

The Prize is Right

An additional prize for academic excellence will be presented at Ashby School's annual awards evening in May.

The Woodcock Prize – which is to be awarded in memory of former headteacher Thomas Arnold Woodcock – is being reinstated after a lapse of many years.

The prize, which was originally for exceptional classics scholars, will be presented to students who show outstanding academic excellence or ability.

Clive Jones, Chair of Governors, who has spearheaded moves to revive the prize, said: "Many former students of Ashby Grammar School will be aware of Thomas Woodcock who was a charismatic and brilliant headmaster.

"Because of his remarkable contribution to the school, I thought it was appropriate to try to reinvigorate and re-establish the Thomas Woodcock Prize."

Thomas Woodcock, who retired as headteacher in 1959 after more than 20 years at the helm, was regarded as a distinguished teacher of classics.

While at Ashby, he lived at School House and helped the school to achieve a nationally acclaimed academic record. An Oxford graduate, he was well known as a Justice of the Peace and an Officer of the Home Guard.

Woodcock is also remembered for his kindness to people in difficulty. In one instance, he paid for the education of two boys whose father was killed in a mining accident.

Woodcock's own daughter, Lady Margaret Arthur, has given her approval for the re-establishment of the Woodcock prize, which has not been awarded since classics was removed from the curriculum at Ashby.

Mr Jones added: "I hope that other people feel, as I do, that the Woodcock prize combines very appropriately the established and permanent values of academic excellence and the historical perspective of Ashby School.

"I would be delighted to hear from anyone who is able to contribute to the fund established to support the Thomas Woodcock prize."

A fund to support the annual prize has now been set up. Anyone wishing to make a contribution to the fund should contact Clive Jones, Chairman of Governors, at Ashby School.