



# The Ashcombe School



# CANDIDATE INFORMATION 2024

**WELCOME TO OUR SCHOOL**

# A Message from the Headteacher

Thank you for being interested in The Ashcombe School – we want to attract and retain the best people with the most potential and in return offer a stimulating and worthwhile environment and great opportunity.

The Ashcombe School is a genuinely comprehensive school with high academic standards for all, a strong and caring pastoral system, and a wide range of extracurricular activities aimed at preparing and enabling young people to lead fulfilled lives.

We are very proud of our students and what the school can help them achieve and are not only ambitious for our students but for our staff as well - this is an exciting opportunity to join a widely recognised, friendly, welcoming and supportive team and to take advantage of the many developmental and other opportunities we provide.



I hope that this pack will give you a positive and meaningful insight into the life of the Ashcombe School and that you will take the opportunity to join us online and visit to experience it for yourselves. I am very much looking forward to meeting and working with you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be 'C. Panting'.

**Chris Panting**

# About The Ashcombe School

## Overview

The Ashcombe School is a high-achieving genuinely comprehensive school with a very successful Sixth Form and is a vibrant and inspiring place to work. We continually look to support exceptional pastoral care, high levels of attainment across the ability range and provide an enviable range of extracurricular activities to prepare and enable young people to lead fulfilled lives.

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## Ethos

The core elements of our ethos are focused on providing a caring environment that enables every individual within the school to realise their potential:

- We are a fully inclusive school that focuses equally on students of all ability levels.
- We provide a calm and welcoming environment with a significant emphasis on pastoral care.
- Our community is based on mutual respect and high quality teacher-student relationships.
- We encourage a culture of self-betterment for all who work at the school, with high quality training and development opportunities for all staff.
- The school operates a no-blame culture that emphasises the importance of collaboration and mutual support.

We strive to create well-rounded individuals, believing that great education is about much more than the lessons we deliver in the classroom.

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## What we do every day

- Curiosity and challenge
  - Compassion and decency
  - Consistency
  - Courage
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***"The school has an ethos which matters"***

# About The Ashcombe School

## Structure

With almost 1500 students, including 290 in the Sixth Form, and over 170 teaching and support staff, the school is at the heart of the community in Dorking, and benefits from a spacious and attractive setting at the foot of Box Hill.

Our key successes include:

- High value-added scores across the full breadth of subjects and ability ranges
- A long tradition of students gaining places at Oxbridge and Russell Group Universities
- A student-centred approach for pastoral care and careers support
- A thriving Sixth Form, encouraging a wide intake where we believe students have the ability to succeed at A Level
- Many high-quality events which link students, staff and the whole community.

We are part of a small independent Multi-Academy Trust (South East Surrey Schools Education Trust - 'SESSET') comprising three secondary schools; The Ashcombe School, Therfield School in Leatherhead and Carrington School in Redhill. The Trust was established in 2017 and allows the schools to benefit from an overarching supportive umbrella whilst still retaining their unique character and ethos.

***"Vision for an academic curriculum, supported by high quality teaching and learning...is shared by all staff at the school"***

# About The Ashcombe School

## Our core aims

The school is highly regarded and oversubscribed as a direct result of its outlook, approach and values as demonstrated by its academic results, standards of teaching and outstanding pastoral care. The four strands which inform teaching and learning for staff and students are:

- **Learning in the classroom - Curriculum and its delivery**

We will provide all students with an inspiring and ambitious curriculum that equips every student with the knowledge and skills to flourish. Our students will become resilient, well qualified, life-ready citizens with a strong sense of social responsibility and adventure, leadership, and a global perspective.

- **Learning to live - Strong relationships and community**

We will provide an inclusive community which allows all members to feel safe and supported. This is underpinned by decency, compassion, and humility. Every child matters - there is an adult for everyone, and everyone is noticed.

- **Learning beyond the classroom - School is more than the classroom**

We will educate beyond the classroom, to develop resilient, creative, and life-ready citizens with a strong sense of social responsibility, leadership, a sense of curiosity, adventure and a global perspective.

- **Learning for Life - Preparation for life after school**

We will provide expert career and life guidance, so our students make informed decisions about their futures which facilitates their transition to life beyond the school.



***“A society grows great when people plant trees in whose shade they know they shall never sit”***

# What We Offer

## **A Strong Culture of Self-Betterment**

We believe that great training is always at the heart of an effective school and recognise that investing in staff development helps us to remain open to innovation, and directly improves the offer to our students and enables our staff to grow. The whole-school coordinated CPD programme is led by an experienced middle leader. The highly successful ECT programme is led by a group of experienced mentors and a coaching programme is offered to all staff. Staff are actively encouraged to engage in leadership courses, which sit alongside less formal groups such as a group discussing emerging pedagogy, as well as teaching and learning discussion workshops. Ideas and feedback are encouraged through many different channels, including direct access to the Headteacher who maintains an open door policy.

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## **A Friendly and Welcoming Teaching Community**

We pride ourselves on treating people well and this was identified by Ofsted which noted that “the school has dedicated, enthusiastic, skilled staff who are supported by a fabulous senior leadership team”. The school has held Investors in People accreditation for almost 20 years and there is a “genuine and sustained commitment emanating from the top to looking after and investing in the staff”. We offer a genuinely warm and welcoming environment at all levels and there is real support from Leadership staff who are visible around the school at all times.

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## **A Beautiful and Well-Connected Location**

In the foothills of the North Downs, the school is within walking distance of some of the most beautiful countryside in Surrey, including direct access to Box Hill and Denbies Vineyard – the surroundings are used by the school for sports lessons, sponsored walks and Duke of Edinburgh practices. There are excellent rail links to London, Brighton, Guildford, Reading, Horsham, Reigate and Redhill, along with access to the major road networks via the A24, A25 and the M25 which is just 5 miles away. Dorking is a thriving town with excellent sports and leisure facilities, entertainment venues and a wide range of food and retail outlets.

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# What we offer



## Financial

- Competitive salaries at all levels, London Fringe, Teacher Pension
  - Free meals for lunch duties and INSET
  - Competitively priced dining service
  - Full benefit and protection of Teacher National Pay & Conditions
  - Complimentary tea and coffee and regular staff treats
  - Green Commute Scheme.
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## Community

- New staff Fitness Suite
  - Staff Association and regular social events
  - Staff choir
  - Participation in cultural trips locally and abroad
  - Half-termly Good News Raffle to recognise staff and teams
  - Culture of self-improvement
  - Open channels for feedback.
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## Work/Life Balance

- Two-week timetable and 4-period day
  - Family supportive - “no-one misses a child’s nativity/graduation”
  - Opportunities for part-time working
  - Staff laptop
  - Staff meetings recorded for convenient access
  - Online parents evenings with refreshments if staying after school
  - E-mail etiquette.
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***“Amazing pupils, excellent parent engagement, warm and friendly staff”***

# What we offer



## Location and Travel

- Ample free and secure car and cycle parking
  - 5 minutes walk to 2 main rail lines
  - Short walk to Dorking High Street and amenities
  - Easy access to London, Redhill, Leatherhead, Crawley, Horsham and Brighton
  - 15 minutes from junction 9 of the M25
  - On the A24 and near A25.
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## Wellbeing

- Well-equipped and spacious work areas
  - Employee Assistance Programme
  - Up to 10 days paid leave for dependent care
  - Term-time Nursery on site with preferential staff rates
  - Wellbeing newsletter and activities
  - Health checks available on INSET days.
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## Career

- Regular CPD programme
  - Dedicated CPD Teams page with extensive resources
  - Middle leader and advanced middle leader courses
  - Opportunities to complete NPQH courses
  - Coaching programme
  - Participation in the SAfE network courses encouraged
  - National College programmes of professional development supported
  - IRIS Connect- to help with professional development
  - Rich programme of INSET run by national experts such as Marc Rowlands, Michelle Miller, and Tom Sherrington
  - New staff induction programme
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# Why we love The Ashcombe



ECT RS and  
Politics teacher

I'm **Lauren** and joined **The Ashcombe** in **September 2023** as a **Religious Studies teacher**, teaching Key Stages 3-5, and A Level Politics. I had two quite different placement schools which gave me a clear idea of the kind of school I wanted to teach in (and those I didn't want to!). Despite my mentor's advice not to take the first job I was offered, The Ashcombe showed the range and diversity I wanted: a large mixed school, 6th Form teaching, and as became clear when I met the Headteacher, an ethos of openness and self-development. After experience working in a variety of jobs and doing outreach with disadvantaged school students while at university, I always came back to wanting to work with young people and teach. As a Year 7 tutor, I am very involved in all the Year 7 activities and trips and developing my involvement with the 6th Form. What impresses me most is **the transparency and open and welcoming nature of the school combined with respect** – there are so many opportunities for feedback, and nothing is sprung on you as a surprise.

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Teacher in charge  
of Media

I'm **Michael** and joined **The Ashcombe** in **September 2023** as **Teacher in charge of Media**, also teaching English. Having taught in schools nearer to London, I was looking for a location which offered community and a balance of family life. The Ashcombe School is at the heart of the community in Dorking and despite its size, the strong pastoral provision has confirmed to me that every student is known and that kindness is at the forefront of the education available. I have felt warmly welcomed to the great range of school events which I have participated in: Careers Fair, Christmas Fair, Buggy Malone production, Christmas Carols, trips to Cologne, visits to the BFI on the South Bank – the calendar this term has been full of activities beyond the classroom for all students. Staff and students are given so many opportunities to challenge themselves and develop, and the school is truly open to feedback and review. **When I walk around the school I see warmth, kindness and authenticity.**

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Physics Teacher

I'm **Deirdre** and I joined the **Science Department** in **September 2022** as a **Physics teacher**, after qualifying and spending 5 years in another Surrey school. I was ready for a change but what made the biggest impression on me was when our Headteacher hosted a Zoom call to introduce us to Ashcombe before I even applied – it was so personal and I could appreciate the ethos of decency at The Ashcombe straightaway. I have found this ethos being embodied every day among the staff I have met. I enjoy being an ECT mentor, and planned a Year 12 to CERN in Switzerland next year – I've found my ideas are encouraged and enabled. Oh, and a 4-period day is a definite planning plus! From an international IT career to now, what keeps me loving my work is that **every day I find joy and reward in supporting our wonderful students whilst also feeling supported by my colleagues and leadership team.**

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## **Our staff say :**

- a culture of community where students and staff feel supported
- a safe and calm learning environment
- camaraderie and shared dedication amongst staff
- strong student/staff relationships
- education is holistic
- a collaborative culture
- culture of openness, trust and support
- caring about individual students
- understanding, friendly and caring environment

**I hope this has given you an understanding of some of the key features of The Ashcombe School and why we believe it is such a special place to work - at the heart of the community and with a positive ethos.**

**Come and join us!**



## Job Profile – Assistant Finance Officer

### Introduction

This is an exciting opportunity to join a well-established, efficient and effective team, supporting both The Ashcombe School and SESSET (the multi academy trust) in all financial matters. The finance team is very much integrated into the life of the school and is highly regarded. This role has significant potential to grow in both breadth and/or depth. The ideal candidate would be looking to become a business manager or finance officer in a few years' time. Professional development will be provided and relevant apprenticeship courses are available.

### Job Purpose

- Administer the financial aspects of educational trips, visits and activities across the school, working closely with the Business Support Officer
- Be responsible for the Ashcombe sales ledger, raising invoices to our external hirers and nursery customers
- Manage the school parent payment portal
- Administer the finances for The Ashcombe Trust, a charitable arm of The Ashcombe School
- Support the work of the SESSET CFO, for example in preparing the regular Management Accounts, preparation for the annual external audit and assisting with external regulatory returns
- Support the work of the Ashcombe Finance Officer in the financial management of activities such as the Chatterbox Nursery, Dorking Schools Partnership and 14-19 ALP which are run by Ashcombe on behalf of SESSET

### Salary

SESSET 6 £28,005 - £30,542 p.a. FTE

Actual pro-rata £17,003 - £26,703 p.a. depending on hours and experience

### Contract

Between 25 - 36 hours per week, 40 weeks (term time only + 1 week in summer holidays), fixed term to 31 August 2025. Option to work from home one day per week.

### Responsible to

The Ashcombe Finance Officer/ SESSET Chief Financial Officer



## Person Specification – Assistant Finance Officer

In selecting candidates for interview and eventual selection, the school will be looking for candidates with relevant education, experience, job-related knowledge, aptitudes, and skills, and many of the personal qualities listed below. The school welcomes applications from candidates who consider they could meet most, if not all, the requirements listed.

### Education, Training and Experience

- Evidence of Further Education (e.g. A Level, college course etc.)
- GCSE English and Maths at Level 4 (Grade C) or above
- Excellent IT literacy

### Knowledge, Aptitude & Skills

- Experience in an educational environment
- Financial acumen
- Accuracy and high attention to detail
- Organised, forward planner
- Critical thinker

### Personal Qualities

- Positive and solution-focused
- Flexible, able to prioritise and manage time effectively and within deadlines
- Strong communication skills
- Reflective, approachable and have a sense of humour
- Able to work independently and as part of a team, establishing good working relationships with a wide range of people including students, parents, governors, and colleagues



## Role & Responsibilities – Assistant Finance Officer

| Role   | Responsibility   |
|--|--|
| <b>Effective Financial Management</b>                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise accurate sales invoices within agreed timelines to our hirers and nursery parents</li> <li>• Respond to queries and monitor payments against the invoices</li> <li>• Provide relevant and timely credit control reports to Finance Officer</li> <li>• Process trip-related invoices and staff expenses, requesting appropriate authorisation for payment</li> <li>• Account for trip income</li> <li>• Calculate and post year-end accruals and deferrals</li> <li>• Liaise with Finance Officer to prepare for weekly BACS payment run</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Financial Administration</b><br>Parent Payment Portal & Trips | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create accounts on the Parent payment portal (ParentPay)</li> <li>• Download reports from Parent payment portal and post journals</li> <li>• Order foreign currency required for trips and manage reconciliation post trip</li> <li>• Manage event related accounts and activities</li> <li>• Allocate internal costs related to trips</li> <li>• Review trip balances post trip</li> <li>• Participate in regular trip meetings to discuss current and future trips</li> <li>• Identify charitable contributions from students and arrange payment to nominated charities</li> <li>• Liaise with Surrey County Council at year end for balance transfers</li> <li>• Point of contact for parental ParentPay queries</li> </ul> |
| <b>Financial Administration</b><br>Nursery                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be the financial point of contact for the nursery</li> <li>• Review and propose fees annually</li> <li>• Keep up to date with changes in government funding and report on the implications</li> <li>• Monitor Early Years Portal for funding</li> <li>• Set calendar in Early Years Portal</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Financial Administration</b><br>Staff related                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek authorisation, book and pay for CPD courses</li> <li>• Maintain training log</li> <li>• Manage DBS update service renewals</li> <li>• Make payments</li> <li>• Maintain log</li> </ul>   |
| <b>SESSET Support</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support CFO and COO with regulatory returns, running financial reports for review and analysis and preparing for annual external audit</li> <li>• Support the Ashcombe Finance Officer with the financial management of SESSET-related operating activities</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Other Duties</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaise with Ashcombe Trust trustees</li> <li>• Administer the finances of the Ashcombe Trust</li> <li>• Implement the use of the Trips &amp; Visits module in Arbor</li> </ul>  |

This is a description of the main responsibilities of the post at the date of issue. These may change over time as requirements and circumstances change. The person in post may also have to perform other duties as may be necessary from time to time and would be expected to undertake any reasonable task, as directed by their line manager.



## Further information

To find out more about the post, please contact us and ask to speak to Paula Stace, Business Manager and visit our website [The Ashcombe School - Working Here](#) for information.

## How to Apply

To apply, please go to our website [The Ashcombe School - Working Here](#) to download and complete the Support Staff Application Form. Please send your completed version to [hr@ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:hr@ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk).

The closing date for applications is **8.00am on Tuesday 16 April 2024**, but early application is advised as the school reserves the right to interview and appoint as applications are received and before the closing date.

Candidates selected for interview will be informed by email. We do not generally contact candidates who are not shortlisted.

## Safeguarding

*The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any successful applicant will be required to undertake an Enhanced Disclosure check by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).*

*We will also carry out an online search about you for information that is publicly available online. This will include social media accounts you may hold. This will only be carried out on shortlisted candidates and before interview. This processing of data will be conducted under the legal basis of Article 6e public task in line with guidance laid out in para 21 of Keeping Children in Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2022. Any data collected during this search will be retained in line with our retention schedule which is available on request.*

