



**Information Booklet
for
New Students
and
Parents**



ASHMOLE ACADEMY

Sept 2011

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INFORMATION BOOKLET FOR NEW STUDENTS AND PARENTS

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Welcome to Ashmole Academy

'Excellence is a habit not an event'

Changing schools may seem a little overwhelming to some of you. For example, if you are transferring from primary school there may be more students in the first year of Ashmole than there were in the whole of your previous school. Unlike your primary school you will be expected to move from room to room for different subjects and you will be taught by many different teachers over the course of a school day. This booklet has been produced to help you settle in quickly and to feel comfortable about joining all of us at Ashmole Academy. The information in this booklet will help to remove any worries and answer many of the questions you have so that you can quickly feel at home here and then concentrate on what you aim to achieve whilst you are here.



Becoming the Best you can Be

Moving to Ashmole Academy means that you are growing up. With this comes greater responsibility both for yourself and others. You are joining a community of people whose main aim is to help you become the best you can be. You will be offered new opportunities - new subjects, lunchtime and after-school clubs and activities, more advanced work in subjects you have already studied, an opportunity to mix with other students some of whom are a lot older than yourself.

Take these opportunities, do not be afraid of them, work hard, enjoy yourself here, become the best that you can be.

Finally, you should find Ashmole to be a friendly and caring place. If you have any questions, ASK! If you are worried about anything discuss it with us. In turn be helpful, polite and caring for others be they students, teachers, parents or members of the public both on and off the school site. This is one of the most important contributions that you can make to your school so that it continues to be a good school and one that we can all enjoy being a part of.

Good luck.

The School Day

You will be provided with a timetable showing 25 periods a week. Each period is allocated a subject, room number and the teacher who will be taking that lesson. A map is provided with this guide to help you find your way around but if you get lost ask anyone you meet to help you. You are responsible for arriving at school and lessons on time and for moving around the school between lessons as quietly and efficiently as possible.

The school day is as follows:

8.35	Arrive
8.40	Go to Form Room for morning registration
8.50	Period 1
9.50	Period 2
10.50	Break
11.10	Period 3
12.10	Period 4
1.10	Lunch
2.00	Go to Form Room
2.05	Afternoon registration/tutor time/assembly
2.25	Period 5
3.25	End of school

Go straight home unless you are involved in an after-school club or activity, or unless you have been given a detention, or a teacher has asked to see you for any reason. **BE SURE TO TELL YOUR PARENT/CARERS IF YOU KNOW YOU ARE GOING TO BE HOME LATE.**

**YOU MUST NOT WANDER AROUND THE SCHOOL
AT THE END OF THE DAY**

Coming to School

You are responsible for bringing to school each day the books and equipment you need. Pack your bag the night before, having first checked your timetable to see exactly what you need. The following is a list of essential items required for lessons:

Black or blue ballpoint pen and a spare, coloured pencils, pencil, pencil sharpener, pencil eraser, 30cm ruler, compass, protractor, scientific calculator (fx85 Casio), dictionary, highlighter pen, games kit, school planner and a reading book.



All of these items are vital for successful work and progress.

Exercise and textbooks are provided and students are expected to keep these in good condition. A charge will be made for lost or damaged books.

Lost or badly kept planners must be replaced at a cost to the student of £5.00.

Students should have a reading book with them at all times.

'Parents are asked to help their child prepare for the next day's school each evening'



Do not bring into School



Mobile phones, personal stereos, iPods, MP3 players, electronic games, radios, pagers, chewing or bubble gum, cans, aerosol sprays, tippex, jewellery, fireworks, too much cash or other valuable items.

If any of the above are brought into the School, the School will confiscate and hold the item for a reasonable time until parent/carers come to collect it and sign an agreement that the item will not be brought into school in the future.

Any student found smoking or in possession of smoking materials on school premises or within the locality of the school while wearing school uniform will serve long detentions or be excluded. It is illegal to smoke on the school premises.

Any student found using, or in possession of, alcohol or illegal substances or weapons will be excluded, including the possibility of permanent exclusion.

The Home - School Partnership

"Your acceptance of a place at Ashmole Academy is the beginning of a Partnership between Home and School"

Home - School Agreement

As in all schools, Ashmole has a Home-School Agreement in line with Government guidelines. You and your child will be asked to sign a copy of this.

Keeping Parents Informed

- A Year 7 Parents' "Welcome" Evening is held in the Autumn Term with the object of answering queries and dealing with any problems which may have arisen during the first few weeks of term. It is also an opportunity to meet your child's Form Tutor, the Head of Year 7 Transition and senior staff.
- Parents meet Subject Teachers at a Parents' consultation evening. There is a Parents' consultation evening once a year. Students are encouraged to attend this with their parents.
- Parents receive a Progress Check and a written annual report on their child's progress each year.
- The school arranges other parents' evenings as required, for example, evenings to consult on Year 9 and 6th Form options.
- By e.mail and a text messaging service. For this, it is essential for you to give us your e.mail and mobile phone details and keep us updated on any future changes.

The School Website

The school web site contains plenty of useful information for parents to know. Details of the calendar, holidays and school closure dates, homework set, course outlines, letters to parents, school policies, the prospectus, details of examinations being taken and examination results. Please make use of the web site to keep you fully informed.

@shmole Newsletter

The @shmole Newsletter, published every term, keeps parents up to date on school activities. Each issue is numbered. In addition, notices of special meetings and letters from the Parents' Association are sent home via students. Please ask your son or daughter about them regularly or you may miss important events or information. The school's website is updated regularly with all school events.

Student Planners

Parents are requested to sign the Student Planner every weekend. Parent/Carers are encouraged to keep in touch with the Form Tutors or Subject Teachers through notes in the Planner. Please note that it is your child's responsibility to draw any such notes to the attention of the teacher concerned. Having read your message the teacher will initial it or respond as appropriate. Alternatively you may contact us at any time by letter, telephone or e.mail via staff@ashmoleacademy.org.

Students should have their planners with them at all times.

The Pastoral Structure

The Pastoral Structure consists of seven Year Groups, each managed by a member of the Leadership Team. This person manages a team of Tutors, a Senior Tutor a Learning Mentor and a Pastoral Co-ordinator. The Learning Mentor attached to the Year Group will oversee the welfare of the students and can be an initial point of contact with parents.

Contacting the School

If a parent/carer needs to contact the school, in the first instance, the contact will be to the Tutor, Subject Teacher or the Learning Mentor attached to the Year Group. Should the matter need to be dealt with by a more senior member of staff it may be advisable to contact the relevant Pastoral Co-ordinator who may be able to respond or will be able to inform the appropriate member of staff. You may prefer to email the member of staff at staff@ashmoleacademy.org. Your email will then be forwarded to the relevant member of staff.

School Counsellor

At Ashmole we have established 'One to One' Counselling to provide a professional counselling service for students with problems.

Counselling occurs in *private* and in *confidence*, only the relevant Deputy Head Teacher and the Child Protection Officer will be informed that the student is seeing the counsellor, but they will not be told what is talked about unless the student request that information be passed on. For students under 16 years parent's permission for counselling to occur is sought before counselling occurs.

Discipline

- In the Student Planner, you will find the School's Rules and Regulations and also our Code of Conduct. These state clearly what the students are and not allowed to do and ensure the smooth day to day running of the School.
- Opportunities to develop a sense of responsibility are provided through societies, clubs and games in which individual talents and interests, initiative and judgement are encouraged. Participation in assemblies, in projects in the classroom, and in extra-curricular activities develops confidence and encourage co-operation.
- In cases of misconduct teachers may keep students behind after school for up to 15 minutes without notice. Generally for longer detentions 24 hours notice will normally be given. More persistent offenders are reported to and dealt with by Heads of Faculty or Assistant Head Teacher. Very serious cases of misconduct would be referred directly to the Deputy Head or the Head Teacher. The school reserves the right to give immediate detentions without warning.
- For a very small number of students a detention of up to one hour may be imposed on the day, without notice. Parents of those students to which this applies will have been notified that this may be a possibility. For students in Years 7 and 8 parents will be contacted on the day.
- At Ashmole we ban mobile phones for all students Years 7 to 11. This is as a result of advice from the Metropolitan Police and the research which suggests that mobile phones in school can increase the risk of theft and the risk of cyber bullying. We will ensure that students who need to contact parents at the end of the day or after a club or activity can do so. A public telephone is situated in the Refectory for students' use. If this is not available, in an emergency, students may use the telephone at Reception. Our Reception is staffed until 5.00 pm and after that the staff running the activity will ensure any child who needs to contact home can do so. Any parent who needs to get a message to their child can do so by contacting Reception until 5.00 pm. These arrangements mean that our students do not need to have mobile phones in school.

Rewards

- At Ashmole we believe in the principle of a praise culture and seek every opportunity to reward and praise students. The most frequent praise will be received verbally and in writing in response to achievement and effort in work in class and for homework.
- All students in Years 7 to 9 will be given merits and in Years 10, 11, 12 and 13 congratulatory postcards if they produce work which shows real effort, achievement or makes a significant contribution to the form or year group ethos. Merits will be given directly to students from Subject Teachers or Pastoral Staff and postcards will be given to students via the Form Tutor to take home. Where a

student reaches gold or above a special postcard will be posted home in recognition of their achievement. Certificates will be issued once students have achieved a certain number of merits or postcards.

Award	Merits	Postcards	Awarded By
BRONZE	25	5	Tutor
SILVER	50	10	Leadership Team
GOLD	75	15	Head Teacher
PLATINUM	100	20	Head Teacher
DOUBLE PLATINUM	125	25	Head Teacher

- Each merit/postcard will have a unique code which will need to be logged by each student when they receive one. They can then monitor their progress and compare themselves against other students in their class and year group.
- Certificates are also issued each term for excellent attendance and punctuality. Form groups may also win awards for excellent attendance and punctuality. An 'Attendance and Punctuality Cup' is awarded to Years 8, 9, 10 and 11 each half term to the form groups with the best overall attendance. Early lunch passes for one week are awarded to form groups in Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 for excellent attendance and punctuality.
- From time to time at the discretion of the school form groups or individuals may be rewarded through a bowling or similar trip, or a gift voucher in recognition of their achievement.
- Students are awarded subject prizes at Prize Giving for excellent effort and achievement and year form prizes for all round effort.
- Students may receive congratulatory letters or postcards from subject staff for excellent effort and achievement for individual pieces of work or extended projects.
- Each month students may be nominated for a Jack Petchey Award. Students are nominated by members of staff and by other students. The School Council then vote a winning student from the list of nominated students. The winning student will then nominate how the award of £200 is to be spent on items for the school. The winning student's name will then be added to the annual Roll of Honour.

Attendance

- All students are expected to attend school at all times unless unable to do so due to illness. The attendance of all students is monitored by Form Tutors and an Educational Welfare Officer.
- If a student is absent from school his or her parent/carers must contact the school **each day** of absence, before 10 am with the reason why.
- Parents are encouraged to register for 'Schoolcomms'. This is a system enabling the school to contact parents by text message if their child has an unexplained absence from school.
- The school discourages the taking of holidays in school time.

Detentions

If a teacher wishes to see you after school, either individually or in a group, you may be detained without notice for up to 15 minutes. Longer detentions normally require 24 hours notice. The school reserves the right to give immediate detentions without warning. If exceptionally you are given a detention without warning your parents will be contacted. If a teacher has asked to see you after school you must attend. If you fail to attend a detention you will be given an extra punishment for this.

Lateness Detentions

We keep a list of students who are late for registration and they are given a detention as appropriate, normally on Friday.

Lockers

You will be provided with a locker to keep books and equipment in during the day. You will be responsible for your locker key and should take great care of this key. A replacement key will be available but you will need to pay for this replacement, so **do not lose your key**.

'The school considers co-operation and contact with parent/carers regarding behaviour problems very important'

Curriculum

Subjects

- For the first three years (Year 7, 8 and 9) students will follow a common course comprising English, Maths, Science, French, Art, Drama, Geography, History, Music and Physical Education, with German or Spanish as a second language from Year 8 for students who are good linguists.
- In Year 9 students will begin work to prepare for the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) in English, Maths, Religious Studies, History, Geography and Science and will complete some of the work which will contribute to their GCSE courses in those subjects.
- The opportunity to study these subjects will continue in Years 10 and 11 as well as the opportunity for some students to study for vocational courses (BTEC) in Art, Business Studies, Media Studies, Physical Education and Science.
- Religious Education, Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), Careers and Citizenship will be studied throughout the 7 years.
- In Years 12 and 13 students choose to study from a variety of subjects at A Level or may have the opportunity to continue with vocational (BTEC) courses.

Literacy

'Children benefit enormously if their parents can spend 15 minutes reading with their son or daughter each night'



Reading plays a major role in supporting children's learning and all children are encouraged to read for 15 minutes, 3 times a week with their parents at home. This home input supports the Guided Reading Project in school, which is clearly improving reading standards at Ashmole.

Numeracy

Following on from work done in Primary Schools, students entering Ashmole will follow a Mathematics course which will provide:

- As smooth a transition as possible between subject content at Primary School and the secondary school curriculum
- An emphasis on the mental procedures and strategies which are the basis of sound numeracy skills and on the written and calculation processes needed for sound Mathematical understanding.

Homework

'We expect that parents will take the major responsibility for ensuring that their son or daughter is both recording and completing the work set'



Homework forms a natural and essential part of the curriculum for most subjects. Each student will be provided with a copy of the homework timetable at the beginning of the year as well as a diary for recording the work set. Although Form Tutors will check the diaries, from time to time, we expect that parents will take the major responsibility for ensuring that their son/daughter is both recording and completing the work set and for ensuring that written homework is completed at a table with good lighting conditions.

Homework tasks could include factual or imaginative writing, reading, learning, listening, revising, fact finding, illustration or map work, thinking, problem solving, investigation and planning, observational and imaginative drawing, design, research and creative use of materials.

The amount of time a single piece of homework should take will increase from Year 7 to 13. The following is a guideline to the amount of time your child should spend on their homework.

Year 7	-	20 minutes per homework task
Year 8	-	30 minutes per homework task
Year 9	-	40 minutes per homework task

Visits and Outside Activities

These are arranged periodically in connection with the various subjects, or purely on a recreational or social basis. Examples are visits to places of historical, geographical or architectural interest, theatre and cinema visits, visits to sporting fixtures etc.

Longer Excursions are also undertaken. For example, geographical field excursions to areas of interest and visits to France are arranged by the relevant Departments.



For further details about payment for these parents are advised to read the section on Charging Policy in the Prospectus.

Music Instrumental Tuition

- Ashmole Academy operates a scheme offering quality tuition during the school day, to students wishing to begin or continue playing a musical instrument.
- We have no audition and will provide lessons for any student who has the motivation to play.
- The scheme has been very popular with students and parents and it allows children to learn in a supportive environment with full time staff on hand to help with mid-week problems.
- Lessons are weekly and are either 15 minutes or 30 minutes long. From time to time larger ensemble lessons are organised to support listening skills.
- Our instrumental staff are chosen for their proven ability in the professional world of music as well as their teaching ability and have come from popular, folk, jazz and orchestral circles. As instrumental teacher are "hand picked", we can provide the best and richest learning experience for our students.
- We currently offer lessons in guitar, electric guitar, piano, keyboard, trumpet, trombone, tuba, flute, clarinet, oboe, saxophone, violin, cello, drums, and would be happy to extend the scheme to meet the demands of incoming students. We aim to meet the demand for all instruments and are proud to say we have not yet been beaten!
- Lessons are booked termly of either 15 or 30 minute duration (usually 10 lessons per term) using the letter and booking form available from the Music Department.



Day to Day Matters

Medication

The School Medical Officer is not normally able to administer any routine medication (i.e. paracetamol or similar). If however, a student is taking a course of prescribed medicine (i.e. antibiotics, migraine tablets, anti-histamines) a School Medication Authorisation Form will be issued. Parents should request this form from the School Medical Officer. Until a completed form and a **letter from the GP** have been received no medication can be issued in school. Any prescribed medication **must** have a prescription label. Students should not carry medication with the exception of inhalers. If your son or daughter suffers regularly from acute pain, parents should contact the School Medical Officer. Any changes in a child's medical condition should be reported to the School Medical Officer in writing.



Emergencies

Occasionally emergencies occur at school, and with your help we can ensure that they are dealt with safely.

- In the very unlikely event that we need to send children home, for example in extreme weather, flood, power failure, etc, you need to have somewhere for your child to go where they will be safe. This might be home, your work or with a relative or friend. Please ensure that your child is totally clear what this arrangement is: you could write it in the Planner if this will aid memory.
- It is very important that we are always able to contact you, for example if your child is ill. Therefore please supply us with work and/or mobile telephone numbers for all the child's parents or carers. An additional contact person is also useful in case we cannot get hold of you.
- The school recommends that parents register for Schoolcomms [*see separate form*]. Schoolcomms is a module of the school computer system which allows us to send email or text messages and can be used in emergencies to contact parents.
- As students are unable to bring mobiles in to school, it is useful for them to carry a small amount of change so that they can use the payphone in events of an emergency.
- The school web site will be updated in the event of an emergency, such as for example, severe snow. Parent/carers are advised to view the web site for the latest information.

Valuable and Personal Effects

- **No responsibility for loss of valuables or personal effects is accepted.** However, every effort is made to help students safeguard their property.
- All clothing, including games kit, must be clearly marked.
- The School Medical Officer looks after lost property. Lost property should be reclaimed by students. Parents inquiring about lost property should go to the main reception.
- Lockers will be available but students will not have unlimited access to their lockers throughout the day. It is, therefore, recommended that students bring only items needed for that particular day. Parents are asked to help their child pack the night before to ensure no unnecessary items are carried to school.
- Unauthorised borrowing and casualness about other people's property is not allowed.
- Any items wrongly brought into school will be confiscated and stored in a safe place for a reasonable time. Items may be claimed by parents in person by prior arrangement.

School Dinners

'Parents are recommended to monitor how much their children spend and what they actually buy'



A cafeteria system is in operation and students can purchase what they wish from a menu of priced items. Students entitled to free meals are allowed £2.30 in food purchases. Under this system students have a choice and parents are recommended to monitor how much their children spend and what they actually buy. Students should be aware of what constitutes a 'balanced' meal/diet. Ashmole runs a cashless catering service. Parents are able to pay online using Parentpay. Alternatively students are able to 'top up' credit in school by cash.

Ashmole Parents and Friends Association – APFA

'All parents are automatically members of the Ashmole Parents and Friends Association'

There is an active Parents' Association, which takes a keen interest in the academic and social life of the School, as well as giving considerable moral and financial support. Parents are encouraged to take an active part in supporting the school help would be welcomed for future events. A separate leaflet describing the aims of the APFA and recent events held will be provided. All events will be advertised in the @shmole Newsletter and on Schoolcomms as well as letters sent via your child.