1st October 2026

Dear Parents,

As we move into October and the autumn term gathers pace, it is wonderful to see students fully settled into school life and developing a strong sense of belonging within our community. Feeling connected, valued and included is fundamental to success, and we continue to place great importance on ensuring that every student feels they belong at Ashcombe.

October is also Black History Month, providing an important opportunity to celebrate the contributions, achievements and experiences of Black individuals throughout history and today. Through curriculum activities and wider school initiatives, we will encourage students to reflect on the values of respect, inclusion and understanding that are central to our school community.

Staffing Update – Modern Foreign Languages
I would like to inform you that due to unforeseen circumstances, Mr Sibley has regrettably left his teaching post at the school. We are pleased to confirm that we have appointed a specialist Languages teacher, Mr Soltysik, who will take responsibility for the affected classes for the foreseeable future. We are confident that this will provide continuity of learning and ensure students continue to receive a high-quality Languages education. Thank you for your understanding and support during this transition. Should you have any questions, please contact Jay Simmonds, Deputy Headteacher, at simmonds.jay@ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk .

Homework
Students have made a good start on their homework, which is set via Microsoft Teams. Please treat Teams as their digital homework planner, with students ticking off completed tasks. We are still setting up the weekly parental email for Microsoft Teams assignments. This will allow parents to see which assignments have been completed and which are overdue. Apologies for the delay. Please continue to discuss homework directly with your child. It is great to see the confidence that good homework brings to students. If your child is struggling with homework, please do get in touch. Further information is available on the website.

Monday 5th and Tuesday 6th October: Charlie's Promise
We are delighted that Martin Cosser from the charity Charlie's Promise (Charlie's Promise | Working to prevent knife crime) will be visiting the school on Monday 5th and Tuesday 6th October to speak to all our students.

Thursday 8th October, early finish:
This is a reminder that school will close at **12pm on Thursday 8 October** to allow preparation for Open Evening.

We would be grateful if you could speak with their child about making sensible arrangements for their journey home. Students should travel directly home and should not congregate in Dorking town centre or other public areas. As always, we appreciate your support in reinforcing our expectations around behaviour and conduct when students are representing the school in the wider community.

Thursday 8th October 5.00pm to 8.00pm: Open Evening
We would love to invite students to help at our Open Evening on Thursday 8th October. This is a fantastic opportunity for students to showcase our school and assist with giving tours to prospective families. If your child is interested in helping, please complete the attached form Volunteers Fill in form.

Students will need to:

- Wear full school uniform, including school shoes (no trainers).
- Arrive at 4.30pm and be collected at 7:30pm.
- Follow guidance provided by staff and tutors on how the evening will run.

Additional information regarding collection arrangements and the activities students will be taking part in during the afternoon will be shared separately.

Friday 9th October: INSET Day
A reminder that Friday 9th October is an INSET Day and the school will be closed to students. Students will return as normal on Monday 12th October.

Friday 9th October: 2026 PTA Quiz Night
The PTA Quiz Night is on Friday 9th October at 7:30pm in the Bradley Hall, The Ashcombe School.
Tickets can be purchased through the Arbor School Shop. If you have any questions, please contact the PTA at: pta@ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk.

Recording of Parent Information Session:
For parents who were unable to attend the Parent Information Session on Supporting Children Affected by Parental Drinking and/or Caring Responsibilities see attached recording: Clipchamp This online session, presented by Amy Dickson (Nacoa) and Claire Terry (Action for Carers Surrey), explores the impact that parental alcohol misuse and caring responsibilities can have on children and young people.

Talking Pre-Teens: A New Course for Parents and Carers
We are pleased to be hosting *Talking Pre-Teens*, a four-week course designed to help parents and carers better understand the challenges and opportunities of the pre-teen and teenage years. Led by Fiona Darnell and Anna, the course is aimed at parents of children in Year 5 and above and will explore pre-teen behaviour, communication, relationships and practical strategies to support family life. The sessions are interactive, informative and designed to build confidence in navigating these important years. The course will take place on Wednesday evenings from **7.30pm to 9.30pm** at The Ashcombe School on **4, 11, 18 and 25 November**. Places cost **£15**, including a handbook. For further information or to book a place, please contact Fiona Darnell at darnell.fiona@ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk.

Support Our Trips and Events Bursary Fund
A gentle reminder that our Trips and Events Bursary Fund helps ensure that all students can take part in educational visits, residentials and school events, regardless of financial circumstances. If you are able to do so, please consider making a voluntary contribution via the Arbor School Shop, where donation amounts start from £5. Every donation helps provide valuable opportunities and experiences for students who may otherwise be unable to participate. Thank you for supporting an inclusive school community where every child can learn, participate and thrive.

Grease Whole School Production
Our whole school production of Grease runs from **Thursday 12th – Saturday 14th November**. With a large student cast and crew, it promises to be an unforgettable show. To help make it possible, we are inviting support from parents and local businesses through **sponsorship or match funding**, with discounted rates available. Sponsors will also benefit from fantastic publicity in our show programme and on social media. For full details, please see our sponsorship pack and complete the linked form. Thank you for supporting this exciting production!

Grease Fundraiser
A huge thank you to everyone who has already supported our *Grease* costume fundraiser. The fundraiser runs until **Saturday 14th November**, so there's still time to get involved and help us bring the show to life on stage. Grease the Musical Costume Fundraiser! - JustGiving

School Production Parent Help Required
We require some support to set up and serve refreshments at the school production. Set up is required both on Thursday 12th and Friday 13th November 5.30pm and some support on Saturday 14th November to ensure we are ready for our two performances that day. Additionally, we would be grateful for some parents to serve refreshments on any of the 4 performances. Please complete this form (which gives more details of timings) if you would be able to support us. We suggest you don't support with serving refreshments if you are watching the show as you may miss the first part of the second half of the show.

Supporting Our Performing Arts Students
We are currently fundraising for a new lighting rig in the BPA to enhance the experience of our productions, concerts and performances. If you would like to support this project, please visit our JustGiving page or scan the QR code below. Support the Stage Lights Campaign

Yours sincerely,

Chris Panting
Headteacher