

School culture - Values and vision

Learning is everything – transformative power of education

Respect – is a minimum expectation of every member of the school community

Responsibility – the school trusts students to make the right choices and to take responsibility for their actions and reactions

Resilience – learning to endure difficulties and to continue through challenges is every bit as important as academic success

1. Safeguarding – (always first on any list of the school's priorities)

Students feel safe, and understand clearly what is acceptable and unacceptable

- Explicit lists of what unacceptable behaviour is – in student planner, reinforced in assemblies, tutor-time and constantly by staff as appropriate -
- Clear explanations during transition from middle-school about what to do if feeling unsafe, including guidance assembly at start of year 9
- Students surveys, student panels, hotspot mapping
- Contextual safeguarding toolkit
- Consistent application of the school's safeguarding and behaviour policy

Students know who they can talk to if they feel unhappy or unsafe, and feel comfortable doing so

- Posters of DSL and deputy DSLs in every form base as well as around the school, referred to by tutors and staff
- Guidance assembly at start of Year 9
- Regularly reinforced in PSHCE, assemblies and form time
- The school website to include signposts to Childline and CHAD

Students know that their safety and general well-being are important to all adults in the school

- Staff safeguarding training
- Staff manner with students, including availability and patience
- Staff and whole-school actions and responses to surveys including peer on peer and contextual safeguarding
- Diverse ways of reporting concerns, including non-public ways through the school website and email system

2. Student Culture

Students know that success in school will give them a better life

- Careers and work-experience programme Sixth form mentoring and celebration of sixth form and alumni success
- Assembly programme
- Parental and staff messaging and support
- Students read for pleasure and make use of the school's library

Students are polite and follow instructions from adults

- School expectations around courtesy and obedience explained during transition, including the reason for those expectations
- Staff enforce the school's behaviour policy consistently and fairly
- Behaviour policy and implementation revisited frequently in staff briefings, INSETS, Year Team meetings and department meetings
- Heads of Year and the pastoral team support students by explicitly teaching courtesy where appropriate

Students wear their uniform correctly and attend school punctually on every school day unless there is an acceptable reason not to

- All staff challenge uniform being worn incorrectly.
- Tutors check uniform each morning to praise students who are smart and ready to learn
- The benefits of good attendance and punctuality are given a high profile at school, and are promoted during transition and through form-time
- The school's attendance and punctuality policy is clearly explained to students

Students recognise that they are members of a large community, and that their words and actions impact on other members of that community

- Sixth form mentoring and conduct
- PHSCRSE Programme
- Pastoral care reinforcing school values of respect and responsibility especially HOYs and tutors
- Anti-bullying, social media policies, practices and messages

Students do things to support others, whether that be in their friendship groups, classes or the wider community

- Year teams create opportunities for service in litter-picks, beach cleans and fund-raising, with their efforts recognised by the school
- Celebration of things students do, big and small, to support others
- Rewards policy implemented consistently and fairly by all staff

Students work hard and often go above and beyond what is asked of them in terms of independent study

- Student aspirations are raised by widening participation projects like The Brilliant Club, through trips and visits related to careers and further study, through the high expectations of staff and through sixth form mentoring
- Students who go the extra mile have their efforts recognised and celebrated
- The school's extra-curricular offer inculcates a love of achievement and learning

Students treat the school environment with respect

- The school creates a safe and pleasant environment for students to study and socialise in
- Expectations around litter, vandalism and graffiti are made clear both in the school's policies and during transition
- The school's rewards and sanctions section of the behaviour policy are applied fairly and consistently by all staff
- CCTV is used where necessary to identify students who have damaged the school environment

3. Parent Culture

Parents trust the school, and support its decisions

Staff communicate well with parents, and are transparent and open in their actions

- There is a clear escalation and concern/complaint procedure, which the school follows
- The school's behaviour, attendance and anti-bullying policies are followed consistently

Parents feel 'in touch' with things going on at the school, and that their views are valued

- The school sends out regular updates to parents about events and successes
- The school's website is easy to navigate and well maintained
- The school surveys parents annually, and the survey informs improvement planning

Parents understand the school's expectations and why the school has them

- Expectations are made explicit, as are their rationales – they are explained at transition, in the student planner, on website and constantly returned to in staff briefing and INSET for consistency.

Parents feel comfortable contacting the school with concerns or complaints

- Parental communication is encouraged and valued
- Clear timelines in place for when parents can expect a response from the school
- Staff are unfailingly courteous and helpful when dealing with parents -
- Serious concerns, either on the part of the parent or the school, are escalated promptly
- The school accepts when it has got something wrong and apologises

Parents treat staff with courtesy and respect

- Middle and senior leaders always meet with parents who have been rude or aggressive toward staff to resolve the issue and reiterate the need for respect between all members of the school community

4. Staff Culture

Staff are professional in all aspects of their conduct

- The staff code of conduct is explained during new staff induction and all staff must agree to abide by it
- All staff, and especially UPS staff and middle/senior leaders, model professional conduct at all times
- Rare instances of unprofessional conduct are challenged

The priority for all staff is the safety and well-being of the school's students

- All staff are safeguarding trained, and are constantly reminded of indicators of neglect, abuse, exploitation or radicalisation.
- Staff understand the process for reporting safeguarding concerns

Staff feel valued, listened to and respected by all managers

- Staff concerns and views are always listened to, and are collected through a range of formal and informal means, including line-management meetings, staff surveys etc, but also through an 'open door' culture amongst middle and senior leaders
- Both at interview and through subsequent coaching, middle and senior leaders are selected for and developed to show empathy and patience
- Staff wellbeing is a priority for the school, with regular workload reviews, support available with mental health and recognition of excellent work

Staff understand and support the school's aims and objectives

- The school's aims and objectives are clearly presented, formally once a year in September, and then throughout the year at staff INSET, at subject leaders and through line-management and performance management
- UPS staff, middle and senior leaders model all the school's policies and practices
- The staff handbook is up-to-date and outlines not only the aims and objectives but their rationale and longer-term strategic aims of the school
- The school evaluation form and school improvement plan is shared with staff and parents

Staff feel they are constantly and appropriately professionally developed

- The school's professional learning programme is designed to meet the aims of the school whilst being flexible enough to meet the needs of all staff
- PL sessions are regular, staff-led and subject specific
- The PL programme is evaluated through staff feedback and monitoring impact through lesson observations and student outcomes
- The school's lesson observation programme means all teaching staff receive regular and meaningful feedback on their practice
- Line-managers agree target for staff which are challenging but achievable