



Year 8

Information Evening



Ursuline High School



Welcome!

Mr Williams - Assistant Headteacher

Miss Smith - Head of Year



Our school prayer



Gracious God,
Let us remain in harmony,
United together;
All of one heart and one will.
Let us be bound to one another
By the bond of love,
Respecting each other,
Helping each other,
And bearing with each other
In Jesus Christ.
For if we try to be like this,
Without doubt,
You, Lord God,
Will be in our midst.
Amen



Our Purpose

Our school theme for 2025-26 is 'Pilgrims of Love'

Our Year 8 virtues are:

- ▶ Autumn term - Listening
- ▶ Spring term - Compassionate
- ▶ Summer term – Faith-filled



Our aim

Our aim is for your daughter to be happy and flourish here at the Ursuline.

A clear partnership between the school and home is one of the best ways you can support your daughter throughout her time here.



Thank you for your continuing support of the Governors Development Fund

- ▶ The Governors Development Fund is the schools' parental contribution scheme.
- ▶ As a Catholic Academy Trust school, we rely on good financial management of school funds and the fantastic generosity of our whole school community to enable and enhance the education experience to our students.
- ▶ All additional funding secured makes a significant impact on our school's offering and the programmes we provide for our students.
- ▶ Your support goes directly towards **enriching the educational opportunities** for our students and **maintaining the exceptional environment** in which the students learn.



Thank you for your continuing support of the Governors Development Fund

- ▶ In recent years, your contributions have supported many works including the refurbishment of student services, construction of the accommodation of T Level Nursing, our Katherine Johnson T Level Digital Building, Business and T Level Science, the new roof at St Angela's, new doors, floors and heating upgrades/repair, renovation of our main kitchen /dining room, tennis court upgrade, and LED lighting and CCTV throughout the Main School.
- ▶ Additionally, Governors contribute to the **School's Chaplaincy programmes** to sustain and develop the school's charism and ethos, and our **Laptop Scheme** where our students have the use of a laptop throughout your child's education at the Ursuline.



Governors Development Fund

We ask all parents/carers to make a voluntary contribution of **£30 per month** to the school, for the duration of their child's education at Ursuline High School. An **annual payment of £360** can be made if preferred.

Monthly donations will be collected by Direct Debit. We ask parents / carers to make the first donation on the date of their daughter's interview. Further donations will be collected by Direct Debit from September onwards.

Gift Aid: If you are a UK taxpayer, we can claim back the tax you have already paid, from the Inland Revenue. For every pound you donate, the school receives an additional 25 pence, at no extra cost to you.



Governors Development Fund

For those facing financial constraints, the **school supports families who are unable to afford the full donation**. If this is the case, please let us know.

Also, your ongoing support through involvement in school activities, volunteering, and fostering a sense of community is equally invaluable.

To discuss the Fund, and/or your donation please contact our finance department.

Thank you and all our families for your continued support. It is appreciated and defines the schools' overall success.



Miss Smith - Head of Year 8

PS



Tonight, we will cover:

- ▶ Who's who in the Y8 tutor team
- ▶ How and when to contact the school
- ▶ How we will communicate with you
- ▶ Essential guide to learning at UHS
- ▶ Measuring progress in learning
- ▶ Pastoral Care
- ▶ Enrichment



The Year 8 team

8 Angela	Jacques Tagholm (Maths)	<u>Jacques.Tagholm</u>
8 Bernadette	Melanie Guillet (MFL)	<u>Melanie.Guillet</u>
8 Catherine	Georgia Davey (DT/Food Tech)	<u>Georgia.Davey</u>
8 Francis	Rayife Atasoy (Maths)	<u>Rayife.Atasoy</u>
8 Margaret	Sarah Shires (English)	<u>Sarah.Shires</u>
8 Teresa	John Fitzgerald (Art)	<u>John.Fitzgerald</u>
8 Ursula	Renoshni Carol (English)	<u>Renoshni.Carol</u>



Contacting us

Please use email to contact us

- ▶ **Form tutors** - general enquires about the Ursuline, friendship issues, organisation, homework, clubs/enrichment, uniform, equipment, travelling to/from school, punctuality, trips/calendar events. (email address on previous slides)
- ▶ **Head of Year or Pastoral Support Assistant** - Mental health, bullying, safeguarding, online safety, absence request forms, request for your daughter to receive school counselling/educational well-being practitioner, financial support/free school meals.
Paige.Smith@Ursulinehigh.merton.sch.uk Head of Year
- ▶ Magdalena.Sawicka@ursulinehigh.merton.sch.uk pastoral support (non teaching)
- ▶ **Ms Young** - Attendance and punctuality/lateness. All absences and lates must be reported via email or phone no later than 8.45am.
Bernadette.young@ursulinehigh.merton.sch.uk 0203 908 3144
- ▶ **Subject teachers** must be contacted for any subject specific enquiries.
- ▶ **Our IT Helpdesk** is available to help with any parent portal, laptops, and other IT queries. laptop.doctor@ursulinehigh.merton.sch.uk
- ▶ All staff contact details can be found on the [Ursuline directory](#) on our website. on our website and in your year group [Curriculum Guide](#).



Safeguarding team



Ms Rachael Gilmore
Assistant Headteacher
Inclusion
Designated Safeguarding Lead
Mental Health Lead



Ms Michelle Alexander
Deputy Headteacher
Standards



Ms Kerry Connor
Assistant Headteacher
Ethos and Behaviour
Safeguarding Officer



Ms Sarah McCourt
Deputy Designated Safeguarding
and Wellbeing Lead



Ms Danielle Boateng
Care Co-ordinator
Safeguarding Officer



*inspire
together*



Common Year 8 worries

Developmental & Emotional Changes

- Hormonal changes can bring mood swings, insecurity, and self-consciousness.
- Body image worries: Heightened concern with weight, appearance, and comparison with peers.
- Emotional intensity: Friendships and conflicts can feel overwhelming.

Friendships & Social Dynamics

- Friendship groups changing: Shifts from Year 7 'best friends forever' to more fluid social groups.
- Cliques & exclusion: Some may feel left out or pressured to fit into certain groups.
- Gossip & fallouts: Social drama is common, especially in all-girls settings where relationships are central.



Common Year 8 worries

Online & Social Media Pressures

- Increased social media use (TikTok, Snapchat, Instagram) leading to:
 - Comparisons and FOMO (fear of missing out).
 - Cyberbullying or subtle online exclusion.
 - Pressure to look or act 'mature'.

Academic & School Pressures

- The novelty of secondary school has worn off, but GCSEs still feel 'far away,' so some lose focus.
- Struggles with organisation, homework, and motivation.
- Pressure from parents/teachers vs. desire for independence.

💬 Identity & Belonging

- Exploring identity: 'Who am I? Where do I belong?' questions become more prominent.
- Testing boundaries with rules and authority.
- Influence of role models (older girls, celebrities, online figures).

Wellbeing & Safety Concerns

- Low-level anxiety and self-esteem issues often surface.
- Some may experiment with risky behaviours (early dating, vaping, etc.), even in all-girls schools.
- Girls may also be more open about struggles — but peer judgment can hold them back.



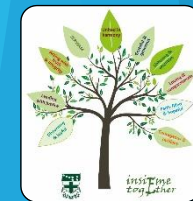
Key dates for your diary

- ▶ 1st October – Rosary Prayer Service
- ▶ 7th October - Learning Support Department coffee morning 9.15-10.15 (by invitation)
- ▶ 8th October – Early closure for Sixth form open evening
- ▶ 15th October – Feast of St Teresa of Avila
- ▶ 17th October – Show racism the red card – Wear Red Day
- ▶ 21st October – Feast of St Ursula
- ▶ 23rd October -12.50 finish for Academic Review Day (ARD)
- ▶ 24th October - 12.50 finish for Academic Review Day (ARD)
- ▶ 27th October – Half term
- ▶ 3rd November – INSET day

Each end of half term you will receive a Newsletter from me which will have other upcoming dates.



Mr Williams - Assistant Headteacher



Smart Devices at School

- ▶ **Smartphones** are huge safeguarding concerns which you will all be aware of due to ongoing research, campaigning and media attention.
- ▶ In addition, academic research is clear that mobile phone use in school is a distraction, negatively impact behaviour, progress and attainment, compromise the integrity of assessments, enable access to apps we cannot control or monitor in school and are banned by JCQ, the exams regulatory authority.
- ▶ We are proud to say we have a clear policy in place regarding the use of phones and smart watches at school.
- ▶ **Phones are allowed for travel purposes.** However, to help keep everyone safe while commuting and at school, we recommend that expensive mobile phones are not brought into school. However, this is at parents' discretion.



Smart Devices at School

- ▶ **Smart Watches of any kind are not allowed on school premises at all.**
Please keep them at home.
- ▶ **Regardless of phone make/model, and in accordance with research, Government guidance and our [Digital Learning & Safety Policy](#), if you choose to send your daughter to school with a mobile phone, it must be switched off, placed in their padlocked locker at the start of the day and remain there until the end of the day. Any phones seen or heard in school will be confiscated. There are exceptions for medical reasons, please speak to us.**
- ▶ If a phone (or other device) is confiscated, a letter will be sent home to inform parents and request that they collect it from Student Services. Confiscated devices will not be returned on the same day. Students who are concerned about being contactable on the way home will be offered one of our school's 'emergency' phones and they can text the number to a parent, returning the phone to Student Services the next day.



Social Media

BeReal, Discord, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Snapchat, TikTok, X(Twitter) and WhatsApp etc

Social media is a huge safeguarding concern. Whilst social media does not negatively impact everyone, every child who uses these platforms is exposed to dangerous algorithms that care nothing about their wellbeing.

Whilst some apps do bring a level of socialisation and connectivity, there are huge risks including harmful content, online grooming & sextortion, bullying, dangerous viral challenges, negative and dangerous impact on self-esteem, unreliable news source and so on.

Social media including BeReal, Discord, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, X(Twitter) and WhatsApp, currently have a minimum age of 13+. Many experts and parent groups believe social media is not suitable for tweens and young teens and there is widespread campaigning to raise the minimum age beyond 13.



Social Media

Please be aware that if a child younger than 13 has social media, then this means they have faked their date of birth to set up an account, and the algorithm is feeding them content that is not age appropriate.

In accordance with our [Digital Learning & Safety Policy](#) and the current minimum age of 13, all **social media is prohibited for year 7 and many year 8 students**, and we ask you to support us.

If your child does have social media, we ask that you have these accounts deleted until they reach the minimum age (currently 13)

If students do use social media, this will be taken into consideration when dealing with issues raised.



Online Safety - Recommendations

- ▶ It is essential that parents get to know the common platforms and how your children engage with them, understand more about online cultures and terminology, and talk to your kids about what they are engaging with and how it makes them feel.
- ▶ Finally, if you suspect risky behaviour then reach out for help.



Online Safety - Resources

- ▶ There are many valuable online safety resources available to parents including [Common Sense Media](#), [Devorah Heitner](#), [Dr Jean Twenge](#), [Jessica Chalmers \(Social Jess\)](#), [Jonathan Haidt](#), [National Online Safety](#), [NSPCC](#), [Titania Jordan](#), [Thinkuknow.co.uk](#), and [UK Safer Internet Centre](#).
- ▶ The Netflix drama [Adolescence](#), and documentaries [Swiped](#), [Childhood 2.0](#) and [The Social Dilemma](#) are recommended. Also, Jonathan Haidt's [The Anxious Generation](#) and Dr Vivek Murthy's [The Social Media and Youth Mental Health Advisory](#) are very insightful reads and finally, The UK campaigns [@smartphonefreechildhood](#), [@delaysmartphones](#) and [Safescreens.org](#) are ones to follow.



Online Safety - Resources

- ▶ Please visit the [Keeping Safe Online](#) page of our website to access our extensive online safety resource library. In addition, you can access our Directory of additional parenting resources [here](#).
- ▶ Thank you in advance for your support. We need to work together to support our young people, and we are stronger when we all do the same.



Use of AI

- ▶ Research shows that using AI without a critical approach reduces student learning significantly.
- ▶ No AI is allowed to be used by anyone below 13. Very few AI tools can be used after 13 without explicit parental consent.
- ▶ Using AI poses significant safeguarding risks.
- ▶ Our aim is to empower students to use it safely, with purpose and critically.



Use of AI - Exam board / JCQ stance.

- ▶ Students using AI to complete any assessed work are at risk of severe sanctions from exam boards.
- ▶ All NEAs at UHSW are run through Turn It In Originality - the same software exam boards use.
- ▶ Any unacknowledged use of AI can result in the student being barred for all exams for that exam board.
- ▶ Acknowledged use of will result in that section only being discredited.
- ▶ Students should not be using AI for homework. AI gives you the end result without the learning journey.



AI in Education

- ▶ Currently, UHSW will not use AI as a decision-making tool.
- ▶ No personal data will be entered into closed or open AI systems.
- ▶ Any use of AI will be to enhance T&L and support staff workload.
- ▶ We will be transparent with any use of AI.
- ▶ Staff have been trained in AI compliance - statutory regulations, KCSIE etc - and safe use. Our AI policy will be updated regularly.



What can we do?

- ▶ Recognise the risks - has a 12/13 year old got the emotional maturity to handle them?
- ▶ Limit the time spent on electronic devices and remove them in the evenings/night.
- ▶ Know what she is doing online - open space at home for access
- ▶ Know logins and passwords
- ▶ School monitoring of devices - even at home (Smoothwall)



The “home school social contract”

We aim to
acknowledge every
email within 24 hours

- ▶ It is a partnership
- ▶ You and we are all doing our best for the students here
- ▶ Communication and support is key
- ▶ We need to see you, in person/online, at ARDs and Parents Evenings



Parent Engagement & Communication

- ▶ We are committed to ensuring parents/carers are engaged in supporting their daughter's academic progress and personal development.
- ▶ Parents are given many opportunities over the year to meet with their daughters' teachers and tutors to discuss their progress and receive regular progress reports.
- ▶ We provide opportunities for parents/carers to learn more about the world their daughters live in, through resource sharing, information evenings, and specialist sessions on issues such as online safety and mental health. We have an expansive [library of resources](#) for parents of adolescents including our [online safety specific resource library](#).



Parent Engagement & Communication

- ▶ We are committed to effectively communicating with our parents and carers about school life and we use a range of mediums incl. Arbor, email, website, information meetings, communications from the Head and other staff, our suite of newsletters and social media.
- ▶ We communicate with all primary guardians via email. There can be more than 1 primary guardian per student. Exceptions include consent forms for trips - here we communicate with 1 guardian only. This is to avoid receiving two responses.



Parent Engagement & Communication

We communicate with the email addresses on record. Do let us know if your details do change.

Emails will come from Ursuline High School or a staff member. We recommend notifications are enabled, that you add us to your safe senders list.

Please check for emails from the school daily, to ensure you are up to date on news from the school.

Remember to check your junk/spam to ensure nothing important/urgent is missed.



Parent Engagement & Communication

Remember to check your junk/spam to ensure nothing important/urgent is missed.

We use a suite of portals to support various elements of our students' learning journeys, including Arbor (records & reports), Evolve (consent forms/trips), and ParentPay (lunches & other payments). Further information & logins have been issued to parents.

If you're on Instagram and you don't already follow us, please do. You can find us @uhswimbledon. This is not compulsory - important communications will be shared directly.

Visit the website to read more about our [Communications Strategy](#) and [Parent Portals](#).



Enrichment

- ▶ It is our expectation for all students to be involved in extracurricular activities.
- ▶ Tutors will monitor their extra-curricular to help students who may find it challenging to engage.
- ▶ A link to the enrichment programme can be found here.
- ▶ Enrichment - Ursuline High School
- ▶ Please go through with your daughter to identify enrichment she would like to engage in - there are lots to choose from.



Where can I get practical advice?

- ▶ [Starting secondary school - BBC Parents' Toolkit - BBC Bitesize](#)
- ▶ [www.childnet.com](#)
- ▶ [www.saferinternet.org.uk](#)
- ▶ [https://www.internetmatters.org/](#)



- ▶ [Childnet](#) offers a toolkit to support parents and carers of children of any age to start discussions about their online life, to set boundaries around online behaviour and technology use, and to find out where to get more help and support
- ▶ [Commonsensemedia](#) provide independent reviews, age ratings, & other information about all types of media for children and their parents
- ▶ [Government advice](#) about protecting children from specific online harms such as child sexual abuse, sexting, and cyberbullying
- ▶ [Internet Matters](#) provide age-specific online safety checklists, guides on how to set parental controls on a range of devices, and a host of practical tips to help children get the most out of their digital world
- ▶ [London Grid for Learning](#) provides support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online, including tips to keep primary aged children safe online
- ▶ [Lucy Faithfull Foundation StopItNow](#) resource can be used by parents and carers who are concerned about someone's behaviour, including children who may be displaying concerning sexual behaviour (not just about online)
- ▶ [National Crime Agency/CEOP Thinkuknow](#) provides support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- ▶ [Parentzone](#) provides help for parents and carers on how to keep their children safe online
- ▶ [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) provide tips, advice, guides and other resources to help keep children safe online



The 'Girls on Board' approach

- ▶ **Friendship turbulence is normal:** Girls' friendships often involve intensity, conflict, and change. GoB teaches staff and pupils that these ups and downs are a natural part of growing up.
- ▶ **Empowerment over intervention:** Instead of adults rushing to "fix" friendship problems, GoB equips girls with the understanding and language to **resolve issues themselves**.
- ▶ **Shared vocabulary & empathy:** Through workshops and activities, girls learn to recognise patterns in social dynamics, understand feelings behind behaviours, and see conflicts in perspective.
- ▶ **Building resilience:** By experiencing and working through difficulties, girls develop stronger social skills, empathy, and self-confidence.
- ▶ For further info see www.girlsonboard.co.uk/parents/
- ▶ Consider purchasing the accompanying book Amazon.co.uk : [when girls fall out book](#)



Attendance & Punctuality

- ▶ We want the students to be in school wherever possible.
- ▶ We must know if your daughter is not attending by 8.45am as this is a safeguarding duty - either by phone or email Bernadette.young@ursulinehigh.merton.sch.uk 02039083144
- ▶ The school's attendance target is 96%
- ▶ We monitor all students, and if your daughter has an attendance below 94% you will be sent a letter
- ▶ Students with excellent attendance have a much higher chance of succeeding socially and academically
- ▶ Punctuality is monitored daily, and at the beginning of October, any student who is late will receive a 30 mins detention on that day, the student and the parent will be notified by email by 11am, failure to attend will result in a Friday detention for an hour.
- ▶ If your daughter needs to leave school early, or is coming in late after an appointment, please email Bernadette.young@ursulinehigh.merton.sch.uk and ask her to bring the proof of the appointment.



Travel to and from school

- ▶ Year 8 can use the buses to and from school however buses towards Wimbledon at the end of the school day are extremely busy. The walk to Wimbledon takes 12 minutes
- ▶ Line up at the Arterberry road bus stop not the bottom of Crescent Road
- ▶ Students must be considerate of our neighbours regarding noise and must never enter a resident's garden or sit on walls/railings
- ▶ No loitering in Wimbledon - no shops
- ▶ No more than 4 students together
- ▶ Travel carefully (e.g using crossings, avoiding use of airpods/headphones etc)
- ▶ Travel safety afternoon (TFL) will be happening soon
- ▶ If you are collecting your daughter please wait on the pavement on the opposite side of the Crescent Road entrance



Mr Williams - Teaching & Learning



Our approach to Teaching & Learning

We have an ambitious curriculum with high academic rigour that ensures our students develop a lifelong passion for learning.

Our curriculum is content rich, where students are taught the skills to retain their knowledge with fluency and are able to apply this knowledge creatively and with purpose.

<https://www.ursulinehigh.merton.sch.uk/assets/2025-2026/Year-8-Curriculum-Guide-2025-2026.pdf> - Please note there is a mistake in Miss Carol's email address. See previous slide for correct contact details.



A research-informed curriculum & pedagogy

A research informed curriculum means that we use the latest research and evidence to ensure best teaching practice for Ursuline students.

This involves:

- ❖ The use of retrieval practice to embed knowledge in long term memory.
- ❖ Feedback in a variety of styles that deepens the learning. Students are expected to act on this.
- ❖ Modelling and scaffolding of work.
- ❖ Ambitious and challenging curricula designed by subject specialist leads. Expect your daughter to struggle at times and get things wrong. This is how we learn.



Teaching & Learning - how you can help

- ▶ Check that your daughter is acting on feedback
- ▶ Talk about her learning and discuss her work with her
- ▶ Use the Curriculum guide for information on courses. These can be found online.
- ▶ Check the homework is being completed and to a good standard
- ▶ Planner- always check and sign
- ▶ Time and space to study



What is ARE?

- ▶ Age-related expectation is the average standard of work expected at a given age or development in education. (This Changes over Time)
- ▶ At the end of KS2 Y6, ARE would have been 100 (scaled score)
- ▶ Each Year some students are below, on, above or significantly above this average when joining UHS.
- ▶ We have devised a system called the UHS Standards to target, track and support students progress through from KS2.



UHS Standards

Upon their entry in the school, students will be given a Standard Target at which they will be expected to meet or exceed in their work. There are four possible targets: Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum.

The Bronze Standard Target will be allocated to students arriving in Year 7 below ARE. Students attaining Bronze standard by the end of Y8 will be targeted a Grade 3 at GCSE. (Currently those students from KS2 below 96)

The Silver Standard Target will be allocated to students arriving in Year 7 at ARE. Students attaining Silver standard by the end of Y8 will be targeted a Grade 4 to 6 at GCSE. (Currently those students from KS2 with 97-105)

The Gold Standard Target will be allocated to students arriving in Year 7 above ARE. Students attaining Gold standard by the end of Y8 will be targeted a Grade 7 or 8 at GCSE. (Currently those students from KS2 with Levels 106-114)

The Platinum Standard Target will be allocated to students arriving in Year 7 significantly above ARE 115+ (the old 5a). Students attaining Platinum standard by the end of Y8 will be targeted a achieve Grade 8-9 at GCSE.

Targets are not Limiting students are expected to match their standard but can move up.



Progress is built into the standards

- ▶ In line with the Assessment calendar, all subjects have designed sets of standards:
 - ▶ Standards for Year 7 Autumn A to Spring A
 - ▶ Standards for Year 7 Spring B to Summer B
 - ▶ Standards for Year 8 Autumn A to Spring A
 - ▶ Standards for Year 8 Spring B to Summer B
 - ▶ This is repeated in Year 9.
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- ▶ The standards get progressively more challenging in line with increasing ARE



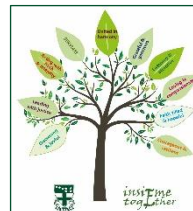
How we grade your daughter's work

Formatively

- ▶ Assessment to aid learning journey (Throughout each half term)

Summatively

- ▶ Assessment of Acquired knowledge at an Assessment Point. (Standard Awarded each half term)
- ▶ We use a mix of both



Accessing this information

- ▶ www.ursulinehigh.merton.sch.uk
- ▶ Click useful links on the right-hand side
- ▶ Enter username and password (distributed to you directly from Arbor on your school email). You will be asked to change your password termly.
- ▶ If you have more than one child, you will be able to access all details concerning all your daughters.



Homework

- ▶ Students are set one homework per week for most subjects
- ▶ For English, Maths, Science they have two
- ▶ Students have, in general, a week to complete each homework

- ▶ We have now shifted away from the planners to using teams to set homework. Students now have easy access to every bit of homework via the assignments tab on Teams. This is also a very easy way for you to monitor what homework your daughter has and support her in completing any.

- ▶ Please review the planner weekly and sign



Miss Smith

Head of Year 8

0203 908 3170

Paige.Smith@UrsulineHigh.Merton.sch.uk



**Thank you for your time
this evening!**

