



Apple Orchard

Year 9-10 Transition Booklet

What you need to know

"I have had the pleasure of being the Headteacher of Apple Orchard School since September 2024 and have enjoyed spending time getting to know you. Seeing how you have grown over the months, witnessing first-hand how you overcome the challenges that being here present.

From September you will be 'Key Stage 4', 'Year 10' and in your GCSE years.

This is it. This is it where it counts. This is where you decide where you want your future to take you.

The school year is 190 teaching days, 380 days for two years. Given that GCSEs take place 7 weeks before the end of the summer term that means it will be less than one year of education until you are taking your GCSEs.

Globally 244 million children do not go to school. Not only do you go to school, you receive education in a way that not even the most expensive private schools can match.

You may not understand the value of what you are learning right now, but trust me when I say that everything we share with you over the coming months will have a part to play in your future – we just don't know what that is yet.

Education is a gift from us to you so please don't waste it – be brave, believe in yourselves."

Richard, Headteacher



10-year-old Tilly Smith saw the ocean pull back in Thailand – and remembered her Geography lesson. She warned others of a coming tsunami, helping save her family and over 100 people. One child's knowledge turned into a life-saving act of courage.

English

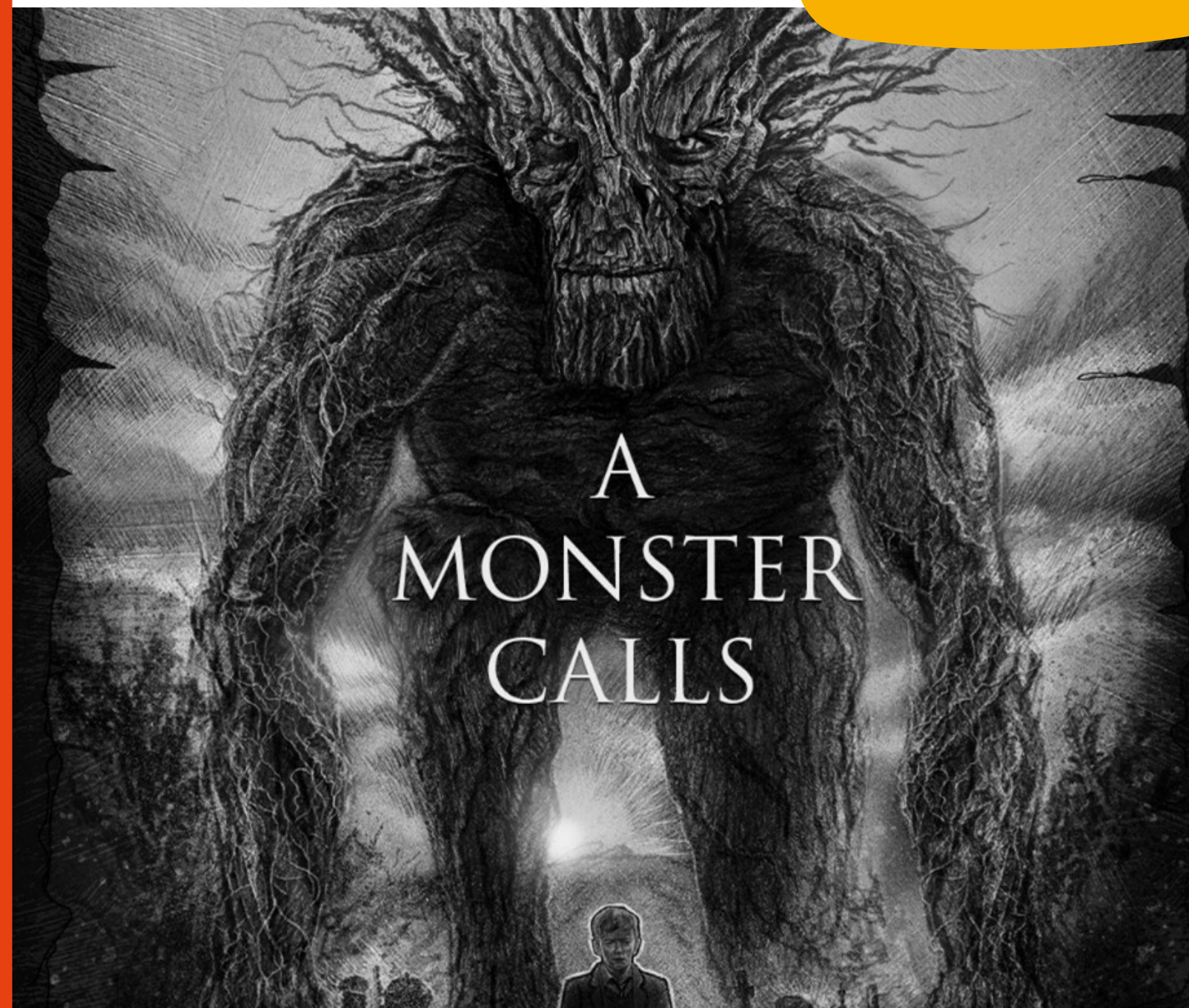
I am really excited about GCSE English Language over the next two years.

Throughout Years 10 and 11, you'll have the chance to explore how language is shaped by our world — from powerful speeches that spark change to gripping stories that leave a lasting impression. You'll dive into a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts, analyse how writers create impact, and learn to craft your own writing that informs, persuades and entertains. You'll develop skills in expressing your ideas clearly,

creatively, and confidently — both on paper and via spoken language. English Language isn't just about exams; it's about becoming a strong communicator, a sharp thinker, and someone who understands the power of words in everyday life.

Whether you dream of a career in media, law, business, or something completely different, the ability to use language effectively will open doors. And who knows? In 5, 10, or even 30 years, your voice could be one that inspires others.

Anne





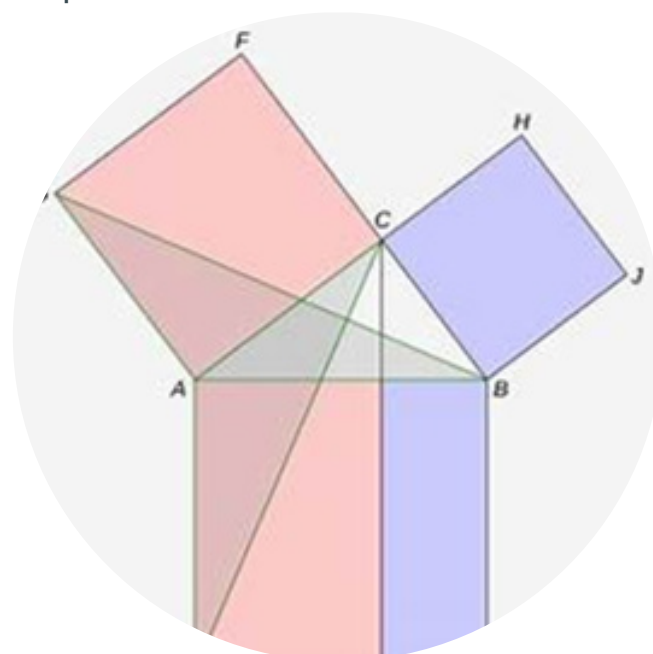
Maths

The transition from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4 mathematics is an exciting step forward in your journey to become a mathematician.

It opens the door to more advanced topics like algebra, geometry, and statistics, encouraging deeper thinking and problem-solving. You will begin to see how maths connects to real-life situations and future careers. This stage builds confidence and independence, as you will tackle more complex challenges and develop strategies to solve them. It's a time of growth, where curiosity is rewarded and mathematical thinking becomes more refined. With new opportunities to explore patterns, logic, and reasoning, students often discover a renewed enthusiasm for the subject.

Key Stage 4 is where maths truly comes to life! Just imagine what lies within the world beyond.

Barry



Science

I'm absolutely thrilled to be your science teacher this year as we dive into the incredible world of KS4 Biology, Chemistry, and Physics!

I've always believed science is more than just facts in a textbook—it's a journey of discovery, wonder, and understanding the universe that surrounds us. I'm passionate about sharing this adventure with you, and I can't wait to see your curiosity spark as we explore these subjects together.



In **Biology**, we'll unravel the mysteries of life itself. From the intricate complexities of the cells in your body to the ecosystems that sustain our planet, we'll explore how living things connect and thrive. You'll discover how your DNA makes you unique, how evolution shapes the diversity of life, and why understanding biology can inspire us to protect our environment. I'm excited to see your eyes light up when we discuss how even the tiniest organisms can have a massive impact on the world.

In **Chemistry**, get ready to be amazed by the building blocks of everything around us. We'll dive into the periodic table, where elements tell stories of reactions and bonds that create everything from the air we breathe to the materials in our phones. You'll mix, experiment, and uncover the magic of chemical reactions—trust me, there's nothing like the thrill of seeing a reaction you predicted come to life in the lab! My goal is to show you how chemistry shapes our world and fuels innovation.



In **Physics**, we'll chase the forces that govern the universe. From the energy that powers our homes to the gravity that keeps our feet on the ground, physics is the key to understanding how things move, work, and exist. We'll explore waves, electricity, and even the stars above us. I still get goosebumps thinking about how physics connects us to the cosmos, and I'm eager to share that sense of awe with you as we experiment and question the "why" behind it all.

This year, science will come alive with hands-on experiments, discussions, and moments that make you go "Wow!" I'm here to guide you, challenge you, and cheer you on as you grow into curious, confident scientists. If you ever have questions or ideas, my door (and my inbox) is always open.

Isiaka



STEM

I'm ecstatic to be your STEM teacher this year as we dive headfirst into the exhilarating world of VEX V5 Robotics for KS4!

This isn't just a class—it's a chance to unleash your creativity, solve mind-bending challenges, and build robots that bring your ideas to life. Robotics has always set my heart racing because it's where science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) collide to create something tangible and awe-inspiring. I can't wait to share this passion with you and watch you become the innovators of tomorrow!

With the VEX V5 system, we'll explore the mechanical foundations of robotics, building robust structures and mechanisms using the VEX V5 metal construction kits. You'll get hands-on with gears, motors, and sensors, designing robots like the ClawBot or even your own creations for challenges like Robo Rally or Robosoccer. I still get chills thinking about the first time I saw a robot I built move exactly as planned—it's a feeling I know you'll love too! You'll learn how to balance strength, stability, and motion to make your robots both functional and epic.

In coding and computational thinking, we'll bring your robots to life using VEXcode, a powerful programming tool where you'll write code in block-based, Python, or C++. You'll program your robots to navigate warehouses, detect objects with sensors, or even compete in games like Team Freeze Tag. The moment your code makes a robot move autonomously is pure magic, and I'm so excited to see your faces light up when you master loops, conditionals, and sensor-based decision-making. This is your chance to think like a programmer and solve real-world problems.

We'll also dive into project-based engineering challenges, inspired by real-world applications like manufacturing, energy, or even Mars exploration. Through VEX STEM Labs, you'll collaborate on hands-on activities that mirror industry challenges, like designing a robot to deliver packages or bowl with precision. These projects, developed with experts will push you to think creatively, work as a team, and iterate like true engineers. I'm thrilled to guide you as you tackle open-ended problems and discover there's no one "right" solution—just your unique approach.

The question is, where will it take you next?

Isiaka





History

I can't wait to start teaching History next year in our School.

At Year 10 and 11 you will explore so many events and key processes that shaped our world and continue to shape the way we think and plan even now. We will delve into the wars between natives and settlers in the American West, recognise the impact of the Cold War on our world and get amazed with experiments that helped the development of medicine through time. In this journey you will be learning to analyse and interpret historical sources and develop your critical thinking skills building your ability to form reasoned arguments about change, causation, and significance.

History is crucial for understanding our present, learning from past mistakes, and shaping our future. It will also strengthen your communication and research skills, which are valuable in careers like law, journalism, and education which is very exciting because we have no idea where you might be 5, 10 or even 30 years from now, but who knows, by then, you may have made your own history.

André



Geography

I'm looking forward to next Year 10 and 11 Geography lessons at Apple Orchard School, we are going through some fascinating topics about our natural world.

We'll have an adventure through natural hazards like earthquakes and storms, walk through the UK and the rest of the world's amazing landscapes from cold glaciers to hot deserts and think about their importance. But it's not just about learning from books — you'll get out into the field, explore real environments with a trip to the South Downs National Park, and develop skills like map reading, using GIS technology, which will help you identify how landscapes are shaped.

Geography is a way of seeing the world through its human and physical complexity. It opens doors to careers in environmental science, urban planning, travel, and more. Most importantly, it helps you become a thoughtful, informed global citizen who can help meet the challenges our planet faces head on.

André



The South Downs



Spanish

Hola! In September you'll begin your exciting journey into the charming world of Spanish.

We will begin with the basics and build a very solid pillar. You will grow your confidence in reading and writing in one of the most widely spoken languages on the planet. Spanish isn't just a subject — it's a passport to the world. Spoken by over 600 million people and recognised as an official language in more than 20 countries. Spanish connects you to vibrant cultures across Europe, Latin America, the Caribbean, and beyond.

This year, you'll be on the road to express yourself in everyday situations and maybe be able to hear the news or sing some songs exploring the rich diversity of Spanish-speaking communities. There might even be a Spanish menu to create and enjoy. So, are you ready to open your minds to this new culture and open many doors to your future? ¡Vamos!

André



Citizenship

Citizenship will empower you with the knowledge and skills to actively participate in society, understand your rights and responsibilities, and make a positive impact on the world around you.

You will explore democracy and politics in the UK, rights, responsibilities and the law, and the UK and the Wider World. You will also get the opportunity to plan and research a citizenship action project.



PSHE and Religious Studies

In addition, I will continue to teach PSHE and Religious Studies, where we will explore important life skills, personal development, and diverse beliefs and values.

These subjects are essential for your growth and understanding of the world. The main themes in PSHE are Careers, Relationships and Sex Education. In Religions Studies you will explore spiritual beliefs, moral values, social justice and cultural traditions within Christianity and Islam and compare and evaluate religious views on marriage, family life and gender equality. You will also learn about religious teachings on peace, justice and forgiveness and the causes and effects of conflict.

Katy



Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque,
Abu Dhabi



Art

Art will unleash your creativity, allowing you to express yourself in unique and imaginative ways.

You will learn various techniques and mediums, and you will have the chance to showcase your talents. You will develop skills in drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture, textiles, and graphics. You will also learn about artists and designers, research themes, respond to stimuli, and develop your own creative ideas.

I am incredibly excited to go on this journey with you all and can't wait to see the amazing things we will achieve together. Let's make this a fantastic year of learning and discovery!

Katy



Fashion &
Textiles

Use of Watercolour



Pencil Drawing



Starry Night,
Vincent Van Gogh

Design and Technology

In September we will be introducing STEM into the world of Design and Technology (DT) for the first time in the school's history.

STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. It's not just a group of school subjects, it's a whole way of thinking and problem-solving that powers pretty much everything from building bridges to coding video games, curing diseases to launching space missions.

In DT we will be using CAD to really develop your technical drawing skills and we will be exploring electrical circuits so that you will be able to assemble electronic systems.

Working with Isiaka and Barry, you will be introduced to Robotics which is an exciting new and emerging technology and alongside this you will be looking at product design and development and how to make things that are sustainable. You will explore the who, why, when and how and I hope that by combining traditional tools and modern technology you will design products that solve real problems.

Year 10 will be different to what you are used to but alongside the theory there will be many opportunities for expression and creativity.

DT won't just change how you see design; it will change how you see the world!

Alastair



Food Technology

Year 10 and 11 Food Technology lessons at Apple Orchard School are going to be awesome.

We will be working through the BTEC Level 2 Home Cooking Skills course—designed to teach you far more than just how to cook. It's a practical, hands-on course that blends essential cooking techniques with the science and nutrition behind the food we eat.

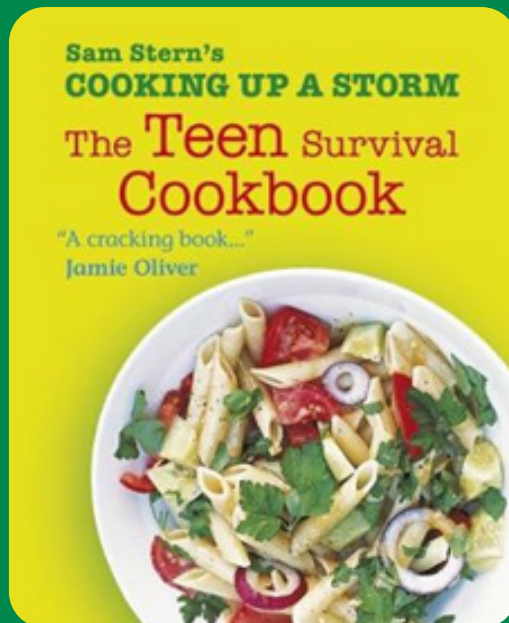
You'll gain confidence in the kitchen as you explore skills such as roasting, baking, boiling, frying, and following recipes accurately. We'll explore topics like food safety, dietary needs, and conduct food experiments, helping you understand not only what you cook, but why you make certain choices—whether for health, taste, or budget.

You'll have the opportunity to showcase your creativity and knowledge, preparing you for further education or careers in the food industry.

One of the best parts? There are no exams. Instead, you'll build a coursework-based portfolio filled with practical work, recipes, and thoughtful reflections.

By the end of the course, you'll be equipped with life-long skills: the ability to cook nutritious meals, inspire others, and possibly take your first steps toward a career in food, health or hospitality, or writing, becoming an author like Sam Stern. Or, simply become more self-sufficient in everyday life.

Shelly



ICT

This subject isn't just about computers — it's about using technology to be creative, solve problems, and build cool things that can make an actual difference. I love ICT because it mixes imagination with real-world skills, and I can't wait to explore it all with you.

We'll start by getting to grips with how tech works behind the scenes —how computers think, how networks connect us, and how digital tools shape our everyday lives. Then we'll dive into coding, where you'll get to build apps, games, and more. Trust me, the first time you get your code to work, it feels like magic — and I want you to experience that too.

This year, expect hands-on projects, creative challenges, and moments that make you say, "I built that!" ICT is my passion because it gives you the tools to change the world, one idea at a time. I'm here to guide you, inspire you, and cheer you on as you become confident digital creators. Let's make this a year where you discover just how powerful and fun ICT can be and just remember, the team that designed this game, started their experience in year 10.

Isiaka

Business BTEC



It is important for young entrepreneurs to be adequately self-aware to know what they do not know.

— Mark Zuckerberg —

I'm excited to introduce you to our BTEC Level 1 Business course for Year 10 and 11 at Apple Orchard School. This practical and engaging course will help you understand how businesses work in the real world—and give you the skills to take your first steps into the world of work, enterprise, or further education.

Throughout the year, you'll take part in exciting, hands-on units like "Running and Organising an Event," where you'll work as part of a team to plan, promote, and carry out a real event — just like Group 4 did with the recent Sponge the Teacher fundraiser. This unit will build your confidence, teamwork, and communication skills while helping you understand planning, budgeting, and customer service.

You'll also explore how business works behind the scenes, learning how companies are set up and what makes them successful. As part of your journey, you'll research different college or work experience opportunities. You'll be supported to break down your personal goals and take meaningful steps toward your future — whether that means applying for a college course or landing a work placement that matches your interests.

This course is all about real-world learning — understanding what employers expect, developing your skills, and building a portfolio of coursework and evidence. There are no exams, just the opportunity to show what you've learned through practical tasks, projects, and reflections.

By the end of the course, you'll have gained valuable knowledge about business, confidence in your own abilities, and a clearer idea of what you want to do next — whether that's in enterprise, retail, hospitality, or further education.

Barry

Homework

From September you will be getting homework to support and consolidate what you are learning in class. This is not optional. This is you taking responsibility. This is you showing that you trust us, as we trust you.

You are heading towards GCSEs now and homework will give you so much more than you realise. We will work with your key workers and home teams so that you get the support you need but you also need to take ownership. Establish a routine and get it done as soon as you can - but present it as well as you can to your teachers. So, no rolling of the eyes or negativity. TRUST US.

Why homework is important

1. It Gives You Valuable Practice:

Just like you need to practise a sport or musical instrument to improve, your brain needs regular practice to fully understand what you're learning. Homework helps reinforce what you've done in class so you're more confident and prepared.

2. It Helps You Learn Time Management:

In the future, whether you're studying further or working, you'll often have to organise your own time. Homework gives you the chance to practise planning ahead and meeting deadlines — useful skills in both education and adult life.

3. It Encourages Responsibility:

Completing and handing in homework on time teaches you to take ownership of your tasks. This sense of responsibility will be important later, whether it's managing your workload at university or meeting expectations in a job.

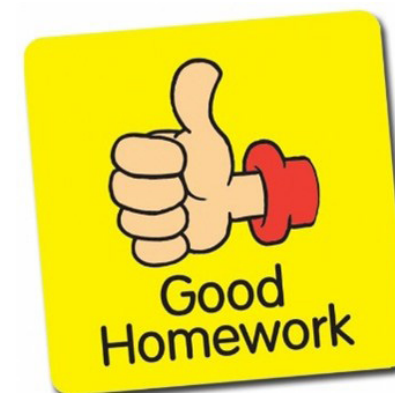
4. It Builds Confidence in Your Learning:

When you've done the work and understand the subject, you naturally feel more confident in class. Homework gives you a chance to test your understanding in your own time, without the pressure of being in front of others.

5. It Helps Identify Gaps in Your Knowledge:

Sometimes, homework shows you that something isn't quite clear yet — and that's a good thing. It gives you the chance to ask questions and improve before your teacher is testing you more formally.

So, while you may think that your console provides all you need after school, homework really does have a purpose — both in helping you succeed now, and for preparing you for the kinds of challenges you'll face later on. And if you ever need help managing your homework, you are surrounded by people who care and will support you so let them know.



Your Homework timetable

You will receive Maths, English and Art homework every week, and you will also receive other homework every term.

Additional termly homework

Term	Week	Subject	Week	Subject
Autumn 1	A	History	B	Science
Autumn 2	A	Geography	B	Religious Studies
Spring 1	A	Science	B	Design & Technology
Spring 2	A	Food Skills	B	Citizenship
Summer 1	A	History	B	Design Technology
Summer 2	A	Business	B	Geography



Your Teachers

They invest their all in you - give them the investment back by becoming the successes they know you can.



Isiaka
Science, ICT & STEM

Anne
English



Alastair
DT and STEM

André
History, Geography & Spanish



Barry
Maths, Business & STEM



Katy
Art, RS, PSHE & Citizenship



Shelly
Food Tech

And our fantastic Teaching Assistants



Tracy



Anna



Nicky



Helen

Have a great time and make the most of your school and your home and all those people that are here for you and care for you very much.

"Learning will not
make your ears fall
off, but it will give
you a lifetime of
opportunity.

Richard Keightley, 2025



Apple Orchard