



# The Ashcombe School



# CANDIDATE PACK 2023

**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 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 'C Panting', written in a cursive style.

**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 caring 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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***"The school has an ethos which matters"***

# About The Ashcombe School

## Structure

With over 1480 students, including 250 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.

We have a thriving Sixth form with around 250 students each year and encourage as wide an intake as possible where we believe students have the ability to succeed at A Level. 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.

We are part of a small independent Multi-Academy Trust (South East Surrey Schools Education Trust - SESSET) comprised of 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

## Values

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:

- **Curriculum and its delivery** - We offer a broad and balanced GCSE-based curriculum with languages, humanities and creative subjects alongside double Science, Maths and English, providing all students with an inspiring and ambitious curriculum that equips them with the knowledge and skills to flourish in a stimulating and demanding environment.
- **Community and strong relationships** - We provide an inclusive community which allows all members of our community to feel safe and supported, underpinned by decency, compassion and humility. Every student and member of staff matters.
- **Learning Beyond the Classroom** - We educate beyond the classroom to develop resilient, creative and life-ready citizens with a strong sense of social responsibility, leadership, a sense of adventure and a global perspective. Ashcombe has earned an outstanding reputation for the diverse range of opportunities offered outside of the classroom. These include more than 30 extracurricular clubs, a huge range of visits and trips abroad and at home, a flourishing Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, competitive sports teams, an inspiring programme of music and drama, and a commitment to students supporting others through fundraising and peer mentoring and support in school.
- **Preparation for life after school** - We continually develop our facilities, teaching methodologies and the learning experience of our students to ensure they are fully engaged and stimulated at school and well prepared for the outside world. Careers guidance, work experience and our strong links with local business help students identify their career objectives and supports their choices for GCSE, A Level and beyond.

# 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.

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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”.

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

In the foothills of the North Downs, the school is within walking distance 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.

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# What we offer



## Financial

- Competitive salaries at all levels, Local Government Pension Scheme
  - Free meals for lunch duties and INSET
  - Competitively priced dining service
  - Surrey 'My Benefits' including generous discounts
  - Complimentary tea and coffee.
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## Community

- New staff gym
  - 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.
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## Work/Life Balance

- Family supportive - "no-one misses a child's nativity"
  - Opportunities for part-time working
  - Green Commute Scheme.
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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
  - Walking distance to 2 main rail lines and Dorking High Street and amenities
  - Easy access to London, Redhill, Leatherhead, Crawley, Horsham and Brighton
  - 15 minutes from junction 9 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.
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## Career

- Dedicated CPD Teams page with extensive resources
  - Coaching programme
  - National College programmes of professional development supported
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# Why we love The Ashcombe



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 I'm planning to take 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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Art teacher

I'm **Nick, Teacher of Art**. I joined The Ashcombe in September 2020 between lockdowns, and taught my first term's classes with everyone disguised by masks! I was based in Hong Kong and interviews were over Zoom – really pleased to be offered the role by Chris, the Head Teacher by phone call from a very different timezone. I had positive reports from colleagues who were already teaching at the school, and the school offered me the opportunity to combine teaching of Art, PSE and Photography – which I really wanted to do. I have had the opportunity to be a PGCE mentor and am Art Clubs co-ordinator, I find a strong sense of community in the school, and mature, professional and approachable colleagues. It has been great to be able to be involved in cultural trips including Cologne, and the Brighton Art Trip.

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ECT English teacher

I'm **Ella and I joined the school in September 2021 as a trainee English teacher**, currently in my ECT year. With a background in publishing, editing illustrated non-fiction, after 7 years and working from home in lockdown, I really wanted to tackle something new. I looked at different routes into teaching but liked the Schools Direct approach – and really liked the interest shown and the care given by the Headteacher to meet and interview me himself; and offer me a lockdown tour despite no students! I got such a positive feeling for a nice school and loved it. It has a lovely atmosphere, great colleagues and, working as a team, there is a real sense that everyone is known and valued. I lead the Reading Ambassador programme, get involved in theatre and literary trips – and **the thing that surprises me most is how much I laugh every day!**

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# Job Profile – Teaching Assistant

## Introduction

Working as part of a lively, well-managed and successful team, supporting the delivery of interesting and stimulating lessons, we are seeking someone with commitment, versatility and enthusiasm. Through assisting in the provision of students' individual needs and creating an environment that encourages learning you will support teachers and students to be successful in their subjects.

We welcome applications from candidates who may be considering a career in education and would benefit from experience working in a school and those who are looking for a position that fits in with their childcare responsibilities. The support of a teaching assistant in the teaching rooms is particularly valued by the departments.

## Salary

SESSET 4 £16,088 - £18,925 p.a. (£22,647 - £24,641 FTE)

## Contract

Up to 30 hours per week, 39 weeks (term time only), fixed term to 31 August 2024

## Responsible to:

SENDCo

# Person Specification – Teaching Assistant

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

- Some evidence of Further Education (e.g. A Level, college, course etc.)
- GCSE English and Maths at Level 4 (Grade C) or above
- Working with teenagers (desirable)
- Working within a school (desirable)

## Knowledge, Aptitude and Skills

- A keen interest in children as individuals, in how they learn, and in a collaborative approach to learning
- Knowledge or a keenness to develop knowledge of:
  - How students learn
  - Effective teaching strategies to support learning
  - Difficulties students can experience in learning
  - Use of diagnostic tests
  - Effective strategies to address the specific learning difficulties of individuals in school
- Commitment to developing knowledge of ICT skills (Word, Class Charts)
- Able to work well with teachers
- Relate well to students of secondary age on a one to one basis and in small groups
- Organisational skills for directing students in their learning
- Creative skills for producing resources

## Personal Qualities

- Positive and solution focused
- Flexible, able to prioritise and manage time effectively
- Effective oral and written communication
- Reflective, approachable and have a sense of humour
- Ability 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 - Teaching Assistant

Role	Responsibility
Planning activities and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in the planning of a range of activities for a group or an individual</li> <li>• Prepare and adapt teaching materials, equipment etc. which facilitate the students' access to the curriculum</li> <li>• Ensure resources prepared are available to all staff through efficient storage, filing and retrieval systems.</li> </ul>
Assisting in classroom management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist in the preparation of the classroom, the reception of students, the organisation of materials and the checking and clearing of the classroom</li> </ul>
Supporting students in the Supported Learning Centre/Inclusion and Internal Exclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist in preparation of the room.</li> <li>• Provide emotional and academic support for students in this space, recognising the individual needs of the given students.</li> <li>• Support the behaviour expectations in both areas and follow the school guidance.</li> </ul>
Giving individualised support to students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist in meeting the students' needs for encouragement and reassurance.</li> <li>• Attend to students' personal requirements and physical care, encouraging independence at all times.</li> <li>• Ensure that the planned programme of activities is implemented, undertake specific tasks with individuals or small groups of students.</li> <li>• Take the initiative in assisting students with setting and reviewing their personal targets, carry out individual interviews.</li> </ul>
Monitoring and recording progress of students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement procedures for the monitoring, assessment (including carrying out relevant tests of literacy, spelling etc.) and recording of students' progress.</li> <li>• Contribute, where appropriate to any multi-disciplinary discussion of students' needs/progress, and contribute to informal and annual reviews.</li> </ul>
Ensuring professional understanding and personal development in the area of SEND	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in relevant staff development activities.</li> </ul>

This is a description of the main duties and responsibilities of the post at the date of issue. The duties 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 on 01306 886312 and ask to speak to Joanna Marks, SENDCo, and visit our website [www.ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk](http://www.ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk) for information.

## How to Apply

To apply, please go to our website [www.ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk/Working-at-The-Ashcombe/](http://www.ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk/Working-at-The-Ashcombe/) 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 Monday 2nd October 2023**, 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.*

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!**

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

