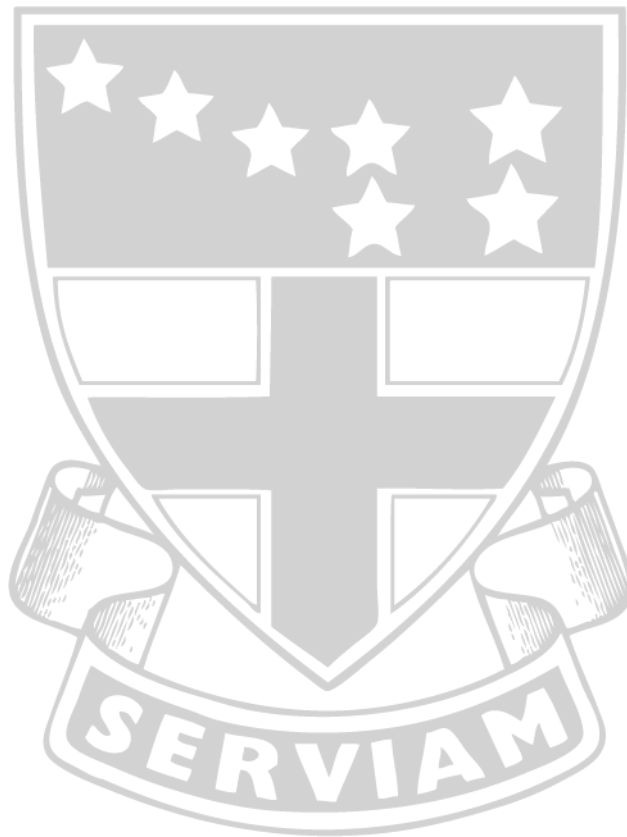


COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY



Date of Review: July 2024

Date of Next Review: July 2025

Prayer Rationale

Worship, prayer and liturgical celebration are central to the Catholic nature of the school and the religious journey and experience of the students.

The place of prayer is of high importance in our school and through prayer we uphold, and maintain the Catholic ethos. Prayer is part of everyday life in St Angela's, and is performed in several different realms of school life, permeating all aspects of the school. The school has a chapel in which the Blessed Sacrament is reserved. We encourage its use by all, for prayer and reflection and celebrate Mass in the chapel on a weekly basis.

The chapel is also used for small class **worship** which occur within the RE curriculum. We have dedicated Liturgy Representatives **in** each form group **from** Year 7 **to** Year 11. Each form class is given the opportunity to celebrate a collective mass throughout the year. Marian devotions take place during October and May and special Saint's Days are acknowledged. **During the Lenten period the Chapel is also used for Stations of the Cross and also Eucharistic adoration.**

Staff begin each lesson with a prayer, which are often student-led and with an intention. **During RE lessons the students learn specific prayers and their deeper purposes and meanings such as the Our Father, Hail Holy Queen, the Magnificat and the prayer of St Francis along with an understanding of the importance of spontaneous prayer and special intentions.**

The Prayer and Liturgy Directory reminds us that 'Communal prayer forms an essential dimension of life in a Catholic school. Staff and pupils are invited to recognise God's action in their lives and the life of the school, and in response to express together their needs and those of the whole human family, and to offer thanks for all that is good.'

Prayer 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 St Angela's.
- 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 help students understand the importance of prayer in their lives and**

personal faith journey.

- To reinforce our mission statement based on Romans 10:1.
- To provide an environment where prayer is accepted and encouraged.
- To give spiritual support for all of those in the school community.

The Spiritual Life of the School

'Education is about the growth and development of the whole person. It should aim to integrate a pupil's intellectual, spiritual, moral, emotional, psychological, social and physical development, thus assisting progress towards that fullness of life which comes from God.' (Evaluating the distinctive nature of a Catholic School 1990)

'I would like to help us to rekindle our wonder for the beauty of the truth of the Christian celebration, to remind us of the necessity of an authentic liturgical formation, and to recognize the importance of an art of celebrating that is at the service of the truth of the Paschal Mystery and of the participation of all of the baptised in it, each one according to his or her vocation.' (Pope Francis, Desiderio Desideravi, 62)

These powerful statements above are a summary of our practice at St Angela's. We are called at baptism to be pilgrims on our journey of faith, and as a school we are guiding and supporting the students' spiritual journey as they pilgrim through their school life with us and as they enter the wider world on their own life mission.

The Prayer and Liturgy Directory says *'The words of Pope Francis have a particular resonance in our Catholic schools, where our children and young people are formed in the art of prayer, learn about the mysteries of God, and grow in an understanding of their own unique call to mission.'*

In addition to the prayer at the start of every lesson, the most concrete way in which we provide opportunities for spiritual growth include Assemblies, Mass, Prayer Groups and Form/Class prayer, these are all developed by students with staff mentoring. Every week assemblies are led by a member of the senior management team, head 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 Group 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 RE department. Appropriate materials are provided, further support and materials can be obtained from the liturgy co-ordinator and the liturgy representative.

St Angela's is in line with the guidance provided below, and the prayer and liturgy directory which states 'participation should be 'full, conscious and active'.



Liturgy as a community: Weekly Mass

The weekly mass is on a Form Group rota and attended by the Form, their Form Tutor, the Chaplain, Head of Music (to play accompaniment for the hymns) and the Assistant Headteacher for Behaviour and Welfare.

The prayer and Liturgy directory states *'The Eucharist contains and expresses all forms of prayer. The invitation to respond 'Amen' in prayer is the invitation to enter into the same dynamic of affirmation, faith, and offering, whether that prayer is one of adoration, petition, intercession, thanksgiving, or praise. 'Amen' is a Hebrew word which means 'so be it'. The saying 'Amen' also expresses a desire and willingness to engage in the missionary activity of the Church. Sacrosanctum Concilium drew on an explicit link between participating in the liturgy and evangelisation in its fullest sense'*

Our Masses are celebrated by one of the four priests of the Community of St John, in the St Antony's, Forest Gate, parish. Hymns are an integral part of the Mass.

Form Classes are provided with readings, and the students write the bidding prayers and the liturgy representatives develop the themes for the offertory and songs. They may perform a drama to the gospel or a post communion reflection on the theme of their mass.

During the year, there may be other occasions when the Eucharist is celebrated for a particular reason e.g. bereavement, and the welcome Mass for Year 6.

Liturgy as a community: Whole School Mass

There are three whole school Masses during the year (the Mass of the Holy Spirit to bless our school year, the Feast of St Angela in the spring term and the Feast of the Ascension in the summer term. Individual members of each form are asked to contribute music, readings and to objects for the offertory.

Celebrations of the Word

St Angela's school encourages priests from our Deanery to come into school regularly. They celebrate Mass and lead services of Reconciliation. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is offered to all year groups at various times throughout the year.

The priests are invited to attend all major school Celebrations and they participate in some RE lessons. The Deanery employs two full time Youth workers who come into school to work with students on liturgy.

Non sacramental celebrations take place at Christmas, Easter, and during the summer term. Each Celebrational service is centred on the appropriate theme; with the Easter liturgy being a solemn focus in preparation for the remembrance of Christ's sacrifice. End of term liturgies are celebrated by the whole school and are developed by the liturgy representatives to reflect world issues and that of the community. In a similar way to Mass, individual pupils contribute. The celebration of the Eucharist is at the heart of our Catholic life.

Year 13 have a Leavers Mass in May. This is a focal points in our school year when we come together to thank God and celebrate the collective achievement of the school and praise pupils for their contribution to the life of the school and the community.

The Sacraments in action

The Sacraments are fostered in St Angelas. The Eucharist rests at the heart of the school and is reserved in the Tabernacle in the school chapel which is celebrated every Friday at mass as well as revered through Eucharistic adoration. Many of our students make their confirmation in the parishes, this is something that is celebrated within the school. A celebration mass is said in the Spring term and they are encouraged to speak to their RE teachers about their confirmation name choices. The Sacrament is offered at points in the year with through one to one experience with the clergy or through wider reflective Reconciliation services in the Chapel led by the School Chaplain

Assemblies

Whole school assemblies follow liturgical and secular themes in a cyclical pattern e.g. Advent, the Jubilee Year of Mercy, The Diocese Centenary Year Celebration, the Prevent agenda. Our daily Acts of Worship takes the form of either an assembly or class prayers and reflection.

Class Acts of Worship take place during registration time, they may be led by pupils or the form teacher. **These assemblies regularly focus on the gospel message taught during the previous Sunday Mass, to make the connection to the wider faith journey.** Prayers are taken from the planner or the Prayer booklets given to each member of staff at the beginning of the year.

Class Prayers

Pupils are keen to compose their own prayers and will often offer intentions for prayers. The school prayer, the Ursuline Prayer is in the school planner and on every form board. A prayer starts each registration and every lesson.

Prayer with staff

St Angela's has many staff of different faith backgrounds, however all staff are inducted into the catholic life of the school and receive a session on catholic ethos. They are encouraged to facilitate opportunities of prayer as well as being led in prayer by SLT in briefings and meetings. The Prayer and liturgy directory states *'Praying and celebrating liturgies together on a regular basis offer staff an opportunity to deepen their own spiritual lives and experience different types of prayer'*.

Music and Liturgy

St Angela's has a rich history of music excellence with many students keen to take an active part in the school choirs and instrumental groups. These groups add a richness to the liturgical celebrations in the school. Students are encouraged to sing communally as well as students having solo roles as cantors during liturgical celebrations. The Hymn selection is tailored to the liturgical calendar and adds spiritual value and richness to worship in the school.

Links to the Ursuline Community

The Ursuline Sisters are an integral part of the school and the students' daily lives. The school is actively engaged at Post 16 with the Ursuline Links Programme and key staff attend our annual Ursuline conference.

Student Faith Journey

Journey of faith, reflective sessions take place for all students in the school chapel. For example, sessions explore the Rosary in October and in November remembrance of those who have gone before us. The sessions follow the Catholic Liturgical Calendar and the Papal Cyclical Year, throughout the academic year. Students have a key role in planning all of the reflective aspects of the sessions.

Retreats

Years 7-11 are given a full one day retreat which explores a relevant theme. Activities are a combination of decisions, action, reflection and creativity. The retreat either starts with mass or closes with Mass. Allowing the student to embrace the power of the Liturgy with their year group. Year 12 are given an offsite retreat day at Aylesford during the first two days of their sixth form induction. It is a very gentle, yet powerful way to induct new members of the St Angela's community to the catholic ethos of the school.

The importance of dialogue:

St Angela's is in a diverse and multicultural community of Newham. The Prayer and Liturgy directory reminds us that *'The Catholic Church is committed to dialogue with members of different religious traditions at all levels. Where schools have pupils from other traditions, it is important that there is dialogue with the families, and local religious leaders where possible. Such dialogue helps the school articulate and implement a clear position on the presence and involvement of members of other religious traditions in its prayer and liturgy'*

As a school we are involved with the wider religious education in Newham through the SACRE programme which offers students opportunities to have wider dialogues and gives a space to share faith journeys and experiences.

Chaplaincy role at St Angela's

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 Liturgical Masses, Celebrations of the word and many Assemblies are developed in conjunction with the liturgy representatives
- The use of the Chapel, including lunchtimes groups for vulnerable students
- The booking of priests and speakers
- Create material during form periods linked to canonical events, holy days of obligation and Saint/feast days
- Creation of resources for staff involved in assembly preparation
- Inset for staff
- Retreats/days of reflection for students and staff

Conclusion

The prayer and liturgy directory summarises this perfectly when it says *'Just as Our Lord Jesus Christ is at the heart of all our prayer and liturgy, so too he is at the centre of every Catholic school. His Gospel is the reference point for its ethos and values; he offers the definitive example of the educator.'*

St Angela's School is a Christian community of prayer and worship that follows the teachings of Jesus Christ, the Catholic Church and of St Angela. Collective prayer and worship are an integral part of school life with an emphasis on the Eucharist. Whilst distinctively Catholic, and distinctively Ursuline, the school is also welcoming of those of all faiths, including those who do not believe. The spiritual life of the school permeates every aspect of the community and every part of the day and is therefore at the very heart of what we are and what we do.