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Prime Minister gives support to Southwick mum's 'fainting game' warning

The mother of a 16-year-old boy who died in a 'fainting' game has received support from Prime Minister David Cameron.

The PM hand wrote a note to Gill Ayre, whose son Harry died after playing the game, and said he too knew what it felt like to lose a child.

Mrs Ayre has visited Harry's former school, Shoreham Academy, and spoken to pupils about Harry's death at his home in Southwick.

But despite her heartbreaking warnings 14- year-old girls from the Kingston Lane secondary are now playing the game.

Mrs Ayre said she warned the academy the schoolgirls had posted images of themselves on Facebook hyperventilating and subsequently falling backwards in June this year.

She said the school had behaved well and subsequently contacted the girls who took the images down.

She was prompted to contact the newspaper after we reported children from schools in East Sussex were 'playing' the game, leading to the area's schools officer Kate Brookman to issue a police warning.

Mrs Ayres admitted she was horrified that, despite the death of her son, youngsters were playing the 'game'.

The 46-year-old said: "I don't mind being seen as a tell-tale if it saves other children from what happened to Harry."

Harry, who dreamed of going to university, had a ligature around his neck when found dead by Mrs Ayre in his bedroom.

Mrs Ayre said that in the months running up to his death his eyes were bloodshot and he became aggressive.

She believes that while he initially started by fainting, he became addicted to the sensation it provided – and the ligature was one step further.

She said there was no indication he was trying to kill himself, and an inquest agreed.

His mother said: "The girls [at Shoreham Academy] might have thought Harry died of a ligature around his neck but it started with the fainting game and they need to know this.

"I wouldn't want other parents to go through what I have been through.

"It's upsetting to think of the damage children could be doing to themselves by hyperventilating."

The letter from Mr Cameron said: "It's really important you have brought this to my attention.

"Thank you.

"I know how heartbreaking it is to lose a child and we must do what we can to learn the lessons of this case."

As it is the summer holidays, no one was available for comment at Shoreham Academy.