

**Inclusivity**

A  
cultural hub  
where  
everyone  
is welcome

**Integrity**

Our  
love of  
reading  
feeds  
curiosity  
and  
learning

**Independence**

We  
learn with  
creativity  
and  
self-reliance



# Prospectus 2024/25



ASHLYNS SCHOOL

# Headteacher's Welcome

*Ashlyns School is an excellent choice for any parent seeking the very best for their child. Our ambition is that your child's time at Ashlyns should be joyful and exciting and that they experience an interesting and diverse education that will stay with them throughout their life.*



Founded originally to provide for the most vulnerable in society, we are immensely proud that our school still emphasises traditional values. These values, combined with high expectations, innovation and creativity mean that Ashlyns is a school which encourages every student to be the best version of themselves.

Students at Ashlyns are challenged to exceed their own expectations and we enjoy an established reputation for academic excellence and first-class pastoral care. As well as academic rigour, we also provide a full range of extra-curricular activities within a well-ordered, purposeful environment. We believe that the experiential side of life at Ashlyns is fundamental to enrich and equip well rounded and successful young adults.

We are a school that never stands still and we constantly reinvest to benefit both students and our local community.

So far this year, we have created a new Drama studio and works are currently underway to expand our Music block.

Ashlyns is a thriving school with a rich heritage, a positive ethos and an exciting future. Our belief is that we change people's lives through learning and this prospectus outlines some of the many opportunities on offer at Ashlyns, which ensure our students are prepared for a bright and successful future.

**JAMES SHAPLAND, HEADTEACHER**

# Aspire & Achieve

*At Ashlyns we encourage every student to aspire and achieve beyond their expectations.*

Our guiding principle is for every child to have the best possible start in life and the opportunity to be the best version of themselves. Our Staff and Governors aim to achieve this by:

- Ensuring that academic achievement at Ashlyns is excellent
- Ensuring that the experiential side of life at Ashlyns is a priority for students
- Ensuring that Ashlyns students receive exceptional care

Our school values underpin everything that our staff, students and governors aspire to achieve. They are based on moral, civic and performance virtues:

**Integrity:** we act with respect, honesty, courage and justice

**Inclusivity:** we play our part in the social contract with kindness, service, empathy and gratitude

**Independence:** we strive to meet our potential with resilience, determination, self-reflection and self-discipline

*Pupils are proud of their school. They appreciate the teamwork between staff and pupils that helps them reach for the highest levels of success.*

OFSTED REPORT, 2023

*Pupils live up to the school's high expectations of what they can learn.*

OFSTED REPORT, 2023





# Joining Ashlyns

*Transition from primary school to secondary school is often described as ‘a big step’. However, at Ashlyns students are well supported and this is the beginning of exciting new opportunities, meeting new people and broadening horizons.*

Our carefully planned transition process helps students to settle in quickly and become part of the Ashlyns family. We gather detailed knowledge of new students, and our staff work closely with their previous schools to ensure we understand each individual joining Ashlyns.

Our current students are an integral part of our transition process and are on hand to offer assistance to new students so that they are welcomed and supported by their peers.

Our three day residential visit to the Peak District early in the Autumn term of Year 7 cements new friendships, strengthens tutor group identity and provides memories that last a lifetime.

All students become a member of one of our four Houses, providing them with a sense of belonging and broadening their friendship circle as they meet their fellow House members, including those from different year groups. Throughout the year, there are many opportunities to gain House points and the competition for the House Cup at the end of the year is hotly contested!

We recognise that it is not only students who need help in navigating the secondary school move, and so our information for parents does not end at our open events. Comprehensive guidance is available at all stages to help with transition. The Parent Information Evening allows parents the opportunity to meet their child’s tutor and to seek answers to those pressing questions every parent has.



The dedicated Year 7 transition team ensures that every child feels able to settle in quickly and knows they belong to our community. We pride ourselves on the care we take when anyone joins Ashlyns.



*“The best thing About Ashlyns so far is being a Learning Ambassador and being able to teach younger children. It’s been great for my confidence.”*

YEAR 7 STUDENT



*The school has an ambitious curriculum for all pupils.*

OFSTED REPORT, 2023

# Curriculum & Learning

*The curriculum at Ashlyns is designed to be broad, balanced and inspiring; this helps to develop students who are confident, articulate, resilient, socially-responsible citizens of the future. We offer a strong core curriculum supplemented by exciting options and opportunities within, and beyond, the classroom; further details of our curriculum can be found on the school website.*



At Key Stage 3, students study a comprehensive range of subjects, providing a foundation for their success at Key Stage 4 and in the Sixth Form. This is enhanced by:

- Extended Learning Days including off-site trips and visiting speakers, mock employment interviews, student wellbeing workshops, international days and House challenges.
- a carousel of exciting curriculum enrichment options in Year 9, such as Marginal Gains, Digital Photography, Astronomy, Business Entrepreneurship, and many more.

Our Key Stage 4 provision offers a predominantly academic suite of GCSEs, supplemented by alternative courses such as BTECs and a bespoke project qualification course, tailored to students' needs and choices. We recognise the importance of making the right subject choices. Our staff work with students to ensure the subjects they choose to study are tailored to their aspirations and strengths, and link these to their relevance and application in later life.

We are delighted that so many of our students join our Sixth Form and progress onto many of the country's top universities. Please see our Sixth Form prospectus for more information.

Students are given the tools to navigate, challenge and contribute to an ever-changing and complex world through our PSHE and enrichment programmes. This means they can keep themselves healthy, safe and happy. We provide a comprehensive package of visiting speakers and experts to provide guidance

on topics such as mental wellbeing, safe relationships, digital footprints and online safety. This helps to ensure that school is relevant in light of contemporary issues and the future.

Our students are digital natives and we support them in becoming responsible users of technology, to harness the benefits of digital technology in the classroom and to prepare them for life beyond school. Students joining Ashlyns have their learning enhanced by use of Google Suite for Education on individual Chromebooks.

*Pupils value the positive and purposeful atmosphere in which they learn. Pupils behave well in lessons and take responsibility for their learning.*

OFSTED REPORT, 2023

# Committed to Excellence & Celebrating Success

*Ashlyns School recognises that each student is an individual with diverse interests: we are committed to providing an outstanding, personalised learning environment in which every student can flourish and succeed.*

At Ashlyns, learning occurs in an atmosphere of mutual respect and support. Our students not only benefit from the care, support and challenge that we provide, they also experience the excitement of recognition for success. Student success in exemplifying Integrity, Inclusivity and Independence is celebrated through a comprehensive rewards system and a variety of events including Presentation Evening and termly Awards Assemblies which recognise merits, character and subject awards.

Recognition of success at all levels helps to build confidence: our rewards and House system ensure students are recognised for their endeavours by their peers, school and community.

We place high importance on regular monitoring and assessment of our students' progress, to help them achieve aspirational targets. This is strengthened by the important three-way partnership between school, student and home, which includes regular parent information evenings, parent-teacher consultations and formal reports.

We have high expectations regarding behaviour. Our behaviour system lays out clear, fair and firm guidelines regarding our expectations.

Our Student Leadership Team, Sixth Form Executive and Learning Ambassadors play an active part in school improvement. You can be confident that, at Ashlyns, students are treated as individuals and an enthusiasm for life-long learning is fostered; we are a community where excellence at all levels is nurtured.



*“What I love about Ashlyns is the entire school community. It's a kind, supportive place where we are encouraged to be our best.”*

YEAR 7 STUDENT



# Welcome to the LRC

**Inclusivity**

**Integrity**

**Influence**

A cultural hub where everyone is welcome

Our love of reading feeds creativity

Learn with confidence, create with passion, and succeed with resilience



*Pupils benefit from the 'can-do' attitude found across the school. Pupils feel safe at school. They know that staff are willing and able to help should concerns arise. Bullying is rare. If it does happen, the school deals with it effectively so that it stops and does not continue.*

OFSTED REPORT, 2023

## Pastoral Care & Wellbeing

*Pastoral care at Ashlyns is excellent and is built upon the principle that 'the children's needs come first'. In today's complex world, young people need guidance more than ever on how to keep themselves safe and happy; at Ashlyns, you can be confident that we nurture the skills, resilience and character that young people need to thrive in the modern world.*

The PSHE curriculum is supplemented by a comprehensive and wide range of exciting and expert talks along with dedicated, timetabled days: these cover vital discussions such as healthy living, safe relationships, the online community and protecting your digital footprint, growth mindset, careers advice, addiction, crime and mental wellbeing. Regular guidance and advice is also provided, in parallel to these sessions, to parents.

Your children's wellbeing is safeguarded and nurtured through:

- the Form Tutor - the first point of contact for you and your child
- the Head of Year and Safeguarding and Pastoral Officer for the year group
- the School Matron, who is on hand every day for advice and concerns
- the Safeguarding Team
- the Inclusion Team

Each child is guided and supported throughout their time at the school, helping to ensure that every student feels happy, confident and a valued member of our community.

Our highly experienced Inclusion Department is part of the transition team; their involvement ensures that the correct assistance is put in place to give targeted support where necessary, so that every child knows that they matter and are valued.

Opportunities for developing students' understanding of how to stay safe

are successfully threaded through the curriculum. These are found in assemblies, tutorial periods and lessons throughout the school. This includes helping students to deal with any risks they may routinely face, including the use of the internet and social media. Students and parents say that students feel very safe at the school. Students are very confident that there are adults at school they can talk to if they need advice and that the school will deal effectively with any concerns they report.



# Sixth Form

*The vast majority of students continue their studies in our vibrant and successful Sixth Form. High expectations from the outset help to prepare them for the next stage of education and/or future employment. Our aim is that they should leave us as confident, well-rounded, independent individuals who are ready to meet the demands of our modern world.*



Making the transition from GCSE to A level is challenging and we ensure our students are fully supported in making the best choices prior to starting their studies in the Sixth Form. In Year 11, students meet with a member of the Senior Leadership Team and benefit from expert advice and guidance on the range, relevance and choice of subjects they wish to study. Our Sixth Form curriculum offers a broad range of A Level choices, which can extend the subject learning they have enjoyed at GCSE as well as providing the chance to study new subjects. The academic programme of study delivered alongside the VESPA

Mindset programme enables students to develop the necessary cognitive and non-cognitive skills that promote educational success.

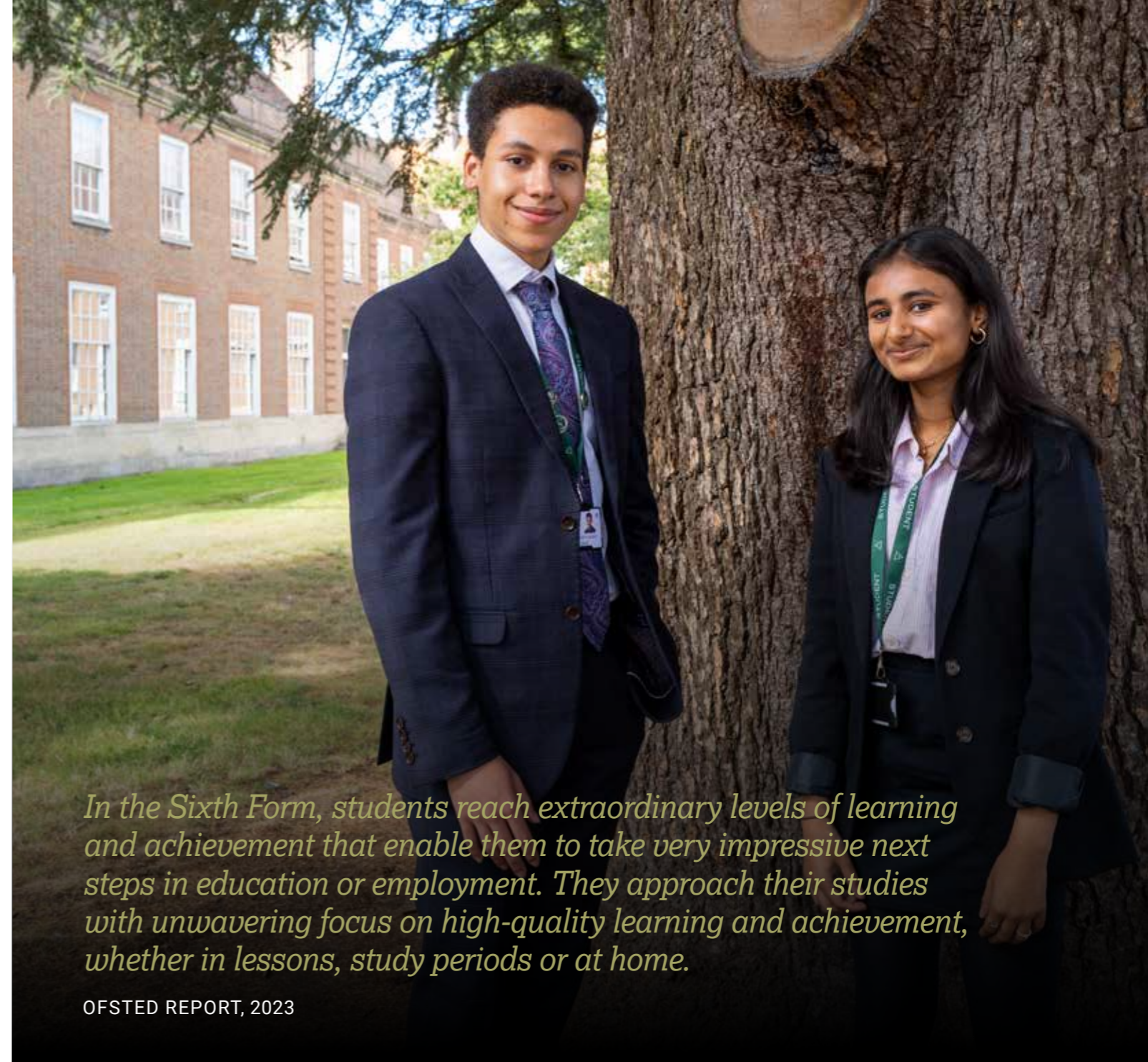
We take a holistic approach to our students' progress providing, in addition to their academic studies, a wealth of opportunities for them to further develop the values that are an integral part of the Ashlyns community. Through our extra-curricular programmes we provide students with additional opportunities to further develop integrity, independence and inclusivity. As role models for the lower school they are encouraged to take part in community activities, taking up leadership and mentoring roles as well as developing the social skills that are essential for employment and university. We set high standards for our senior students and are proud that they are such confident and exemplary role models for others.

Independent learning is at the forefront of success at A Level. To facilitate this, our Sixth Formers enjoy their own

standalone block which includes quiet study areas and a separate Sixth Form cafe with inside and outside eating facilities. Our Learning Resource Centre is also available for study and provides a variety of Sixth Form specific reading materials.

Experienced tutors and a dedicated Safeguarding and Pastoral Officer are proactive in supporting, motivating and guiding students through these vital two years of study. This helps to ensure our high expectations are realised and that students are resilient and independent learners, able to perform at a high level, with a positive work ethic and self-reliant attitude.

Students appreciate the expert advice and preparation they receive regarding university entry and the majority of our Sixth Formers go on to higher education, including the most prestigious universities within the Russell Group such as Oxford and Cambridge and with top ranking companies as part of the Degree Apprenticeship Programme.



*In the Sixth Form, students reach extraordinary levels of learning and achievement that enable them to take very impressive next steps in education or employment. They approach their studies with unwavering focus on high-quality learning and achievement, whether in lessons, study periods or at home.*

OFSTED REPORT, 2023



*Pupils take part in a wide range of clubs and trips that enhance their learning.*

OFSTED REPORT, 2023

# Learning Beyond the Classroom

*A wide and varied programme of extra-curricular activities is crucial to our ethos of developing the whole person, inspiring students, and helping them to achieve their potential. Students are encouraged to express themselves through sport, music, drama, technology and outdoor pursuits, and to develop leadership skills in our extensive student leadership programme.*



Our outstanding facilities, including an impressive sports hall, state of the art gym, pump track, dojo and astroturf pitch, as well as specialist drama studios and music practice rooms, encourage students to develop skills across a variety of different areas. Productions in drama, concerts in music and frequent fixtures in sport provide excellent opportunities for our students and community to celebrate and enjoy their skills.



Our extremely popular Learning Resource Centre is a hub of creativity and is pivotal in encouraging extra-curricular reading through a rich programme of events and activities. These include visits from award-winning authors, the popular 'Book Bake-Off' plus Harry Potter and murder mystery evenings. In addition, students can participate in lunchtime quizzes, creative writing and drawing competitions and literary digital escape rooms. Students also take part in the Carnegie Medal book shadowing and the Royal Society Young People's book prize.



Ashlyns offers a wide range of opportunities that promote independence and learning in the wider sense. Students are encouraged to participate in competitions such as the Rotary

Challenges in Technology and Maths, Youth Speaks and the Young Chef Award. Every year our students develop their research and presentation skills in the charity First Give competition as well as taking part successfully in the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme. Alongside a wide variety of curriculum based trips, we offer further opportunities such as the World Challenge expeditions, last year to Vietnam, as well as the popular biennial ski trip.

Clubs and extra-curricular activities help to lay the foundations of future successful and responsible citizenship, and we encourage students to be involved in local groups and community projects, such as the Swan Youth Centre, Berkhamsted Raiders Community Football Club, and Rush Judo.

Students help raise funds for many charities through their House, where they have the opportunity to nominate and promote their own favoured charity, and through the First Give project. Charity work is close to the hearts of many of our students and they are involved in a variety of ways with organisations such as the Hospice of St Francis and the Wamba Community Trust.



# Leadership & Community

*At Ashlyns, we believe that all students have tremendous potential to make a positive difference, not only to benefit themselves, but also to benefit their school, local and wider communities.*

Our students are encouraged to play a pivotal role in school and community life; we consider this a vital part of developing our core values of integrity, inclusivity and independence. Student Voice plays a central part in the life of the school and we encourage our young people to take an active role in the Student Leadership Team and their House leadership. The Student Leadership team is led by our Head Students and representatives from the Sixth Form Executive, who also play an extremely active part in Sixth Form operations and strategy. Leadership Committees cover a range of areas including the EcoGroup and Equalities Group.

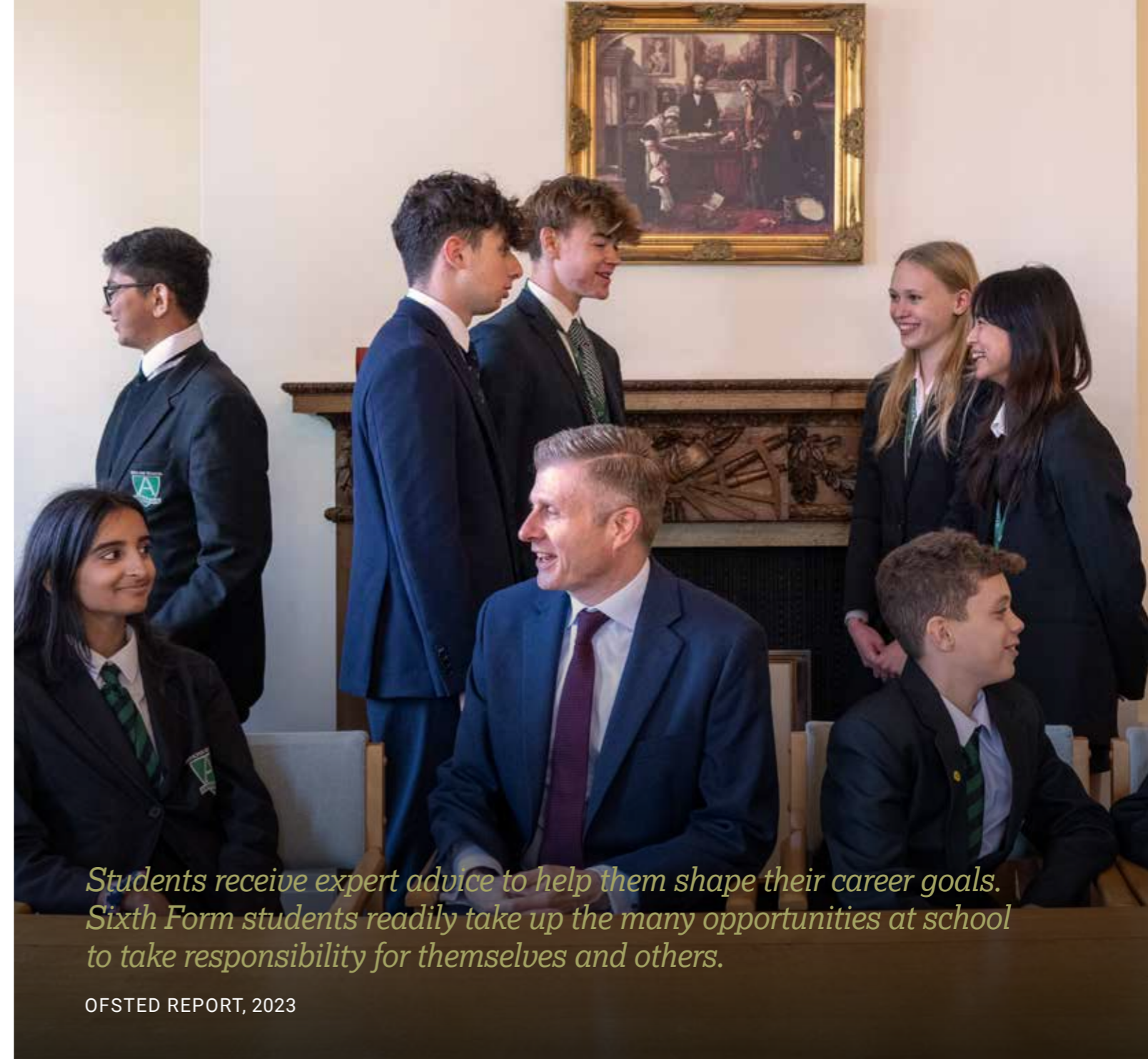
The opinions of students are essential to the school's development, and regular focus groups of students from across the school take place to gather their views on a range of issues including: teaching and learning, behaviour, home-learning and safeguarding, as well as school improvement planning.

The Ashlyns School Sports Leaders and the Learning Ambassador programmes play a fundamental role in developing the leadership skills of our students. Our Sports Leaders represent Ashlyns around the school and wider community at a variety of events, including Sports Days and Community days.

Our team of dedicated and highly skilled KS3 Learning Ambassadors deliver lessons across Berkhamsted primary schools in a variety of subjects. Each learning ambassador visits at least three primary schools per year and are wholly responsible for delivering their lessons to small groups of primary school children. Both the Sports Leader and Learning Ambassador programmes develop confidence, independence and core skills that our students can take forward through school and life.



Parents and carers play a fundamental part in their child's learning and our wider community. Our Parent Forum is open to parents from all year groups and has been influential in informing development on issues such as home learning, careers, attendance, and our extra-curricular programme, amongst many others. Parent Forum feedback also forms an integral part of our school improvement planning each year.



*Students receive expert advice to help them shape their career goals. Sixth Form students readily take up the many opportunities at school to take responsibility for themselves and others.*

OFSTED REPORT, 2023

# Heritage

Ashlyns is proud of its heritage dating back to the 18th century. Our journey began when a retired sea captain, Thomas Coram, became concerned about the number of unwanted children wandering the streets of London and campaigned for a hospital to be built to accommodate them. In 1739 he was granted a Royal Charter and the hospital was established at Lamb's Conduit Fields, Bloomsbury, in 1742.

The Hospital Governors decided to relocate to a healthier environment outside London in 1926. The children were relocated to Redhill, whilst our magnificent Georgian-style buildings, based on the original hospital, were completed in 1935. Many features from the original hospital can be found in the school such as the stained glass in the Chapel, the beautiful staircase in the entrance hall and the carved fireplace in the Board Room.

In 1951, Hertfordshire County Council took responsibility for the educational element of the Hospital, and it was renamed Ashlyns School. The Coram Foundation phased out boarders in 1955, when the Foundation sold the buildings to the County Council. The living accommodation was converted into classrooms and laboratories, and a 'grammar' stream was added to the school, making Ashlyns the first bilateral school in Hertfordshire.

By 1972, Ashlyns School had become a comprehensive upper school, forming part of the three-tier system of education which operated in Berkhamsted. 2013 heralded a new chapter in our history as we welcomed back students from the age of 11 to become a secondary school again.

Our staff and students are proud and conscious of their historic surroundings and we have close links with the Coram Foundation ([www.coram.org.uk](http://www.coram.org.uk)).



## Key Information

### Governance

Since joining this vibrant community, I have had the pleasure of seeing the school go from strength to strength. The school has had a significant investment in and expansion of its facilities and infrastructure, as well as continued improvements in examination performance for GCSE and A level students.

The governors act as a corporate body and have statutory responsibilities to ensure the school meets its legal requirements whilst also making strategic decisions and providing suitable challenge to the Headteacher in order to keep the school moving forward. As a Foundation School, the Ashlyns Board has additional responsibilities regarding the school finances, as the employer and as custodian of the school site.

Our most recent inspection in September 2023 confirmed the school's significant strengths alongside the "positive and purposeful atmosphere in which pupils learn". Perhaps most importantly it also noted that "pupils are proud of their school and appreciate the teamwork between staff and pupils that helps them reach for the highest levels of success".

As governors, we are dedicated to school improvement and are proud to work with the staff, students, parents/carers and the community to ensure Ashlyns builds on its successes to provide an excellent quality of education. Our aim is simple - to

provide an environment where students feel proud, happy and safe – one where they are stimulated and are provided with a platform for a successful future. We look forward to you joining our community.

### Julie Laws, Chair of Governors

### Admissions

Ashlyns School admits 240 students per year into Year 7. All admissions are handled on our behalf by the Local Authority at Hertfordshire County Council, and in accordance with our published admission rules, available on our website: [www.ashlyns.herts.sch.uk/join-our-school/](http://www.ashlyns.herts.sch.uk/join-our-school/)

All applicants must complete the Common Application Form of their home Local Authority. Hertfordshire residents should apply online to Hertfordshire County Council:

[www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions)

Families resident in other authorities must complete the form provided by the authority in which they live. Applicants for Ashlyns School do not need to complete a Supplementary Information Form (SIF).

Further information regarding the secondary transfer process is also available online at the Hertfordshire County Council website. If you have any queries regarding the admissions process please contact our **Admissions Officer on 01442 863605**.

### Safeguarding

Ashlyns School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all students; our governors and staff all share this commitment. The school has policies and procedures in place for safeguarding our students in line with the Local Authority and national guidance. The Child Protection Policy is available on our website. The school adheres to Safer Recruitment guidelines.

### Ashlyns School Association

The Ashlyns School Association (ASA) is run by parents/carers of our current students and plays an important role in the life of the school. This very active group offers a great opportunity for parents to 'get involved' and socialise whilst raising vital funds to boost facilities and run events for our students.

Events during the year include the Christmas Craft Fair, Quiz Night, Student Halloween Disco, Festival of Light and Ashlyns Festival Comedy Nights. Their programme of events can be found on the school website and ASA updates are provided in our weekly e-Bulletin.





Ashlyns School

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[www.ashlyns.herts.sch.uk](http://www.ashlyns.herts.sch.uk)

*“Ashlyns School is an excellent choice for any parent looking for an integrated approach to education. You expect the best for your child and so do we – whatever subjects, courses or activities they choose to follow.”*

JAMES SHAPLAND, HEADTEACHER