



Headteacher's Letter

As we return to school, let me start by wishing you all a Happy New Year! The Spring term in schools is always a great point to look forward into the rest of the year;. Our Year 9 students will soon start selecting their choices for their GCSEs, whilst attention in Year 11 and 13 will move towards exam preparations and finalising plans for next steps. We have held assemblies with all our Year 7 to 11 students as they returned to talk about their aspirations for the rest of the academic year and beyond as they accept responsibility for their learning and build the resilience that they will need to be successful in school and our community. Within this, we have also revisited some of our expectations so our students can continue to be the best version of themselves. These have included reminders around punctuality, where we expect students to be in their CREW rooms by 8:40am and about wearing their ID badges and lanyards which help keep our site safe. Replacements can be bought online via Wisepay but also from the tills in dining.

As a school, our new year's resolution is to continue to improve our communication through greater use of the Arbor App but also our work with our community. We were delighted to see so many residents at our Christmas Concert and having fun in the bingo that followed. We look forward to more of these events in the coming term, not least through our production of *Les Misérables* where tickets are selling fast. Please remember that if you do have any questions about school, our enquiries form on our website can help get your enquiry to the right person.

With best wishes for the year ahead

Dr Mellor

Next Two Weeks

9 th January	Ashby Sixth Form Applicant Deadline
13 th January	School Early Finish 2pm
22 nd January	Year 9 Parents' Evening (Face to Face) – Read letter here

Pastoral & Safeguarding Updates

Absences for Year 11 Students - Unauthorised absence must be **less than 5%** across the school year, or Students **will not be able to attend the Year 11 Prom.** (School trips, sports events, college visits, medical appointments and general illness are not unauthorised if we are made aware of them)

Other Key Dates & Events

28 th – 31 st January	Les Misérables – Tickets on Sale here . – More Tickets Available Now!
2 nd February	Year 8 HPV Vaccinations
12 th February	School Early Finish 2pm
16th – 20th February	February Half Term
26 th February	Year 12 Parents' Evening (Online)

Wellbeing Updates

Winter comforts - How small routines can bring big joy – [Read the article here](#), published by [Young Minds UK](#). 

In Our Classrooms

What are we learning Spring Half Term 1 .

Please find an overview of what students will be learning in their subjects during the second half of the Autumn term to support them to become Empowered to Learn and know that Anything is Possible. Thank you for your continued support and involvement in your child's education. We look forward to a productive and enriching half term!

Please click the relevant year to open the link.

[Year 7](#)

[Year 8](#)

[Year 9](#)

Operations Updates

School Drop-off and Pick up/Parking

A polite reminder to help make school drop-off and pick-up times more pleasant for everyone in our community.

1. Please turn off engines when waiting: - If you are waiting in your car for an extended period, we kindly ask that you turn off your engine to help reduce the noise for our neighbours.

2. Please be mindful of noise - While we understand that drop-off and pick-up can be a busy and social time, we kindly ask that you respect the privacy and peace of our local community. Please avoid gathering or chatting directly in front of homes, as this can be disruptive.

3. Respect local neighbours when parking - Please do not park along Range Road as this blocks driveways and causes congestion for buses who are arriving/departing our site. We would request that you park away from the school site, so your child can walk safely into school via the authorised entrances.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation in helping to keep our school and local area a welcoming, respectful place for everyone.

Reminder of Early school finish Dates across LiFE MAT schools to facilitate professional learning opportunities for staff. (early finish 2pm)

- Tuesday 13th January 2026
- Thursday 12th February 2026
- Tuesday 10th March 2026
- Tuesday 21st April 2026
- Thursday 25th June 2026

Vacancies

Cover Supervisor – Closing Date Monday 12th

January – Click [here](#) for more details.

Exams

February trial exams for Year 11 and 13 (including some year 12s)

These trial exams are taking place from 23/02/2026 – 05/03/2026. Candidate timetables were emailed to parents on 06/01/26, along with important exam information. Timetables will be printed and issued to students, via their CREW Leader, in the coming days.

Ashby School's resilience arrangements:

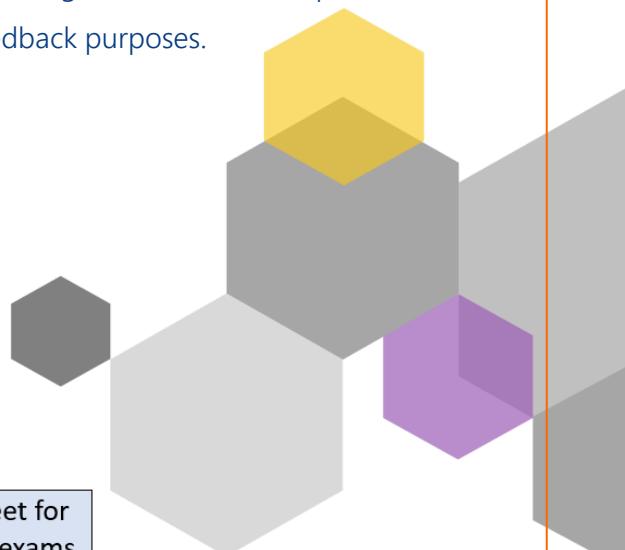
In line with Ofqual's guidance, our trial exam papers in the Spring term form our 'exam resilience' arrangements, with students being assessed under exam-like conditions. For example, students will not know the questions in the assessment beforehand, will work independently and without assistance (other than as required for a reasonable adjustment), will not have access to books or revision notes, will be supervised during the assessment and will be assessed under timed conditions equivalent to those under which they would expect to complete the assessment (or part of an assessment) during their exam.

Assessment evidence collected and retained under this guidance will only be used to determine grades in the unlikely situation that exams and formal assessment cannot go ahead. Original work will be kept but students can have copies of their work to assist them with learning and for feedback purposes.

Here is a reminder of the trial exams coming up:

Year 12 & 13 Students – go straight to exam rooms

Click [Here](#) for the February Post 16 Trial exams Timetable.



Year 11 Students – see meeting instructions below:

Click [Here](#) for the February Year 11 Trial exams Timetable.

Exam Room	Where to meet	Time to meet for Morning exams	Time to meet for Afternoon exams
Sports Hall	Bus Park	09:05	13:05
BGYM	Bus Park	09:05	13:05 12:55 for GCSE Chemistry on 24th Feb
B7 (Music)	Bus Park	09:05	
B1, B21, B22, B23	LINC (opposite the turnstile)	09:05	13:00 before end of lunch

Communication Update - REMINDER

A reminder that we are moving some communications to the School Newsletter and/or Arbor App notifications. We advise you to allow push notifications on the Arbor App, if you haven't already done this. If you don't have this enabled, you may still receive emails to inform you when a notification is sent to you. You will still receive some communications via email, including the fortnightly newsletter, urgent notices, specific trip information for your child and behaviour communications. We may occasionally use text messaging for a time sensitive issue such as an emergency closure. If you don't have the Arbor App installed, please [follow this link](#) for further guidance. We will evaluate this approach in the Spring term and thank you for your understanding whilst we improve our systems.

Food Preparation and Nutrition

KS3 Design Technology - Students have now rotated Design Technology groups. Students who are now in Food Prep and Nutrition will find their practical lesson dates and ingredients on Arbor. They also need to bring an apron, and a container to take home their cooking.

Year 11 Food Prep and Nutrition. - Students this will be bringing home extended exam question booklets. Students are to complete one question a week for homework, and then the answers will be reviewed in class. Details of due dates are on Arbor.

Students will also be completing their NEA 2 practical element this half term, which accounts for the majority of the marks for NEA 2. There are no set recipes, or provided recipes for this, students are required to source and plan their own recipes. Mobile phones cannot be used in the sessions so all recipes MUST be printed. For the final all-day session, students must use a plan which they will write in lessons.

Students cannot deep fat fry and cannot use nuts.

For the all-day exam, students are expected to lay a table out, so will need tablecloths and presentation dishes. (We have a limited number in school).

Students will be off timetable for all elements of the practical sessions, and it is very important that they attend the sessions, as it is hard to find time to catch up.

Details of the dates are below:

	Week	Day	Lessons	Date	
11A	A	Thurs	LESSON 4 AND 5	22 January 2026	SECTION B DISH 1
	A	Mon	ALL DAY	02 February 2026	SECTION B DISHES 2/3/4
	B	Wed	ALL DAY	11 February 2026	ALL DAY EXAM - SECTION D DISHED 5/6/7
11B	Week	Day	Lessons	Date	
	B	Tues	LESSON 1 AND 2	27 January 2026	SECTION B DISH 1
	A	Mon	ALL DAY	02 February 2026	SECTION B DISHES 2/3/4
	B	Thurs	ALL DAY	12 February 2026	ALL DAY EXAM - SECTION D DISHED 5/6/7
11E	Week	Day	Lesson	Date	
	A	Tues	LESSONS 3 AND 4	20 January 2026	SECTION B DISH 1
	B	Fri	ALL DAY	30 January 2026	SECTION B DISHES 2/3/4
	B	Tues	ALL DAY	10 February 2026	ALL DAY EXAM - SECTION D DISHED 5/6/7

What's been happening...

December Sparx Maths Update - Each week, we reward our students for doing their Sparx Maths homework. For every week of homework completed, we give students: a positive point on Arbor, a raffle ticket and a chance to build up to our half termly and termly rewards. In lessons, students who have done 100% of their Sparx Maths homework that week are entered into a spin the wheel and can earn a mini prize each week. The table below shows the number of rewards we have issued to students by 17th December 2025:

Reward	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
Golden tickets	176	137	124	113	76
1 HT certificate	176	137	124	113	76
Raffle tickets	2938	2364	2340	2121	1952
Autumn Raffle Winner	Jack T 72Ma2 Edie C 71Ma4	Owen A 81Ma1 Lilian G 81Ma3	Minnie B 91Ma1 Erin C 92Ma1	Julia P 101Ma5 Riley F 102Ma4	Reuben K 111Ma3 Alexander M 112Ma1

Our termly raffle was drawn on Wednesday 17th December and our winners each received a Christmas Selection Box. Raffle tickets will be reset ready for the new term after Christmas, and the next raffle will take place on Tuesday 24th March 2026. Raffle tickets will be earned each week up to that date. There will be DOUBLE RAFFLE TICKETS issued for the Sparx Maths homework due on 7th January 2026 and 25th February 2026, giving our students a whopping 13 chances to earn raffle tickets before the draw. Some winners below:



We also run an initiative called "The Secret Class". Each week one class in each year group is selected (at random, in secret). When the deadline is passed, the Sparx Maths completion for the whole class is checked, and if it is 100% the class win a prize. This term we had three different Secret Class winners. 101Ma1 won it in week X, 91Ma1 won it in week X and most recently, 71Ma3 won it in week X. There is a real buzz around the secret class in lessons, and we hope to see many more classes being celebrated as the Secret Class in the Spring term.

The next wave of rewards will be issued in the week commencing 12th January, where we will be recognising students for having 100% completion for 2 half terms (or 1 half term if they missed out last time). 2 half terms at 100% will earn students a certificate and a postcard home, so keep an eye out for these!

Mrs Atkins, Teacher of Maths



Winter WATER SAFETY

EVERY YEAR CHILDREN ARE AT RISK WHEN THEY ARE TEMPTED TO PLAY ON THE ICE FORMED ON OPEN WATERS AND ADULTS FIND THEMSELVES AT RISK AS THEY ATTEMPT TO SAVE THEM. OVER 50% OF ICE RELATED DROWNING INVOLVED AN ATTEMPTED RESCUE OF ANOTHER PERSON OR A DOG

TOP TIPS



Keep away from the edge of the water



Only walk in well lit areas



Keep dogs on their leads



Walk with an adult or group of friends **Never go on the ice under any circumstances**



WHAT TO DO IN DANGER



Shout help and call 999. Use your what3words location



Never go onto the ice to try and rescue a person or animal



Keep an eye on the person in danger



If possible lie flat to spread your weight



Wait for the emergency services