



31 March 2023

Dear Parents/Carers

As we come to the end of the spring term, I wanted to take a moment to reflect on the achievements of the past few months and to update you on our plans for the summer term.

Our termly Awards Assemblies this week clearly demonstrated the scale of our students' ambition and achievements. The huge number of merits, certificates and subject awards was a testament to their hard work and commitment over the course of the term. Awards were also presented to recognise students who have exemplified our school values - Integrity, Inclusivity and Independence - along with overall Head of Year awards for the spring term. Well done to all students.

Parents/carers will know that we outline our assembly theme for the week in our e-Bulletin. Alongside key topics for raising awareness including racism, equality, prejudice and knife crime, it has been particularly pleasing to see how positively our students have responded to the focused, character assemblies which support our school values and the virtues that underpin these. This term we have focused on a range of virtues such as humility, courage and kindness. These character assemblies form an important part of the growing Character Education programme at Ashlyns.

Other highlights this term include over 60 of our Learning Ambassadors delivering lessons to primary schools, our spring Chill Concert, Extended Learning Day, launch of A Midsummer Night's Dream production and a wide range of sporting celebrations: Netball District Cup Champions, Football achievements at County and National level and winning the School Challenge at the Berkhamsted Fun Run, raising money for charity in doing so.

Our Year 11 and Year 13 students have shown huge amounts of character this term; their hard work and determination to achieve their best is commendable. I'd like to take the opportunity to remind all of our examination students to use the Easter break effectively - to strike the right balance between work and relaxation so they are well prepared for their upcoming exams. Year 11 students have shown real commitment to Session 6 and 'Elevate' sessions and I look forward to seeing those attending the Easter revision classes next week. I am grateful to our staff for facilitating this revision programme, and indeed for their efforts in supporting and encouraging students in all year groups this term.

My thanks also go to the Governors and ASA for their continued guidance and support. The ASA's Silent Disco for Year 9 last night, the parent Quiz night earlier this month (and of course the return of the Ashlyns Festival in July), show just how fortunate we are to have a parent association which enhances our community so enthusiastically.

Over the course of the spring term we have undertaken significant infrastructure works around the school, which are now nearing completion. This investment in our beautiful school buildings has seen the replacement and insulation of our extensive flat roofs and skylights. In addition to updating and refreshing the site, these works will also contribute to our sustainability planning by reducing heat loss along with helping to stop the 'inside rain'! Our next major project will see work carried out on the Boiler House during the course of the summer term to provide additional teaching space for the new academic year.

At the end of term, we often say goodbye to valued friends and colleagues. This term, we say farewell to Mr Draper (Teacher of Technology), Mrs Hallahan (Pupil Premium Administrator), Mr Holmes (Premises Assistant), Miss Harris (Teacher of English) and Mrs Ross (Student Support Worker). We wish them all the very best in their new endeavours.

When we return, we have so many things to look forward to: summer sports fixtures, activity days, trips (from Southwold to Ypres), concerts, a whole-school drama production, Duke of Edinburgh expeditions - and, I hope, a little sunshine! We also look forward to welcoming new staff Miss Jay (Teacher of Art) and Dr Knight (Teacher of English).

We wish you a safe, happy and restful break and look forward to welcoming students back to school for the summer term at 8:35am on Monday 17 April.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shapland', written in a cursive style.

**James Shapland**  
**Headteacher**