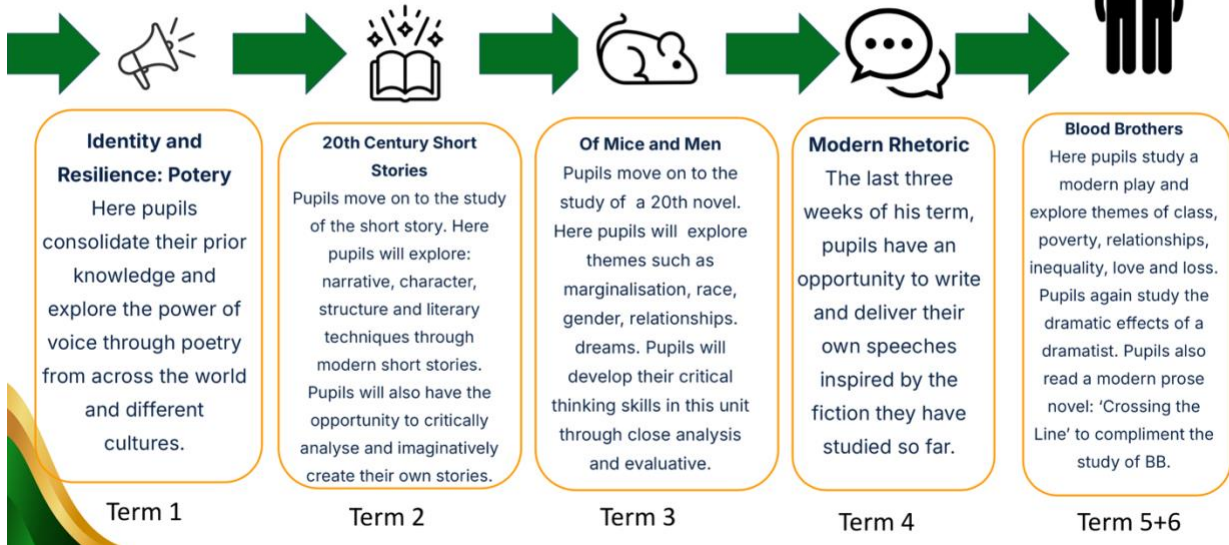


“What will your child be learning this academic year”



English Road Map for SUBJECT Year 9

Achieving Excellence



Road Map for Mathematics: Year 9

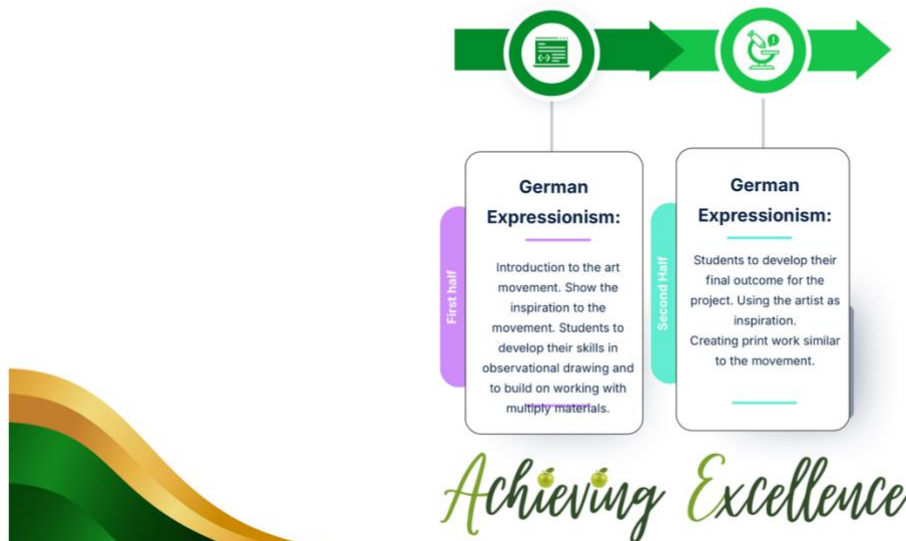




Road Map for Science: Year 9



Road Map for Art: Year 9





Design and Technology: Year 9



Road Map for Drama Year 9





Road Map for Geography: Year 9



Road Map for History Year 9





Road Map for Music: Year 9



Road Map for RS: Year 9

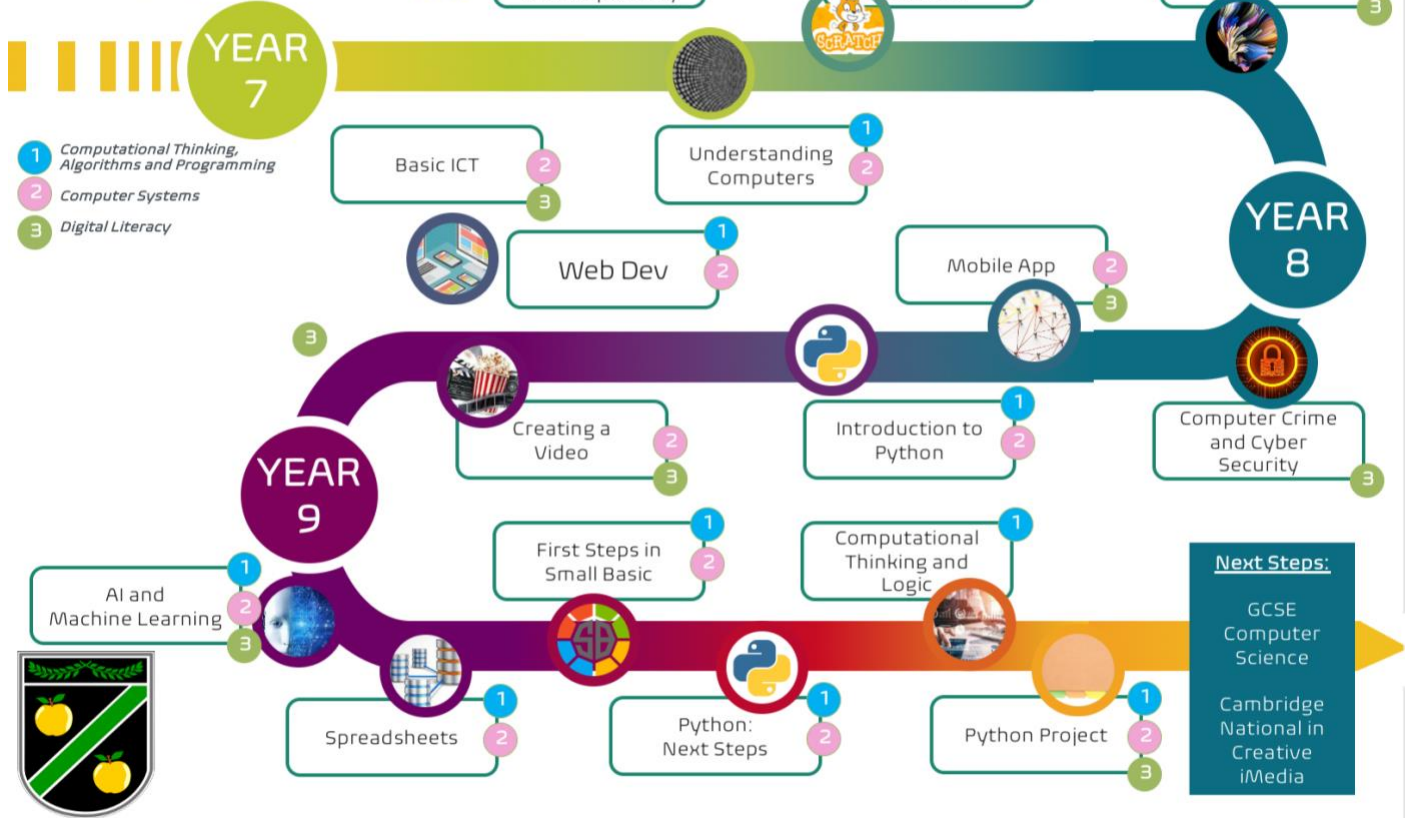




Computer Science

2025-2026

Curriculum Outline





Supporting their studies

A question we are often asked by parents is how can you help their studies at home, we all recognise that schools and resources to support learning are very different from when we were at school, the below tips should help.

At The Appleton School, we believe that parents and carers play a vital role in helping children achieve their full potential. Small, consistent actions at home can make a big difference to a young person's progress, confidence, and enjoyment of learning. Below are some practical ways you can support your child:

How You Can Support Your Child with Their Studies



Provide a Study Space

Choose a quiet, well-lit area at home for homework and revision.



Establish a Routine

Set regular times for studying, leisure, and extracurricular activities.



Take an Interest

Ask about their learning – discuss topics and express curiosity.



Offer Praise

Recognise effort, resilience, and organisation as well as achievement



Encourage Planning

Help them use a planner or diary to keep track of their work.



Break Tasks into Steps

Show them how to tackle assignments by dividing them into smaller parts



Support Wellbeing

Ensure they get enough sleep, exercise, and healthy food



Resources to Support Learning

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”

Homework:

1. Satchel One – our platform for recording homework and where students/parents can monitor what has been set. A multitude of platforms might be used to assess homework performance but all will be required on Satchel.
2. Sparx – we have SparxReader, SparxMaths and SparxScience, a platform to support students in their core subject homework, this is set **weekly**. Students can also access the Independent Learning section of the websites to support revision or to generally develop their understanding.

General approach to Home Learning and Revision:

The Pomodoro Technique — Study in Focused Bursts

The Pomodoro Technique is a time-management method that helps students stay focused and avoid burnout by working in short, concentrated bursts followed by regular breaks.

How it Works

1. **Choose a task** to work on.
2. **Set a timer for 25 minutes** — this is called one “Pomodoro.”
3. **Work with full focus** until the timer rings.
4. **Take a 5-minute break** — get up, stretch, drink water.
5. **Repeat** this cycle 3–4 times.
6. After 4 Pomodoros, **take a longer break** of 15–30 minutes.

Why It Helps

- Builds **focus and concentration**
- Prevents **mental fatigue**
- Makes large tasks feel **more manageable**
- Encourages **regular rest and movement**

Tip for Parents

Encourage your child to try the Pomodoro Technique during homework or revision sessions — it can help them use their time efficiently and keep motivation high. Link <https://www.tomatotimers.com/> to timer videos with calming music to help students focus and apply the technique correctly.



Sparx Homework



As a school we have bought into the Sparx Learning package. For the last year we have been using SparxReader, SparxMaths, and this year we are introducing SparxScience.

Sparx is an intuitive piece of software that allows students to work through questions, with support when needed, and the questions adapt to a student's ability – the quicker they work through questions correctly then the system will then make the next questions more challenging and vice versa.

Along the way Sparx will also ask students about an answer to a previous question, this is because the system works best if students write down the answers in their exercise book alongside the online portal to help writing practice and retention. The homework percentage is a completion rate not a score.



FAQs

Why are you using Sparx?

Sparx has been shown to improve student outcomes with regular use, the students with the highest grades last academic year were the ones with the highest Sparx use. It helps students to plug gaps and ensure they are challenged.

How can I know when they've been set homework?

We still use the Satchel One platform for recording homework which all parents have access to. If you are unsure at all please contact the school info@theappletonschool.org

Why is so much homework online?

Online homework allows for immediate feedback to students to prevent the embedding of misconceptions, it can also automatically pitch the right amount of challenge to help them progress.

My child spent so long on their homework but still did not complete 100%

Please do not worry, this will flag to a teacher, they can see the amount completed and the time spent on the homework so will realise there is an issue and will intervene.

I suspect my child is doing the homework far too quickly, are they cheating?

We suggest taking away their phone during their homework, there is a new tool on AI where they can film/take photos of the question and it will give them a solution. However, it also means they complete the homework quickly and that will be noticed by the teacher – although best to keep the phone away!

Do I get a notification about incomplete homework?

Sparx automatically notifies parents on a Sunday about any outstanding homework and feedback on what has been completed.



KS3 Home Revision Resources (for Parents & Students)



Maths

BBC Bitesize – Clear lessons, videos, and quizzes on every KS3 topic

[BBC Bitesize KS3 Maths](#) ↗

Corbettmaths – Practice questions, video tutorials and 5-a-day worksheets

[corbettmaths.com](#) ↗

Cognito – Animated lessons and quick quizzes to check understanding

[cognitoedu.org](#) ↗

Dr Frost Maths – Free practice tasks and worksheets (create a free account)

[drfrostmaths.com](#) ↗



Science

BBC Bitesize – KS3 Biology, Chemistry, Physics lessons and quizzes

[BBC Bitesize KS3 Science](#) ↗

Seneca Learning – Interactive KS3 science courses with instant feedback

[senecalearning.com](#) ↗

Cognito – Short topic videos and retrieval questions

[cognitoedu.org](#) ↗

STEM Learning – Free remote lessons and resources for KS3

[stem.org.uk](#) ↗



English

BBC Bitesize – KS3 reading, writing, grammar, and Shakespeare

[BBC Bitesize KS3 English](#) ↗

Seneca Learning – KS3 English literature and language courses

[senecalearning.com](#) ↗

Education Quizzes – Fun quizzes for spelling, grammar and literature

[educationquizzes.com](#) ↗



Humanities (History, Geography, RE)

BBC Bitesize – Excellent KS3 courses for each subject

- [KS3 History](#) ↗
- [KS3 Geography](#) ↗
- [KS3 Religious Studies](#) ↗

Seneca Learning – KS3 History, Geography and RE courses

[senecalearning.com](#) ↗



Creative & Technology Subjects

BBC Bitesize – KS3 Art & Design, Design Technology, Music

- [KS3 Art & Design](#) ↗
- [KS3 Design Technology](#) ↗
- [KS3 Music](#) ↗

Oak National Academy – Full lesson units with videos and tasks

[thenational.academy](#) ↗



The Appleton School

Resources to Support Wellbeing

As well as links on our website for useful information and activities for wellbeing we also have our own dedicated webpage to wellbeing that focuses on various aspects:



[What Is Resilience?](#)



[Mindfulness Exercises](#)



[Sleep Management](#)



[Healthy Eating](#)



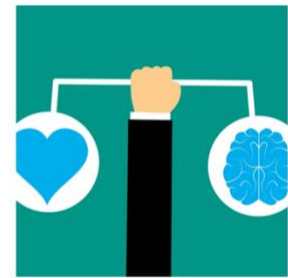
[Study Space](#)



[Events & Resources](#)



[Contacts](#)



[Emotion Regulation](#)

Wellbeing Resources on main school website –

<https://www.theappletonschool.org/students/student-wellbeing>

Appleton Wellbeing website, MindCare -

<https://sites.google.com/theappletonschool.org/mindcareappleton/home>

Parental Advice for handling exam pressure -

https://www.theappletonschool.org/user/pages/05.students/02.revision-resources/03._parent-resources/Handling_the_pressure_of_external_exams.pdf

Top Ten Tips for parents supporting children through exams -

https://www.theappletonschool.org/user/pages/05.students/02.revision-resources/03._parent-resources/Top_Ten_Tips_for_parents.pdf



SEND Support

“Staff make effective adaptations for pupils with SEND during lessons. Support staff work well with individuals. Consequently, pupils with SEND achieve well from their various starting points.”

Introduction

OFSTED, 2024

The Appleton School is an 11-18 comprehensive secondary school which admits students to the school in line with the school's admission procedure. The school believes that all children and young people are entitled to an education that enables them to:

- Develop lively, enquiring minds, encouraging the ability to question and argue rationally. Confronting them with challenging mental and physical tasks in order to ensure the highest possible level of achievement.
- Instil respect for each other, for religious and moral values and tolerance of other races, religions and ways of life.
- Acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes relevant to adult life in a rapidly changing world.

The Appleton School takes a whole school inclusive approach to students with special educational needs, recognising that the aims of the school ('achieving excellence') are the same for all students, whatever their abilities.

Working with the school

Our Curriculum Support Team are:



SENDCO:
Ms N Cox



Inclusion Lead:
Mr D Clout



SEND Manager:
Mrs Emily Fox



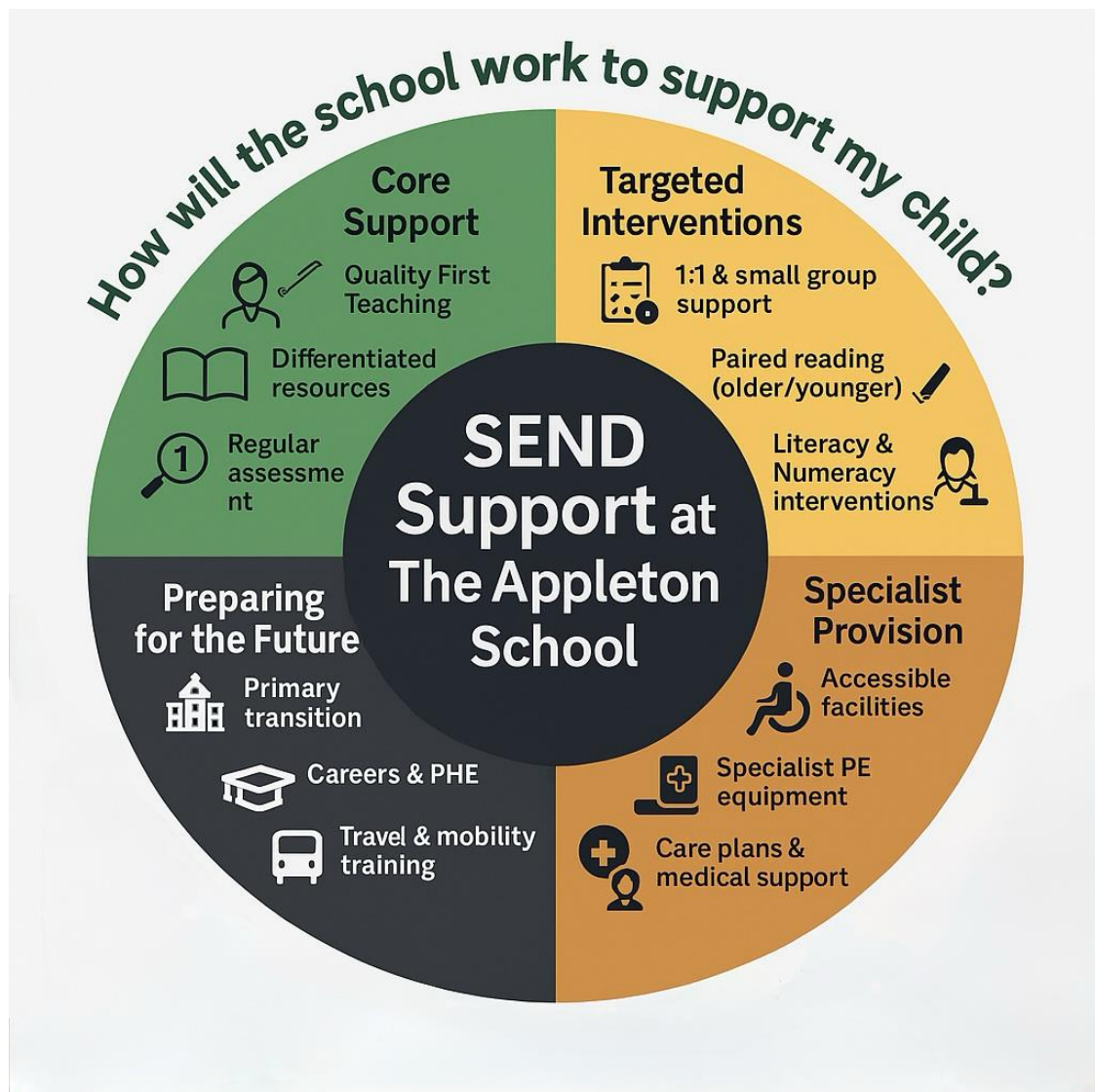


The Appleton School

As a school, we work hard to be in effective communication with children and parents, and to listen and respond positively to any concerns brought to our attention. We are committed to taking all concerns seriously and would like to think that, through being open and accessible, concerns can be both raised and dealt with easily.

“The school has high expectations for pupils. There is an ambitious curriculum for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school has recently implemented several strategies that support pupils to meet the aims of the curriculum. This ensures pupils achieve well and are ready for the next stage of their education.”

OFSTED, 2024








The Appleton School

In order to fulfil its commitment to fully support every child into “achieving excellence”, the school already has in place a range of specialist interventions and continues to seek new ways of providing support.

Examples of the kind of support we can provide are:

-  School Homework clubs (Pre and post school and lunchtimes)
-  Literacy and Numeracy support groups
-  Small group skills sessions
-  Friendship groups
-  Peer Mentors
-  Counselling and mentoring
-  Classroom and examination access arrangements

The school is committed to ensuring that all teaching is at least good and that much is outstanding. High quality teaching is differentiated and personalised to meet the needs of all children and young people.

What happens if my child needs specialist equipment or facilities?

- Accessible Toilets
- ▲ Ramps
- Access to specialist teacher input (PNI, HI, VI)
- Access to a laptop
- Implementation of care programmes for students with PNI
- ⊕ Specialist PE equipment

We work closely with outside professionals — such as specialist teachers, occupational therapists, and specialist nursing teams — to ensure no student is disadvantaged. Our approach is guided by our Equality and Disability Policies.

How does the school support my child at the various Key Stages and in preparing for life as an adult?

- Close liaison with Primary Feeders
- ◀ Working with the Transition Pathways Service (Yr9-KS4/KS5)
- PSHE programme and Careers guidance/education
- Organising travel or mobility training
- ↑ Facilitating transfer onto appropriate Post-16 college courses

We support students at every stage of their school journey, preparing them for life as confident, independent young adults.



Reading

"Today a reader, tomorrow a leader"

The Importance of reading

At The Appleton School, we believe in the power of reading. We understand that becoming a confident reader unlocks all subjects in our curriculum and helps students to succeed beyond school. Regular reading has a number of benefits:

1 minute a day: Students will encounter 180 words per school year.

5 minutes a day: 282,000 words per school year.

20 minutes a day: 1,800,000 words per school year and likely to score in the top 90% of standardised tests.

All students from Year 7 to Year 9 will be expected to complete reading homework. This will be set via the Sparx Reader platform. Sparx Reader is a reading, comprehension and vocabulary programme that gets all young people reading regularly to help improve their literacy. It also aims to motivate students to read for pleasure.

Research shows that students who read every day are 28% more likely to over-achieve and exceed their target grades across the curriculum. Reading widely supports overall academic progress, however we have also carefully mapped our curriculum offering to generate a recommended reading list for every subject studied in Year 7 to Year 11 to reinforce the learning of our young people and to help challenge them to be more aspirational. Key Stage 5 reading lists are shared with students upon entry to the Sixth Form. We have also compiled a recommended reading list for reading for pleasure.

[Cross Curricular Wider Reading List](https://theappletonschool.org/subjects/reading-and-literacy/Cross%20Curricular%20Wider%20Reading%20List.pdf)

<https://theappletonschool.org/subjects/reading-and-literacy/Cross Curricular Wider Reading List.pdf>

[KS3 reading list](https://www.theappletonschool.org/subjects/english/ks3-reading-list)

<https://www.theappletonschool.org/subjects/english/ks3-reading-list>

[KS4 reading list](https://www.theappletonschool.org/subjects/english/ks4-reading-list)

<https://www.theappletonschool.org/subjects/english/ks4-reading-list>

[Encouraging reading list](https://theappletonschool.org/user/pages/13.Subjects/02.reading-and-literacy/Encouraging_Reading_List.pdf)

https://theappletonschool.org/user/pages/13.Subjects/02.reading-and-literacy/Encouraging_Reading_List.pdf

[Aspirational reading list](https://theappletonschool.org/user/pages/13.Subjects/02.reading-and-literacy/Aspirational_Reading_List.pdf)

https://theappletonschool.org/user/pages/13.Subjects/02.reading-and-literacy/Aspirational_Reading_List.pdf



Current Targeted Provision: Interventions

Today a reader, tomorrow a leader.		
<p>National Tutoring Programme Working in small groups with a Primary trained phonics teacher, students with a low reading age take part in daily intervention over a three week programme. Reading age testing is used to measure progress. Data shows that students make significant progress in this intervention.</p>	<p>Bedrock Students in Year 7 and Year 8 have access to Bedrock online, a platform which explicitly teaches vocabulary and grammar in the context of original prose linked to a range of curriculum areas, ensuring learners are reading a diverse range of high-quality texts that draw them in and expand their cultural capital. The platform is self-differentiating and tasks adapt to meet the needs of individual students, and is monitored by English staff.</p>	<p>Corum Beanstalk This programme trains KS4 'Reading Leaders' to work with younger students and is a structured peer-mentoring programme, developed to provide benefit to both younger and older pupils. Pairs use materials to promote reading for pleasure principles. Student surveys are used to monitor engagement and measure impact.</p>
<p>Phonics Trained progress mentors in the SEND department work with key students to improve phonological understanding and reading fluency. AFALS testing is used to measure progress.</p>	<p>LAC tutoring Trained progress mentors provide individualised tutoring for students who are Looked After, using English teacher feedback and reading age test results to design personalised learning programmes.</p>	<p>Peer Reading Programme Year 7 and Year 8 PPG students meet with older students once a week to read together, promoting reading for pleasure principles. Student surveys are used to monitor engagement and measure impact.</p>

Current Universal Provision: Reading

Today a reader, tomorrow a leader.		
<p>Tutor Time Programme Alternating between Literacy and Numeracy resources on a half-termly basis, students in Y7-Y11 receive input in registration time linking to reading and Literacy, including reading practice and vocabulary teaching.</p>	<p>Varied English Curriculum Students in KS3 and KS4 read a rich range of fiction, nonfiction, plays and poetry, and are explicitly taught skills for writing creatively for a range of purposes. Oracy is embedded through speaking and listening projects.</p>	<p>Reading Lessons Once a fortnight, students in KS3 have a reading for pleasure lesson. Teachers alternate between independent reading and modelling high-quality reading through class novels.</p>
<p>School Library Our school library is open during break and lunch times for students of all ages and has a variety of books that can be borrowed and enjoyed at home.</p>	<p>Reading Enrichment This year we have celebrated World Book Day and promoted a summer reading challenge.</p>	<p>Reading Age Testing We test students' reading ages on a termly basis using online software. Reading ages are recorded and shared with all staff to inform their planning. Students with a low reading age are identified for targeted interventions.</p>
<p>Reading Newsletters Our parent bulletin includes book recommendations and promotes reading for pleasure at home. School social media is also used to promote our book of the week.</p>	<p>Reading Rewards Assemblies are used to share rewards linked to reading, for example Bedrock certificates. In the summer term we purchased a book vending machine to integrate into our rewards systems.</p>	<p>Subject Reading Lists Our website shares with students and parents a suggested cross-curricular reading list to support and extend students' learning in each of their subjects. We also share a suggested 'reading for pleasure' list of recommendations.</p>