



03 September 2026

Dear Parents/Carers

Welcome back from all of us at Ashlyns.

I hope that you had a good summer and that students are rested and ready for another busy and exciting year ahead of them. As well as welcoming back students in Years 8 to 13, I would like to extend a special welcome to all of our new Year 7 students. We were pleased that over 100 of them joined us during the summer holidays to take part in a week of team building activities and taster lessons. My thanks go to Miss Hirst, staff members and Sixth Form/Year 10 'buddies' for delivering this rich programme of events, which helps to provide such a positive start to life at Ashlyns for so many of our new students. I'd also like to welcome those joining us in the Sixth Form for the first time; we are delighted all of our new students have chosen to be part of our school community and wish them every happiness and success during their time here. We look forward to getting to know them all.

Examination Results

August always marks examination results days for our A level and GCSE students and I am delighted to report that our students across both year groups achieved some of the best examination results we have ever had, particularly at the top grades. We are thrilled that so many of our ex Year 13s secured their chosen destinations, with over two thirds of them gaining places at prestigious Russell Group universities. We are equally delighted that so many of our former Year 11s are returning to our Sixth Form, following their own superb achievements at GCSE. Their success should definitely provide inspiration and encouragement to others. I would like to pass on my congratulations to all our students who worked so hard to achieve their best in these public examinations. I am fully aware that their achievements are a result of hard work, dedication and support from a team - the students themselves, their parents/carers and of course the staff at Ashlyns. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their part in ensuring these students could celebrate their success.

Attendance

One of the most notable factors influencing the achievement of our GCSE and A level students, was strong attendance. The new Education Secretary recently spoke of the need for everyone to work together to improve attendance for all students, not just because of what students miss but also because of the clear link between that and outcomes in external examinations.

At Ashlyns, this was very clear from this year's results. For those students who had attendance of 95%+, their average grade was over a grade 6. For those students who had attendance at 85% or below, their average grade was below a grade 4.

Whilst we understand that, at times, some absence through illness is unavoidable, this should be an exception, and we would like to remind everyone of the importance of attending school - every day. Ultimately, the students' future chances depend, in part, on strong, regular attendance and not taking occasional days off unless absolutely essential. Your support in reinforcing this is very much appreciated.

School Uniform and Behaviour Expectations

One of the things that characterises Ashlyns are the high expectations we have of our students and indeed the high expectations they have of themselves - both in terms of conduct and presentation. It is the thing that visitors to our school and the wider community comment on - and again establishes positive habits for the future.

In their assemblies today, as well as in tutor time, students have been reminded that hard work, positive behaviour and smart, appropriate uniform are expected from all students. You will be aware that we have made some revisions to our school uniform guidelines and we expect these to be followed by everyone. I would be grateful if you could reiterate this message, and that when your child leaves in the morning, you help to ensure they are appropriately and smartly dressed and have the correct equipment.

With your support, if we can avoid spending time dealing with uniform and attendance issues, we can spend more time on ensuring our students get the very best support to achieve the kind of success we have seen Year 11 and 13 celebrate this year.

Extra Curricular Offer

Each year I remind staff and students that as well as ensuring we help students to do well academically, it is equally important to me that their wider school experience is a rich, rewarding and memorable one. Sport, Music, Drama - along with trips and other activities - help to develop children in the wider sense and create life-long memories.

Over the year, the e-Bulletin will detail opportunities and highlights from our extra-curricular activities, competitions and trips. We very much hope all students will be able to choose something from our extra-curricular programme, which is expansive and exciting. We are fortunate to be able to offer such a range of activities and we know participation in these clubs and events has such a positive impact on students' learning and happiness at school. Please do encourage your child to join in.

Communications and Contacting the School

We appreciate that modern life can sometimes seem to bring a little too much information at times. To help parents and carers we keep to an established cycle of regular communication to make sure that everyone is aware of news and key information. Our weekly e-Bulletin provides updates and outlines key events for the term, so please take time to read these and do remember to update us with any changes to your contact details to ensure you receive these regular communications.

Alongside these communications, there will also be a range of opportunities for parents and carers to engage with school through a mix of online and in-person events and activities.

However, we are committed to ensuring our students receive the very best care and guidance and our staff are always here to deal with concerns, so please don't wait until a scheduled event should you have things you wish to discuss or changes in circumstances you wish us to be aware of.

If you do have a query, please remember the first point of contact should be either your child's form tutor or subject teacher, or alternatively email in to admin@ashlyns.herts.sch.uk, which will help us try to address and resolve questions when staff are teaching and unavailable. Our guidance on school communication can be found [here](#).

Safeguarding

Mr Beattie is our Designated Safeguarding Lead. Full details of the Safeguarding Team can be found on the school website [here](#). Regular safeguarding updates are given in the weekly e-Bulletin.

Transport and Drop Off

As always, we would like to urge all parents/carers to encourage their child to walk to and from school, if possible, and to ensure they take care on the journey. However, if you are dropping your children at the front of the school, please remember that the only drop off point is at the top of the school driveway by the school gates. Punctuality is important and registration will start promptly at 8.35am. As such, we expect all students to be on site for 8.30am to ensure they are not late for registration. The school gates are closed from 8.35am, through the school day, until 3.20pm. Should you need to access the school site during school hours, please use the buzzer to the right of the gates. Please also remember that parking in the turning circle at the end of the school day is reserved for school authorised taxis and buses until 15.35.

Thank you for your continued support, and I look forward to a positive and productive term.

Yours sincerely



James Shapland
Headteacher