



5<sup>th</sup> September 2018

Dear parents,

We would like to welcome you back. As we have outlined over the past few months, there are a number of changes that are taking place in the management structure of the school for the new academic year. Mr Blow is becoming Executive Head of The Ashcombe School and Executive Head of the three schools in SESSET (whilst drawing his pension so that there is no net cost to the school), and will retain the strategic responsibility for the school. He will be working full-time and still be very much around school. Mrs Reed and Mr Panting are now Joint Heads and will take responsibility for the day-to-day running of the school. Mrs Reed will be responsible for the pastoral aspects and Mr Panting will be responsible for teaching and the curriculum. Mr Simmonds has become Deputy Head with responsibility for curriculum and is often the best person to contact if you have a query about the curriculum or teaching and learning. Mr Ketley will be Senior Pastoral Manager. Other new appointments to the Senior Team are Mr Ravenhill, Head of Lower School; Ms Gray, Head of Upper School; and Ms Sampson, Assistant Head (Curriculum).

The start of a new year always sees a number of new arrivals to the teaching staff. I would like to welcome Mr Biggs (ML), Miss Duncan (Music), Dr Fortini (Science and Computing), Miss Garcia (English), Miss Guirey (PE and Food), Mrs Hipple (English and Psychology), Miss Murphy (English), Mrs Ohlsson (Science), Mr Pearson (English) and Mrs Turner (PSE and Food). We are extremely pleased to be fully staffed, as there is a significant national teacher recruitment crisis that is exacerbated in the South East due to the cost of living.

## Welcome to new Year 7 pupils

September is always one of the most exciting times of the year with the arrival of many new pupils. The majority of these are in Year 7 but we do have new arrivals across the year groups. We will provide particular additional support for Year 7 over the first two weeks allowing them to leave lessons five minutes early to ensure they can find their way around the school. Please contact Ms Treadwell, Head of Year 7, on [treadwell.joanna@ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:treadwell.joanna@ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk) if you have any questions about Year 7. We will be writing over the next week with details of extra-curricular activities that are taking place both during lunchtime and after school.

## Pastoral Teams

The Heads of Year are as follows:

Year 7 Ms Treadwell; Year 8 Mr Mason; Year 9 Mr Ashwood; Year 10 Mrs Palmer; Year 11 Mr Prior; Lower 6<sup>th</sup> Miss Pitman; Upper 6<sup>th</sup> Mr Mercer.

## Exam results

The results at both GCSE and A Level were extremely good and I would like to commend the dedication of both pupils and staff. This year sees the first results of the new GCSEs in a range of subjects including Science, History and Geography, introduced by the Government, as well as a new 9-1 grading system for those GCSEs. To ensure that pupils this year are not disadvantaged, Ofqual (the independent regulator) has ensured that the number of pupils getting new grades 9-4 will be the same nationally as gained grades A\*- C last year. As last year for English and Maths, the short timescales and late delivery of materials have made this a very stressful two years for pupils and teachers, and we are delighted that the hard work and commitment shown has resulted in excellent results across subjects. We do however continue to find it frustrating that every year one or two different subjects are affected by marking and moderation issues



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SESSET

with inconsistencies. We raise these concerns with the exam boards and Ofqual, as we want to ensure all of our pupils get a fair experience.

Full details are on the school website.

- **41 out of 230 pupils gaining 4 or more "top" grades: (9 or 8 or A\*).**
- **All pupils gained at least one 9-1 (formerly A\*-G) grade.** This is particularly pleasing because we are a comprehensive school taking the full range of ability with no selection or filtering.
- **"first entry" % 9-4 (formerly A\*-C) in:** Maths was **76%**, English Literature **73%**, English Language **73%**.
- **Over 90% of pupils gained at least 1 "9-4" grade** showing that the curriculum is sufficiently broad and flexible so that virtually all pupils can gain a "9-4" grade in at least one subject.
- **37% of pupils gained at least one "top" grade (9 or 8 or A\*)** with a total of 146 grade 9s.

#### **Outstanding subject results included**

- **12% of all pupils getting a 9-9 (equiv to upper A\*) in Science.**
- **Over 30% achieving grade 9-7 (equiv to A\*-A) in Art, Computer Science, Geography, History, and Science.**

### **Trips over the summer**

The school's visit to Uganda over the summer was a great success. Accompanied by Mr Blackband, Miss Telford and Miss Perry, the group of 6<sup>th</sup> formers visited the schools and projects that they had raised money for over the past 12 months. We are running a further trip in 2019 due to the great popularity of the experience. We have also been selected by Build Africa (the supporting charity) as their lead British school.

### **Expectations**

We sent out the uniform expectations with the last letter of term and this clearly outlines what pupils should wear and bring to school. Mr Panting and Mrs Reed will go through these expectations in assemblies. The atmosphere at Ashcombe is rooted in a sense of mutual respect with clear expectations helping to engender a calm and caring atmosphere. The support of parents has always been a key feature of the school and this support is particularly vital at the start of the year when we are re-establishing the norms. We would like to clarify a few issues where we would really welcome parent support:

- School shoes should be polishable and should not be trainers or canvas. We will be in touch if the shoes being worn are not appropriate.
- The only jewellery pupils are permitted to wear is one stud in each ear. Acrylic nails and nail varnish are not permitted. Make up should be discrete and false eyelashes are also not permitted.
- Pupils are only allowed to use mobile phones at break and lunch. If they are found using them at other times between 8.50 am and 3.30 pm, we will take them and place them at Pupil Services or Bradley Office.

Please do get in touch with Year Heads or Mr Ketley if you have any particular questions about uniform.

### **Parents' Evening**

Year 11 and Upper 6<sup>th</sup> parents' evenings will be taking place over the next few weeks. There will be separate letters detailing these evenings but I wanted to flag them up in this letter.

Upper 6<sup>th</sup> – Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> September

Year 11 X band – Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> September

Year 11 Y band – Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> October

### **Careers Fair**

Our annual Careers Fair takes place on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> September and we are always keen to hear from anyone who is willing to share their career journey. The event starts at 6.00pm and finishes at 8.15pm.

We are particularly interested in hearing from the following people: Entrepreneurs; Primary School teachers; Music related careers; Medical professions; Health and Beauty; Legal; Finance and accounting;

Travel and Hospitality. Please contact Mr Panting on [panting.chris@ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:panting.chris@ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk) if you are interested in supporting the event.

### **Online reporting**

Online reporting can be used to access details of your son/ daughter(s) school life. Online reporting includes information about timetables, rewards, detentions and homework. It has proven to be very popular with the parents who have used it. It can be accessed on computers and phones. Details about how to use the facility can be found at <https://onlinereporting.org.uk>

### **Support Staff Vacancies**

We have a vacancy for a member of the site team; if anyone is interested in finding out more, please contact Maria Stanley on the school telephone number or [stanley.maria@ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:stanley.maria@ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk)

### **School Calendar**

The dates for this academic year are on the school website > Calendar  
<http://www.ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk/03-calendar/01-calendar.shtml>  
There is a link so that you can easily add them to Google Calendar.

### **Communication with school**

I am aware that many parents choose to communicate with the school via email. Please be aware that staff have teaching commitments and other duties during the school day and often may only be able to respond to you after school hours. If the matter is very URGENT and you need a quick response from a member of staff, please telephone and we will do what we can to help.

We are aware that some parents may be having difficulty receiving emails following a new version of our Email to Parents system; if you know of anyone experiencing difficulties with this, or you receive a paper copy through your child but not electronically, then please could you check your junk mail folder, and if it is not there, then email [info@ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:info@ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk)

We hope you have had a good summer and look forward to a productive Autumn Term.

Yours sincerely,



D.J. Blow  
**Executive Headteacher**



C.G. Panting



Mrs A.S Reed

**Joint Heads of School**