

28 February 2025



UXBRIDGE
HIGH SCHOOL

Dear parent/guardian

The priority of all Headteachers is safety. Considering recent high-profile events in schools and involving teenagers, I feel compelled to write to you to ensure all stakeholders share the importance of working collaboratively to keep students safe in school and beyond. It continues to be a necessity for the academy trust to reassure the school community that they are taking every available action to mitigate against current potential safety concerns.

Uxbridge High School is a community of nearly 1400 students and well over 100 staff. Students and staff do feel safe here because of the importance we place upon wellbeing and welfare. We are also open and honest that whilst we promote the highest standards for behaviour and values things happening nationally and in society are likely to be replicated in a large secondary school.

This likelihood increases if we don't have preventative policies and practices in place. By holding this view, we ensure everything we do from the smallest routine to some of the more visible high-profile strategies are focussed on student and staff safety. We know most parents are supportive of the measures we take; we hope that a shared understanding of the reasons we have policies and practices will strengthen support and alignment. To highlight the importance of communication, I consistently share that when we collaborate with a shared vision and aligned expectations, young people tend to recognise this and are far more likely to respond positively.

I know parents and guardians particularly need to be reassured that leaders take all available steps to mitigate against any potential harm to young people in school. Examples of pro-active approaches include lessons, assemblies, student communication, the 'Your life your choice' event, security arch, spot searches, the behaviour policy, mobile phone policy and the toilet and washroom policy. These are examples and not an exhaustive list. These strategies are designed to ensure students are educated about safety and risks of harmful behaviour are minimised.

Examples of the main risk areas (again not exhaustive) we aim to mitigate against include sexual harassment, bullying, online bullying or grooming, carrying/using dangerous items such as weapons or substances and intruders gaining access to the school site. We have a 'serious incident lockdown protocol' which relies on us being accountable for where every student in the school is. This last point is a reactive measure, but it is important parents and students understand we must be prepared. We must not be complacent, and we are trained in school to have the mindset that 'it could happen here' to ensure all risks are minimised and there are deterrents in place.

As parents/guardians there are also many ways you can support safety in schools. Examples include:

- Supporting school policies and recognising that they promote safety and the school values.
- Having open conversations with young people, encouraging them to report or share concerns either with you or staff at the school.
- Regularly check mobile phone or online interactions, limit or block screen time in late evenings.
- Checking school bags, clothing or bedrooms for vapes or other harmful items.
- Ensuring they are safe on their journey to and from school, with the same approach as we have in school - if it doesn't feel right don't take the risk and ensure you report it.
- Monitoring their wellbeing, looking for signs of stress or risky behaviour which includes being alert to changes in mood, eating or sleeping habits and seeking support from your GP or the school if needed.

POSITIVE • RESPECTFUL • OPEN MINDED • UNIQUE • DETERMINED

Principal: Louisa Seymour BEd

The Greenway, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB8 2PR | T: 01895 234 060 | office@uhs.org.uk | www.uhs.org.uk

Uxbridge High School Academy Trust - A company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales with company number 07623418

Our students are very perceptive and good at reporting things if they are worried about their own and others safety, and we hope that parents actively encourage this. I know many parents will be doing all the above and more. I also know we are very busy and gentle nudges and reminders are helpful. As the guardian of a young person in Year 11, I appreciate prompts from school, and I hope you see this letter as well intentioned to demonstrate our commitment to working collaboratively for the benefit of every young person and safety of the school and local community.

Parents should also familiarise themselves with the following policies that have a safety link or focus:
Behaviour policy:

<https://www.uhs.org.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=712&type=pdf>

Mobile phones see it lose it policy:

<https://www.uhs.org.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=362&type=pdf>

Toilet, washroom and medical facilities policy:

<https://www.uhs.org.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=747&type=pdf>

In relation to the final policy, we know that parents/guardians want to ensure that this practice does not impact on student health or welfare. Last summer, we invested in a capital project to improve the toilet provision in the school, which has been well received by students. We appreciate young people need access to dignified bathroom facilities and the policy ensures that we minimise the length of time without open access. The policy also provides arrangements for emergencies, students with medical conditions and/or SEND needs and that we can mitigate against the risk factors described in this letter and therefore the safety of all students and staff is not compromised.

In relation to findings from recent surveys of different stakeholders, the toilets will be opened and supervised from 13:55 until 14:25 during period 5 lessons. Students will be given this access only in the rare occasions when they have an urgent requirement for access. This is being trialled this half term with the potential for a permanent amendment to the implementation of the policy. This relies on students using this option responsibly and proportionately. We will keep you informed of the progress and continue to conduct regular surveys regarding the safety and well-being of students.

Thank you, as always for your continued support and please thank the young people as we continue to do in school. We are also grateful that spring is thinking about making an appearance this week. Many young people are already brilliant at bringing a water bottle each day, however, please remind them of the importance of doing this and staying hydrated as the weather gets warmer

Please feel free to visit parent surgery on a Monday after school if you have any questions on the content of this letter.

Yours sincerely

L Seymour

**Louisa Seymour (Ms)
Principal**