

Statements of School Policy & Practice (2009/2010)

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A.1 The UCS Foundation

The University College School Foundation comprises three schools:

The Phoenix is a co-educational Nursery and pre-Prep School for pupils aged from 3 to 7 years.

UCS Junior Branch is a single-sex Junior School for boys aged from 7 to 11 years.

UCS Senior School is a single-sex school secondary school for boys aged from 11 – 16 years with a coeducational Sixth Form.

There are currently 128 pupils in The Phoenix; 240 at the Junior Branch and 800 in the Senior School (of whom 300 are in the Sixth Form).

While the schools are located on separate sites, they are closely linked – not only by common aims and ethos, but also by a single Governing Council, a common Finance & Administration Department and by a management structure that respects the individuality of each school but also ensures close co-operation between the three UCS Heads and their senior staff.

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A.2 The Aims & Ethos of UCS

UCS was founded to promote principles of liberal scholarship. That remains our first and over-riding aim. Intellectual curiosity, breadth of study and independence of mind combine to achieve academic excellence; they are not subordinate to it.

Selecting students with no regard to race or creed, UCS fosters in them a sense of community alongside a tolerance of and a respect for the individual. By offering the fullest range of opportunities for personal and for group endeavour, it teaches the value of commitment and the joy of achievement. It is a place of study, but also of self-discovery and self-expression; a school that places equal value on learning with others as on learning from others.

UCS places great emphasis upon tolerance of and respect for others. This is the key element of the school's liberal ethos. Thus, liberalism at UCS requires the highest standards of inter-personal conduct and of sensitivity from both staff and pupils.

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A.3 Equality

In accordance with its ethos, UCS is committed to ensuring that the resources and talents of all its staff and pupils are utilised to the full and that no job applicant, employee or pupil receives less favourable treatment in any aspect of employment or of education on the grounds of gender, ethnic origin, nationality, colour, religious belief, marital status, sexual orientation, socio-economic grouping, disability, learning difficulty or health problem which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance in the job or position within the School.

In order to achieve this, the School will implement a positive action programme requiring that:

- Selection procedures, both for pupils and staff, are periodically evaluated and reviewed.
- Employment terms, conditions and benefits as well as facilities and services offered as a consequence of employment are regularly reviewed.
- Opportunities for in-service training are available to staff to enhance their understanding of equal opportunities within schools.
- Any individual who believes that he or she has experienced inequitable treatment within the scope of this policy will have the right to draw this to the attention of the Headmaster.
- All staff and pupils experience equality of opportunity and encouragement to progress their career within the School and so realise their potential to the fullest extent possible.

Responsibility for the practical application of this policy lies with all members of the school community. Specific responsibility falls upon the Headmaster, senior pastoral and academic staff, the DFA and those involved in recruitment, selection and promotion of staff and pupils. Deliberate breach of the policy will be treated as a disciplinary matter.

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A.4 Disability Policy

Introduction

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA), as amended by the SEN and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) places a legal requirement on all schools

- Not to treat disabled pupils 'less favourably'
- To make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled pupils are not at a substantial disadvantage
- To draw up plans to show how, over time, they will increase access to education for disabled pupils (see accessibility plan policy)
- To comply with the Disability Equality Duty
- To prepare, publish, implement and report on a Disability Equality Scheme.

The Act defines disability as a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

Reference to 'disabled people' includes disabled children, young people and adults, as pupils, employees, governors, parents and carers and other members of the wider community that might use school premises for leisure or other activities. The definition of disability covers a broad spectrum of impairments including

- cancer
- diabetes
- epilepsy
- HIV
- multiple sclerosis
- hearing or sight impairments
- mobility difficulties
- people with mental health conditions or learning difficulties/disabilities.

Special educational needs (SEN) and Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LDD) refer to any circumstances resulting in an individual pupil requiring additional or different help in order to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered to pupils of the same age. These difficulties include physical, emotional, behavioural and specific learning difficulties and can also refer to gifted and talented pupils. Pupils categorised as SEN are statemented; all other pupils on the Learning Support Register are categorised as LDD.

The University College School Disability Policy will underpin all the other policies of this School, and will ensure that the provision of the SEN and Disability Act 2001 and Disability Discrimination Act 1995, and subsequent code of practice are put into place in this School. It will ensure that the Revised Code of Practice for SEN 2002 is implemented.

Aims

1. To increase access for disabled people to the school curriculum.
2. To improve access to the physical environment of schools.

3. To improve the delivery of written information to disabled pupils.
4. To recognise and record the strengths and successes of all students to encourage a positive self image.
5. Everyone in the UCS community must ensure that there is no victimisation, discrimination either direct or indirect against disabled pupils, pupils with SEN and LDD.
6. To ensure that all pupils receive entitlement to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum and that provision for pupils with SEN and LDD is central to curriculum planning.
7. Everyone in the UCS community must be familiar with the requirements of the Statutory Codes of Practice for SEN (Revised), Disability and Race and they must ensure that the codes underpin all aspects of their work.

Education and Associated Services

The School has a duty under SENDA to ensure that less favourable treatment does not occur in the following areas:

- curriculum
- teaching and learning
- timetabling
- homework
- serving of school meals
- interaction with peers
- assessment and exam arrangements
- school discipline
- exclusion/suspension procedures
- preparation of pupils for their next phase of education

All of these are bound by the limits of reasonable adjustment as covered by SENDA. UCS will, wherever possible, make reasonable adjustment to allow SEN/disabled pupils to access the full educational and learning experiences that the school provides. However, under the reasonable adjustments duty the school would also have to consider:

- the need to maintain academic, musical, sporting and other standards
- the financial resources available to the school
- the health and safety requirements – SENDA does not override the School's duties under Health and Safety legislation.
- the interests of the other pupils and persons who may be admitted to the school as pupils.
- Accessibility Strategies: Buildings
- Under SENDA the school has a planning duty to audit access to buildings and facilities. Such an access audit has been completed (UCS Disability Audit (revised December 2009)) and incorporated in the School's plans for future development (UCS 3- year Accessibility Plan).

Admissions Policy

We welcome all children who can make the most of the opportunities that we offer and can flourish in the caring environment of school. Treating every child as an individual is important to us, and we welcome pupils with physical disabilities provided that they can cope with our site.

No child should be discriminated against on entry into UCS, because of their individual needs. However, UCS is an academically selective school and reserves the

right to continue this process for which provision for this is made in the code section 5:23, where independent schools may select on grounds of both ability and aptitude. All pupils must therefore satisfy the academic criteria.

The UCS Admissions Policy makes provision for the disclosure of disability and special needs, and states the commitment of the school to deal appropriately and supportively in the admissions assessment process. The school therefore fulfils an anticipatory duty as defined by the Act.

We advise parents of children with special educational needs to discuss their child's requirements with the school before he or she sits our entrance exam so that we can make adequate provision for him/her. Parents should provide a copy of an Educational Psychologist's report or a medical report to support their request, together with evidence from their current school of their normal way of working. For example, for large print material, extra time or other special arrangements. The failure of a parent to divulge SEN/disability at this time constitutes a justification, under the Act, for discrimination. Where a parent requests confidentiality regarding a SEN/disability this request would limit what the school could provide in making reasonable adjustments. Under these circumstances the school has the right to decide the balance of confidentiality and possible and reasonable adjustments for inclusion.

UCS accepts pupils who are dyslexic, those who have specific learning difficulties and those for whom English is not their first language (EAL). We also offer places to pupils who have other difficulties such as physical disabilities, motor co-ordination problems, visual impairment, auditory impairment, ADD/ADHD and emotional problems. The suitability of the structure of the school's buildings and their limitations for each pupil have to be considered. This will be carried out in consultation with each pupil, parents and any appropriately qualified person.

On Entry

Each pupil with a disability requires special consideration and treatment. If appropriate, adjustments will need to be put in place. We will discuss thoroughly with parents and their medical advisers the adjustments that can reasonably be made for their child once they have accepted the offer of a place and before he/she becomes a pupil at the school. We recognise that some disabled pupils may also require specialist support from our Learning Support Department, and we would normally discuss this issue with parents before their child enters the school. Copies of the UCS SEN and Learning Support Policy may be downloaded from our web site.

Appointment of Staff

UCS is committed to an equal opportunities approach to employment and ensures both in the advertising and promotion of posts and in selection procedures that appropriate measures are taken to ensure that discrimination does not take place.

Review

UCS is committed to reviewing annually both admissions procedures and policies and issues of access to learning to ensure that a continuous responsibility is exercised. Other areas of policy and provision should in addition where appropriately be reviewed with SENDA in mind.

Educational Inclusion

UCS is an educationally inclusive School, where the teaching and learning achievements, attitudes and wellbeing of every pupil matter.

Through appropriate curricular provision, we recognise that pupils have different educational needs and abilities. They learn and acquire knowledge in different ways and at varying rates. Accordingly, teaching provision is adapted to the individual's needs, including those with disabilities, those with special educational needs, those from all cultural backgrounds and pupils with English as an additional language.

All pupils may have special needs at different times and therefore a wide variety of strategies are used to meet these needs as they arise. Learning diversity is recognised and planned for, any barriers to learning and participation will be challenged and removed and all pupils will be provided with equality of opportunity. Parents will be fully informed when special education provision is made for their child.

Organisation of Provision

Our Learning Support Department is staffed by fully qualified specialists who are able to support each pupil with a specific learning difficulty. Mrs Robyn Spencer is Head of Learning Support at UCS. Ms Tracey O'Neill is the other member of staff working in the Learning Support Department.

On four occasions during the academic year – September, November, January and April – the Learning Support Register – a register of pupils requiring additional support, who have received support in the past years, or who give cause for concern – is collated and circulated. This is regularly updated throughout the year in consultation with the appropriate staff, parents and pupils. Regular meetings are held for this purpose to discuss cases, and to impart information.

Pupils may receive help in literacy and mathematical skills, in memory techniques, in presentation and organisation of coursework and projects, and in study skills.

We are able, depending on need, to arrange for children to use laptop computers in classes, and, for example, for large print documents to be given to those with impaired vision

Arrangements for each pupil's learning support are discussed following screening and at annual reviews. The needs of pupils with mild difficulties are met within the normal class situation. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 (Entry to Lower Remove) may have to miss other lessons to attend Learning Support sessions.

Pupils at all stages are gently weaned off support when it is felt to be appropriate. This decision is reached in consultation with all relevant teachers, the pupil and parents. A close vigil is kept throughout the pupil's academic life. His or her name remains on the register along with the details of difficulties, which have been experienced. An open door policy is maintained with ad hoc assistance being offered.

Pupils are encouraged to seek help when required. Where necessary, members of staff can consult with Mrs Spencer and will receive advice and materials to help.

Individual Educational Plans

Each pupil who receives individual help from the SEN department will have an IEP (for SEN pupils) or Learning Support Profile (for LDD pupils). This will happen after information has been gathered from an assessment, from teachers, from parents and from the pupil. The IEP or Learning Support Profile will set out the nature of the difficulty, the action that will be taken and details of recommended programmes to follow. A discussion will be held with parents, to outline what help can be given at home.

Where the advice of outside help is considered necessary, eg behavioural optometry or occupational therapy, this will be included. Additionally, a need for pastoral care may also be identified. In this case the relevant Deme Warden will be consulted. Any further information about the pupil will be disseminated to the appropriate staff, thereby helping staff to understand and meet the needs of each pupil.

Integration of SEN Pupils and Access to the Curriculum

It is the Policy of the School that any pupil with any type of special need should be as fully integrated into the school as possible. They will have full access to the curriculum unless special arrangements have been made, in full consultation with all concerned. It is recognised that all pupils have something to offer to the School and that pupils have strengths and weaknesses in different areas.

It is our policy to recognise those areas of strength and to enhance them, exploiting them to the full, thereby building a feeling of worth and self esteem in each pupil. Concurrently, areas of weakness are targeted, in order to remedy problems. Pupils are encouraged to recognise their problems, to face and to tackle them, but not to hide from them.

Differentiation of work or task may take place to ensure full access and, when possible, approaches will be varied or modified to take into account the different learning styles and levels of ability of individual pupils.

At Senior School level, it is occasionally felt to be in the interests of a pupil to drop a subject. This decision is not made lightly. It is only done after consultation with the Headmaster, the Deputy Head – Academic, the Deme Warden and form teacher, the parents and the pupil. This strategy does sometimes reduce pressure for the pupil.

Gifted and Talented Pupils

UCS recognises gifted and talented pupils as having special educational needs. The needs of those pupils are met by individual teachers and tutors who coach and supply differentiated work to meet the challenge. The school has a separate policy for supporting the interests of Gifted and Talented pupils (the Enrichment Programme).

Assessment and Review

All pupils are assessed for reading and writing difficulties on entry to UCS. We are thus able to identify and monitor any difficulties in these areas. If seen to be appropriate, extra help may be offered after consultation with Mrs Spencer, the appropriate form teacher, subject teachers, parents and pupils.

Throughout the School, pupils' progress is assessed and monitored on a regular basis. Early identification of any difficulties is vital. Parents are immediately informed of

any concerns, and active support in helping their child is sought. An assessment to identify areas of weakness may be offered and a remedial course suggested.

Where it is felt necessary, pupils will be offered support by the Learning Support Department. Frequency and times of sessions will be discussed with all concerned parties. Regular meetings, to review progress, will take place with parents, class teachers and pupils. Parents are welcome to contact the Learning Support Department for advice.

Assessment and review of each pupil is an ongoing process. In addition, the Special Needs Policy and resulting practice are continually kept under review, with the changing needs of pupils and the School, teaching requirements and Government policy. As the need arises, staff, parents and pupils are kept informed of developments.

It is the UCS Foundation policy to ensure smooth passage through each of the schools in the foundation. To this end, close contact and regular meetings are held at transitional stages involving The Phoenix School, The UCS Junior Branch, and the Senior School.

At all times, informal discussion takes place with members of staff, in the normal course of the School day.

Physical Accessibility

Parents and prospective parents of disabled children may wish to obtain a copy of the UCS Accessibility Plan from the web site. This shows the ways in which we plan to make our buildings progressively more accessible to disabled pupils, parents and visitors.

UCS has an active monitoring policy and will do its best to make adjustments to take account of an individual pupil's needs, within the constraints imposed by its historic buildings on a scattered site. We are progressively introducing facilities for wheelchair users and hearing loops as our buildings are upgraded.

Staff Training

UCS recognises the needs for staff INSET on issues of SENDA provision and incorporates this within the plans for full staff INSET. In addition an awareness of SENDA issues is part of all new staff induction and addressed appropriately at regular staff and pupil assessment meetings.

Our teaching staff receive training on the learning needs of pupils with special education needs and disabilities. All staff (including teaching and support staff) are given regular training on working with disabled pupils.

Raising Awareness

In addition to staff training, we make every attempt to raise awareness of the particular issues affecting, and needs of, people living with disabilities through the school's PSHE programme, visits from outside speakers, the school's Community Action programme, work experience in local schools for disabled pupils as part of the Sixth Form Activities Programme, and school assemblies.

Claims of unlawful discrimination

Any claim for unlawful discrimination under SENDA must come from the parent not the child. In the first instance the complaint should be made to the school and follow the school's grievance policy. However, parents have the right to refer a complaint to SENDIST within six months of the date on which they believe unlawful discrimination has taken place.

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A.5 Admissions

Choosing the right school for your child is a very important decision. We do all that we can to help families to make the right choice. We strongly encourage personal visits (the precise arrangements for which vary between the UCS Junior Branch and Senior School, and particular details at each school can be found below).

Admissions decisions will be based upon the academic potential revealed by each candidate in examination, in interview and (where appropriate) activity and also upon the judgement of assessors in respect of a candidate's ability to make the most of the diverse opportunities on offer at UCS and to contribute positively to the life of the school and to the experience of other students. We will always seek a report from the candidate's current school, and take full account of it in balancing all the available information before a decision is reached. An enthusiasm for the extra-curricular life of the school – supporting our long-standing traditions in music, art, drama, debating, community activities and sport - will be an advantage.

Open Evenings & School Visits (Senior School)

UCS Senior School holds Open Evenings which give a general introduction to the School and offer the chance to tour the site and facilities and to meet with a variety of teachers (including the Head) and pupils. The dates of these Open Evenings (usually in the Autumn Term) are published on our web-site and in our Prospectus pack, or can be found by telephoning the school. There is no need to pre-book for attendance at Senior School Open Evenings. At least two Open Evenings at the Senior School will be specifically directed towards Sixth Form entry.

In addition to Open Evenings, we are very happy to welcome families, with their children, separately for personal visits to the UCS schools during the school day. If time permits, this can also include a private meeting with the Head. These visits can be arranged by contacting the Admissions Secretary.

Application to UCS Senior School

Whilst UCS is an academically selective school, we are keen to invite and encourage applications from students of all backgrounds.

The school has no religious affiliation and was founded on the principle that the opportunity of an academically fulfilling education should be available to all who can benefit from it. Accordingly, we welcome families from all backgrounds to view the school and to register their sons or daughters for assessment. Whilst registrations will close a few weeks before any published assessment date, our aim is to manage the process in such a way as to make application as straightforward and simple as possible. There is a standard registration fee, to cover the costs of administration and

assessment. This fee will be waived in the case of candidates applying for fee assistance.

The Entry Procedure for UCS Senior School

UCS is an academically selective school. We make every effort to give candidates full opportunity to reveal their academic potential. So, our assessment procedures are not restricted to formal examinations. At every entry point, we aim to interview as many candidates as resources permit. We also broaden the interview process to include opportunities for group activity and for a simulated learning experience. In this way, we plan that the selection process will be able to identify potential rather than merely to reflect current educational experience.

The usual points of entry are at 11 years (Year 7), 13 years (Year 9) and 16 years (Year 12).

Vacancies may occasionally arise at other ages. The Senior School Admissions Secretary will be happy to give details of the application process.

The process of application always requires the completion of a Registration Form, which must be signed by both parents. The deadlines for application are published on the school web-site and in our Prospectus Information Booklet. A registration fee is normally required but is waived where candidates are applying for fee assistance.

Equal Treatment

In accordance with the aims of our founders, UCS is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of a race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or social background. Our provision for fee assistance is described below. Our aim is to encourage applications from candidates with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible. This enriches our community and helps to prepare pupils for their lives beyond school. Means-tested fee assistance is available in order to enable as many as possible who meet the school's admission criteria to attend the school.

Special Needs

We do not discriminate in any way regarding entry. We welcome pupils with special educational needs, providing that our Learning Support Department can offer them the support that they require. We welcome pupils with physical disabilities, conscious that there are some areas in our older buildings to which access may be difficult in certain cases. We advise parents of children with special educational needs or physical disabilities to discuss their child's requirements with the Headmaster before registration is completed, so that we can be sure that adequate provision can be made, both in the assessment process and, if admitted, during the student's school career. Parents should always inform us of any Special Needs that their son or daughter might have; such information will never adversely prejudice an application. The school must be provided with a copy of a relevant report from an Educational Psychologist,

doctor, or other health professional in order for appropriate judgements to be made. It is not possible to make any adjustment to the admission process (for example, to offer a candidate additional time) in the absence of such a report.

We will discuss thoroughly with parents and their medical advisers the adjustments that can reasonably be made for the child if he/she becomes a pupil at the school.

The Assessment Process

No specific preparation for the entrance tests is needed, all candidates start on an equal footing, with identical opportunities to display their academic aptitude and personal skills.

Decisions will be based on the academic potential revealed by each candidate, in examination, interview and (where appropriate) activity and also upon the judgement of assessors in respect of a candidate's ability to make the most of the diverse opportunities on offer at UCS and to contribute positively to the life of the school and to the experience of other students. An enthusiasm for the extra-curricular life of the school – supporting our long-standing traditions in music, drama, art, debating, community activities and sport – will be an advantage.

Entry at Year 7 at the Senior School: All candidates sit papers in English, Maths and Verbal & Non-verbal Reasoning, which are designed for their age group. Candidates who are successful in the examination will be recalled for interview, which will include group activity, group interview and personal interview.

Entry at Year 9 to the Senior School: All candidates are initially required to sit a Preliminary Assessment (in English, Maths and Verbal & Non-Verbal Reasoning) in the Autumn Term of Year 7. Candidates who are successful in the examination will be recalled for interview, which will include group activity, group interview and personal interview. Following this, offers will be made which remain conditional upon success at Common Entrance (or an equivalent assessment) in the summer of Year 8.

Entry at Year 12 to the Senior School: All candidates sit a Thinking Skills Assessment and complete an essay paper in the Autumn Term of Year 11. The assessment process is identical for all applicants regardless of proposed subjects for further study. Candidates who are successful in the examination will be recalled for the interview process, involving two separate interviews for each applicant. Offers of places at this level are not conditional upon GCSE grades.

Whenever a candidate is applying from a school other than UCS, a full academic and personal report will be sought from the candidate's current school.

The key dates for all aspects of our assessment process for the current year are published on our web site.

Sibling Policy

Whilst we are very happy to welcome siblings at UCS, admission is not automatic. Siblings must go through the same process as all other applicants at their chosen point of entry. Siblings will not be admitted if we believe that they are unlikely to thrive within the UCS environment or if we think that their admission in preference to another candidate would be unfair.

Fee Assistance

In our efforts to ensure the widest possible access to a UCS education, we are keen to provide financial assistance to candidates who qualify for a place on the basis of aptitude and ability but who would otherwise be unable to take up a place (or would find it very hard to do so) as a result of family financial circumstances.

It is UCS policy that fee assistance should be directed primarily on the basis of need and will, therefore, almost invariably, take account of the financial circumstances of candidates' families.

Families who would like to be considered for fee assistance are asked to make this clear at the appropriate point on the UCS Registration Form. Guidance regarding qualification for fee assistance may be found on the school's web-site or in our specific documentation. All families who request such consideration will be required to complete a full and confidential Financial Disclosure Form.

The assessment process for candidates who may qualify for financial assistance is identical to that for all other candidates.

Applying for fee assistance

We are keen that the opportunity to attend UCS should not be denied to students on the sole basis of their family's financial circumstances. Accordingly, we have in place a scheme that enables us to offer fee assistance where pupils have qualified for entry to the school and where such assistance is warranted on the basis of need. We cannot guarantee to be able to support every applicant who falls into this category but we are eager to support as many as possible.

Fee assisted places are available to students who join the school at Year 7 or at Year 12. Parents must indicate on the registration form that they would like to be considered for financial support. All such fee assistance is means-tested in accordance with the criteria published on the school's web site, and requires the completion of a confidential Financial Disclosure Form, on which both parents are required to provide proof of their income and assets. The level of support varies according to parental need; but can extend to 100% remission in cases of proven need.

All fee assistance is offered for 12 months at a time. The family is required to provide fresh information about its circumstances for every year that their child attends the school. Levels of support may vary with fluctuations in family financial circumstances.

Cases of hardship

In addition to fee assistance that is provided upon entry to UCS, the school maintains an annual Hardship Fund for families whose circumstances change after their son or daughter has been admitted to the school. In order to qualify for hardship assistance, families must be able to show a material and significant change in their circumstances that could not have been predicted at the time that a fee-paying place was accepted. The criteria for the award of hardship funding is, in other respects, the same as for all other fee assistance, but, since funds are limited, hardship funding is not automatic. Hardship funding is always temporary and is aimed to help a family to avoid disruption to their child's education by enabling him/her to remain at UCS until the next 'break-point' in the educational process.

Our Fee Assistance Policy can be viewed on our web site, or can be obtained from the UCS Bursary Department.

Academic Awards

UCS does not offer fee assistance simply on the grounds of recognised academic ability. We, therefore, do not offer traditional academic scholarships. The school will occasionally offer prizes to candidates whose performance in entrance tests is exemplary in order to recognise that achievement.

Music Awards

Music is a particular strength at UCS and we are keen to encourage talented musicians to join the school. Music Awards may be made to outstanding instrumentalists or singers. Awards are made on the basis of audition (conducted by the UCS Music Department with the guidance of an outside assessor). Auditions for candidates in Year 11 (either at UCS or at another school) are held in the Autumn Term. Auditions for candidates of other ages (normally planning to join UCS in Year 7 or Year 9) are held in the Spring Term. Advice and guidance regarding these auditions and informing about the arrangements for application is readily available from the UCS Music Department.

Music awards will only be made to students who have qualified for admission to UCS through our standard entrance procedures.

In addition to Standard Music Awards, Supplementary Music Awards are also available. These take into account family financial need as well as the musical ability and potential of the applicant. They may raise the value of an award as high as 100% of the termly fee. Families wishing to be considered for Supplementary Awards will be required to complete a confidential Financial Disclosure Form. Any award made will take this information into account alongside a judgement of the contribution that the student is likely to make to the musical life of the school.

The School's Contractual Terms & Conditions

Acceptance of any place at UCS requires the payment of a financial deposit and advance payment of a portion of the first term's fees (adjusted to take into account any fee assistance that has been granted). It also requires that the School's Admission Agreement is completed and signed by both parents and is returned to the school. A separate copy of the Terms and Conditions of this Agreement will be provided for retention by the family.

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A.6 Joining UCS Senior School

Any offer of a place at UCS will be accompanied by a copy of the School's Admission Agreement and an indication of the deadline by which the Agreement must be completed, and a financial deposit must be received, in order for the place to be secured. These deadlines are never negotiable. Once the Admission Agreement has been completed, the status of any financial deposit paid will be governed by the terms of the Agreement. Such deposits are not normally returnable.

We make every effort to encourage students and their families to feel a part of the UCS community as soon as a place has been accepted. Welcome meetings are scheduled for pupils joining UCS in Years 7, 9 and 12 in the term or terms before they are due to join. Families are also invited to meet with pastoral and other staff and, of course, to get to know one another. Families will also receive a full pack of Joining Instructions well in advance of their son or daughter joining the school. The attention of all new UCS families is drawn to the comprehensive collection of School Policies & procedures that is accessible on the UCS web-site and, if preferred, may be distributed on paper.

Pupils with Disabilities

Each pupil with a disability requires special consideration and treatment. If appropriate, adjustments will need to be put in place in order to ensure that a disabled pupil can gain full advantage from a UCS education. We are very happy to discuss thoroughly with parents and their medical advisers the adjustments that can reasonably be made for their child both before and after a place has been accepted and regard it as very important that these discussions take place before he/she becomes a pupil at the school.

Copies of our Accessibility Plan and of our Learning Support policy may be found on the school's web-site.

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A.7 Attendance

Dates of UCS terms are published well in advance. The school requires daily attendance from every pupil. Parents must arrange family holidays and other appointments in such a way that clashes with term-dates are avoided.

The school is happy to excuse students from attendance from school for reasons of special religious observance. However, absence for other reasons will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances, and only with the express permission of the Headmaster, who should be contacted in writing and given as much notice as possible of any such request.

Attendance and lateness are recorded twice-daily through morning and afternoon registration sessions, and data is communicated to parents whenever a full written school report is sent.

If a pupil is absent from school, it is required that his/her parents provide an absence note explaining the circumstances as soon as he/she returns. Parents should also inform the school by telephone (020 7433 2136) or email absence@ucs.org.uk on the day of the absence. To ensure the safety of all pupils, unexplained absences will be followed up by telephone on a daily basis. Parents should ensure that the school has an accurate contact number for this purpose.

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A.8 Travel to and from School

We are very keen that UCS pupils (and UCS families) should be properly aware of the implications of their own private travel choices for the wider community. We believe that there are pressing arguments – both social and personal – to reduce the volume of traffic associated with travel to and from school and to encourage as many members of school community as possible to make their way on foot, by bicycle or on public transport.

Because of this, the governors and managers of UCS have decided to build a commitment to the reduction of school-related traffic into all of our future Development Plans. This first UCS Senior School Travel Plan (the first such Plan for any Secondary School in Hampstead) was prepared in 2006. It has been reviewed and updated since then, most recently in 2009. In our Travel Plan, we have established two clear targets:

- to reduce the number of vehicle trips to the school site by encouraging and/or developing alternative travel options, including increasing the proportion of parents who are involved in car-sharing schemes
- to raise awareness among pupils and within the wider UCS community about the impact of private travel choices upon the local environment, the human environment and upon the health and safety of all citizens.

Meeting these targets will help to reduce pollution and congestion in the local area, promote healthy exercise for UCS pupils, make life more pleasant for our neighbours and help to develop the proper independence of our students. We hope that all UCS families will support these aims and will think carefully about the best choices for travel to and from school.

It is the considered view of the School that all pupils of secondary school age should travel to and from school independently of their parents. We hope that the following initiatives and sources of information will help UCS families to find a transport option that suits their child and that helps us to meet our Travel Plan targets:

1. Collecting Data. If we are to meet our targets, we need regular and up-to-date information about pupils' travel arrangements. We will be collecting data through regular surveys during the school year.
2. Public Transport Options. All families should think seriously about encouraging their sons to travel by public transport. The following services operate in the Hampstead area:

By Bus: Many buses stop in Hampstead or at Finchley Road Station including: 13 (from Golders Green to Central London); 46 (from Queens Park, Maida Vale and Kentish Town); 82 (from Finchley); 113 (from Edgware, Mill Hill and Hendon); 268 (from Belsize Park); C11 (from Archway, Parliament

Hill and Gospel Oak); C12 (from Tufnell Park); 603 (from Muswell Hill Broadway).

By Underground: Hampstead Station is on the Northern Line. Finchley Road Station is on the Metropolitan and Jubilee Lines.

By Train: Finchley Road and Frognal Station is on the Silverlink Line which connects Richmond, Kew, Acton and Willesden with Camden, Highbury and Islington. West Hampstead Station is on the Thames Link line which connects stations in outer North London and Hertfordshire to King's Cross/St Pancras.

3. Cycling. There is secure accommodation for bicycles at UCS. We regularly publicise details of any cycling proficiency courses of which we are aware, especially those offered by the local authority.
4. Walking. Families who live close to the school, are encouraged to consider the benefits in terms of exercise and independence of allowing their sons to travel to and from school on foot. We can advise of safe walking routes and (with the local Community Police) offer clear guidance to all UCS pupils regarding safety on the streets. Even if the journey is longer and parents intend to use a private car, they should consider dropping and collecting their sons at a small distance from the school in order to give them some daily exercise and to reduce the immediate congestion in and around Frognal.
5. Car-Sharing. If it is necessary for pupils to travel to or from school by private car regularly, or on particular days, parents should consider the possibility of sharing the journey with other families who live nearby. The school can help to put families in touch with potential car-sharing partners.
6. Driving Lessons. At no time should students expect to take time off school for driving lessons during the school day.
7. Parking at school. Before students are permitted to drive to school, we must receive a statement of consent from their parents and details of the car that they will be using. Students are **not** permitted to park their cars at the school site, nor is parking permitted in Frognal Way (the private road close to the school). The absence of local parking spaces means that all students are advised to use public transport or walk to school. Those who choose otherwise should be reminded that the needs and property of our neighbours and other local residents should be respected at all times.
8. Delivering & collecting students to/from school by car. It is not possible for parents (or others) to drive vehicles onto the school site when delivering or collecting students to/from school. Drivers are asked to be mindful of and sensitive to the congestion, inconvenience and safety risks that can result from excessive congestion in Frognal. In particular, drivers should give proper consideration to the needs and rights of our neighbours. We strongly advise parents to find other means of travel to and from school for their children, or, if travel by car is unavoidable, to arrange to drop and collect students at a convenient point a little further from the school.

Exactly the same principles apply when delivering or collecting pupils from the games fields in Ranulf Road.

Senior Teaching Staff

The Vice Master (Christopher Reynolds)
020 7433 2103

creynolds@ucs.org.uk

Deputy Head – Academic (Simon Marshall)
020 7433 2104

simon.marshall@ucs.org.uk

Deputy Head - Pastoral (David Colwell)
020 7433 2105

colwelld@ucs.org.uk

Senior Pastoral Staff

All senior pastoral staff may be contacted directly by telephone (or voice mail) or by e-mail:

Lower School Wardens

020 7433 2183 (Adrian Barnish & Ian Gibson) lowschool@ucs.org.uk

Deme Wardens

Baxters (Stewart FitzGerald)

020 7433 2202

baxters@ucs.org.uk

Black Hawkins (Steven Hawley)

020 7433 2191

bhawkins@ucs.org.uk

Evans (Thomas Underwood)

020 7433 2304

evans@ucs.org.uk

Flooks (Geoffrey Plow)

020 7433 2302

flooks@ucs.org.uk

Olders (Lisa Jenkins &

020 7433 2220

Jennifer Kung)

olders@ucs.org.uk

Underwoods (Andrew Wilkes)

020 7433 2196

underwoods@ucs.org.uk

Sixth Form Tutors

020 7433 2222 (Russell Chapman)

020 7433 2221 (Steve Wells)

020 7433 2220 (Lisa Jenkins & Jennifer Kung) stutors@ucs.org.uk

Contacting Individual Teachers

If you wish to contact one of your child's subject teachers, it is usually best to telephone the school switchboard and if necessary, to leave a message with the switchboard operator.

Receiving Information

When we need to order to convey important messages to parents, we will normally use text messaging to alert families to the presence of more detailed information on the school web-site.

In addition to this, a number of telephone lines are dedicated to providing recorded information giving details of particular school events and trips. You will receive information about these as and when they affect your child.

Games Information Line

This provides recorded information regarding games arrangements and fixtures. It is updated daily:

Telephone: 020 7433 2120

Trip Information Line:

When a school trip takes place outside normal school hours, a telephone number will be issued to parents for emergency contact and information.

Web Site: www.ucs.org.uk

The school's web site is regularly updated and is our prime means of conveying information.

Section A: Introductory Principles; Admissions; Joining UCS

A.10 The Relationship with Parents

General Principles

We are very keen that education at UCS involves a collaborative and co-operative relationship between school and family. We try, therefore, to provide opportunities to build strong and close contacts between parents and individual members of staff and the school in general.

When pupils join the school, parents will be invited to meet their son's new Form-Teacher or Form-Tutor and the relevant pastoral Warden. It is hoped that this marks the beginning of a valuable and, where possible, informal relationship that will support pastoral care for the coming years.

In addition to these meetings, there are annual consultation evenings at which parents may talk with each of their child's teachers and, in particular, those charged with his or her pastoral care. In years when important academic decisions must be made, there is more than a single meeting of this kind. Parents will receive at least two detailed, written reports on their child's progress during the school year, normally in the terms when a consultation evening is not scheduled.

We strongly hope that parents with concerns of any kind regarding their son's or daughter's progress or well-being will not feel constrained to leave these until a consultation evening. Time on these occasions is often limited, and delay may cause further anxiety. Just as we will seek always to communicate our concerns to parents, we hope very much that parents will feel free to contact form-teachers, Lower School Wardens, Deme Wardens or the Headmaster about academic or social matters. Pastoral Staff need also to be informed about any developments at home that may affect a student's attitudes or behaviour.

In the same way, just as parents properly expect to rely upon the support of the school in the effective care of their sons or daughters, so the school needs and deserves the support of parents. We hope that parents will respect the school's values and procedures - in particular by ensuring that their children do not miss school for reasons other than illness and that they fulfil sporting or cultural commitments, even when these fall outside normal school hours.

Family Circumstances & Contact Information

It is very important that parents should notify the School of any changes in their circumstances. Of course, we need to know about changes of address (including changes of business address and telephone number, as it is essential to be able to contact parents in an emergency). Mobile telephone numbers and e-mail addresses must be communicated to the School when pupils join and we must be informed of any changes.

It is also vital that we should be informed if there is to be a separation or divorce, if there has been a death in the family, or of any other events which might affect a pupil's happiness or demeanour at school. Information will always be treated in confidence. Parents may prefer to write directly to the Headmaster or to their son's/daughter's pastoral Warden in matters of this kind.

Absence Notes and School Holidays

If a pupil is absent from school, it is essential that his/her parents provide the form-teacher with an absence note, explaining the circumstances as soon as he returns. Parents must also inform the school by telephone by 10am on the day of their son's absence. (Absence line: 020 7433 2136 or by e-mail: absence@ucs.org.uk).

Dates of UCS terms are published well in advance. Parents must arrange family holidays and other appointments in such a way as to avoid clashes with term-dates. The school is happy to excuse pupils for reasons of special religious observance. However, absence for other reasons will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances, and only with the express permission of the Headmaster. Parents wishing to request such absence must apply to the Headmaster in writing, giving sufficient notice for an appropriate and proper decision to be made.

The Parents' Guild

The parents of all students at UCS are encouraged to join and support the Parents' Guild. The Guild offers opportunities for parents and families to meet one another socially, to enjoy shared social activities, to raise money for charities and to raise funds for the school. The Guild is run by a committee of parents who share responsibilities, and who are always keen to welcome new members. The prime functions of the Guild are to the extend the social community of the school to include the parent body, and to enable parents to support the school's aims both directly and indirectly. The Guild is not involved in the formulation, consideration or review of school policy.

Section A: Introductory Principles; Admissions; Joining UCS

A.11 Complaints

There may be occasions on which parents wish to draw to the school's attention a matter of concern regarding their son's education or happiness at school. All such complaints will be treated seriously and, as far as possible, confidentially (except in so far as is required of the school by the Education [Independent Schools Standards] Regulations of 2003). Our aim is always to resolve such issues quickly, informally and personally.

Informal resolution

It is hoped that all complaints and concerns will be resolved as early and as informally as possible. Where parents have a complaint, it should initially be discussed with an appropriate member of staff (normally the form-teacher or Warden). If this member of staff is unable to resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult a Head of Department, or one of the senior teachers, or the Headmaster.

Complaints made directly to a senior teacher or to the Headmaster will normally be referred to the relevant Head of Department, form-teacher or Warden, unless the senior teacher thinks it appropriate to deal with the matter personally.

Whenever a complaint is received, a written record will be kept by the teacher who receives the complaint, logging its nature and the date on which it was received. If the matter has not been satisfactorily resolved within fourteen days, then parents may choose to proceed to a formal resolution of their complaint. The procedure for this is outlined here.

Formal resolution

If the matter cannot be resolved informally, then parents should put their concern in writing to the Headmaster, who will decide the appropriate course of action. A full record will be kept of the complaint and of the action taken in respect of it. It is likely that the Headmaster will wish to meet personally with the parents in order to discuss the matter, normally within seven days of receiving the complaint. It may be that the matter can be resolved at this meeting, or the Headmaster may think it necessary to carry out further investigations. He will always keep the parents fully informed (by letter, telephone, or in person) of the ways in which the issue is being handled. When the Headmaster has reached his decision, the parents will be informed in writing, with a full account of the Headmaster's reasoning.

Resolution assisted by Council

The Headmaster may, if he chooses, pass the complaint to Council to aid the process of formal resolution. He will inform the parents if he thinks that this course of action will be helpful and appropriate. The Chairman of Council will then identify two members of Council who will receive copies of all relevant papers from the Headmaster and will meet privately with the parents to hear the complaint, and with other affected parties. The involvement of members of Council at this stage is not investigatory, but is rather to assist the Headmaster and the parents to reach agreement in the matter and to decide upon an effective process of resolution.

Independent resolution

If parents are not satisfied with the Headmaster's decision, they may pass their complaint on to the Council of UCS who will establish an appropriate Panel to consider the matter. The particular arrangements for this stage of the procedure will be communicated to parents at the time.

The Panel will normally comprise three persons, two of whom are members of the Council of UCS and one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the school. Members of the Panel will be appointed by the Council of UCS. Hearings will normally be held within 28 days of the approach to Council. The parents will be invited to attend, and have a right to be accompanied by one other person (this may be a relative, teacher or friend; legal representation will not normally be appropriate). Other relevant evidence may be heard.

If possible, the Panel will resolve the complaint immediately without the need for further investigation. Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out. After due consideration, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations. This process will normally be completed within seven days of the hearing. The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and of the reasons for it. Any further recommendations will also be sent in writing to the parents, the Headmaster, the Council of UCS and, where relevant, the person complained of. The decision of the Panel will be final.

The Rights of Pupils

If a pupil wishes to raise a complaint personally, he/she should speak directly with his/her Deme Warden or, in the Lower School, with one of the Lower School Wardens, or, if he/she wishes, with the Headmaster. The matter will then proceed towards informal resolution. If it is not satisfactorily resolved in this way, the pupil's parents should follow the procedure for formal resolution outlined above.