

April 2024

YEAR 8 Newsletter



Message from our Key Stage 3 Lead



I hope you find this newsletter safe and well. Last term we appointed Ashlawn School's Anti-Bullying Ambassadors for 2024-2025. They began their role on a high with Anti-Bullying Ambassador Training which was delivered by The Diana Award. The training provided them with the knowledge, skills and toolkit to support students who are experiencing bullying behaviour, and launch their own anti-bullying prevention campaign. The opportunity has enabled students to amplify their voice on issues they feel passionate about and empowered them to engage their peers, parents/carers and staff to change their attitudes and recognise the rights of others. This term, Anti-Bullying Ambassadors will continue to launch a range of engaging anti-bullying initiatives across the school.

Furthermore, I believe it is important for students to be rewarded for a wide range of achievements with regular praise, encouragement and rewards. In order to reinforce and reward students for good behaviour, attendance, punctuality, progress, achievement and success during the Summer Term, I will be organising an exciting end of year rewards trip for each year group in KS3. Heads of Year will send out the trip letter to parents/carers shortly. The success criteria for attending this trip has been outlined below so that parents/carers are clear on what students need to do in order to be successful at gaining a place on the trip. We will also provide students and parents/carers with informative feedback about their progress towards meeting the criteria.

Rewards Trip Criteria

Trip Criteria:

- At least 96% attendance
- 0 trancies
- Significantly improved lates and behaviour
- Engage in at least one personal development/enrichment activity

For example:

- Attend a school club
- Volunteer at a school event
- Duke of Edinburgh
- Participate in a school event through music/art/drama
- Be part of a school leadership team where you represent the school's student body (Anti-Bullying Ambassadors or CARE Ambassadors)
- Volunteer, either within school helping a member of staff or outside of school through scouts/guides etc.
- Use personal skills to make a positive difference to others

This will be launched on Monday 22nd April 2024 and we will monitor students against this criteria for the purpose of attending the trip until Friday 21st June 2024.

The Year 7 and 8 Awards Evening which recognises academic progress and achievement across the year will continue as usual. In addition, as a result of the positive feedback we received last year, the Year 9 Graduation Ceremony will continue this year.

We trust your child will feel excited about the rewards trip, strive to meet the criteria and will enjoy a variety of learning experiences that we have planned for the Summer Term.

Miss Arshad
KS3 Leader

Bushcraft Payment Dates

Please remember if your child is attending the Bushcraft Trip in July the payment dates are as follows;

£80.00 12/04/2024

£75.00 03/06/2024

Punctuality

We would also like to stress the importance of arriving to school on time. Our school gates open at 8.30am, where students are greeted by their Head of Year at the gate. The gates close at 8.40am, after which students must enter via the main pedestrian gate. Our first lesson begins promptly at 8.45am, students are expected to be in classrooms by this time, anyone arriving after this time will be marked late.



Classroom expectations:

This term we will be reminding students of lesson our expectations, and the goal that we should be 'Our Best, Always'. This means arriving to lessons on time, equipped to learn with a positive attitude and ready to learn.

We have the following expectations for our students:

Entry into the classroom

- Students greet the teacher at the door, enter calmly and quietly, removing coats/outerwear
- Sit where asked with equipment on the desk
- Start 'Do Now' task

During the lesson

- Respect the classroom environment, books and equipment
- Put your hand up if you have a question
- Complete all activities to the best of your ability

Exit from the classroom

- Pack away when instructed, leaving the classroom tidy and presentable
- Quietly stand behind your chair
- Leave when dismissed and move with purpose to your next lesson

The Ashlawn Way

We are pleased to be able to share our newly created Ashlawn School pledge, '**The Ashlawn Way**', this has been shared and discussed with students during form time activities in the previous half term and forms the foundations of being 'Our Best, Always' as we work together in all areas of school life.



ASHLAWN
SCHOOL

The Ashlawn Way

We commit to being a part of the Ashlawn community and pledge to:

- **Demonstrate kindness to all and help those in need**
- **Be proud of our uniqueness and champion the differences of others**
- **Celebrate our successes together**
- **Express gratitude for things that others do for us**
- **Show respect and pride in our words and actions**
- **Challenge ourselves and each other to be our best, always**

Our school community charter is driven by the TLET trust values of courage, kindness and loyalty.

Community Aspiration Respect Excellence

This charter forms the foundation of the way in which we work together in all areas of our school life.

PSHE

Please see the schedule of topics that are going to be covered in PSHE this term. If you have any concerns over the topics your child will be studying, please do contact the school so a note of this can be made.

Year 8 Celebrating Diversity and Equality <u>Equality & Diversity Explored</u>
Equality Act 2010
LGBTQ+ What is it?
LGBTQ+ Rights Across the World
Gender Equality
Ableism and Disability Discrimination
Removing the Barriers, Equality for All
Racism & Discrimination in Society

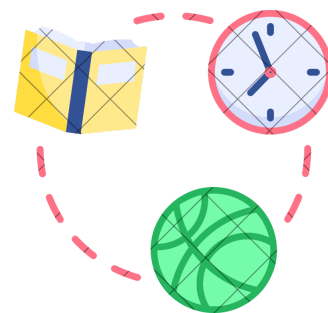
Curriculum Overview

KEY STAGE 3 (YEARS 7, 8 AND 9)

All students study the sciences, English, Maths, at least one language, geography, history, PE, RE, life skills, art, drama, music, reading and computing. All Key Stage 3 students follow a DT curriculum which offers a 'taste' of the range of DT subjects available in Key Stage 4. Students also experience a rotation through an extended Arts curriculum, and this operates in the same manner. In Year 7 students experience the first term as they rotate through a choice of three language subjects before they select their preference for continued study from the Spring Term of Year 7.

Two slightly different curricula are available at Ashlawn School with one for students who join us through selection whilst the other curriculum is available to students who have not chosen the selective route. All students follow the curriculum above whilst selective students have the opportunity to study two languages, additional qualifications in mathematics and the separate sciences.

We believe that literacy and reading are essential for students to fully access the curriculum and to achieve at the highest level. In Year 7 and 8, all students will develop their reading comprehension skills by a timetabled weekly reading programme designed to extend and enhance their vocabulary, levels of comprehension and knowledge of reading. Students entering Ashlawn with low prior attainment are offered an intensive programme of literacy and/or numeracy support in sessions which are tailored to their individual needs.



<https://www.ashlawn.org.uk/curriculum/curriculum-overview/>

Attendance

Sept - Mar	Year 8	All Years
Attendance	93.11%	91.26%

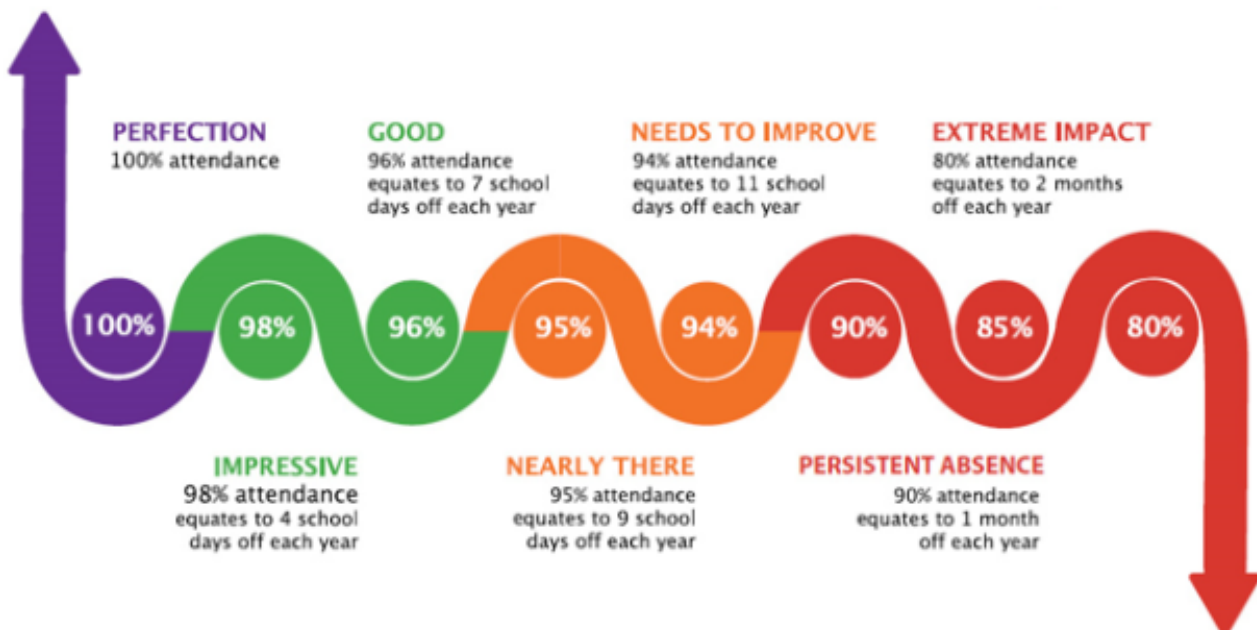
Parents and carers may recall from our original letter issued in January of this year, of the **'Moments Matter, Attendance Counts'** campaign.



You may also be aware that for a child to be categorized as 'persistently absent', their attendance will have fallen below 90% for the academic year, this equates to missing one half day each week. Attendance of 50% or below is regarded as 'severely absent'.

Research shows that lower attendance leads to lower attainment outcomes for students at Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and 11), and the statistics are compelling:

Data from the 2022-2023 academic year for the end of Key Stage 4, pupils who missed less than 1% of sessions across Year 10 and 11 had an average Progress 8 score of +0.73, that is almost a grade higher than their peers in similar schools, while those who missed 50% of sessions or more had an average score of -2.83, almost 3 grades lower than their peers.



Attendance

While the link between attendance and attainment is clear, absence is not just about exam results. It's about all the other important moments in school that help shape young people:

- building positive peer relationships
- taking part in extracurricular activities and trips
- developing important personal skills and finding a sense of belonging within the school community

We all have hopes and dreams for our children. But the statistics show young people will only be able to realise their full potential, academically and personally, if they are in school and ready to learn at least 97% of the time. However, it is never too late to benefit from good attendance.

There are times when absence is unavoidable and a student is too unwell to attend. In a post-pandemic world, it's sometimes difficult to know when children suffering from mild coughs and colds can and should be sent into school. To help parents make an informed decision, please see the [advice and guidance from the Chief Medical Officer](#). In these circumstances, please advise us of your child's absence using the **StudyBugs** app..



We understand that, for some families, the challenges around attendance are very real and there are significant barriers preventing children from coming into school. If you are struggling and need support, please contact your child's Welfare Lead, Head of Year or the School Attendance Officer directly and we will work with you to put a plan in place.

Here are a few strategies to help improve your child's attendance:

- Establish a routine: Set a consistent daily routine that includes ample time for sleep, meals, and preparation for the school day.
- Open Communication: Keep the lines of communication open with your child about their experiences at school. Address any concerns or issues they may be facing that could contribute to absenteeism.
- Highlight the Value of Education: Reinforce the importance of education and how it shapes their future. Discuss their goals and aspirations, emphasizing how attendance plays a crucial role in achieving them.
- Celebrate Achievements: Acknowledge your child's achievements, both big and small. Positive reinforcement can motivate them to attend school regularly.
- Stay informed: Be aware of school events, projects, and activities. Engaging with the school community can foster a sense of belonging and enthusiasm for learning.
- Remember, every day of school missed is a missed opportunity for learning and growth. We appreciate your commitment to your child's education and look forward to working together to ensure they have the best possible experience.

Reporting an Absence

Reporting an absence Studybugs! We are please to announce that Ashlawn has introduced a new, more efficient, and secure system for reporting your child's absence due to illness, called Studybugs. If you haven't already please get the free Studybugs app, or register on the Studybugs website, and use it to tell us whenever your child's ill and unable to attend school.

Medical Appointments

Where possible, appointments should be made out of school hours or in the school holidays. However, we realise that this is sometimes not possible. Students should come into school before and after appointments to ensure they miss as little lesson time as possible. If possible, we ask that if appointments are made during the school day, please try and book the appointments between 10.30am and 12.30pm. Students should sign in at reception and sign out at student services.

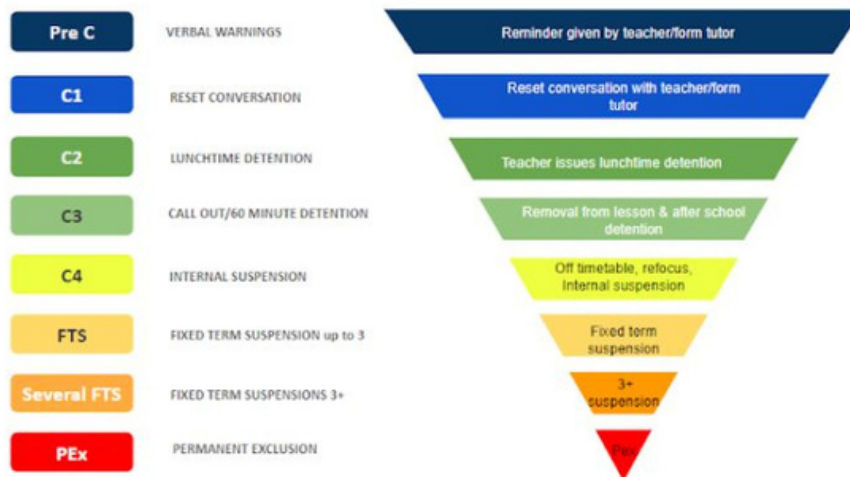
Free School Meals

The current economic climate has meant that more families are finding it difficult to make ends meet. It may be that you and your family could be entitled to additional help. Miss Lodge is our Pupil Premium advocate, so please do email lodgek@ashlawn.org.uk if you have any questions or concerns. We are able to support in certain circumstances with food bank vouchers, and we have attached below the link to apply for Free School Meals. If you have any problems completing the form we can also help with this.

<https://admissions.warwickshire.gov.uk/Synergy/Enquiries/Citizen/FreeSchoolMeals.aspx>

Behaviour Reminder

The following is a reminder of our **school consequence system**, used when students need to reflect on the choices they are making in school.



Social time and 'Hands Off'

As we move into the summer term, the hope that weather will improve, students will be invited to use the school field during social times. This will provide more space for students to socialise and to play. We would appreciate the support of parents in reminding our young people of the school's 'Hands off' policy. If students are using the field for games, then this should be done sensibly, there should be no physical contact or play fighting.

This is for the safety of all students in our community.



Uniform

We would like our initial interactions with students on a daily basis to be positive rather than reminding students about uniform requirements. For the majority of students our uniform is worn correctly, with pride and exemplifies the high standards of the school.

Please can you support in upholding the uniform policy outlined below, specifically that black leggings are not part of our uniform. Any student not in the correct uniform may borrow uniform from our donated uniform items. Any student not in correct uniform may otherwise be off timetable until this issue is resolved during the school day.

Core Uniform

- Ashlawn School logo polo shirt (Burgundy for Y7-9 and Black for Y10-11)
- Black, smart, tailored trousers (please note that trousers should be full length, in a fabric suitable for formal wear and with a button and a zip. Trousers that have rivets or stitching like jeans are not permitted. Leggings are not permitted)
- Ashlawn School logo knitted jumper/cardigan (if student wishes to wear a jumper)
- Plain black leather or leather look shoes or trainers
- Coats and outer garments should be black, dark grey or navy blue

Optional Uniform Items

- Ashlawn School logo pleated skirt (students can only wear a pleated skirt)
- Ashlawn School logo shorts
- No other skirts or shorts will be permitted

Jewellery

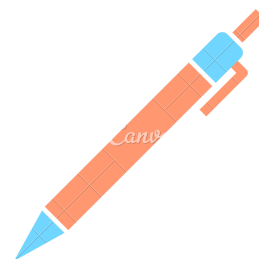
- Students may wear one pair of stud earrings
- Students may wear a watch
- Rings, bracelets and necklaces are not permitted however negotiation will be considered for religious purposes
- Nose studs and facial piercings are not permitted. Please note, plastic nose studs are not permitted in place of nose studs

Students wearing excessive jewellery will be asked to remove it and place it in an envelope and collect it at the end of the school day.

Equipment

To be successful and ready to learn, all students should be fully equipped with:

- A school bag, large enough to carry A4 sized books
- Pencil case
- 2 pens, black or blue biro
- Green biro pen
- Highlighter pen
- Pencil
- Sharpener
- Ruler
- Rubber
- Scientific calculator



Mobile phones

- Y7 - 11, should be handed in at the gate. If not handed in, students accept responsibility in case of loss, theft or damage.
- Phones, if not handed in, should be kept, switched off, at the bottom of school bags at all times.



If a student is seen with a phone, including in a pocket:

- Staff will confiscate the phone and take it to the welfare lead office to hand to a member of admin staff on duty, admin services will email home to inform parents.
- Students may collect their phone if it is a first occasion.
- Second confiscation will be parental collection. Admin services will collate a log of this
- At the end of the day, phones are to be collected from reception.

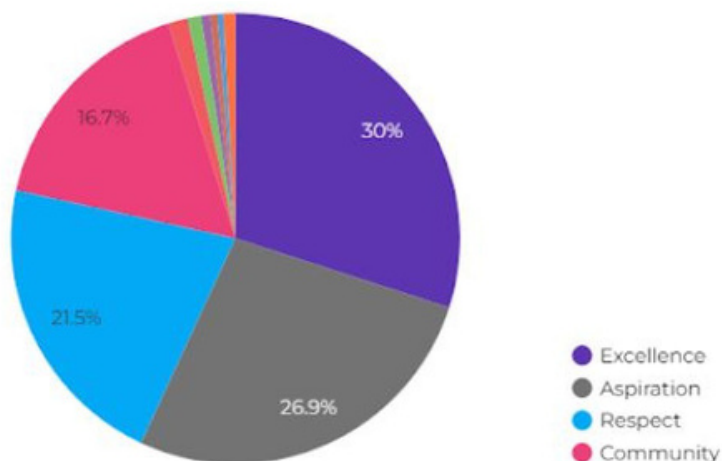
Sixth form students may only use phones in sixth form areas.

Achievement points and CARE (Community, Aspiration, Respect and Excellence)

Our drive for this half term will be on community, this is especially important as we begin the process of inviting new students into our school for induction days and visits. Students should expect to achieve points for their contributions to school community in a variety of ways:

- Working well with others
- Getting along with new people
- Contribution to tutor group/class/college/year group
- Supporting at a school event
- Being supportive of others
- Taking part in enrichment opportunities
- Performing in a school activity/event/sport
- Modelling/demonstrating core pillars of Community, Aspiration, Respect or Excellence to others, particularly to new members of our community

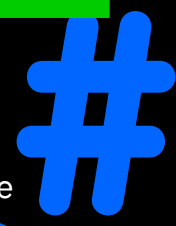
A huge **181, 265 achievement points** have so far been achieved by our students this year, broken down into the following categories:



Social media tips

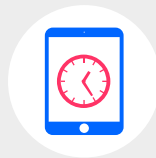


Social networks are a great place for young people to stay in touch with friends and demonstrate their creativity. As a parent, there are simple things you can do to ensure your children's experience is both safe and fun.



1. Are they sharing inappropriate selfies?

Discuss the reasons why they feel the need to share such images and the potential long-term impact this could have on them if the pictures are used without their consent.



2. Do you feel they're spending too much time on social?

Talk together so they understand your concerns. Agree house rules on when and how long they can go online and which sites they should visit.



3. Are they sharing their location through apps?

Make sure geo-location is disabled to keep their whereabouts private. Explain why it's important that they never share personal information with people they don't know online.



4. Have they posted too much personal information?

Talk to them about who they've shared the information with and assess the risk it poses to your child. You can also ask your child to remove the information from their account and help them understand how to share safely.



5. Are they chatting to strangers online?

Make sure your child understands that people may hide behind fake profiles for dishonest reasons and the person they've been chatting to could easily be someone with bad intentions.



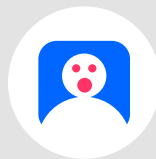
6. Are they gaming with strangers online?

Playing games can be fun and positive but ensure your child understands people may hide behind fake profiles for dishonest reasons and learn how to block and report anything offensive.



7. Do they have hundreds of followers?

Explain that some people may not be who they say they are and tell your child how privacy settings can put them in control of who they talk to.



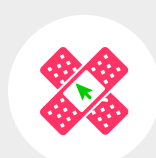
8. Have they shared embarrassing images?

Remind your child that these images are their personal digital footprint for years to come and advise them to use settings that only let them share with friends they know. If they're not comfortable wearing it on their T-shirt, they shouldn't put it online.



9. Are they at risk of being cyberbullied?

Stay calm, listen without judging and reassure your child that you can help. Discuss any action you may take together. Encourage them not to retaliate and to save any evidence.



10. Do they know what they share online can hurt others?

Talk together about peer pressure and how screens and anonymity can lead to behaviour that is hurtful. Remind them there's a fine line between sharing content because it's funny or might get lots of 'likes' versus the potential to cause offence or hurt.



11. Have they been affected by content shared online?

Encourage them to think about why friends may share certain posts. Show them how to gently challenge their friends if they find their content offensive. Remind them they can always talk to you about things happening online.



12. Are they ready to share on social?

Most social media apps have a minimum age rating of 13. If a social network has set an age limit it means that some of the content may not be suitable for a younger child.