

Headteacher's Update

Dear Parents and Carers

As we approach the end of 2016 and my first year in Ash Manor School, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for the support you have given your children to ensure that they are able to make the best progress possible.

This term has been as action packed as ever; I am sure you will see from the January newsletter how many additional opportunities the students have had. As always, I am privileged to be invited to watch and participate in events and there are a few that I feel merit special mention here due to the commitment of students and the excellence displayed. In November I visited Camberley Theatre to watch a group of our students perform in the Shakespeare School Festival and I was incredibly impressed to watch a shortened version of 'Twelfth Night' performed with such flair; the work required to achieve that was evident and a credit to Miss Reid and the entire cast. Later that month I was invited to an evening in our school canteen and enjoyed a fine dining experience where our students prepared, cooked and served all of the food, working with a top chef. It was a fantastic meal that set the scene for a really lovely evening with staff, parents and friends of Ash Manor School. I have also been lucky enough to have been part of the judging panel almost every week for the Ash Manor Bake-off and the quality of the cakes, biscuits and pies produced has been exceptional - a massive well done to Katie Homick who won the 6 week-long event and runner-up Tia Vivash. Along with a school trip to Rome and Naples, a visit to Euro Disney, countless sporting fixtures, Year 11 Pre-public Exams, Children in Need Day and auditions for the summer musical to mention just a few things, Ash Manor School has been as busy and vibrant as always.

Parents' Forums

I would like to thank all of you who participated in the Parents' Forum on 7th November. The evening was run by the school's Learning and Teaching team. These members of staff are identified as excellent practitioners and work with colleagues and students to ensure that learning is effective across the school. There were some fantastic conversations and feedback from parents that we have been able to use to support our development plan and guide the team in understanding learning from the parents' perspective.

The next forum will be on 10th January when we invite you along to work with us on supporting an improvement in literacy.

Where questions or concerns were individual I have ensured that these were responded to personally; if you feel that this has not happened and you would like a specific response, please use the contact form on the web-site or come along to the forum on 10th January and speak to me.

The common themes running through the feedback were:

Comment/Suggestion	Response
Sometimes homework resources are not easy to access from the SMHW website.	All homework resources will now be printed and distributed in class
Sometimes access to SMHW is not possible.	All staff will ensure that homework is set on SMHW and written in the students' planners
We like the reports but some of the information is unclear	The explanations on the reports have been altered to make them easier to understand

I would once again like to thank you for the positive comments indicating that your children are happy in Ash Manor School and making good progress in their lessons. We all value the opinions and information gained from these and intend that they will continue to be a part of our school.

Curriculum and Staffing

There are a number of staffing changes taking place at Christmas and these will have some implications for the curriculum here at Ash Manor School.

We say good-bye to Mrs Copeland (Deputy Headteacher), Mr Herbert (ICT), Mr Greaney (Science), Ms Furfaro (MFL) and Ms Amabile (English) and we wish them well in their future endeavours.

In January we welcome to Ash Manor Mr Duffield (Deputy Headteacher), Mrs Borowska (MFL), Mr Cottrell (PE/Science) and Ms Hutton (HSC/PSHE/CCF).

The staff changes during the academic year have resulted in some timetable changes for students and so on return from Christmas break students should go to their tutor room at 8:40am to collect their new timetable and lessons will commence at 8:50am.

In particular please note the following:

- Years 7 and 8 ICT has been removed from the curriculum for the remainder of this academic year. We are unable to source a high quality ICT/Computing teacher and do not want to enter into a situation where students are taught by a range of non-specialist cover teachers. ICT will be replaced by PE which we know we do well here at Ash Manor and the students will have a mixture of lessons in Fitness, Healthy Living and practical sport sessions. Years 9, 10, 11 will continue to be taught by specialist teachers and Computing Studies and ICT will continue to be an option choice.
- Year 10 Science groups will change. We were unable to source a full time scientist and so we will have larger Year 10 classes all taught by subject specialists to ensure that the GCSE courses are securely taught. This change, along with Mr Cottrell joining the team, means that all science classes have the appropriate specialist teaching.

- Ms Copeland's Year 11 History class will be taught by Mr Clouston but will change scheduled times. There will also be changes to Year 11 support sessions in response to the Pre-public Examination results. New timetables will be issued to all Year 11 students at tutor time on 4th January.
- There will be some changes to Year 11 Mathematics classes. These will be notified to individual parents by separate letters.

I would ask that all students check their new timetables carefully to ensure that they are in the correct place and ready to learn at all times.

Combined Cadet Force

We have been given permission to form a Combined Cadet Force from Easter 2017. This will give massive opportunities to our students and I am delighted that we have come through the stringent application process and are in a strong position to become a successful unit. We have our Contingent Commander, Lieutenant N Clifford, in place and will launch this exciting opportunity to Year 9 students early in the New Year.

Key Dates for the next term

Wednesday 4 th January	Students return to school – 8:40am
Thursday 5 th January	Year 9 students trip to Surrey Skills Fair
Tuesday 10 th January	Parents' Forum
Week Beg 30 th January	Year 9 Mid-year Exams
Thursday 9 th February	Year 10 Parents' Evening
Monday 13 th – Friday 17 th February	Half Term Break
Week Beg 20 th February	Year 11 Pre-Public Exams
Wednesday 22 nd February	Parents' Forum
Thursday 23 rd February	Year 8 Parents' Evening
Thursday 2 nd March	Year 9 Parents' Evening
Thursday 9 th March	Year 9 Options Evening
Wednesday 15 th March	INSET Day – school closed to students
Thursday 16 th March	Year 7 Parents' Evening
Thursday 23 rd March	Year 11 Parents' Evening
Friday 31 st March	School closes for Easter Break

I would like to thank students, their families, governors and the wider community for the support received in my first year of many at Ash Manor School.

I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and look forward to continuing to work with you to ensure the success of our young people.

Yours sincerely

Agnes Bailey
Headteacher