



27th February 2018

Dear parents,

You will no doubt have seen the weather forecasts and the references to the “beast from the East”. We are very much hoping to keep the school open but we are concerned about the potential blizzard conditions which are forecast to hit on Thursday or Friday. We have not had to close because of poor weather for a number of years; however, if the forecast is accurate this week, we may need to. We will consult with our contract coach companies to determine if they can operate safely and will liaise with The Priory School. As very few staff live within walking distance of the school, we will also consider the weather conditions in their areas, as conditions can be different from Dorking.

If we do need to close, we will communicate as usual through Call Parents and the school website, and encourage pupils to use SharePoint access (see below). We will do this as early as we possibly can.

We do have parent support evenings for Year 8 this evening and Year 11 tomorrow and, due to the forecast for icy conditions, we feel it would be sensible to postpone these events until the weather settles.

Trips update

It has been an extremely busy time in terms of trips. The Year 10 historians visited the battlefields in Belgium and France, a group of Year 11 and 6th form students went to Paris for a French study visit, and a large group of pupils went skiing in France. We also had a group of 6th form historians in Berlin. Over the next few weeks, Classics students are going to Greece and Physics students are visiting CERN in Geneva.

We are currently planning the Uganda visit for the summer where around 20 students are visiting schools and projects linked to Build Africa around Masindi. The students taking part in this trip are currently organising several fund-raising events. The students going to Uganda will be fundraising at Y7 and Y8 parents’ evenings, hosting both a cake sale and staging their “rowing along the Nile” event.

Technology to support learning outside of the classroom

Most pupils are now making regular use of Office 365 and SharePoint but I wanted to raise awareness with parents. The school has moved over to this system over the past few months. SharePoint has replaced Fronter as the place for pupils to get revision resources and additional subject information. All pupils have OneDrive that allows them to save and access their own work online.

There are a number of ways to log in, but we have encouraged pupils to use the link on the school website:
<http://www.ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk/10-login/01-login.shtml>

There is a link here for pupils to click on that takes them to Office 365.

To log on, the pupils need to use their normal school user name and add **@ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk** to the end of this. The password is the same as their school one.

One really useful aspect of Office 365 is that pupils are entitled to 5 free copies of Microsoft Office that are available through their school account. There is a download link when pupils log in and go to the Office 365 home screen. We will be continuing to publicise the materials in class.

In addition to Office 365, the school has a wide range of online packages that are used to support learning. These include:

My Maths - <https://www.mymaths.co.uk/>

Sam Learning - <https://www.samlearning.com/>

Educake for Science for Key Stage 4 - <https://www.educake.co.uk/>



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SESSET

Linguascope and Vocabexpress for Languages - <https://www.vocabexpress.com/co/> and <https://www.linguascope.com/>
ClickView - an online bank of educational videos - <https://www.clickview.co.uk/>

These can all help learning, particularly in the build-up to exams. If there is any question relating to log in details, then please contact passwords@ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk

This term we have relaunched our new Twitter page. This is a key means of not only promoting the many wonderful things that we do at the school but also as a way of engaging you in your children's daily activities more effectively. We hope by using social media we will further improve communications between the school and the community. For Twitter, follow @AshcombeSchool

Success of work experience

The Year 11 pupils completed their week of work experience prior to half-term and it was extremely successful. Two pupils were offered long term apprenticeships as a result and the feedback generally from employers was overwhelmingly positive.

Uniform

Please can you note the following if you are buying new uniform or school shoes. Please make sure that new skirts do reach the knee at the time of purchase, as anything shorter is not in line with the uniform policy, and shoes must be plain black and can be polished with no trainer type soles. Black trousers must be a school uniform type of material and not jean type.

Polo Shirts for the summer term

In thinking of warmer weather, please note that white Polo Shirts are available to order from PTA Uniform. This can be done by using the paper order form available from Pupil Services Desk or online from the uniform webpage on the school website. Wearing a white Ashcombe logo polo shirt in the summer term is optional.

Apprenticeship Fair- Wednesday 14th March

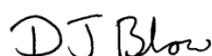
As an offshoot of the careers fair, we are organising a specific apprenticeship focussed event on 14th March. The event will take place from 2.00pm through to 4.00pm. The event will be focussed on the various opportunities available through the growing range of apprenticeships. It will be relevant for some of Year 11 and the 6th form. Please contact Mr Panting on panting.chris@ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk if you are interested in taking part.

Music

Year 11 Concert 14th March – The Year 11 GCSE Music students will be giving a concert of their ensemble performances in the evening of Wednesday 14th March in BPA prior to their exams. All welcome.

An ex-student, Emily Heuvel is running a fun and welcoming choir that uses breath and the voice to realign the nervous system, reducing stress, anxiety, depression and more. The first term starts on Monday 23rd April at The Ashcombe and will run weekly on Monday evenings 7.30-9pm. The cost is £10/session, but you can save money by booking in advance. No singing experience is necessary, and there is no need to read music. The choir is suitable for anyone from Year 8 up. For more information or to book a place visit www.birchtreechoir.com or contact Emily at emily@birchtreechoir.com

Yours sincerely,



D.J.Blow
Headteacher