THE ASHCOMBE SCHOOL

18th September 2026

Dear Parents,

As many of you will be aware, the school's electrical and security systems have been upgraded over the past 18 months. As part of this programme of works, our emergency alarm systems have also been updated to enhance the safety and security of our school community.

In recent years, a number of schools across Surrey have had to implement lockdown procedures in response to incidents in their local area. While such situations remain rare, it is important that we regularly practise our procedures so that staff and students know how to respond calmly and safely should the need ever arise.

On **Wednesday 23 September**, we will be conducting a **lockdown drill**. The exercise will allow us to test both our procedures and the effectiveness of the new security infrastructure.

For most students, this experience will be no different from participating in a routine fire drill. However, we recognise that some students may find the exercise unsettling. Staff will explain the purpose of the drill in an age appropriate manner and will be available to provide reassurance where needed.

If you feel that your child may be particularly anxious about taking part, or if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact your Head of Year or Tutor.

Monday 21st September: Online Parent Information Session
You are invited to a free online information session hosted by Nacoa and Action for Carers Surrey, focusing on supporting children affected by parental alcohol misuse and caring responsibilities. The session will provide practical advice, information on available support, and an opportunity to learn more in a confidential, non-judgemental environment. Further details and the Teams link is attached: Join meeting in Teams

Tuesday 22nd September 6.00pm - 8.00pm: Careers Fair Reminder
A reminder that our popular Careers Fair takes place on Tuesday 22 September. Students in Years 9-13 and their families are warmly invited to attend. This year we have an excellent range of employers and organisations joining us, including AON, AtkinsRéalis, Aviva, East Surrey Hospital, Gatwick Airport, the NHS, RAF, Warner Bros. Discovery, Downs Solicitors, Surrey FA, Dorking Wanderers and Dorking RFC, alongside universities including Bath, Birmingham, Cardiff, Exeter, Lancaster, Leeds, Nottingham, Sheffield and Surrey, and local colleges NESCOT, Merrist Wood and East Surrey College. There will also be a programme of short talks covering apprenticeships, post-16 choices, university courses, placement years and making a competitive university application. Whether students already have a clear idea about their future or are only beginning to explore their options, the evening is a fantastic opportunity to meet employers, ask questions, discover different pathways and be inspired about what might come next.

Wednesday 23rd September: Talking Pre-Teens Course
Please find attached flyer or if interested please email darnell.fiona@ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk

Saturday 26th September: Pre-loved Uniform Store
The next pre-loved uniform sale will take place on Saturday 26 September in B1 (the hut in Bradley), from 10.00am to 12.00 noon.

Carrington School, Therfield School and The Ashcombe School have formed and are part of South East Surrey Schools Education Trust (SESSET), a charitable company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales with company number 10479401. The registered address is The Ashcombe School, Ashcombe Road, Dorking, Surrey RH4 1LY

Tuesday 29th September: School Photographs for Years 8, 9 and 10
Students in Years 8, 9 and 10 will have their individual school photographs taken on **Tuesday 29 September.** Please ensure that your child arrives at school in full school uniform and looking smart for the occasion. Further information on how to view and purchase photographs will be shared with families once the images are available from the photographer.

Tuesday 29th September, 5.30pm: Year 10, 11, 12 & 13 Exams & Assessment Parent Support Evening
Parents are invited to a short virtual parent support evening which will share key exam information and the school's assessment schedule for this academic year. To join the session please log in via this link:

Join: https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/326997538308674?p=YNGLXzBzJ97fNcVcgl
Meeting ID: 326 997 538 308 674
Passcode: 3ZE7GS3Z

Thursday 1st October, 4.00pm-7.30pm: **Year 11 Progress Evening**
A progress evening for Year 11 will take place on **Thursday 1st October.** Further details about this event and how to book will be shared with parents next week.

Thursday 8 October: Open Evening
School will close at **12pm on Thursday 8 October** to allow preparation for Open Evening.

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

PTA Quiz Night – Friday 9 October 2026
The PTA will be holding another Quiz Night on Friday 9 October in the Bradley Hall, The Ashcombe School. Time: 7.30pm. Cost: £5 per person, payable via Arbor. Tickets can be purchased through the School Shop, which can be found from the main Arbor dashboard. Please feel free to bring your own food and drinks. This is a wonderful opportunity not only to support the PTA, but also to gather a team of friends and family for an enjoyable evening. If you have any questions, please contact the PTA at:pta@ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk.

Is your child a Young Carer?
Under the Children and Families Act 2014, a **Young Carer** is defined as any person under 18 who provides regular, unpaid support to a family member who has a disability, illness, mental health condition or a drug or alcohol related problem This includes **sibling carers** whose day-to-day lives are heavily impacted by a brother or sister with conditions like ASD, ADHD, PANDAs, PDA or other Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. Unlike typical sibling relationships, these students regularly take on advanced, long-term responsibilities such as managing sensory meltdowns, providing constant safety supervision, or absorbing extra domestic tasks when parental attention is divided which places them at a higher risk of emotional exhaustion and academic disadvantage, thereby qualifying them for targeted school pastoral support and statutory assessments. Further information and support can be obtained from contacting the school Young Carers Champion: Fiona Darnell via the school office or by email darnell.fiona@ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk.

Detentions
To support students in completing any sanctions promptly, we offer two detention options. If a student receives a detention, they may either attend the scheduled after-school detention or complete their detention during the lunchtime detention session, which takes place from 1:40pm in Room R28.

Year 7 Wind Band Scheme
Year 7 students have the exciting opportunity to join the Ashcombe School Year 7 Wind Band. This programme is designed for beginners and gives around 18 students the chance to learn a new instrument, receive weekly small-group lessons, take part in weekly band rehearsals and perform at school events.

Instruments available include flute, clarinet, alto saxophone, trumpet, trombone, euphonium and tuba. All instruments are loaned free of charge by the Music Department, helping to keep the overall cost of the programme affordable. Students eligible for Free School Meals may apply for a fully funded place. If you would like your child to be considered for a place on the scheme, please complete this Form by 5.30pm on **Friday 19 September 2026.**

Train to Teach at Ashcombe
Train to Teach Online Information session. There will be an opportunity to join a Teams call on Monday 28th September if you are thinking about training to be a teacher. The login details are as follows:

Join: https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/335262031014351?p=aEID1rq2RFMyj1aJw2
Meeting ID: 335 262 031 014 351
Passcode: Ag9jV7jB

Alternatively, you are welcome to attend our "Getting into Teaching" information event on Thursday 1st October from 9.00am to 10.30am. Please register your interest here: Train to Teach Information Event

Free School Meals (FSM)
The Department for Education has extended the deadline for Free School Meals eligibility checks for this year's Autumn School Census. If you think your child may be eligible for Free School Meals, please contact the school office as soon as possible and we will be happy to check this for you. Registering for FSM can provide additional support for your child and also helps secure valuable funding for the school. If you would like us to check your eligibility, please get in touch with the office in confidence.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Panting
Headteacher