

Gemma's life had taken many twists and turns, but she can now feel secure about her daughter's future with the support and understanding of St Ursula's Catholic Junior School



On the up

Everyone goes through ups and downs in their life and Gemma is no exception. Having experienced some difficult periods in the last few years she is now definitely on an 'up', and she gives St Ursula's much of the credit for this.

"We have moved several times for various reasons and it has been a bit unsettling, especially for the children," Gemma explains. "Shania especially felt the effects and when she got to St Ursula's she was below the level she should be in her education, and she didn't have much self-confidence. Within the last year and a half she has made excellent progress in every way and has caught up to where she should be, as well as being much happier in herself and it is St Ursula's I have to thank for that."

Gemma Curran lives in Romford with her three children. Shania is 9 and attends St Ursula's Catholic Junior School.



**ST URSULA'S CATHOLIC
JUNIOR SCHOOL**
Diocese of Brentwood

We celebrate God in all we do!

A life-changing experience

As a regular churchgoer, Gemma had confided to her Priest at St Dominic's Church that she would like to move Shania to St Ursula's, with which the church has close links. "He was very helpful and prepared to support my application for a place for Shania, and fortunately soon after a place became available. I found the teachers very friendly and welcoming and they have all been a huge help to us in so many ways; I can honestly say that moving my daughter to St Ursula's has been a life-changing event. It is the school I wanted for her, one which I knew I could trust 100%."

Back up to speed

Having fallen behind in English and maths at her previous school, Shania is now completely up to speed and, in Gemma's words, flying ahead. "It was St Ursula's which picked up why she was failing and her teachers knew how to get her back on track," says Gemma. "They also arranged for her to have some counselling to improve her self-esteem and she is so much happier and more confident now. The school's approach has been completely effective and has helped amazingly in turning things around for us."

Non-judgmental and positive approach

The close-knit, community spirit of St Ursula's and the area in which it is situated has given Gemma a whole new outlook, helping her to feel at home and more secure than she had previously been. "With one daughter at the Junior School and another in the Nursery, I have lots of opportunity to chat to other parents in the playground which is lovely! The best thing, though, is that the teachers are so kind and understanding and I have always felt able to go to them with any problems I may have. They have always been completely non-judgmental and very positive, so that with their help I have been able to overcome difficulties and move forward."

Working together

Gemma's Christian faith is obviously a great support to her and the fact that at St Ursula's that faith is actively celebrated makes the school even more special. "I feel that the teachers are on our side in every aspect of our lives," she says. "We work together to make sure Shania is getting all the help she needs, and they have given me a new lease of life, too. I am in a much better place now because of St Ursula's; it is run by lovely people and I feel very blessed."



Children say:

Shania:

"I feel like I can talk to the grown ups when I have a problem and they sort it out. I have made lots of new friends, I have learned lots and I feel relaxed at St Ursula's and able to learn."

"I like that there are people here to help you and that they give you time and are very kind."

It's lovely to go on school trips because I get to go to places that I wouldn't be able to go to otherwise."

There are lots of people to help me with my learning - the teachers give up their time to help you - like if I couldn't do my homework I go to homework club and a grown up will help me to do it."



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St Ursula's Catholic Junior School, Straight Road,
Harold Hill, Essex, RM3 7JS

Email: office@st-ursulas-rc-jun.haverling.sch.uk

Telephone: 01708 343170

Fax: 01708 379590