



The Ashcombe School



CANDIDATE INFORMATION 2025

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, appearing to read 'CP' followed by a stylized surname.

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.

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.

What we do every day

- Curiosity and challenge
- Compassion and decency
- Consistency
- Courage



"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.

Our most recent OFSTED in May 2024 highlighted the continuing strengths of the school for staff and students - they said: ***"Staff are proud to work here, and there is a great sense of teamwork. Leaders take exceptional care of staff well-being and workload, enabling staff to concentrate on continuing to develop the education the school offers."***

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 knowledge - 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. .

- **Learning to develop my own story - 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 about others - 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 the next chapter - Preparation for life after school**

We will provide expert career and life guidance, so our students make informed decisions about their futures which facilitate 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.

A Friendly and Welcoming Teaching Community

We pride ourselves on treating people well and this was identified by Ofsted in May 2024 which noted that “Staff at all levels feel supported, including teachers in the early stages of their careers”. 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.

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.

“the school is an inclusive place where difference is celebrated”

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
 - 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, Michele Miller, and Tom Sherrington
 - New staff induction programme.
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“a caring school community”

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, Sixth 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.



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, Bugsy 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.**



Physics Teacher

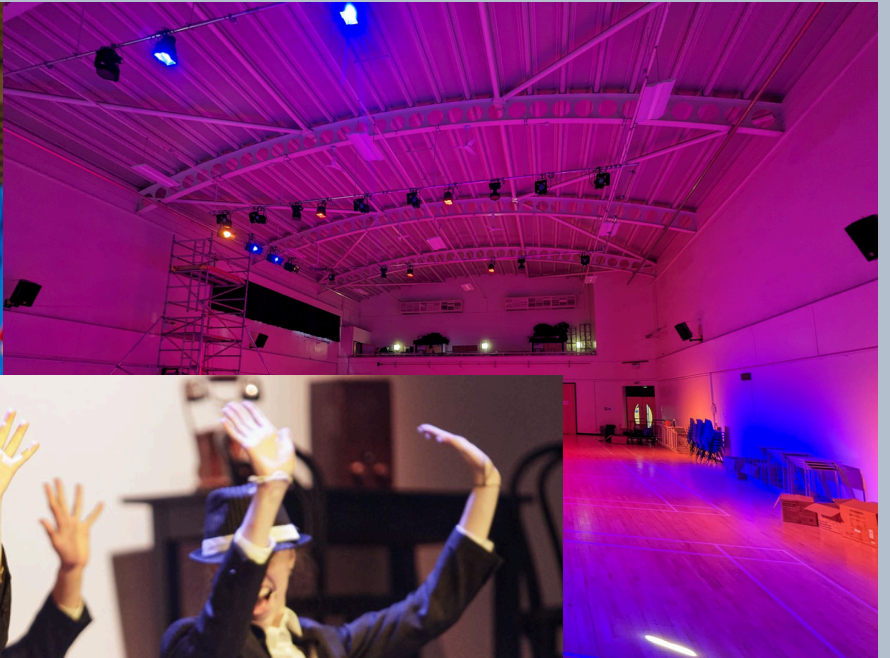
I'm **Deirdre** and I joined the **Science Department** in **September 2022** as a **Physics teacher**, after qualifying and spending 5 years in another Surrey school. I was ready for a change but what made the biggest impression on me was when our Headteacher hosted a Zoom call to introduce us to Ashcombe 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.**

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
- compassion and support
- strong student/staff relationships
- education is holistic
- collaboration between staff and students, shared ambitions and high aspirations
- staff feel listened to
- culture of openness, trust and support
- caring about individual students
- understanding, friendly and caring environment
- **the warmth of the school towards the students - it's tangible!**

We 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 wonderful ethos.

Come and join us!





Job Profile – Careers Coordinator

Introduction

We are advertising an exciting opportunity at Ashcombe to support students in delivering their career aspirations. Careers education has been a central part of Ashcombe School with events such as the annual Careers Fair, the Apprenticeship Fair and our virtual careers events attracting praise both regionally and nationally. The previous careers lead has had to leave due to relocation, having developed an infrastructure of careers that has fulfilled all of the Gatsby benchmarks.

We wish to build on these successes by appointing a new Careers Coordinator as soon as possible. The position has four key aims:

- To coordinate and develop the whole school careers programme to ensure we connect with as wide a group of young people as possible with particular reference to those students who are disadvantaged
- To support personalized guidance in Key Stage 4 so that we enable all of our students to move onto the correct destination at 16
- To further develop the range of events and information sharing in school that will help to inspire our future generations
- To support the expansion of the school's alumni and use these role models to inspire the current Ashcombe students.

The post is a central part of our wider vision to ensure our young people leave school prepared to live fulfilled lives in the 21st century. We are looking for a dynamic, inspiring, creative and empathetic individual. The successful candidate will be able to connect with a range of audiences both internally and externally, from students to experts in their professional field. Above all else, the successful candidate will have an inner personal drive to make a real difference to young people's lives by offering imaginative, informed and personalised support.

Salary

SESSET 7 £15,321 - £16,558 p.a. (£33,181 to £35,859 FTE)

Based on 3 days, 8.30am – 3.30pm per week, term time (39 weeks) + 2 days in the summer holidays.

Responsible to

Ben Blackband, Head of Sixth Form, SLT lead for Careers, Assistant Headteacher



Person Specification – Careers Coordinator

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

- GCSE English and Maths at Level 4 (Grade C) or above
- Computer literacy in Microsoft Office
- A willingness to undertake further career education related programmes

Knowledge, Aptitude & Skills

- Knowledge/ a willingness to learn of legislation and guidance on careers, including the Gatsby Benchmarks
- Awareness of local and national organisations that can provide support with delivering a careers programme
- Ability to communicate a vision and inspire others
- Ability to build effective working relationships with staff and other stakeholders
- Organised, forward planner
- Prioritise workload within deadlines, and know when to seek guidance

Personal Qualities

- A commitment to getting the best outcomes for all students and promoting the ethos and values of the school
- Confident, positive with an approachable manner
- Uphold and promote the ethos and values of the school
- Ability to work under pressure and prioritise effectively
- Maintain confidentiality
- Commitment to safeguarding and equality



Role & Responsibilities – Careers Coordinator

Role	Responsibility
Guidance	• Meet with students to inspire, inform and guide them in their options and choices for the next stage of their lives both on a one-to-one basis and at key school events e.g. KS4 option evening and Into the Sixth • Support and implement a careers guidance development plan
Coordination	• Coordinate delivery of school career programme with pastoral team, teachers, administrators and external partners • Liaise with the PSHE and other subject leaders to plan their contribution to career guidance • Establish and enable encounters with employers • Communicate with students and their parents • Develop and maintain the careers area of the school website • Organise the Careers Fair, Apprenticeship Fair and other whole school events
Management	• Plan the programme of activity in careers guidance • Brief and support teachers and tutors involved in careers guidance • Monitor delivery of careers guidance across the 8 Gatsby Benchmarks
Networking	• Establish and develop links with further education colleges, apprenticeship providers, technical colleges and universities • Establish and develop links with employers • Negotiate a service level agreement with the local authority as appropriate • Commission careers guidance services where appropriate



	• Manage links with external organisations • Secure funding for careers related projects • Build a network of alumni who can help with the career's guidance programme and share this with the current student group
Professional and Market Knowledge	• Advise the senior leadership team on policy, strategy and resources for careers guidance and showing how they meet the Gatsby Benchmarks • Ensure compliance with the legal requirements to provide independent careers guidance and give access to providers of technical education or apprenticeships to students in schools • Understand the implication of a changing education landscape for careers guidance, e.g., technical education reform • Review and evaluate careers guidance and provide information for school improvement planning, Ofsted and other purposes • Manage the provision of career and labour market information

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.



Chris Panting (Headteacher) will be holding a Zoom presentation to introduce the school and give more detail on working as a member of support staff in the school. This will take place on Wednesday 24 September 2025 at 5.30pm. If you would like to attend, please email hr@ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk to request an invitation.

The closing date for applications is **8.00am on Monday 29 September 2025**, 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.