

# ASHLAWN

## EASTER NEWS 2026



ASHLAWN  
SCHOOL

*Our best, always*



Year 10 and 11 Ashlawn School students with their French pen pals

## Welcome from the Executive Principal

**Another term has flown by, and it's already time to look ahead to the Easter break.**

The Spring Term has been full of energy and opportunity across the school. Our students have taken part in a wide variety of enriching experiences, from connecting with French pen pals and engaging in charity initiatives, to showcasing their talents and producing impressive science projects. Alongside this, they have continued to develop their understanding of future careers with a range of employer-led workshops and inspirational trips and events.

These opportunities are all part of our Student 2030 vision – our approach to delivering on our ambitions for all our students: Academic Achievement,

Employability, Place in Community, Personal Character and Creation of Aspiration.

The term ahead will be especially important for our Year 11 and Year 13 students as they will begin their GCSE and Post-16 exams shortly after we return to school. They have been showing fantastic dedication to their revision and working hard to give their best, always, as they approach this important moment.

We encourage those students to use the Easter break productively as they prepare for their exams, but also ensure that they rest and recharge ahead of this busy time. We are grateful to our families and staff for their ongoing encouragement and support.

We look forward to welcoming everyone back on Tuesday 14th April for the start of the Summer Term.

Wishing you all a relaxing and well-deserved break.

**Paul Brockwell**  
Executive  
Principal



## MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

**As another busy half term comes to an end, I would like to take this opportunity to wish all of our students, staff, parents and carers a happy and restful break.**

It has been a thoroughly positive term, and my first full term as Head of School, with students making the most of the many opportunities available to them.

Alongside their classroom learning, they have taken part in a wide range of activities including trips, performances and sporting events, representing the school with enthusiasm and pride. It is always encouraging to see the commitment and resilience they continue to show.

I'd like to thank everyone that attended our recent community surgery which focused on two key areas: the careers provision at our school, as well as how we work together with families at the key transition points throughout secondary school – your input and feedback is greatly appreciated.

I would also like to thank our staff for their continued hard work and dedication, particularly in the support they have given to our Year 11 and Year 13 students.

Through additional lessons, revision sessions and targeted support, they have worked hard to ensure students feel well prepared as they approach their GCSE and Post-16 examinations.

The Easter break offers an ideal chance for those students to focus on revision and consolidate their learning. We encourage them to plan their time carefully working purposefully to establish a routine that is both effective and manageable.

Our Easter booster school for Year 11s will offer additional revision sessions, including some external workshops provided by the excellent team at PET Xi. We encourage everyone to take advantage of these wherever possible.

A special mention also goes to our students who have just set off for an Easter ski trip, they've got a week packed with exciting activities and experiences ahead.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. I hope you all enjoy a well-earned break, and we look forward to welcoming students back for the start of another successful term.

**Stephen Darby**  
Head of School



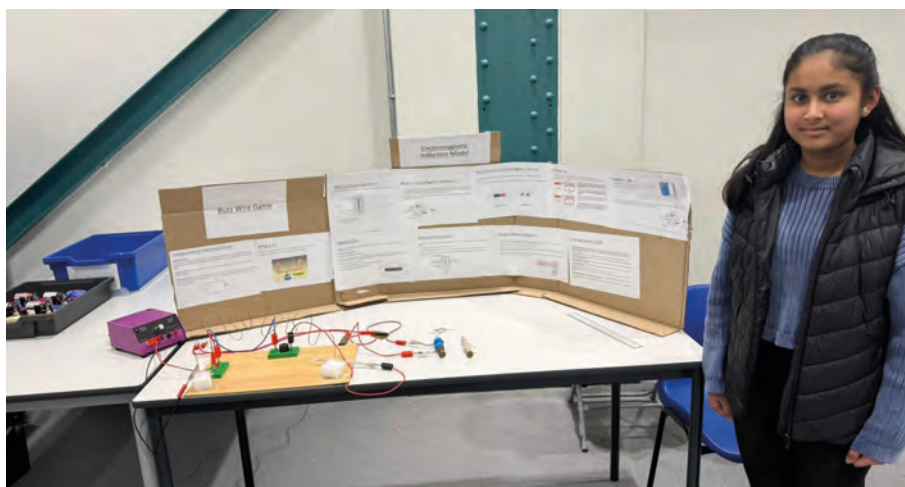
## STUDENT SUCCESS AT TLET SCIENCE FAIR

**Earlier this term, students from across TLET took part in our second annual Science Fair as part of British Science Week.**

A total of 24 students participated, representing each school within the Trust. The event showcased an array of amazing projects, all of which students had developed with the support of a family member since the event launched in January.

- **Winner:** Forest C, Houlton: Spider vs Asteroid
- **Honorary winner:** Aksh A, Henry Hinde: Elderly home care safety
- **Runner up:** Richard H, Ashlawn: How clean is high school?
- **Runner up:** Bhargava K, Ashlawn: "Free" energy water wheel

**Well done to everyone that participated!**



## TLET TALENT SHOW 2026



**Students from across the Trust took to the stage for this year's TLET Talent Show, delivering an evening of high-quality performances that showcased creativity, confidence and dedication. The standard was exceptionally strong, making it a difficult task for the judges to select the final winners.**

We are particularly proud of our Ashlawn students, who represented the school superbly throughout the event. A special congratulations to Ava and Anna, who were both named as runners-up, a fantastic achievement and a reflection of their hard work and talent.

Well done to all performers across the Trust, including the overall winners from Houlton. Thank you to everyone who supported the event and celebrated the talent within our school community.



## RED NOSE DAY 2026

**We marked Red Nose Day 2026 in style, with students and staff enjoying a fantastic day of non-uniform, cakes and plenty of fun, all in support of Comic Relief. The school community came together brilliantly to embrace the occasion and raise money for an important cause.**

The atmosphere throughout the day was full of energy and generosity, with everyone playing their part in making the event such a success. We are delighted to share that, although the final total is still being confirmed, we have already smashed our £1,000 target!

This is a wonderful achievement and a reflection of the kindness and community spirit shown by our students, staff, and families. Thank you to everyone for your support and for helping our young people contribute to such a worthwhile cause.



**COMIC  
RELIEF**



# AUTHOR AND ADVENTURER INSPIRES STUDENTS

**Students at Ashlawn were given a unique and exciting opportunity recently when Matt Dickinson visited the school to share his experiences as both a writer and an adventurer. He has also worked in conjunction with the exam board AQA and some students will be familiar with his published work entitled: *The Death Zone*.**

His visit created a real buzz in the sessions and around the school, with many students eager to hear from someone who has not only written gripping stories but has also lived through incredible real-life challenges.

During the session, Dickinson spoke about his journey to becoming an author, as well as his remarkable experiences climbing Mount Everest. His storytelling immediately captured the youngsters' attention, as he described the dangers, risks, and emotions involved in such an extreme environment. Students were particularly fascinated by how these real-life adventures inspired his writing, making his books feel authentic and intense.

One student said: "I was really impressed with his bravery and his skills, this made me want to read more of his work. He is a real inspiration!"

What made the visit especially inspiring was Dickinson's message about perseverance. He spoke honestly about the challenges he faced along the way and encouraged students to stay determined, take risks, and believe in their own potential. His advice made a strong impression, reminding everyone that success often comes from resilience and hard work. This is a message that all students can take heed from.

Overall, the visit was both engaging and motivating. It not only gave students insight into the life of a professional author, but also encouraged many to think more creatively and ambitiously about their own futures. It is safe to say that Matt Dickinson's visit will be remembered for a long time and who knows he may be paying us another visit again soon.



# FRENCH PEN PALS

## Our Year 10 and Year 11 French students recently enjoyed a fantastic day with their pen pals who travelled from Épernay and spent the day with us.

Throughout the day students took part in a variety of speaking activities, and it was wonderful to see their confidence in their spoken French grow as they communicated with their pen pals. Our students proudly showed their pen pals around the school, leading tours entirely in French and demonstrating both their language skills and their enthusiasm for the partnership.

In the afternoon, the group visited Rugby School before finishing the day with a lively disco, dancing together to both French and English classics.

Many students formed genuine friendships with their pen pals and saying goodbye at the end of the day was not easy. We are incredibly proud of them all. The day was a wonderful reminder that learning French goes far beyond preparing for a GCSE exam; it is also about building cultural understanding, confidence, and lasting memories.

Here are some messages that our Y10 & 11 students wrote about the day:

- “I really enjoyed the dynamic that we had between the pen pals and I had fun being able to practice my French-speaking skills with them”
- “The activities we did with our pen pals were challenging but really fun - we learnt a lot about each other, and we made a lot of memories with them (especially during the disco) and we will miss them very much”
- “It was a great experience to see my pen pal again and having the chance to celebrate together. Meeting our pen pals was an amazing opportunity that French pupils at Ashlawn value so much.”

We are also delighted that, during the week beginning 16th March, three of our Year 12 French students, Harriet, Finn and Pauline, travelled to Épernay to stay with their pen pals while completing a period of work experience.

During their time there they gained valuable insight into the French education system and experienced daily life in a French school. This was an exceptional opportunity for our students to further develop their language skills, cultural awareness, and independence, and we are very proud of them for embracing such a rewarding experience.



## YEAR 9 STUDENTS EXPLORE CLIMATE CHANGE WITH COLAS RAIL

### Colas Rail visited Ashlawn School to deliver a workshop to 30 Year 9 students.

The session focused on climate change adaptations, guiding students through an in-depth analysis of how human activity is influencing the planet's climate. The workshop provided a valuable opportunity for students to explore real-world environmental challenges and consider how industries are responding to climate change.

It was also a chance to see practical solutions that have been put in place by a large organisation within the transport industry as they tackle this pressing issue.



## EXCITING DANCE WORKSHOP OPPORTUNITY AT ASHLAWN SCHOOL

### Students on our BTEC Level 2 and 3 Performing Arts Dance courses are taking part in a special dance workshop on Friday 17th April.

The workshop will be led by Flo Mossi who famously starred as Michael Jackson in the West End hit production, Thriller. This is a fantastic opportunity for our dancers to learn from an experienced industry professional and gain valuable insight into performance at a professional level.

We are also pleased to offer a limited number of additional places for students who are currently considering their options and have an interest in pursuing dance pathways.

If your son or daughter would like to take part, please get in touch as soon as possible to secure a place.

For enquiries or to register interest, please contact: [pickeringw@ashlawn.tlet.org.uk](mailto:pickeringw@ashlawn.tlet.org.uk)



## HEALTHY LIVING IN FOOD AND NUTRITION

**Our students have been showcasing their creativity and skill in Food and Nutrition, producing some fantastic dishes as part of their learning.**

Year 8 students created vibrant Buddha bowls, while Year 9 students prepared a range of colourful and nutritious super salads. It was great to see the care, effort and attention to detail that went into each dish.

We hope students enjoyed eating their creations as much as they enjoyed preparing them, and that these experiences help to build confidence and encourage positive habits around food and wellbeing.



## WORLD BOOK DAY 2026

**We celebrated World Book Day 2026 in true Ashlawn style, recognising the joy and importance of reading through a day filled with creativity and enthusiasm. Students and staff embraced the occasion by dressing as their favourite literary characters, bringing a wide range of stories to life across the school.**

From Roald Dahl classics to Harry Potter and The Lord of the Rings, there was a fantastic variety of characters on display. Even a familiar face from the Twilight Saga made an appearance, adding to the fun and energy of the day.

The event was a great celebration of reading, highlighting its power to inspire imagination and creativity. It was wonderful to see the whole school community getting involved and sharing their love of books.



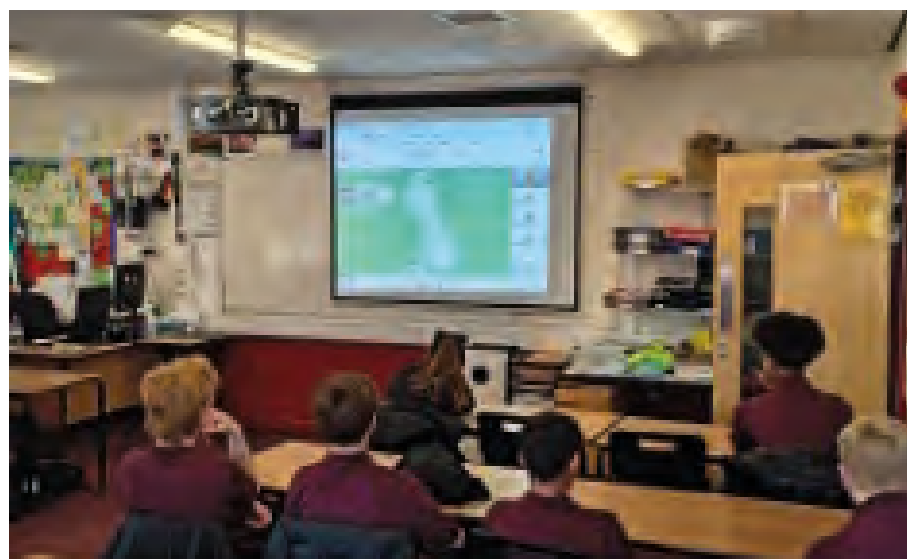
## MODERN LANGUAGES IN THE WORKING WORLD SEMINAR

**A group of Year 9 students took part in an online seminar, Modern Languages in the Working World, hosted by David Binns, CEO of Sanako UK.**

The session highlighted the importance of language learning in today's global job market, emphasising how even a GCSE pass in a language can strengthen a CV and help develop key soft skills such as communication, confidence, and cultural awareness.

Our students were incredibly engaged throughout, listening attentively and asking thoughtful questions at the end of the session.

Even if you don't use the language day to day in your job, it is a valuable qualification to have for the future. This was a fantastic opportunity to get students to reflect on the importance of languages in our global society!



## YEAR 12 STUDENTS HEAR FROM TLET CFO

**We were delighted to welcome Marc Goodey, CFO of TLET, who kindly gave up his time to speak to our Year 12 A Level Business students about Budget Variance and its role in effective financial management.**

Students had the chance to learn more about how businesses analyse variances in the public sector compared to commercial organisations, identify underlying causes, and make informed strategic decisions to improve performance.

The session proved very engaging and informative, allowing students to connect classroom theory with real-world practice. They found the talk particularly insightful and appreciated the opportunity to learn directly from an experienced finance professional.



## CAREERS WEEK AT ASHLAWN

**Students across the school enjoyed a packed and inspiring Careers Week, with a wide range of activities designed to help them explore future pathways and aspirations.**

From assemblies and guest speakers to hands-on workshops, the week provided valuable opportunities for students to engage with the world beyond school and begin thinking about their next steps.

A particular highlight was the Year 9 STEM Renewable Energy Challenge, where students worked in teams to design, build and test their own wind turbines as part of an engineering workshop delivered by Quartzelec Ltd in partnership with The Smallpeice Trust.

The event concluded with a “Dragons’ Den” style presentation, allowing students to pitch their ideas while developing confidence, teamwork and problem-solving skills.

Students also benefited from hearing directly from professionals, including a practising psychologist who spoke to Year 10 and 11 students about careers in psychology and the different pathways into the profession.



Sixth Form students took part in tutor-led assemblies exploring career journeys and future options, while Year 9 students gained insight from an Ashlawn alumnus, helping them see how their studies can connect to real-world opportunities.

Throughout the week, students were encouraged to reflect on their own ambitions and the skills they will need moving forward.

It was a fantastic celebration of aspiration and opportunity, supporting all students to feel more confident about their futures.

## NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP SHOW VISIT

**On 12th March, students from Years 11, 12 and 13 attended The National Apprenticeship Show at the CBS Arena, where they had the opportunity to explore a wide range of future pathways.**

The event brought together employers and training providers from a variety of industries, offering students valuable insight into apprenticeship opportunities from Level 2 upwards.



Throughout the visit, students were highly engaged and represented the school exceptionally well. Their behaviour was excellent, and they showed genuine interest when speaking with exhibitors, asking thoughtful questions and exploring the different routes available to them after school or sixth form.

One of the highlights of the day was the Army stand, where students experienced an interactive and engaging session led by enthusiastic representatives. Many particularly enjoyed taking part in the activities on offer, including the bar challenge!

Overall, the trip was an informative and inspiring experience, helping students to better understand the range of opportunities available and supporting them in making informed decisions about their futures.



## WORK EXPERIENCE - YEARS 10 & 12

**Our Year 10 and Year 12 students have recently begun their work experience journey, with placements happening in July (Year 10: week commencing 6th July; Year 12: week commencing 13th July).**

Students have taken part in assemblies and tutor sessions to support them in finding and applying for placements and are using the Unifrog Placements Tool to organise this process. They have also had dedicated time in IT rooms this half term to access and complete key steps.

All student guidance, including resources and support materials, is available via the Careers Google Classroom (Classwork > Work Experience).

Placements should be secured by the end of next half term, and students are encouraged to use the Easter break to make contact with employers.

Emails have been sent to parents and carers outlining the process.

We encourage families to discuss possible placements and support students in reaching out to employers.

Further information, including how to link parent accounts to Unifrog, can be found on the school website under Careers Information or in the 'Careers Corner' section of the newsletter.

# CAREERS

CORNER

## SUPPORTING EVERY STUDENT'S FUTURE (YEARS 7-13)

Careers education at our school starts in Year 7 and continues right through to post-18 planning.

Our aim is to help students understand their strengths, explore opportunities and make confident, informed decisions about their futures — with parents and carers playing an important supporting role.

Here's how we support students in school and how you can support at home.

### OUR CAREERS PROGRAMME IN SCHOOL

#### Fortnightly Careers Programme (All Year Groups)

Students take part in a structured careers programme during tutor time every fortnight, building knowledge of careers, pathways, employability skills and future planning in an age-appropriate way.

#### 1:1 Careers Guidance

Students can access impartial careers interviews with a qualified careers adviser to explore options and make informed decisions at key transition points.

#### Annual Careers Fair

Students meet employers, colleges, universities and training providers to explore a wide range of education and career pathways.

#### Guest Speakers, Employer Encounters & Careers Show Trips

We regularly welcome professionals from different industries and organise visits to careers shows and external events, giving students direct exposure to the world of work.

#### National Careers Events

We take part in national initiatives to broaden awareness of opportunities:

- National Green Careers Week (November)
- National Apprenticeship Week (February)
- National Careers Week (March)

#### Mock Interviews (Years 11 & 13)

Students experience realistic interviews with external employers to develop confidence and professional skills.

#### Work Experience (Years 10 & 12)

Students complete structured placements to gain first-hand experience of the workplace and explore possible career interests.

#### Careers Google Classrooms

Each year group has a dedicated careers classroom where opportunities are shared, and students complete targeted careers homework suited to their stage in their career journey.

#### Timetabled Careers Activities

Every half term, students take part in guided careers sessions in IT rooms, researching pathways and using careers platforms.

### PARENTS & CARERS: ACCESS UNIFROG TOO

You can create a linked parent account to support discussions at home.

With a parent account, you can:

- See what your child is exploring
- View careers events and webinars
- Track careers tasks
- Explore pathways yourself

Set up at: [www.unifrog.org/parent](http://www.unifrog.org/parent)

### CAREERS USING UNIFROG

We use Unifrog, an award-winning online destinations platform, to support all students.

Students use Unifrog to:

- Discover strengths and interests
- Explore careers and subject pathways
- Join webinars and short courses
- Build a personal skills portfolio
- Search for apprenticeships, university courses and employer opportunities
- Prepare applications and personal statements

### UNDERSTANDING FUTURE PATHWAYS

Students may progress to:

- A Levels and vocational qualifications
- Apprenticeships (including higher and degree apprenticeships)
- T Levels (technical courses with industry placements)
- University and higher education

Helpful websites for families:

- [Amazing Apprenticeships](#)
- [National Apprenticeship Service](#)
- [UCAS](#)
- [Prospects](#)
- [Not Going To Uni](#)

### HOW FAMILIES CAN HELP

- Talk regularly about interests and strengths
- Explore careers and pathways together
- Encourage involvement in careers events
- Use Unifrog together to research next steps

Working together helps students feel confident and prepared for their future.



At Ashlawn we...

# CARE

## **COMMUNITY**

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We value every member of the Ashlawn family and treat each other with kindness and compassion.

## **ASPIRATION**

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We work hard and make the most of exciting and challenging learning experiences, in order to open up the world around us and achieve our dreams.

## **RESPECT**

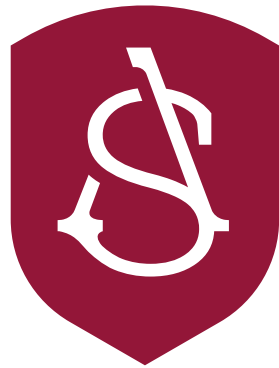
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We respect each other and our differences. We respect our learning environment and appreciate everyone's right to the best possible experience at Ashlawn.

## **EXCELLENCE**

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We are committed to trying our best and achieving the highest standards in our love of learning, so that we can be the best versions of ourselves.



ASHLAWN  
SCHOOL

*Our best, always*

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