



# Ashlyns School

Sixth Form Information Booklet

2015 - 2017



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## The Sixth Form at Ashlyns

There are two fundamental questions you should ask when considering a school:

1. Will this school provide me with the academic success, skills and confidence needed to maximise my opportunities in an ever-changing world?
2. Will I be happy at this school?

At Ashlyns School, we believe the answer to both of these questions is a resounding 'yes'.

***'...a very welcoming school where students collaborate well ...'***\*

Our success is built on four key principles:

- delivering high-quality learning;
- providing the enrichment and leadership opportunities that instil confidence and pride, and nurture talent;
- providing the personalised mentoring, support and feedback needed to ensure students are informed, supported and on track across two challenging years of education;
- ensuring our Sixth Form students have the dedicated facilities you would expect in a school that cares for their wellbeing.

We offer a wide range of AS and A Level courses to a growing and high-achieving number of post-16 students. We are delighted that Ofsted's report from September 2014 recognised our Sixth Form success and this is also reflected in the university destination data for last year's school leavers (included in your pack).

### Curriculum and Learning

Academic excellence is at the heart of everything we do; students who continue on to A Levels enter our vibrant Sixth Form with high expectations. The step from GCSE to A Level is considerable and we ensure students benefit from expert advice and guidance on the range, relevance and choice of subjects they wish to study. The A Level curriculum offers a wide choice of subjects, and we are pleased to be working in partnership with other Dacorum schools to ensure students have access to a broad curriculum offer that serves their needs and aspirations.

Students will only succeed academically if their teaching is inspiring, rigorous and supportive, and these elements are central to our ethos.

***'Teachers have strong subject knowledge and great enthusiasm for their subjects. This positivity is transferred to students, who display a genuine love of learning.'***\*

***'Teaching in the sixth form promotes genuine debate, dialogue and reflection through skilful questioning that deepens students' knowledge and gives opportunities for students to discuss and evaluate their ideas and those of others.'***\*

\* Ofsted Report September 2014

## Enrichment and Leadership Opportunities

Along with developing our young adults' academic prowess, we also provide a wealth of opportunities through our enrichment and extra-curricular programme to develop the leadership and social skills that are essential for employment and university. You can be sure that our students develop into well-rounded, independent, confident, politically-enquiring and astute young adults through opportunities such as:

- The Enrichment Programme: over the last year this has included a range of high-profile visiting speakers such as the US Ambassador, Baroness Tyler and John Bercow (Speaker of the House of Commons), as well as a range of team-building, self-awareness and study skills activities. Workshops on Yoga, Zumba, British Sign Language, Karate, First Aid and cooking on a budget are also offered
- Leadership roles on the Sixth-Form Executive, or as House Captains, Learning Ambassadors, mentors and prefects
- Duke of Edinburgh Award and World Challenge (2013: Nicaragua; 2015: Nepal)
- Young Enterprise teams, Sports Leaders, Debating Society
- The Extended Project Qualification
- The Ashlyns' Community Service Programme
- The International Music Tour

***'The enrichment programme prepares students well for life in modern Britain. Students are highly articulate and have good personal, social and employability skills.'*\***

## Pastoral care, Personalised Mentoring and Feedback

Success at Ashlyns School does not happen by chance: extensive support and guidance is provided to each student, who will benefit from an experienced and dedicated team of tutors, a Learning Mentor, a Head of Year and a committed Sixth Form team, combined with a personalised mentoring programme.

Alongside this support, parents receive regular information regarding the monitoring and assessment of students in the Sixth Form. Our subject leaders and Sixth Form team work together to identify and target individual students using tracking data to help ensure they achieve the best possible outcome. This helps to keep students well-motivated, focused and thriving on the academic rigours of Sixth Form life.

## Careers and University Guidance

***'The Sixth Form receive high-quality careers guidance which results in them being able to make good decisions about their future career choices. As a result, a large percentage of students continue on to higher education, including to the country's most highly regarded universities.'*\***

We pride ourselves in the quality of preparation of students for higher education and future careers.

In Year 12 students participate in:

- the 'Morrisby' programme – a questionnaire assessing individual students' higher education/career possibilities
- an introduction to UCAS (university applications)
- visits by experts in higher education
- UCAS/Next Steps Day
- a higher education conference at a university
- a school higher education evening
- Careers Day
- Regular careers advice from a dedicated careers advisor

In Year 13 students:

- receive advice from Form Tutors, Head of Year and Head of Sixth Form on university courses, Personal Statements and completing UCAS forms
- benefit from an extended learning day on UCAS/higher education applications and Personal Statement writing
- visit universities/colleges on Open Days
- attend interviews at universities/colleges
- have support with interview preparation and practice and ongoing careers advice

Careers advice is always available and can be booked through the Sixth Form Office or Learning Resource Centre. The higher education careers library is in the main school Learning Resource Centre annexe.

## Facilities

Providing the freedom for students to explore learning independently, outside of the classroom, forms an important part of Sixth Form study, as we develop the skills needed for real-world success. Our students enjoy their own dedicated Sixth Form area, including ICT suites, quiet study areas and common room. Our Learning Resource Centre is available at all times for Sixth Form study, as is our dedicated Sixth Form Café and dining room. We eagerly anticipate the opening of our brand-new Sports Hall and fully-equipped gym in the summer of 2015, which will provide opportunities for our students to release their energy!

We set professional standards for everybody in Ashlyns' Sixth Form and encourage all students to continue to develop a strong, positive work ethic and a responsible, self-reliant attitude. Our students leave Ashlyns equipped with the best possible education and the pastoral guidance they require to help them meet the demands of a fast changing world.

\*Ofsted Report September 2014

## Next Steps

<b>December 2014</b>	Ashlyns assemblies to current Year 11s.
<b>15 January 2015</b>	<b>'Into the Sixth' Evening'</b> Read the prospectus thoroughly; ask questions to students and staff. Make realistic plans for next year based on trial examination results/predicted GCSE grades, Form Tutor and careers guidance.
<b>5 February 2015</b>	Further advice available at the Year 11 Parent Consultation Evening.
<b>9 February 2015</b>	Initial Sixth Form/Post 16 options form to be completed by 9 February.
<b>March 2015</b>	Individual interviews with senior staff. Option blocks confirmed.
<b>April 2015</b>	Confirmation of Sixth Form offer, subject to GCSE results.
<b>May 2015</b>	Exams take place through May and June.
<b>29<sup>th</sup> June 2015</b>	Post 16 Induction days.
<b>20<sup>th</sup> August 2015</b>	GCSE results published – you will receive your grades and a letter from Ms O'Driscoll inviting you to follow either four or three Level 3 courses based on your achievements.
<b>21<sup>st</sup> August 2015</b>	Senior staff available by appointment for post-results advice and guidance as required.
<b>September 2015</b>	Year 12 courses begin.

## Entry requirements for each subject

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Minimum entry requirement</b>
Art	Grade B in GCSE Art
Biology	Minimum of 2 Grade Bs in Science and a B in Mathematics
Business	Grade C in English and Mathematics GCSEs (and Business Studies if studied)
Chemistry	Minimum of 2 Grade Bs in Science and a B in Mathematics
Creative Writing	Grade B in both English Language and English Literature GCSEs (at least five GCSE A-C grades)
Drama	Drama GCSE is useful but not essential
Economics	Grade C in English Language and B in Mathematics GCSEs
English Literature	Grade B in both English Language and English Literature GCSEs (at least five GCSE A-C grades)
Film Studies	Grade B in both English Language and English Literature GCSEs.
French	Grade B in GCSE French
Further Mathematics	Grade A in Mathematics GCSE. You must also be studying A Level Mathematics
Geography	Grade B in GCSE Geography and B in English Language
Government and Politics	Grade B in GCSE English Language or History
Graphics	Grade C in GCSE Graphic Products, Resistant Materials or Systems and Control
History	Grade B in GCSE History and B in English Language
ICT (Applied)	Grade B in GCSE ICT and C or above in GCSE Maths & English Language
Mathematics	Grade B in GCSE Mathematics
Music	Grade B In GCSE Music. It is recommended that students are grade five standard in performance and in music theory
Philosophy of Religion & Ethics	Grade B in GCSE English Language and a Humanities subject
Photography	GCSE average points score of at least 40. Art and Design at GCSE is desirable but not essential
Physical Education	Grade B in GCSE PE. Students should also have a high level of competency in at least two practical sports and participate regularly in competitive activities associated with that sport outside of school
Physics	Minimum of 2 Grade Bs in Science and a B in Mathematics
Psychology	Grade B in GCSE English Language, Mathematics and 2 Sciences
Sociology	Grade C in GCSE English Language
Spanish	Grade B in GCSE Spanish
Textiles	Grade C in GCSE Textiles or Graphic Products

NB: Where C grades are specified in associated subjects the 'C' grade should be from the Higher Tier examination.

## Ashlyns Sixth Form Admission Requirements

### Advanced Level (2 year Level 3 courses)

Sixth Form courses require a high level of intellectual ability and commitment to work, which is why advanced courses will necessitate students reaching a target of an **average of 40 points per subject**, based on their eight best GCSE results, including English and Maths.

To calculate this;

- GCSE grades will be given a points standard:

<b>A*</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>
58	52	46	40	34	28	22	16

- Examples of 40 points average minimum requirement.

<b>1B 46 Pts</b> <b>6C 24 Pts</b> <b>1D 34 Pts</b> <hr style="width: 20%; margin: 5px auto;"/> <b>320</b>  <b><math>320 \div 8 = 40</math></b>	<b>2B 92</b> <b>4C 160</b> <b>2D 68</b> <hr style="width: 20%; margin: 5px auto;"/> <b>320</b>  <b><math>320 \div 8 = 40</math></b>	<b>3B 138</b> <b>2C 80</b> <b>3D 102</b> <hr style="width: 20%; margin: 5px auto;"/> <b>320</b>  <b><math>320 \div 8 = 40</math></b>
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Students falling just below this target will be given best advice on their futures in terms of courses/careers advice; criteria such as work ethic and potential attitude may also be used to make decisions on suitability for courses.

Students gaining average points of 44 and above will be advised to take four subjects.

Students achieving below 44 points average will be advised to take three subjects.

Any students close to a points boundary must see Ms O'Driscoll or Mrs Martin, who will give 'best advice' on future study. Students are expected to achieve B grades at GCSE for the Advanced courses of their choice.

NB : Individual subjects may require a specific grade for entry – please refer to our subject booklet.

Entry into Year 13 is not automatic; students will be required to achieve a minimum of 3 Es in their summer examinations.

## Changes to A Levels

There are many changes taking place in education at both Primary and Secondary level. We hope you will find this simple guide helpful in outlining the changes being implemented which affect A Level courses.

### **Changes to Assessment Criteria**

The new system is moving away from the AS and A2 model - whereby exams are taken in both Years 12 and 13 - and will now move to a terminal exam being taken at the end of the two-year course in Year 13.

### **When do the changes take effect?**

Subjects are scheduled to go through these changes over the next two-academic years. Therefore we will be operating a dual system. For clarity, the chart below shows the years the new system comes into operation for individual subjects.

- Phase 1 – Subjects being taught under the new terminal exam system starting in 2015 – these subjects affect students entering Year 12 in September 2015. The A Level is assessed through examinations taken at the end of the two years in 2017.
- Phase 2 - subjects which will convert in 2016. Subjects not listed in Phase 1 will continue to be assessed under the existing AS/A2 criteria (i.e. the AS exam will be taken in 2016, with the final A2 exam being taken in the summer of 2017).

### **How to pick your subjects**

Don't worry about the difference in the assessment times; our advice and guidance remains the same - that students should listen to their teachers' advice, and pick the subjects that they have a natural aptitude for and enjoy. This ultimately leads to the best outcomes. Please bear in mind that particular subjects will need to be considered for certain career paths. We are available to help and give advice: it is important the right choices are made at this stage.

### **Keeping updated with changes**

Whilst these changes are scheduled for September 2015, , we will naturally keep you updated with any further developments. Please don't worry about these changes: we will all be working together to ensure you are fully supported.

#### **Phase 1 subjects:**

(First teaching September 2015)

Art & Design  
Biology  
Business Studies  
Chemistry  
Economics  
English Literature  
History  
Physics  
Psychology  
Sociology

#### **Phase 2 subjects:**

(First teaching September 2016)

Design & Technology  
Drama  
Geography  
Modern Foreign Languages  
Music  
Philosophy of Religion & Ethics  
Physical Education

Mathematics & Further Mathematics  
(First teaching September 2017)

NB: in Spring 2015, the Government will consult on plans for the reform of all remaining A Levels.