



THE URSULINE ACADEMY ILFORD

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

Date of Review – October 2023

Mission Statement

We are a Catholic community of faith, love and service rooted in the spirit of St Angela. Through Christ and the Gospel and in our diverse community we strive to provide an environment for young women to flourish, spiritually, academically and socially.

Together we are The Ursuline Academy Ilford.

Ursuline Core Values

As Ursulines we continue the approach to ministry which draws its life and vision from St Angela's spirit and philosophy. Inspired by the call of the same Gospel, and challenged by the needs of our time, we, like Angela, ground our mission in the following core values:

- Spiritual formation and faith development
- Respect for the uniqueness of the individual
- Development of the whole person
- Development of a nurturing community spirit
- Commitment to peace-making
- Serviam (I will serve) as a lived reality
- Development of leadership skills for every individual

The school is actively engaged at Post 16 with the following: Ursuline education community, Ursuline Links Programme and key staff attend our annual Ursuline conference.

Introduction

At Ursuline Academy Ilford, we believe that Christian worship in our Catholic school is a way to recognise and celebrate God's presence in our lives. It involves giving thanks, praise, and honour to God. It's our loving response to God's invitation to build a relationship through the teachings of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.

It is an important reinforcement of the nature of the school, as well as allowing our young people to express their faith in a variety of ways. They therefore understand the nature of the Catholic faith and develop spiritually throughout their time at the school.

Purposes:

- To bring students and staff closer to understanding God and the message of the gospels in their daily lives
- To enrich the spiritual life of both staff and students at The Ursuline Academy Ilford
- To reiterate the Catholic ethos of the school
- To open students to a variety of ways of praying, therefore, exposing them to the spectrum of prayer available in the Catholic Church
- To allow students to question their faith and take an active role in developing the liturgical life of the school
- To reinforce our mission statement
- To provide an environment where prayer is accepted and encouraged
- To give spiritual support for all of those in the school community

Principles:

All acts of worship in this school will:

- give glory to God
- be a quality educational activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character, including aspects of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the whole person
- give students positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds, in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church.

Prayer:

Our primary goal is the spiritual growth of our students. Teachers *may* start each lesson with a prayer, which can be the Ursuline School prayer, a student-led prayer, or a reflection led by the teacher.

We also provide opportunities for spiritual growth which include: Senior leadership and Heads of year Assemblies, Liturgies, Mass, Prayer Groups and daily recitation of the school prayer in form time. Every week assemblies are led by a member of the senior leadership team, heads of year, or by our pupils themselves. All assemblies/class prayers encourage student and staff participation either through active involvement in the preparation and presentation or by listening and participation. Each form class is expected to prepare at least one assembly during the school year based around a chosen theme. The form teacher will organise this with support from the Head of Year, RE department and the school Chaplain.

We will continue to foster and deepen the students' personal relationship with God our Father daily in prayer. We do this by helping them become aware of God's Presence in their lives and of His love for them by leading them to respond to Him in a manner suited to their age. This may be in one of the following ways:

- Prayer of silence
- Spontaneous prayer
- Praying through gesture or action
- Formal prayer
- Prayer through song and music
- Liturgical prayer and observances

Prayer will not be confined to an act of worship, for example students pray at the start of each lesson.

Worship in this school is more than just a legal requirement. It is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition.

Whole School Masses:

There are three whole school Masses during the year (All Saints Day, the Feast of St Angela in the spring term and the feast of SS. Peter & Paul in June). Chaplaincy representatives from each form are asked to contribute music, readings, objects for the offertory, as servers, also to help prepare the chapel and/or hall and to welcome staff, students and visitors to each celebration. In this way opportunities for pupils and staff to be actively involved are maximized. Other Eucharistic celebrations and liturgies take place during the school year, they are:

- Form masses
- Christmas Carol Service
- Ash Wednesday Liturgical service
- Lenten Liturgies

Chaplaincy:

To nurture the development and expression of spirituality, the school has a Chaplain whose role is to maintain the broad aims of liturgy as set out in this document. The role is to organise:

- All school liturgies developed in conjunction with the Chaplaincy prefects.
- The use of the Chapel, including lunchtimes groups for vulnerable students

- The booking of priests and speakers
- Creation of resources for staff involved in assembly preparation
- Inset for staff
- Retreats/days of reflection for students and staff

Planning

Collective worship is planned:

- following a structure linked to the Church's seasons, significant dates and the curriculum
- with flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school and the wider community
- with reference to the school's aims and policies
- to develop in students the skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship themselves, rather than participating or contributing in a token way.

Resources

There are many resources available for planning Collective Worship including those which can be found on a variety of internet sites and in the Chaplaincy area. The Chaplain provides resources for key events and links to the Liturgical Calendar are highlighted weekly via the staff bulletin, Family Newsletter and whole school calendar.

Legal Requirements

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship for all pupils. (This can take place at any time during the school day and can be either a single act of worship for all pupils, or separate acts of worship in school groups). We understand that simply holding an assembly that includes a prayer, said by either the teacher or everyone present, does not fulfil this requirement. We also acknowledge that collective worship and assembly are distinct activities. They may sometimes form part of the same gathering, but the difference between the two will always be made clear. The act of worship is not designated curriculum time under regulations and will not be considered as part of the RE lesson (for time purposes)

In this voluntary aided Catholic school, responsibility for arranging collective worship rests with the governing body after consultation with the head teacher.

Withdrawal

Parents have the right to withdraw their child / children from Collective Worship. However, given its importance in a Catholic school, parents and prospective parents need to be made aware of the fact that it can never be confined to 'timetabled slots', but may take place in a variety of contexts other than those which are specifically structured.

In order to do this, our celebrations are kept small wherever possible, to help students personalise the experience. We also keep them relatively short, appropriately paced and simple, albeit including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings.

Collective Worship is organized at the Academy as follows: -

Lead by staff and / or students SLT assemblies alternate with Year Group assemblies

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Year 13	Senior Leadership Liturgical Assembly: 8.40am - 9:00am Main Hall			Year team Assembly 8:40am - 9:00am Main Hall	
Year 12				Year team Assembly 8:40am - 9:00am Main Hall	
Year 11					Year team Assembly 8:40am - 9:00am Canteen
Year 10		Senior Leadership Liturgical Assembly: 8.40am - 9:00am Main Hall		Year team Assembly 8:40am - 9:00am Canteen	
Year 9			Year team Assembly 8:40am - 9:00am Canteen		
Year 8		Year team Assembly 8:40am - 9:00am Canteen	Senior Leadership Liturgical Assembly: 8.40am - 9:00am Main Hall		
Year 7	Year team Assembly 8:40am - 9:00am Canteen				

Monitoring and Evaluation

The school’s provision of worship will be evaluated annually through the School Improvement Plan and Performance Management to consider whether it meets the needs of students and whether it truly reflects the aims and mission of the Ursuline Academy Ilford. Assemblies are observed by members of the leadership team to ensure a consistent approach is used in delivering the principles set out above. In addition as part of the school’s pastoral monitoring programme the daily act of worship is monitored half termly by Heads of Year and reported to Governors.

