



19<sup>th</sup> September 2017

Dear parents,

### Information for Year 10

Welcome back to the new academic year. I hope you have had an enjoyable summer and you are looking forward to the commencement of the GCSE courses. I have been very impressed with how the year group has returned and settled in to their new sets and courses. I am writing to outline a number of key features and events that impact upon this term. One of the first events will be the Parents' Support Session that takes place on **Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> September** and is detailed below.

#### Head of Year

Mrs Treadwell has now taken over pastoral responsibilities for the new year 7 cohort. I am delighted that Miss Davidson, a very experienced Head of Year, has taken over pastoral responsibilities for year 10. Please do contact her on [davidson.stefanie@ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:davidson.stefanie@ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk) if you have any concerns.

#### Parents' 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 to 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 parental information evening specifically tailored 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.

I 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 27<sup>th</sup> September** and 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 me directly if you wish to attend and how many seats you require in order to give us an idea of numbers.

#### Forthcoming Subject Events

I have attached our latest Curriculum Plan for Year 10 and 11. This plan has information regarding exam boards and which subjects still have Controlled Assessments to complete. The following departments would like me to share information:

English - Pupils have just begun studying Power and Conflict Poetry for their English Literature GCSE. There is a very good CGP revision guide that pupils may find helpful in supporting their learning. The revision guide can be found using the following link: <https://www.amazon.co.uk/GCSE-English-Literature-Poetry-Guide/dp/1782943617>

Pupils may also wish to use the Mr Bruff videos on Youtube to support their study of the poetry unit. The following link will take you to the Mr Bruff homepage and from there you can select the correct video: <https://www.youtube.com/user/mrbruff/videos>



Headteacher: D. J. Blow, M.A.  
Ashcombe Road, Dorking, Surrey RH4 1LY  
Tel: 01306 886312 Fax: 01306 742537  
[www.ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk](http://www.ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk)  
[info@ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:info@ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk)



ML – In these first few weeks, it is important that pupils regularly set time aside to learn any new vocabulary and to look over their class notes. We recommend using [www.vocabexpress.com](http://www.vocabexpress.com) for this. Pupils will soon be issued with speaking practise booklets to introduce them to the different elements of the GCSE speaking exam. Just before the half-term holiday, pupils will complete an informal speaking task, which will require them to describe a picture. After half term, pupils will take an assessed translation which will focus on the key vocabulary and grammar covered in the first half-term. Pupils will be provided with a revision checklist for this.

History – We would like to give advance notice of the dates for the annual Battlefields trips for Year 10. The 3-day trip will depart on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> February and will return on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> February. The 1-day trip will take place on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> June. Letters will be issued in the next fortnight

Homework Club – Will take place in R6 every Wednesday from 3.30pm.

### **Transition Report**

We will soon be asking subject staff to identify how individuals have settled into their GCSE studies, specifically looking at classwork, behaviour and homework. This is the first opportunity for the 'Upper School' pastoral team to identify and tackle early issues and congratulate those that have made a pleasing start to the school year. Following the transition report, tutors will be arranging meetings with all pupils to discuss progress being made in subjects. This will be an opportunity to identify any concerns and set targets for pupils to work towards over the next term.

### **Parents' Evening**

The Year 10 Parents' Evenings take place after the October half-term, with X band on **Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> November** and Y band on **Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> November**. This provides an opportunity to speak to subject teachers on how pupils have settled into the GCSE programme. I would strongly recommend that pupils also attend this evening to discuss strategies to improve performance in individual subjects. I will write with further details of this later in the term. The first progress review will be published next term.

### **Uniform**

I would like to thank parents for their support with ensuring school uniform is worn correctly. PTA order forms are available at the Pupil Services Desk. The next PTA sale is being held on **Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> September** between 1pm-4pm. Please do contact Miss Davidson or myself if there are any issues.

### **Social Trips**

We are in the process of organising social trips for the year groups. All social trips in the Upper School, including the Leavers' Ball and Study Leave in year 11, have qualification criteria of attendance above 95%, no more than 10% lates, and pupils showing a willingness to follow school rules, including working-off detentions and following school uniform procedure.

I look forward to seeing you at the Parents' Support Evening but as always please do contact me in the meantime if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely,



Mr S Ketley  
Head of Upper School