



St Ursula's Convent School

A Humanities College and Teaching School



*I am an Ursuline.
Today, tomorrow, always.*

Welcome

A message from the Head Teacher

I am delighted that you are considering St Ursula's as a secondary school for your daughter. As an outstanding school, with a vibrant learning community, we aim to provide the very best learning opportunities where students are challenged, inspired and encouraged to reach their full potential, regardless of ability.

Our reputation as an outstanding school ensures we are very popular and highly oversubscribed year after year. Our academic profile of excellence is based upon a culture of high aspirations and expectations where we believe that every girl can achieve highly. The success of the school is due to the commitment, enthusiasm and hard work of all staff, students and parents.

The well qualified staff ensure learning is engaging, challenging and enjoyable. We are a school that instils a sense of belonging and worth; where dreams and aspirations become a reality. We are very proud of our achievements and we believe that our girls will be tomorrow's leaders. I hope our prospectus provides you with a flavour of our happy, caring community.

Our place in the World

Founded by the Ursuline order in 1877 in Greenwich, St Ursula's has fine views over London and the Thames, surrounded by a rich heritage of maritime history and located on the Meridian Line. The original Georgian house set in beautifully landscaped gardens has been extended to embrace all the requirements of a modern day school. We are a traditional school providing a modern day curriculum and a forward thinking approach to education.

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 of peace-making*
- *Serviam (I will serve) as a lived reality*
- *Development of leadership skills of every individual*

A hallmark of an Ursuline school is academic excellence.





Serviam

St Ursula's Convent School is a voluntary aided, all-ability, Catholic School for Girls. The school forms part of a worldwide community of Ursuline schools and was founded over 130 years ago. We are very proud of our heritage and we continue to live out St. Angela Merici's vision of educating young girls.

Our school motto is **"Serviam"** meaning **"I will serve"**. We are a testament to this in that our school community bears witness to God's love whereby each individual is encouraged to serve and love one another.

Our Mission is

- to ensure that every individual achieves their potential through the pursuit of academic excellence and the nurturing of their gifts and talents.
- to create a caring Catholic community allowing everyone to develop and share in the love of Christ serving the world of today and tomorrow through the relationships we make and the service we provide to others.

The behaviour and safety of pupils (Personal development, behaviour and welfare) is graded as outstanding at St Ursula's.

'The strong ethos of the school means that students are very supportive and respectful of each other. They are polite and courteous to each other, staff and visitors to the school'. (Ofsted 2015)

Our Faith Journey

St Ursula's has a distinctly Catholic nature where prayer is an integral part of our school day. There is an expectation at St Ursula's for all students and staff to be active in the liturgical and spiritual life of the school. For each individual that may have a different meaning as everyone's life-pilgrimage is slightly different, but we believe that our Catholic ethos and strong Christian values allow everyone to develop spiritually, emotionally and physically in this ever demanding world. Our strong community spirit creates an environment where everyone feels valued and they are encouraged to use their talents to live out **"Serviam"**.

We have an impressive programme of sacramental and non-sacramental services throughout the year, which reflect both the Church's liturgical calendar and the school's academic year. Our links with nearby parishes are strong, especially with our local parish, Our Ladye Star of the Sea. The Eucharist is celebrated on Holy Days of Obligation, on Ash Wednesday, at the start of the new academic year, for Year 11 Examination Mass, Staff Masses, ethnic minority Masses and at a Year 7 Welcome Mass.





Catholic Life of the School

Overall the quality of collective worship is outstanding. It is central to the life of the school and fundamental in providing extensive, varied and meaningful religious experiences. The Parish Priest offers Mass once a week in school. Pupils also attend the Parish Mass in the church which adjoins the school. Prayer opportunities are well planned with the assistance of the School Chaplain. The Chaplaincy programme ensures students gain opportunities to attend retreats and explore their faith journey.

‘Pupils display an understanding of and a deep reverence at prayer’.
(Ofsted Section 48 Report 2015)

Inspiring a Love of Learning

‘The curriculum is tailored to meet the needs of the students...It is under continuous review and has been adapted over the years to ensure that students all receive a core offer of subjects’.
(Ofsted 2015)

St. Ursula’s provides a vibrant and stimulating environment overseen by well qualified staff with a wealth of expertise in their subjects. The teachers here strive to provide learners with exciting and innovative lessons, which stretch and challenge the thinking and imagination of students of all abilities. When students join, they follow a rich, diverse and balanced curriculum, designed to stimulate and spark their enthusiasm in a wide range of different subjects.

From investigating the battlements of Dover Castle and the foreshore of the River Thames to teaching Food Technology and Science to local primary school students in Years 5 and 6, a St. Ursula’s learner can look forward to expanding her horizons and developing her potential. Whatever the ability of the learner, rigour in the classroom and high expectations for the achievement of the individual are the norm. These goals are reflected year on year in the outstanding public examination results achieved by our girls.

Teaching and Learning graded as **“outstanding”** in St. Ursula’s.

‘The high quality of teaching typically encountered by students accounts for their outstanding academic achievement.

The very best lessons are characterised by high expectations, strong subject knowledge and activities that challenge students to deepen and extend their learning further. Students look forward to lessons and have excellent attitudes to their learning’. (Ofsted 2015)





Care, Support and Guidance

All students receive the highest possible standards of care, support and guidance as they move through the school. The pastoral care of the individual student is our prime concern and whilst all staff contribute to the ethos of our school, ‘**Serviam**’, there are a number of specialised roles within the school which offer personalised support.

Personal Tutors

Our Personal Tutors provide consistent and interested adult support to the young people in our care. They are the first point of contact for parents/carers and seek to enable the development of positive and encouraging partnerships between the school and the home which will foster both the student’s learning and development. Personal Tutors also play a major role in the spiritual, social and moral development of the child.

The School Chaplain and newly appointed Counsellor are also pivotal in supporting the spiritual and personal development of the girls.

Year Leaders and Key Stage Learning Managers

The Pastoral Support Team ensures that all children are known, valued and supported throughout their time in St. Ursula’s. Where necessary, intervention and support strategies will be put in place to increase and maximise the achievement of each child.

Students are regularly monitored; their individual academic, emotional and spiritual needs are identified and addressed. The Year Leaders and Key Stage Learning Managers have overall responsibility for the pastoral care of the students in their respective year groups, working closely with the Personal Tutors, preparing a programme relevant to the needs of the students.

The Pastoral Team, supported by the Senior Leadership Team, oversee the progress and general welfare of every student in the school.

In addition, each member of the Senior Leadership Team oversees one year group of the school.





Influencing Learning - Pupil Voice

The students are fully involved in the life of the school, particularly regarding the continual focus on outstanding learning and teaching across the school.

The Junior Teaching School (JTS)

This pupil voice group annually recruits new members who bring with them new and creative ideas to challenge the school community on how to improve learning further. Key developments that have had great effect on the school include 'The Green Pen Challenge', a reward scheme that encourages careful proof reading and editing of work alongside DIT (Dedicated Improvement Time), which ensures that teacher marking and feedback is really put to good use by students.

JTS help to champion the habits for learning which help to make their peers successful in learning.

The Junior Assessment for Learning Board

This pupil voice group work hard to ensure that all students in the school understand Assessment for Learning and how it helps them to make rapid progress in their lessons. They help their peers to see how they can be really effective in taking the next steps in learning, whether it is through deepening the understanding of how young people can be expert assessors or through supporting them in writing targets for Pupil Self Evaluations each term.

This group also acts as a consultative body for new initiatives and they help to encompass all viewpoints on the impact of developments in teaching and learning.

'I have become a more confident public speaker having delivered the assemblies and speaking to Governors and teachers.' (Lucy - Year 11 student)

Debating Society

Debating in the curriculum and in the weekly STU Debating Society adds another layer to **'Student Voice'** and gives students the opportunity to be empowered as confident speakers and clear, rational thinkers. They are trained by the English Speaking Union and run debates around a range of engaging topics over the term. We hope our young women use these skills in the future to champion the weak and vulnerable in the wider world.





Exciting and Enriching

At St Ursula's the enrichment of our students is of high importance, whether it takes place during lessons or during our calendared Enrichment Days etc, students are given a wealth of enriching experiences and opportunities. Our extensive Gifted and Talented programme provides a rich and challenging curriculum for all learners, one that promotes the highest standards and encourages each and every girl to achieve her full potential.

We offer additional educational support to those who require it, so every student is able to work at a level suitable to her needs.

Students have a voice in the choice of activities they wish to experience, with the expectation of all students engaging in the programme and improving their skills.

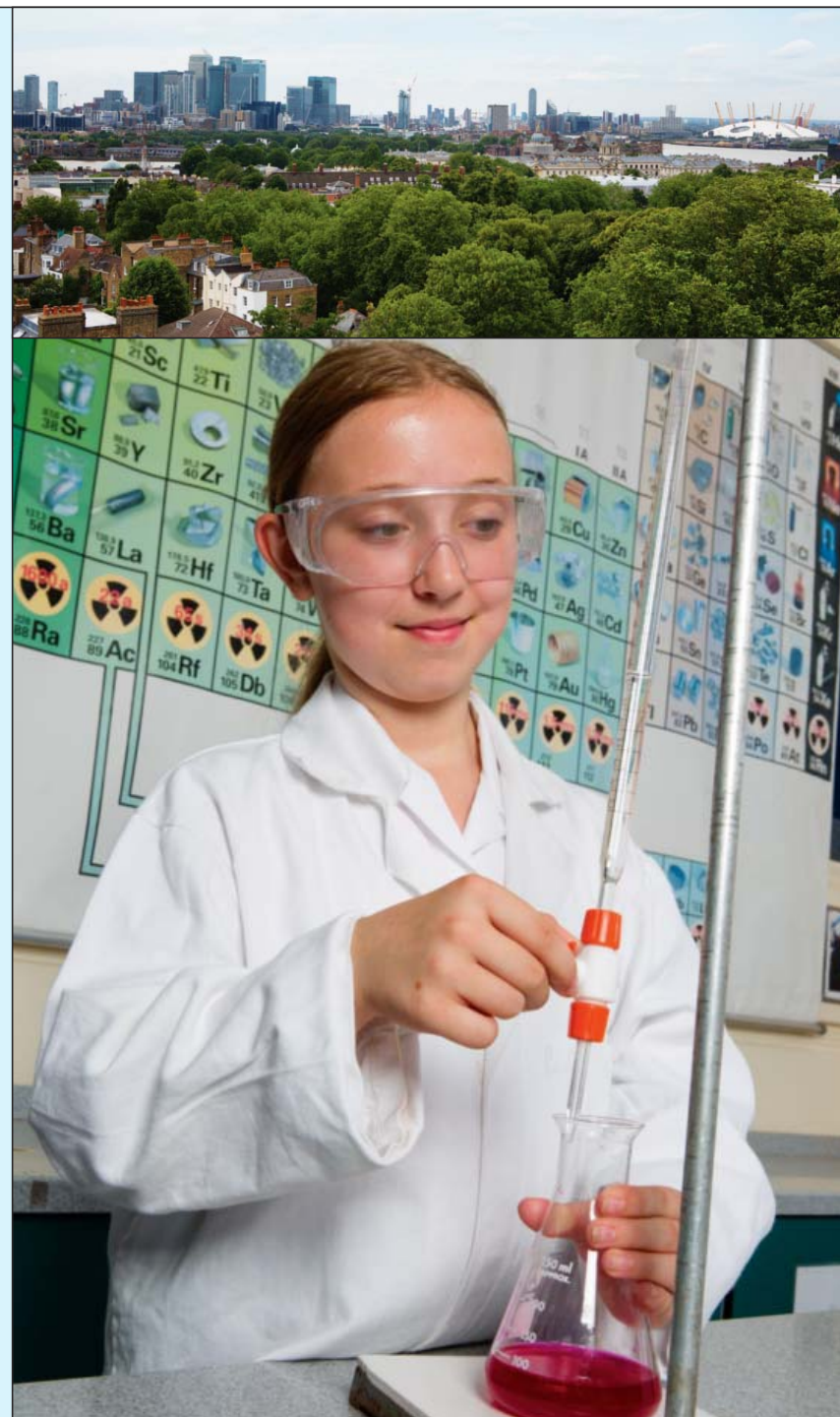
The achievement of pupils (Outcomes for pupils) is graded as "outstanding" in St. Ursula's.

'All students, including the most able, make exceptional progress from Year 7 through to Year 11. Disadvantaged students perform especially well. The school's supportive ethos, combined with high expectations, results in phenomenal achievement for disadvantaged students'. (Ofsted 2015)

Innovation through the Specialism

St Ursula's continues to embrace its Humanities Specialism. English, History and Geography remain successful, innovative and popular with the students. Our striving for excellence regularly takes us beyond the school gates to encounter all the exciting and creative opportunities available in the Heritage site on our doorstep and the riches that easy access to London can offer. Girls revel in the workshops facilitated by The National Maritime Museum and the Cutty Sark and always enjoy their engagement with Shakespeare at The Globe. The major art galleries too are regularly visited in our year long programme of enrichment. The status allows for the creative enrichment of all these subject areas both in and out of school.

Our girls are regularly involved with our feeder Primary schools via various artistic projects. There are also numerous opportunities to be involved in outreach work within our local community in the spirit of **"Serviam"**. The Specialism is full of energy and so is leading to embrace change in our school community as it looks towards a more integrated teaching approach in the lower school. Subject areas enjoy the freedom of working together in an innovative environment.





Initial Teaching Training (ITT)

As an outstanding school, we are committed to training teachers. We offer a wide range of subject placements, working closely with our local universities, Goldsmiths and the University of Greenwich.

The support and guidance given to the many **“Beginning Teachers”** we host on placements throughout the academic year is highly rated.

All our subject departments are involved in ITT through:

- PGCE placements
- Subject mentoring
- Pastoral mentoring
- Visits to departments from prospective PGCE students
- Delivery of Learning and Teaching sessions

“It is a pleasure to work in an environment where the staff are friendly and the morale is good. I found my placement at St Ursula’s encouraging and rewarding.”

“The students’ keenness to learn has been amazing and they have made my first experience of teaching highly enjoyable. Behaviour is incredible at the school.”

Our Teaching School ethos effectively and innovatively leads the way in the recruitment, training and development of teachers. This ensures that expert knowledge and practice is disseminated across the school and through collaborative outreach with partner schools, local authorities, initial teacher training providers and other agencies.

‘Staff feel privileged to work at the school and speak highly of the support and development they receive’. (Ofsted 2015)

A Centre of Teaching Excellence

St Ursula’s is a strategic partner in the Catholic Teaching Alliance and the Royal Borough of Greenwich Teaching Alliance. As a strategic partner we are designated as a centre of excellence in training and development.

We focus on developing and delivering high quality initial teacher training (ITT) and professional development which is focused on improving and enhancing the quality of teaching and learning in our school community.







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