



18th June 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Over recent months, we have been reviewing the internal structure of the school day for September as part of our continued commitment to providing the very best educational experience for all students at The Appleton School. As part of this process, whilst we have already confirmed the length of the school day as of 8.30am to 3.15pm, we have carefully considered feedback from parents and carers, particularly regarding concerns around lunchtime occurring later in the day.

Following extensive research, consultation, and visits to a number of the highest-performing schools locally and nationally, we are pleased to confirm that from September 2026, we will be introducing a new internal structure to the school day built around four 80-minute lessons. This revised model has been carefully designed around educational research and evidence-informed practice, including principles from Doug Lemov's influential work *Teach Like a Champion*. The longer lesson structure allows teachers greater opportunity to embed key teaching strategies such as modelling, checking for understanding, guided practice, purposeful independent practice, and responsive feedback within a single lesson. This supports greater depth of learning and stronger retention of knowledge over time.

The revised model will also allow us to create a more balanced and effective day for students while ensuring that lunchtime is distributed more effectively across the school. Under the new structure, half of the school will have an earlier lunch period, while the other half will continue to have lunch at the same time to the current arrangement. This staggered approach will help improve the overall experience for students throughout the day while also reducing congestion around social spaces and dining areas.

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THE APPLETON SCHOOL



The proposed structure of the school day is outlined below:

Time	KS4/5	KS3
8:30 – 9:50	Lesson 1	Lesson 1
9:50 – 9:55	Transition	Transition
9:55 – 11:15	Lesson 2	Lesson 2
11:15 – 11:35	Break	Break
11:35 – 12:55	Lesson 3	Lesson 3
12:55 – 1:25	Lunch	Elevate Programme *
1:25 – 1:55	Elevate Programme *	Lunch
1:55 – 3:15	Lesson 4	Lesson 4
3:15 – 4:15	Practice Makes Progress	Enrichment

There are a number of significant educational benefits to this approach:

- Increased curriculum time in core subjects, allowing students more opportunity to develop depth of understanding and secure key knowledge.
- Longer lessons reduce disruption caused by frequent movement around the school and allow teachers to deliver learning in greater depth.
- Improved opportunities for practical work, extended writing, retrieval practice, modelling, and purposeful independent practice within a single lesson.
- Greater opportunities for high-quality teacher feedback and responsive teaching.
- A calmer and more structured day with fewer transitions between lessons.
- Research and evidence from other schools suggest that longer lesson models can be particularly beneficial for students with SEND, as they reduce cognitive overload associated with multiple transitions and allow more time for consolidation and support.
- Timing of lunch period for KS4/5 facilitates a full lunch break prior to afternoon examination periods.

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The structure of our 80-minute lessons will continue to reflect our whole-school approach to teaching and learning through:

- “I teach”
- “We check”
- “You practise”

In addition, the revised *elevate programme will provide dedicated time for reading, assemblies, Citizenship and SRE, careers education, and wider personal development opportunities.

We appreciate that any change to the school day is significant, and we would like to thank parents and carers for the valuable feedback provided throughout this process. We are confident that this revised model will further strengthen the quality of education and daily experience for all students.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,



Mr J Hannan
Deputy Headteacher

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