The Appleton School

January 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are writing to provide reassurance and clarity regarding the preparation of Year 11 students for their upcoming PPE examination in February 2026.

To ensure that all students are fully prepared, the Science curriculum for both Combined Science and Separate Science has been carefully adjusted so that all content required for the mock examination has been taught. In December, the teaching order was deliberately reviewed and amended to prioritise examination readiness, allowing students sufficient time to revisit, consolidate and apply key knowledge and skills ahead of the PPE3.

We would also like to reassure you that significant parts of the ecology topic in both Combined and Separate Biology was initially introduced and covered during the Summer term of Year 9. This was due to the timing of paper 2 and it being Winter. This means for this part of the specification students are revisiting and strengthening existing understanding rather than encountering unfamiliar material for the first time. This structured approach supports long-term retention and confidence. Once the PPE examinations are over, we will continue to revisit content for both Paper 1 and 2 up until the GCSE examinations.

As we move through this crucial stage of the course, it is important to emphasise that every lesson counts. Regular attendance, punctuality and active engagement are essential to ensure students are as prepared as possible. These expectations are in place to support students in achieving outcomes that accurately reflect their ability and potential.

Following the mock examination series, students will receive:

A **Paper 1** grade from the November PPE

A **Paper 2** grade from February PPE

An **overall** PPE grade for both papers.

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This breakdown is intentional. It allows students to clearly identify where their strengths lie and how they are performing across both papers, enabling more focused and effective revision moving forward. To ensure fairness and accuracy, grade boundaries will be moderated in line with examination standards. This process ensures that the grades awarded are both reflective of student performance and are appropriate for this stage of the course.

To further support revision, we strongly encourage students to regularly access Google Classroom, where targeted resources are available. In particular, students should focus on Paper 2 required practical's, as these form a significant part of the examination – 15% and are an area where focused revision can make a substantial difference.

Google Revision Classroom:	
AQA Separates Higher Revision	**AQA Combined Science Higher Revision**
Link to Classroom	Link to Classroom
Class code: mulh4du	Class code: dz2yxif
AQA Separated Foundation Revision	**AQA Combined Science Foundation Revision**
Link to Classroom	Link to Classroom
Class code: d3psvkn	Class code: fu6mtdi

We appreciate your continued support during this demanding period. By working together students, staff and families we can ensure that every student is given the best possible opportunity to succeed.

Should you have any questions or require further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact the Science department.

Yours sincerely,

Rachel Cannon
KS4 Lead

Attached is an overview of the Required Practical's for Paper 2

Biology	**Required Practical**
Paper 2 Reaction time	**Skills**
Plan and carry out an investigation into the effect of a factor on human reaction time.	Use appropriate apparatus to record. Selecting appropriate apparatus and techniques to measure the process of reaction time. Safe and ethical use of humans to measure physiological function of reaction time and responses to a chosen factor.
Paper 2 Field investigations	**Skills**
Measure the population size of a common species in a habitat. Use sampling techniques to investigate the effect of a factor on the distribution of this species.	Use appropriate apparatus to record length and area. Use transect lines and quadrats to measure distribution of a species. Safe and ethical use of organisms and response to a factor in the environment. Application of appropriate sampling techniques to investigate the distribution and abundance of organisms in an ecosystem via direct use in the field. Use of appropriate techniques in more complex contexts including continuous sampling in an investigation (Biology only).
Chemistry	**Required Practical**
Paper 2 Rates of reaction	Skills
Investigate how changes in concentration affect the rates of reactions by a method involving measuring the volume of a gas produced and a method involving a change in colour or turbidity. This should be an investigation involving developing a hypothesis.	Use of appropriate apparatus to make and record a range of measurements accurately, including mass, temperature, and volume of liquids. Use of appropriate apparatus and techniques for conducting and monitoring chemical reactions. Making and recording of appropriate observations during chemical reactions including changes in temperature. Safe use and careful handling of gases, liquids and solids, including careful mixing of reagents under controlled conditions, using appropriate apparatus to explore chemical changes.
Paper 2 Chromatography	Skills

Investigate how paper chromatography can be used to separate and tell the difference between coloured substances. Students should calculate Rf values.	Use of appropriate apparatus to make and record a range of measurements accurately. Safe use of a range of equipment to purify and/or separate chemical mixtures including chromatography.
Paper 2 Identifying ions (Chemistry only)	Skills
Use of chemical tests to identify the ions in unknown single ionic compounds.	Safe use of a Bunsen burner. Use of appropriate qualitative reagents and techniques to analyse and identify unknown samples or products including gas tests, flame tests, precipitation reactions.
Paper 2 Water purification	Skills
Analysis and purification of water samples from different sources, including pH, dissolved solids and distillation.	Safe use of appropriate heating devices and techniques including use of a Bunsen burner and a water bath or electric heater. Use of appropriate apparatus and techniques for the measurement of pH in different situations. Safe use of a range of equipment to purify and/or separate chemical mixtures including evaporation, distillation.
Physics	**Required Practical**
Paper 2 Force and Extension	Skills
Investigate the relationship between force and extension for a spring.	Use appropriate apparatus to make and record length accurately. Use appropriate apparatus to measure and observe the effect of force on the extension of springs and collect the data required to plot a force-extension graph.
Paper 2 Acceleration	Skills
Investigate the effect of varying the force on the acceleration of an object of constant mass and the effect of varying the mass of an object on the acceleration produced by a constant force.	Use appropriate apparatus to make and record measurements of length, mass and time accurately. Use appropriate apparatus to measure and observe the effect of force. Use appropriate apparatus and techniques for measuring motion, including determination of speed and rate of change of speed (acceleration/deceleration)

Paper 2 Waves	Skills
Make observations to identify the suitability of apparatus to measure the frequency, wavelength and speed of waves in a ripple tank and waves in a solid and take appropriate measurements.	Make observations of waves in fluids and solids to identify the suitability of apparatus to measure speed, frequency and wavelength.
Paper 2 Light **(Physics only)**	Skills
Investigate the reflection of light by different types of surface and the refraction of light by different substances.	Make observations of the effects of the interaction of electromagnetic waves (light) with matter. Make observations of waves in fluids and solids to identify the suitability of apparatus to measure the effects of the interaction of waves with matter.
Paper 2 Radiation and absorption	Skills
Investigate how the amount of infrared radiation absorbed or radiated by a surface depends on the nature of that surface.	Use appropriate apparatus to make and record temperature accurately. Make observations of the effects of the interaction of electromagnetic waves with matter.

Online Resources:

Virtual Lab

- Focus E Learning: www.focuselearning.co.uk
    - Username: student@theappleton3762
    - Password: 5xw2qyqcw
    - Practice required practical at home to gain a better understanding

YouTube

Teacher Demonstrations via Malmesbury Education on Youtube

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLAd0MSIZBSsF3vV_uxzbcNHuDrQ6Hc-Ul

Study Mind – GCSE Exam Questions

https://studymind.co.uk/resources/

Physics and Maths Tutor – GCSE Exam Questions