



The
Appleton
School

Headteacher's Bulletin

To Parents



December 2025



Dear Parents/Carers,

We come to the end of what has been a very busy term, in our 60th anniversary year, with new Year 7 and Year 12 students settling quickly into the school. It was also a pleasure to welcome students and parents to our Sixth Form Open Evening on 23rd October. The evening was a huge success, with comments from students and parents extremely complimentary.

The deadline for secondary applications has now passed and I thought you would be interested to know that we have had over 750 applications for Year 7 entry to The Appleton School next year. At the time of writing, we have also had over 240 applications for Year 12 Sixth Form entry for September 2026.

I am also delighted to show parents and carers our winning entry for The Appleton School Christmas card design competition. It was very difficult to judge as we had so many high-quality entries. Congratulations go to Scarlett Monksfield in Year 7 for her charming Christmas scene (below), with entries from our runners up Shritha Balumuri and Poppy Booth, (underneath).



This term has also seen us in contact with over 120 alumni across the decades, sharing their fond memories of their time at Appleton.

May I take this opportunity to thank you for your support this year and wish you all a very safe and happy Christmas and my best wishes for 2026.

Ms Cox
Headteacher

REMEMBRANCE



During the week commencing 3rd November the theme of our morning assemblies was Remembrance, paying tribute to all those fallen soldiers from World War 1 onwards. Our Senior Prefects joined assemblies to read a number of poems to students, including 'For the Fallen. To mark their respects, our Year 7 students were involved in creating a remembrance garden of poppy crosses in the school's Inner Quad. A number of students wore clothing to represent their uniformed organisations for our two-minute act of Remembrance on 11th November.



CHRISTMAS CONCERT



The Performing Arts department have had a wonderfully successful year taking part in many community opportunities.

On 18th December we performed our Christmas Concert to a sell-out audience. This was a wonderful festive evening made

DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARD NEWS



up of singing, acting, dancing and music across all of our year groups. This was also a perfect opportunity to announce our school production this year, with an incredible reaction from students.

The concert ended announcing our School Production, Disney's Frozen! Auditions will take place week commencing, Monday 19th January.

The Music department attended the 'Music of John Williams, performed by Essex Music Services' Youth Chamber Orchestra' at the Brentwood Centre, with 22 GCSE Music students. Our students watched the live renditions and musical analysis of the most iconic film scores from the likes of Jurassic Park, E.T, Star Wars, Harry Potter, and Home Alone. With soloists and instrumentalists showcasing iconic passages and impressive solos, plus the orchestra performing for us some of the most renowned music for film, our students were able to listen to and observe the most classic as well as most rare instruments from the orchestra in real time.

We have some exciting news coming in January. The music department are creating a DJ Studio, known as istudio. This will be available for any students with a keen interest in music, DJ'ing and creating their own tracks.

The Music department hand selected students to perform during the Year 7 Christmas meal, led by Miss O'Leary.

We are excited for the new year and to see what other opportunities we can offer to our students.

NON-UNIFORM DAY



Well done to The Appleton School's Student Council Committee who organised a non-uniform day on Friday 14th November which raised £1715 for the Children in Need charity.

2025 has proved to be another busy year. We once again had several expeditions taking place throughout the year, including a Bronze expedition for the Year 10 students and a week-long expedition for the Year 13 students completing their Gold award.

We have had 20 successful Bronze Awards, 1 Silver and 1 Gold award – and we shall look forward to reporting on a trip to the Palace next year as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award celebrates its 70th anniversary in May.

We have enrolled 25 students for the Bronze Award in Year 10, and are currently recruiting Year 12 students for the Gold Award.

Our Awards evening will be taking place in the middle of January to celebrate all of our successes.

SAFEGUARDING - CAPE

CAPE topics next half term

Thank you once again for all for your support in encouraging our young people to be their best selves. This is CAPE's first and foremost goal – to equip our young people with the skills and attributes to be their best selves ready for when they leave us and move onto their next steps.

This half term we had the privilege of welcoming Essex Fire Safety and Rescue Services to our school who conducted a hate crime assembly for both year 8 and year 9.

This half term has also seen our CAPE students in year 7 begin to tackle the important topic of Puberty and the effects it can take on them. Year 8 have been looking at Equality and Diversity, in particular the 9 protected characteristics of the Equalities Act 2010. Year 9 have been focussing on Sex, the law and consent. Year 10 have been creating their CVs and application letters in order to be ready for Mock Interview Day next year and year 11 have been looking at Sexual health with a focus on contraception and STI's.

For year 11, the CAPE Scheme of work will now end to make way for the ASPIRE program.

Next half term will continue to build on the skills and attributes needed to be well rounded individuals with the following topics:

Year 7 will be looking at Friends, Respect and Relationships:

- Lesson 1 – Consent and Boundaries
- Lesson 2 – Respect and Relationships
- Lesson 3 – What makes a good friend?
- Lesson 4 – Friendships and online relationships
- Lesson 5 – Being Positive
- Lesson 6 – Road Safety Assembly with Essex Fire and Rescue Services



Year 8 will be looking at Identity and RSE:

- Lesson 3 – Healthy, respectful relationships
- Lesson 4 – What is love?
- Lesson 5 – Dealing with Conflict
- Lesson 6 – Periods and menstrual cycle

Year 9 will be looking at Contraception and STI's:

- Lesson 1 – What are STI's
- Lesson 2 – Treating STI's and the clinic
- Lesson 3 – Contraception explored
- Lesson 4 – Contraception explored part 2
- Lesson 5 – Contraception explored part 3
- Lesson 6 – HIV and Aids

Year 10 will be looking at Risk, Relationships and Sex Education. There will be some sensitive yet important lessons:

- Lesson 1 – Pleasure and delaying sexual activity
- Lesson 2 – Campaigning against FGM
- Lesson 3 – Sexting
- Lesson 4 – Online pornography
- Lesson 5 – Pornography and its impact on society
- Lesson 6 – Unhealthy relationships and sexual abuse

The Appleton School Sixth Form Applications

Our application deadline this year was Monday 17th November and once again we have received a high number of applications from both internal and external students. Students are still welcome to apply but they would now be recorded as a 'late applicant'. Details of the subjects on offer and the admissions process are available to view and/or download from our website www.theappletonschool.org by clicking on the Sixth Form Tab. Any further questions please contact Miss Sweeney or Mr Lawrence.

Students that applied to our Sixth Form by the deadline should have had their completed guidance interview with a member of the Sixth Form team before the 19th December.

Important Dates

6th February 2026	Final date for conditional offer letters
2nd/3rd July 2026	Sixth Form Induction

Sixth Form News – Student Council

Every Wednesday lunchtime, the Sixth Form student council meets to feedback to the Sixth Form team and plan events and discuss student voice. This term, the Student Council has been helping the main school with immunisations and the Poppy Appeal. The council continue to share student voice in order for continuous improvement to the overall Sixth Form and are currently organising the Sixth Form Charity Week, which takes place next half term.

The Prom Committee have raised £300 towards their prom, specifically a photo booth. They organised a bake sale, a sixth form non-uniform day and a football match between Year 12 and Year 13. The invite has been designed and they look forward to organising the theme and decorations next term.

Sixth Form News – University Applications

The deadline for Year 13 University applications is in January, and good progress is being made with personal statements now being finalised for all students following workshops in Year 12. A number of completed UCAS applications are being sent off early. This year, we have a much larger number of applicants pursuing post-18 education. All students are provided with the opportunity to meet with Miss Clifforth, who is the designated person who offers support during this process. Our students have been visited by a number of alumni this term, including our alumni in their first year of their medicine course. Alumni have been able to give insight into

TEACHER TRAINING RECRUITMENT EVENTS



Do you want to train to be a teacher?



Can you inspire the next generation?

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find out more at www.btsa.uk
or email mhoward@theappletonschool.org



In Partnership with
TES Institute

applications and post-18 destinations. We wish this year's applicants the best of luck!

Upcoming Sixth Form Event - Year 12 Work Experience

Year 12 will all be on a one-week placement for Work Experience from 29th June - 3rd July 2026. Year 12 have started their work experience process by attending an information evening (during the curriculum pathways event we held at the beginning of the academic year), completing tasks during their CAPE lessons such as producing a CV, researching employers and writing enquiry emails/letters. Students will use the placement tool on Unifrog to assist with this process.

Upcoming Sixth Form Event – Study Skills Workshop

Both Year 12 and Year 13 students will be invited to a study skills workshop on the Friday 19th December, which is being delivered by an external organisation called 'Positively You'. Year 12 students will have a session that focuses on 'Bridging the Gap'. This workshop equips students with a range of tools and techniques designed to promote self-study, independent learning and research. Year 13 students will focus on a session called 'Exam Mastery'. This interactive workshop will help to improve memory skills and increase self-confidence along with alleviating exam stress.

JACK PETCHEY



Over the year, we have had a considerable number of nominations for our students where our community have wanted to praise students for overcoming significantly difficult challenges, have helped out with clubs and supporting others and for exceeding expectations to challenge themselves to obtain the best results possible.

Congratulations to all the Jack Petchey Award winners listed below:

Main School

Scarlett Nolan - She made a book to highlight to children about invisible disabilities and how we cannot see all disabilities and how people with them are often treated differently. She had written and illustrated the story book to raise awareness and to educate other students in her own time and from her own research and experiences. She is currently writing part two of the book. Scarlett has a love of Art and wanted to spend her grant in the Art department so that they could have more resource for student to be creative.

Alessia Gavril - Alessia competed in the WUMF Karate World Championships and won in 7 medals including; She won in 7

medals including; 3 Golds and 1 Silver in Fighting, 1 Silver and 2 Bronze in KAT – Alessia has requested that we spend the money in PE to support our curriculum, she would like to have the opportunity to allow other students to experience different sports.

Teddy Penston - Teddy helped to run for Essex Arrows, Youth Darts Club a Charity Darts Marathon which lasted for 12 hours. Our students took part against Professionals and other Club Members throughout the day. The event was being held to raise funds for Mind. They managed to raise £1200 through the event. – Teddy would like for business studies to have the money, which will be put towards an educational trip which will benefit all students that are currently undertaking GCSE Business studies.

Sixth Form

Chloe Orford - Chloe has shown remarkable resilience and dedication which I believe deserve special recognition. Chloe continues to approach her education with incredible tenacity and a positive attitude. Her determination to thrive and excel in French is truly inspiring. – Chloe is going to spend the money on a trip to London and visit an area that is a French speaking, to be able to immerse in the culture and hear the language will support the students.



Staff

We have the privilege of celebrating two of our staff for their exceptional work toward our young people and community. The members of staff that won Jack Petchey awards this year both have a grant of £1000 that can be used to help support students with projects that they are passionate about. We would like to congratulate Mr Lewis and Ms Levey. Both these teachers were nominated by our young people and had extremely positive things to say about their work. Below are two citations from our pupils about the staff.

Ms Levey – “She has helped me and many others through so much and is such a huge inspiration with her journey of recovery. She has gone through so much and is still the most positive person I know and her experience is so inspirational to never giving up.” “Boundless positivity and happiness along with a genuine passion for English which makes it even more engaging and fun in lesson”

Mr Lewis – “Always an inspiration for students and presents himself as a role model for everyone around him” “He is really good at teaching and explaining but not only does he do that, even though he may seem like a very serious teacher, he is really funny and makes maths fun.”

Subject Badges



Throughout this term students have been working towards collecting their subject badges. Each student has the opportunity to complete a subject badge in 8 weeks through collecting a signature each week for impressing in their chosen subject. This term we are delighted to see so many students picking up badges and currently in the school we have 1002 badges that have been awarded to students for all their hard work. Congratulations to Year 7 who have had 42 badges awarded to students since the start of term and we look forward to more students achieving badges in the coming weeks and over the rest of the academic year.

House Cup

Throughout the term we have been running our House Cup competition for all Year groups. Points have been awarded for student participation in events. It has been great to see an event in MFL for the bake sale, Geography and the design the flag for Antarctica and finally an Art competition to design the Appleton Christmas card for this year. After the first full term House Austen is our overall winner at the moment.

The House totals stand as following:

16011	15470	18336	21155
POINTS	POINTS	POINTS	POINTS
Grand Total			70972

Congratulations to our winners, House Austen.



CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR PERSONAL DETAILS

Please could I remind parents/guardians to advise the school by letter or email info@theappletonschool.org regarding any change of address, personal details, contact telephone numbers (including when there is a change to work telephone numbers) and email addresses.

LOST PROPERTY

We make every effort to return lost property items to their owners. To assist us with this could I please ask that you ensure all clothing including coats / shoes / P E bags and kit / pencil cases etc are named. Lost Property is located in reception.

CHILD PROTECTION

The safety and wellbeing of students is our paramount concern. As part of our curriculum we are currently focusing on wellbeing in our Wednesday form slots. This covers issues such as stress as well as safeguarding concerns.

The Appleton School Safeguarding Team are here to support you. Any child protection concerns should be reported as soon as possible to the Designated Person for Child Protection or one of his Deputies: -

Designated Safeguarding Lead:	Mr Stockdale
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead:	Mrs Salisbury
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead:	Miss Green
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead:	Mrs Whitehead
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead:	Miss Wright
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead:	Mrs C Jones

Please click on the link below for contact details:

<http://www.theappletonschool.org/parents/safeguarding-and-wellbeing-for-families>

SPELLING BEE

On Tuesday 25th November, students from across Years 7, 8 & 9 took part in the Trust Spelling Bee, competing against students from Bromfords, Woodlands and Billericay. Students were presented with 50 very challenging words to spell. This included the words "**chihuahua**" and "**hippopotamus**" in the Animal Kingdom round, the words "**Paleontology**" and "**Archaeology**" in the Subjects round, and the words "**arachnophobia**" and "**pyrophobia**" in the Fears and Phobias round. I'm sure you will all agree that these spellings present a great level of challenge, even to the most proficient spellers!

Appleton students came 2nd in the Year 7 category, and our Year 8 and Year 9 teams both won their categories, meaning that as a school we collected two thirds of the trophies on offer! We were also the overall winners, collecting an additional prize of £50 to spend on library books.

Huge thanks to Miss Levey for organising the event and well done to all students that took part - congratulations on your fantastic achievements!

YEAR 11 PROM



The date for our Year 11 Prom has now been secured. This will take place at Stockbrook Manor on Friday 19th June 2025.



We are also excited to announce that we have around 40 prom dresses from Lady McAdden, (Breast Cancer Charity). The dresses are new and were originally donated to Lady McAdden by Del Taylors. There are various sizes, styles and colours.

Please find a link to the digital Prom Dress catalogue here:

[Prom Dresses 2026](#)

Lady McAdden have suggested that a small donation (around £30 – or whatever families can afford) would be appreciated. Any donations would be split 50/50 between Lady McAdden and the school. Please do take a look at the catalogue, as you may be able to secure yourself a bargain and help raise funds for Lady McAdden and The Appleton School at the same time.

PE KIT - FITTING

Please be advised that our PE kit supplier, SchoolSports4U, have now provided us with kit samples in a variety of sizes. If you need to order PE kit for your child and are unsure of sizing, please ask your child to come to the Main Office at break/lunch or after school and we can arrange for them to try on items as necessary, so that you will know which size to

order. Alternatively, please contact: info@theappletonschool.org to make arrangements for your child to have a fitting.

CAREERS & EMPLOYABILITY

Careers education continues to be a key focus across the school, with a range of successful activities already taking place this term and more planned for the months ahead.

Careers Guidance and Support



Since October, All **Year 11 students** have been taking part in one-to-one careers meetings with Mrs Moyo our Careers & Employability Manager. These interviews have provided valuable guidance to support post-16 decision-making, helping students explore pathways, courses, apprenticeships and career options. **Year 13 careers interviews** are due to begin shortly after the Christmas break, ensuring students receive tailored support as they prepare for post-18 destinations, including university, apprenticeships and employment.

If you feel your child needs any help or support with planning their next steps, please contact Mrs Moyo on the school telephone number or via email:

careers@theappletonschool.org

Careers Fair

We were also delighted with the success of our recent Careers Fair, which welcomed 22 employers, training providers and universities. The event was attended by students in Years 10, 11, 12 and 13, giving them the opportunity to engage with a wide range of industries, ask questions and gain first-hand insight into future pathways. Feedback from students and providers was extremely positive, and the event has been a valuable part of our careers programme.



Looking ahead, work experience placements are approaching:

Year 10 Work Experience: 6 July – 10 July:

This is a crucial part of our careers programme as it helps students to gain a greater understanding of a career they may be interested in pursuing when they leave education as well as helping them to develop relevant skills and experience that will broaden their options in the future.

Once your young person has secured a work placement, they must log the placement on their Unifrog account, once it has been logged the careers team will process the placement and get it approved in time for their start date.

Year 12 Work Experience: 29 June – 3 July:

It is important that our Sixth Form students gain first-hand experience of careers they may be considering, helping them make confident choices about university courses, apprenticeships or Employment.

Once your young adult has secured a work placement, they must log the placement on their Unifrog account, once it has been logged the careers team will process the placement and get it approved in time for their start date.

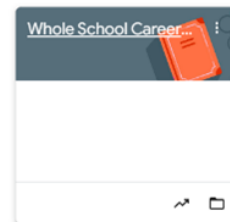
To help students find their placements, we encourage them to:

- Start early – give yourself plenty of time to research options and contact employers.

- Use personal networks – ask family, friends, neighbours or parents' workplaces if they can offer a placement.
- Think about your interests – choose an area linked to subjects you enjoy or careers you are considering.
- Be proactive – contact employers directly by email, phone or in person; don't wait for opportunities to come to you.
- Prepare a short CV – include your skills, strengths, subjects studied and any relevant experience.
- Write a clear, polite message – explain who you are, when your work experience dates are, and why you would like to work with them.
- Be flexible – consider a range of roles and industries to increase your chances.
- Follow up – if you don't hear back, a polite follow-up email shows commitment.
- Use school support – speak to the Careers Team for guidance, templates and approved employer lists.
- Stay positive – rejections are normal; keep trying and learning from each application.

Work experience plays a vital role in developing employability skills, building confidence and helping students make informed decisions about their future. We look forward to seeing the positive impact these opportunities will have on our students.

Whole School Careers Notice Board



All students now have access to the Whole School Careers Notice Board via Google Classroom. The stream is updated weekly with information about in-school, local and national careers events and activities. Students will find opportunities such as: educational taster days, work experience, apprenticeships, competitions and clubs to get involved in. To join, students must accept the invitation found in their Gmail.

Unifrog



Searching for careers inspiration and ideas can be a struggle? Here you'll find useful information and tools to support your child, to plan for their future. Unifrog is an integral part on

the careers curriculum and is used in CAPE lessons throughout the academic year. All students have access to their Unifrog account, and we would strongly encourage logging in, for independent research, regularly at home too.

Unifrog is a complete destinations platform that allows students to search for opportunities and make applications for their next steps. The database is packed with information about career routes and the current labour market. There are lots of videos and articles to discover and live webinars that focus on specific industries. You'll find useful information about Colleges and Sixth Forms spanning the country, with great advice regarding courses, qualification types and student finance. Students can even search for live apprenticeships and make a short list to help them stay in control of their own destination. Students simply log in with their school email address.

MORE ABLE (ASPIRE+) GCSE PROJECT CHALLENGES

This term, we are excited to introduce our GCSE Project Challenges to our More Able Year 10 students. Designed across all GCSE subjects, these projects give students the invaluable opportunity to explore their learning far beyond the classroom and textbooks. Working in small groups, students will develop essential lifelong skills such as teamwork, communication, critical thinking, independence, and leadership. Throughout the 12-week process, students will receive a wide range of support, including mentoring from subject specialists, access to lunchtime and after-school working sessions, guidance from senior staff, and additional incentives such as lunchtime queue passes and refreshments.

A number of rewards are available, including a £100 team voucher prize for the overall winners. Culminating in a Presentation Evening—where parents, staff, and peers will be invited—students will showcase their final outcomes and celebrate their achievements. Every student who takes part will receive a certificate recognising their hard work and dedication. This is a fantastic opportunity for our Most Able students to be challenged, to stretch themselves academically, and to develop the skills and confidence needed for the world beyond school. We would like to thank our parents for their ongoing support and for encouraging their children to participate in this enriching initiative.

PE REPORT



Cross Country

The Appleton School recently competed in both the National Cup Cross Country and the Castle Point and Rochford District Competition. The Inter Girls team narrowly missed out on reaching the Regional Final, but their performance was still impressive. In the Castle Point and Rochford District competition, Appleton finished 3rd overall, marking the school's highest-ever team position.

The standout team was the Senior Girls, who secured 2nd place, while every other team finished in 3rd, which is a fantastic achievement across the board. Notable individual performances included:

- Buhlebethu Hlongwa: 2nd place
- Jessica Unett: 2nd place
- Demitria Robinson: 5th place
- Oliver Bard: 8th place

Buhlebethu, Demitria, and Oliver have both been selected to represent Castle Point and Rochford in the Essex Schools Championships this January.

Boys Football

The Appleton School football teams have had a strong start to the season, with particularly standout performances from the Year 8 and Year 10 teams. Both teams have progressed to the Quarter Finals of the South East Essex Cup.

- Year 10: A dominant 10-0 victory over Chase High
- Year 8: A comfortable win against Belfairs

Both teams are now eagerly looking forward to their Quarter Final matches after the Christmas break.

Girls Football

The Appleton school girls football teams are having a successful season with some standout performances coming from the Year 7 girls and the U15 Girls.

- **U15**- 5th Round of the National Cup and 2nd round of the National Sisters in Sport competition
- **Year 7**- Semi-finalists in the District Football Rally

Both teams are now eagerly looking forward to their Quarter Final matches after the Christmas break.

Lee Valley Athletics

The Year 8 and 9 athletics teams competed in the Lee Valley Indoor Athletics Cup in November. Though held early in the academic year, this competition is always a highlight for students, offering a chance to compete against some of the top schools in the country.

- Boys team: Reached the semi-finals
- Girls team: Advanced to the final



Boys Basketball

The basketball season has just begun, with the Year 7 team already having played the most matches. They have had strong performances against several competitive schools, with standout games including:

- Against Castle View: A strong performance in the league
- Against Mayflower High: A convincing win in the Essex Cup

The team is now focused on progressing to the Quarter Finals after Christmas.

Girls Basketball

The Year 7 team had a good introduction to Basketball, finishing 4th in the district rally. The U14 also had a good run in the Essex Cup competition. They unfortunately lost both of their games in the pool, but showed great determination and team spirit to never give up.

Rugby

Rugby has proved to be a great success this half term. The Year 7 Rugby team has competed in a number of fixtures, including a tournament hosted here at the Appleton School. During this event, the team recorded impressive victories against King John and Fitzwimarc.

Participation across rugby has been exceptionally strong, with high levels of involvement from both junior and senior players. It has been particularly encouraging to see a mix of

experienced club players alongside students who have picked up a rugby ball for the first time this term. As a department, we are extremely proud of the commitment, teamwork and progress shown by all involved.

We now look forward with great anticipation to the Year 7 Rugby Tour in the New Year, when the team will travel to Bath and Bristol for what promises to be an exciting and valuable experience.

Netball



The Appleton School netball teams have enjoyed a highly successful term, with strong performances across multiple year groups demonstrating excellent teamwork, skill, and determination. Some highlight events include:

- Year 7 – An impressive win against Cecil Jones, showcasing great court awareness and teamwork.
- Year 8 – A well-earned victory against Castle View, with confident attacking play and strong defensive pressure throughout the match.
- Year 9 – Progressed into the top 12 teams in the Essex Schools County Competition and are currently excelling in the Sisters in Sport Bowl Competition following an impressive win against Forest School in round 2.

All teams are continuing to develop and perform with confidence, reflecting the growing success of netball across the school.

STUDENT LEADERSHIP

At The Appleton School, we are immensely proud of our Student Leadership Team, whose members take on a wide range of leadership roles across our community. They are passionate about making a meaningful difference, and their commitment enriches the culture of our school.

As part of the Appleton family, our student leaders develop a broad set of valuable leadership skills, including taking initiative, leading by example, demonstrating accountability, radiating positivity, and maintaining a proactive attitude. Through these opportunities, students grow in confidence and build the character needed to stand out with pride when they leave our school. We are exceptionally proud of every student who undertakes a leadership role.

With **29 different roles** available and **over 400 leadership positions** across the school, there are plentiful opportunities for students to get involved. This year, we have welcomed new members to our leadership team, including Performing Arts Leaders, Sports Leaders, Form Captains, and Student Council Representatives. We were also delighted to appoint our new cohort of Year 10 Junior Prefects following a rigorous application and interview process. We successfully recruited **27 Junior Prefects**, who continue to serve as outstanding role models and ambassadors for the Appleton community.

Our student leaders have been extremely active, supporting a wide range of school events such as Open Evenings, Parents' Evenings, Performing Arts showcases, and numerous sports events. Reading Leaders have been supporting students across all year groups during morning registration, while Form Captains and Student Council representatives have met every half-term to discuss ways we can further improve our policies and procedures to enhance the student experience.

The Senior and Junior Prefects have also contributed significantly through their wide range of duties, including supporting Year 7 reading during morning registration, carrying out weekly equipment checks for Year 7 and Year 8 tutor groups, running lunchtime board games clubs, and supervising the POD area to help Year 7 students settle into school life.

Our Student Council team has been especially successful this year, organising and leading several fundraising events for different charities. Through two major charity initiatives, they have raised an impressive **£1,820**. In addition, they have generously reinvested a portion of the funds into improving school facilities, including the purchase of new basketball nets and table tennis equipment for the PE department. Their teamwork, leadership, and commitment to supporting both our school and wider community have been exemplary.

As Headteacher, I am incredibly proud of the achievements of all our student leaders. I look forward to seeing the impact of their continued dedication and to supporting them in their upcoming charity events as we move through the remainder of the academic year.

HOMEWORK CLUB

Homework is an integral part of learning at The Appleton School, as it enables students to consolidate their knowledge, extend their understanding, and develop essential independent study skills. Homework is set regularly for all year groups, and we closely monitor the quality and completion of the tasks.

To support students who may need additional help, or who may not have access to suitable technology at home, we offer

Homework Club in the Resource Centre every Monday and Thursday from 3.00 pm to 3.30 pm.

The Resource Centre is also available to students during morning sessions from 8.00 am to 8.30 am, as well as at break and lunchtime (excluding Wednesdays).

In addition, a wide range of clubs and enrichment opportunities are available before school, during lunchtime, and after school. Full details can be found on our school website.

SEVERE WEATHER EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSURE

Whilst we very rarely need to close the school, given the wintry weather earlier this week please could I remind parents that should there be an emergency closure or delayed start of the school due to severe weather, parents and guardians can access information about school closures via a live feed on the Essex County Council website:

<https://www.essex.gov.uk/Education-Schools/Schools/Dates/Pages/Emergency-School-Closures.aspx>

This feed will continue to update as notifications of all school closures are received. The page will refresh at 6pm each evening and closure lists for the next day will then go live.

We perform site inspections at 6:30am and will make a decision about any arrangements by 7:30am. Parents and students will be notified via Arbor. The school will also display closure or delayed start arrangements on our website www.theappletonschool.org

BEBRAS COMPUTING COMPETITION



I am also delighted to report that we had some very exciting news last week with the results of our inaugural entry into the **UK Bebras Computing competition organised by the Raspberry Pi Foundation**. The Bebras Challenge introduces

computational thinking to students worldwide. This exciting online challenge takes place in schools, under the supervision of teachers, over a two-week period every November. Last year, over 3 million students from more than 80 countries participated!

In the UK, the challenge is open to young people aged 6 to 19. Each participant has 45 minutes to tackle a series of interactive tasks, designed to encourage logical thinking and problem-solving skills appropriate for their age group. **This year across the UK there were 156,557 entries, with 110 Gold awarded nationally. We achieved 10 of these Golds!**

These outcomes represent an **exceptional level of performance** when compared with thousands of pupils across the country.

These results are particularly noteworthy given that the challenge was undertaken by our Year 7 pupils. Their success clearly demonstrates excellent computational thinking, logical reasoning and problem-solving skills, all of which are fundamental to success in Computer Science and beyond. Jamie Gillooly and I met with our winners last Thursday to award them their Bebras Gold certificates and Appleton Values **'Aspiration'** badges. A huge well done to our students and fantastic teaching staff!

GEOGRAPHY CLUB

Geography club news.



In geography club over the last half term we have focused on our Eco School work, which has included planting a new hedgerow, and also feeding the local birds by making fat balls, using coconut oil vegetable suet and bird seed. We meet every Wednesday in C16 from 3:00 – 3:45.



Some of our Geography Club eco champions.

SANTA FUN RUN/REINDEER DASH

Thank you once again to all of our incredible staff and students that stayed after school last Friday to do a Santa Fun Run / Reindeer Dash to raise funds for Havens Hospice, a charity that is very special to the Appleton School, with a number of students and families in our community that they have supported. We are now able to share the fantastic news that this event managed to raise over £440. Well done to Mr

Browne, who organised this event, and to all staff and students that joined in with this fun event.

Special shout outs go to our T-Rex who made another appearance especially for this Christmas themed event, and to the winner of the Santa Fun Run, Cheranpreet Mahesh, pictured with Dr Hunt and the Headteacher below:



STUDENT SHOUT OUTS

Mr Harji would like to congratulate Luke Judge and the Senior Prefect team for raising £65.70 for Help for Heroes charities.

Mr Harji would like to say **well done** to the following Yr. 10 iMedia students for producing outstanding coursework:

Max Wilson
Tallulah Ashman-Hughes
Ellie-Faye Halls
Maisie Townsend
George Barnard
Lewis Beckett
Owen Jones
Lennon Maffey
Katie Perry
Teddy Penston
Lucas Miller.

IMPORTANT DATES

Friday, 19 th December 2025	School Ends: Years 7 – 13 dismissed at 13.00hrs
CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS Monday 22 nd December 2025 to Friday 2 nd January 2026	
Monday, 5 th January, 2026	8.30am All Year groups return

*Merry Christmas
and
a
Happy New Year
from
staff and students
at
The Appleton School*

