



3 November 2011

Dear Ascham Parents

I am delighted to be appointed as the new Headmistress of Ascham School, and I am very much looking forward to taking up my new post in January 2013. Over the next 12 months or so, I hope to get to know many of you, and most especially your daughters, so that we can begin with a sense of purpose and in a very positive way and I shall enjoy this enormously.

It is clear to me that Ascham is both an impressive school and a very special place and I am truly honoured to be able to lead this fine establishment into the next phase of its long and distinguished history, continuing the great traditions of excellence that are so clearly in place. As you will have seen from my biography I have been a Head of two outstanding and very successful girls' schools in the UK for more than a decade. I am deeply committed to the education of girls and young women and I believe firmly that if our daughters are to rise to the challenges of the futures that await them, then they need to have a forward-thinking education: one that develops resilience, agility of mind, flexibility, creativity and a strong sense of purpose. In their lives they will have to juggle their relationships and families with work and ongoing learning. In an increasingly demanding, ever-changing and fast-moving world, they will need to be grounded with a strong set of values to be ready to embrace and initiate the changes the world needs.

The world is a much smaller place than ever it was before and your daughters need to learn to think and act globally. I am especially pleased to be able to bring an international dimension to the school and I will encourage your daughters to develop a confidence in engaging with the wider world which will give them many advantages in their careers and lives. With a great education comes also the responsibility of giving back, of seeking to make the world a better place, and I look forward to exploring this too with your daughters.

The experiences your daughters have at school are crucial in developing their ability to be able to make the most of their lives. Not only do they need to be able to develop their academic talents – the critical thinking and intellectual independence which the Dalton Plan, quite rightly prized at Ascham, develops so well – but they need also to develop themselves in every other respect. I believe that it is the role of a great school to enable young people to grow fully into the people they are meant to be, and release from them that deep creativity and spirit that makes them truly themselves. We do this by recognising who they are and giving them the space to grow, while stretching and supporting them in equal measure. School years should be challenging years, a time of real growth and development; they should also be happy years, as life-long friendships are forged and vistas to an exciting future open up. As a proud parent myself, I know that what I really want for my children is that they are happy and fulfilled and I carry this passion into everything I do for every single one of the girls in my charge. Together, we can encourage your daughters to become the very best of themselves.

I am very much looking forward to meeting as many of you as possible early next term, in the week beginning 13 February 2012; in the meantime, I send you and your daughters every good wish for a successful end to this year.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Helen Wright'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr Helen Wright