



21st September 2018

Dear parents,

The start of term has been extremely positive with new pupils settling into the school. The majority of new arrivals are naturally in Year 7 but we have welcomed pupils into all year groups, particularly the Sixth Form. We will advertise our 'Into the Sixth' evening later in the term, but the popularity and regard for our Sixth Form is highlighted by the level of external applications.

Careers Fair

We would like to thank all volunteers who participated in the 2018 Careers Fair. The range of volunteers was incredible for a school event and this contributed to the very positive feedback. In addition, the exhibitors have commented very favourably on the interest shown, and say that it is the biggest single school Careers Fair that they attend. We continue to place Careers Advice as an important aim of our education provision. We are staging our second Apprenticeship Fair on Wednesday 21st November and would welcome any companies who are interested in outlining and advertising their apprenticeship programme. Please contact Mr Panting on panting.chris@ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk if you are interested in supporting the event.

Online reporting

Last academic year saw the introduction of The Ashcombe School Online Reporting system. This took the form of a carefully staged introduction to the system by pupil year group and the corresponding communication to parents to enable user registration with that system. The uptake was very successful and pupils, parents and teachers made increasing use of Online Reporting to view their own school records including homework, attendance, timetable, rewards and sanctions.

As we begin this new school year, pupils and parents joining the school will need to be registered with Online Reporting and so there may be a short period of time where not everyone has access and pupils joining the school may not appear to parents accessing the system. We ask for your patience as we make those changes to the system.

Similarly, as any changes to the school timetable occur, the detail that may appear in Online Reporting may not update immediately and so please do not consider this fully accurate. Pupils will have received their timetable and class lists from their tutors.

Extra-curricular Clubs

The autumn term extracurricular timetable has started and the initial participation level has been very high. All pupils are welcome, particularly those trying something new. The timetables can be found on screens around the school. All Year 7 pupils have been given a paper copy of the programme and this can also be found on the website at <http://www.ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk/03-calendar/docs/2018-19%20Autumn%20Ex%20Cur%20Activities%20bklt.pdf>. Lunchtime clubs take place between 1.20-1.45pm and after school clubs are from 3.45-4.45pm.

Parents Evenings

The Year 11 X band parents' evening is on Tuesday 25th September and the Year 11 Y band one is on Thursday 4th October. Please contact the pastoral team if you have any questions about either evening.



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Year 10 support evening

As I am sure you are aware, there have been major national curriculum changes at Key Stage 4 over the past couple of years. These changes were highlighted in the Upper School Booklet distributed earlier this year. The changes for the current Year 10 are particularly significant, with GCSEs now being given a 9-1 grade rather than the old style A*- G grade.

For the past five years, we have hosted a Parent Information Evening specifically tailored for parents to support pupils through their GCSE courses. The feedback from these events has always been very positive. This year we would also like to focus on the exam changes, which have occurred nationally and will have a significant impact on those pupils currently in year 10.

We will host an evening entitled "How can you support your children through the GCSE programme?" This will take place in the Study Centre on Wednesday 26th September and will start at 6.30pm. The session will last for approximately an hour and there will be an opportunity for you to raise individual questions. The evening will cover a range of issues, including the changes to exam grading from September 2017 and how you can support your child through the academic challenges of years 10 and 11.

It helps with our planning if you could email Ms Gray directly on gray.pam@ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk if you wish to attend and the number of seats you require.

PTA

PTA annual quiz on Friday 28th September:

- The quiz takes place in Ranmore Hall. Doors open at 7.30pm with start at 8pm.
- Quiz teams comprise tables of eight but it will not be a problem if you do not come with a ready-made full group.
- £5 entry per person for each evening.
- Quiz tickets can be bought on entry on the night or in advance via ParentPay.

PTA wine tasting on Friday 23rd November:

- The wine tasting also takes place in Ranmore Hall starting at 8pm; doors open at 7.30pm.
- The wine tasting evening has a maximum capacity of 100 people, so tickets must be bought in advance through ParentPay. We would not want to turn anyone away at the door! Tickets will be sold on a first come, first served basis.

Uniform

We are very grateful to all parents who have ensured their son/daughter has returned with the correct uniform, including shoes. There are a few pupils who will have to purchase new skirts and others needing the correct shoes, which must be non-trainer and able to be polished. We will be contacting those parents separately to find a solution.

You may be aware that we have a small selection of loan items for pupils who have forgotten their tie, blazer or have had a problem during the day. Last year, over 300 items were not returned to us despite reminders, letters and bills for the 'lost' items. We are happy to provide this service, but loan items must be returned. Should you have found any items at home over the summer that have 'loan' on them or do not belong to your son/daughter, please could they be returned to Bradley Office. In addition, it would be helpful if items that are now too small, but still in good condition, could be donated to school or the PTA uniform 'preloved' stock. Please drop off at Bradley Office.

PE Kit

We would like to thank parents for their support in our efforts to apply the PE kit rules consistently, especially with shorts. Unfortunately too many variations were appearing, and we are reminding pupils what the rules are. The shorts, tracksuit trousers and leggings have always been navy and should not have large logos or stripes please. The shorts in particular must not be the very short, tight Lycra type. Most large department stores sites appear to stock what is required and there is certainly no need to purchase expensive branded ones. The PTA uniform stopped stocking shorts a while ago to allow parental choice in where they purchased certain uniform items.

Free School Meals

If you believe, you may qualify and have not applied yet please contact the school office for more information. The criteria is currently:

Children are eligible to receive free school meals (FSM) if their parents are in receipt of any of the following benefits:

- Equal Based Jobseeker's Allowance/Employment and Support Allowance
- Income Support
- Income-based Job Seekers' Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The Guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income (as assessed by HM Revenue and Customs) that does not exceed £16,190. [N.B If you receive WORKING TAX CREDIT you do not qualify even if you receive child tax credit and your income is below £16,190].
- Working Tax 'run-on' - the payment someone may receive for a further four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit with an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400.

Pupil Premium Plus

The Government has extended funding to schools to provide for children who are under a Special Guardianship Order or who have been adopted from **local authority** care **under the Adoption Act 2002**. In order for our school to receive this additional funding, parents will need to identify these children by providing evidence, such as their official SGO or Adoption Order to a member of school staff, (Mrs. Reed and Mr. Ketley will oversee this process as the Designated Teachers for Looked after Children, LAC). In requesting this information, we wish to stress this is entirely up to parents/carers as to whether they wish to disclose this information to the school or not, but it would be helpful to know about an eligible child(ren). This information will be recorded and held in confidence and in line with all Data Protection requirements and used to support the learning needs of your child(ren). If you would like to discuss this further, please contact Mr. Ketley or Mrs. Reed.

Mobile Phones

We have tried to devise an policy for mobile phones which balances the practical requirements of pupils, particularly in relation to allowing parents to text important messages with the need for lessons to be undisturbed.. Our approach is to allow them at break and lunch but they should not be used at any other times. If they are used, then they will be confiscated. We are very appreciative of the support parents give us in administering this policy.

Support Staff Vacancies

We have a vacancy for a member of the Site Team, a Science Technician and a Cover Supervisor. If anyone is interested in finding out more, please contact Maria Stanley on the school telephone number or stanley.maria@ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk

INSET and Open Evening

The Open Evening for prospective new pupils takes place on Thursday 11th October starting at 6pm. We are asking pupils to volunteer to help on the evening either as guides or assisting staff in the classrooms. As in previous years, we have INSET days on Thursday 11th and Friday 12th October. School will be closed for pupils on these days.

Yours sincerely,



D.J. Blow
Executive Headteacher



C.G. Panting



Mrs A.S Reed

Joint Heads of School