



17 July 2026

Dear Parents/Carers

As we reach the end of another incredibly busy year, I wanted to take a moment to reflect on the various achievements of the summer term, as well as provide some key updates for our school community.

Instead of slowing down, these final weeks of term have been packed with a multitude of events and activities. I have been incredibly proud of the energy our community has brought to all of them, and of their resilience during the recent heatwaves - even if we are all now quietly wishing for a summer break that is slightly less tropical.

Creating meaningful experiences that leave a lasting impact on our students is at the heart of what we do at Ashlyns. Anyone lucky enough to have been in the audience of this year's Summer Concert will have witnessed the magic created by the Ashlyns' 'musical family'; our thanks go to Mr Hutchinson for leading the annual showcase for the final time after more than a quarter of a century in his role as Head of Music. Over this time, he has nurtured incredible musical talent, which has been truly transformational and leaves a strong legacy for the future. We are fortunate that he is staying in the Ashlyns' family and that our music department is in the safe hands of Mr Chan, one of the many 'musical talents' nurtured under Mr Hutchinson's leadership and know our music department will continue to thrive.

Similarly, we enjoyed celebrating the stunning art work at the GCSE and A Level exhibitions, the success of our U16 Netball Team winning the National 'Sisters in Sport' cup and the KS3 summer drama showcase. My thanks to our PE and Creative and Performing Arts teams for helping our students find their confidence to showcase their skills in talents in so many wide ranging ways.

Great experiences are always better when they are shared, and that spirit has been on full display across the summer term. We have seen it in: teamwork during Duke of Edinburgh expeditions; the awe of Science trips to CERN and Oxford & Cambridge Universities; the roaring encouragement of our Sports Day; the discovery of new cultures in Girona and Paris; and the sheer fun of this week's Activity Days and trips. The shared adventures continue for students on the World Challenge trip in Borneo - we can't wait to hear their stories, when they return.

I am always mindful that the range of activities, experiences and achievements are only possible because of our committed staff - both teachers and support staff alike - who strive to ensure our students have the best enrichment experiences possible in a caring and supportive environment. My thanks go to everyone who has given up their time to provide this range of opportunities.

As ever, the sunny leaving celebrations and Prom provided a memorable end for Year 11 and Year 13 students, following their hard work and dedication over the recent months. We look forward to celebrating their achievements on A level and GCSE results days in August. My thanks go to all staff who supported our students on their journey, including giving up weekends and holidays for revision sessions to help ensure they felt as confident as they could going into the exams.

My thanks would not be complete without acknowledging the incredible support of our Governors and the ASA. Our Governors give their time freely to ensure we are supported to make sure the school continues to thrive and, this year, the ASA has continued to provide great community events

whilst raising significant funds to support the school's offer. During 2025/26 they have allocated £35K of funds to school projects, including providing a new school minibus. We do not take this support for granted and would like to say a heartfelt thanks on behalf of all our students.

The end of the summer term also sees us mark great achievements. This year, this hasn't been limited just to our students, as we are delighted that our School Travel Plan, designed to provide a safe and sustainable travel to and from school, has been awarded 'outstanding' status.

This year, we have hosted our rewards assemblies and the House Cup announcement on the last day of term. My congratulations to all students receiving awards as well as Coram House for winning this year's competition.

As always, as we approach the end of any school year we have mixed emotions, as colleagues move on to new challenges and opportunities. This term we say farewell to Mrs Animashaun (Geography), Miss Corbett (Teaching Assistant), Mr Froment (Technology), Mrs Hakiu (Teaching Assistant), Mr Jabbie (French), Miss Lyons (Data), Mr Rosa (Maths) and Mr Trevathan (English). We wish everyone all the very best in their future endeavours.

September may seem a long way ahead, but please make a note of the [arrangements for the beginning of the Autumn term](#) and the [school uniform requirements](#).

Finally, this year marked the 75th anniversary of Ashlyns School and gave the opportunity to look back through archives which were displayed for staff and students in the LRC. I was particularly struck by a note from a former student who, looking back on his education here, left a simple piece of advice for future generations:

"To all you boys and girls still at Ashlyns I say this: make the most of your days on top of the hill; it's a wonderful school, with a grand Staff, and believe me when I say that schooldays really are some of the happiest days of your life."

Whether our students are moving onto new chapters, or returning to us in September, it is a reminder that these years are precious and how fortunate we are to inhabit this beautiful place on top of the hill.

I wish you all a safe and relaxing and enjoyable summer, albeit without the celebrations of a World Cup win.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shapland', with a stylized flourish at the end.

James Shapland
Headteacher