The ‘Prevent’ Strategy at Mulberry School for Girls
Guidance for Staff and Parents

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Introduction
The ‘Prevent Strategy’ published by the government in 2011 is a strategy designed to prevent any kind of extremist or terrorist activity from occurring in any community. In the report, 25 areas of the country were highlighted as areas in which such activity was likely to be present. One of those areas was Tower Hamlets, alongside several other east London boroughs including Lewisham, Newham and Barking and Dagenham.

At Mulberry School for Girls, although we know we need to be constantly vigilant and to eschew complacency, we have always been regarded as having good practice in preventing extremism. We have constantly worked together with families, governors and the local community to protect our pupils from the effects of different kinds of extremist behavior, including the EDL or groups which sympathise with terrorism. In 2008, the school and its staff were involved in advising the government on how best to approach community cohesion and the policy approach to preventing extremism. We had a visit from central government to discuss our approach and Deborah Weston, our Director of Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development at the time, became a key adviser until the 2011 strategy was published.

The approach that Mulberry School for Girls takes is built on the following principles:

1. It is good practice in any school to be constantly vigilant in combatting suspicion or distrust between different groups of people represented in the school’s community. Mistrust and a sense of injustice lie at the heart of division which can lead to extremist activity.

2. The expression of extremism changes as national and world affairs change. Being resilient to all forms of extremism both now and in later life as things
change depends on the values, the critical thinking skills and belief in tolerance and mutual respect that a person has.

3. Having a stake in the opportunities which Britain offers to all its citizens for economic empowerment is critical. Disaffection and alienation occur when young people feel disenfranchised. An outstanding education which sees pupils leave school confident, fulfilled, well-qualified and with a repertoire of skills to engage in British public and community life is the best way to eradicate all forms of extremism. This is what our parents want and this is what Mulberry delivers.

How the ‘Prevent Strategy’ is Delivered at Mulberry School for Girls

The strategy is delivered through the following elements of our provision:

1. The Curriculum: Curriculum content is carefully constructed. Pupils follow a traditional broad and balanced curriculum focused on subject mastery. Religious Studies is taught by specialists and is compulsory for all students up to age 16. It includes extensive study of all faiths with a focus on Christianity and Islam at KS4. Misconceptions are addressed in relation to scripture and religious text. In English, texts are from the English canon. They reflect Britain’s diversity. Citizenship is a discrete compulsory subject at KS3. Democracy, rule of law and global citizenship is taught as well as tolerance, diversity and respect. There is a strong PSHE curriculum which includes relationships and sex education, health education, drugs education and social issues amongst other learning. Arts subjects, including dance, music and drama are compulsory until age 14 after which it is compulsory to specialize in at least one arts subject at GCSE. History and geography are compulsory till age 14 after which it is compulsory to study at least one of the two. Humanities subjects cover life in Britain historically and in contemporary times. Politics and sociology are popular options at KS5 alongside History and Geography.

   * There is a whole curriculum audit of opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development that should be read alongside this guidance.

2. Arts Education: study of the arts at Mulberry is safeguarded through its School Specialism which is Arts Specialism. Through careful work with families, Mulberry has no withdrawal from the study of arts subjects and this has been so for at least eight years. Girls perform publicly in dance and drama through the establishment of the Mulberry Dance Company and the Mulberry Theatre Company, which has performed in Edinburgh for four years to critical acclaim as well as at the Southbank Centre and Southwark Playhouse. The Mulberry Dance Company has performed at the Royal Opera House and Sadlers’ Wells. Every girl must perform publicly in Year 9 as part of the Year 9 arts project. A Winter Gathering is held every year at Christmas, taking themes related to Christmas and the arts team lead the whole school community in carol singing for pupils and parents at the end of the Christmas term – all staff join in regardless of culture, faith or background. Similar celebrations are held in the school for other reasons, for example the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee when the school held a ‘Right Royal Knees Up’ in true cockney east end style.
3. **Extra-Curricular Provision:** all girls must be involved in clubs and other activities that enrich the curriculum at Mulberry. Some of the major programmes offered are listed:

   a. **Global Classrooms – MUN programme.** Mulberry has run this conference programme for many years. It is co-educational and it involves writing resources, training staff from other schools and training pupils as committee chairs, rapporteurs and leaders. Over 30 schools regularly access this programme, including schools from Japan, the USA, Slovenia, Israel and Palestine.

   b. **The Youth Conference** – this is regularly attended by over 20 schools. It is led by the sixth form, supported by teachers. Themes relating to justice, tolerance and equality are explored.

   c. **Arts Partnerships** – pupils have supported the establishment of WOW (the Women of the World Festival). They have worked closely with Jude Kelly at Southbank Centre. The school has recently gone into partnership with the Donmar Warehouse. In December 2014, Phyllida Lloyd brought her all female production of Henry IV for a run in Tower Hamlets at Mulberry School – the play considers themes of filial duty, nation state and patriotism. The school has a longstanding partnership with the National Theatre with which it ran Mulberry Youth Conference in 2015. The conference focused on David Hare’s play ‘Beyond the Beautiful Forevers’ and themes connected with the play. The Royal Court Theatre has worked with the Mulberry Alumni Theatre Company to create and produce a play for performance at the Royal Court. The BFI (British Film Institute) is a film-making partner and has supported the school’s work through ‘Cutting East’ – a young film-maker’s festival in East London and Cinematique – a project related to French cinema which enables pupils to make films and show them internationally.

   d. **Women’s Conferences** - the school has run over 10 conferences for girls and young women giving them access to a variety of successful women from different fields including business and industry. Themes cover ambition, aspiration, resilience and determination to make a positive difference to society.

   e. **Duke of Edinburgh’s Award Scheme:** the school has run the DofE scheme for over 8 years with several students achieving gold awards in the past.

   f. **Magic Me** – is an inter-generational arts project which the school has offered for over 11 years. It engages a group of diverse older women from the East End with Year 9 and 10 pupils at Mulberry.

4. **Trips and Visits:** pupils engage in a wide range of field trips, residential trips and day trips to support their curriculum learning or enrichment. Examples include: the battlefields in Ypres, Wales, Edinburgh, Venice, Berlin, Singapore, Paris and the UN in New York.

5. **Pupil Voice:** Mulberry has a strong School Council and a range of other initiatives for student leadership which allow pupils to have input into the strategic planning for the school. A democratic process is in place to ensure fair representation.
6. **Links with Employers**: a wide variety of work is undertaken with employers. The employers we work with include: Barts Health who offer regular work experience for students interested working within the medicine and Allied Heath sector. KPMG offer professional mentoring schemes for year groups 9, 11 resulting in continuing networking with their mentors post 16. Clifford Chance is one of our long -standing partnerships offering mentoring programme for year 10. JTP Architects is an international company that is based locally and offer bespoke work experience and shadowing to increase BAME to this sector. Young Work Path- signposting students that are looking for apprenticeships/ traineeship with employers across London to reduce the potential to become NEET after leaving MSfG.

7. **Parent and Family Programmes**: parents and families have access to help, advice and support through our community learning programme. In 2012, we opened the Mulberry and Bigland Green Centre to provide a space for families and their learning. Courses in childcare, parenting, access to employment, fitness, literacy, numeracy and ICT are offered together with enrichment trips, events and social space. Much support is given to parents at crucial times of options choice, mock examinations and learning intervention programmes. Building trust with families has supported our ability to provide a rich arts education.

8. **Safeguarding**: Mulberry has employed extensive safeguarding services for pupils as part of its commitment to the whole child. They include: a School Social Worker, two Attendance and Welfare Advisors and Learning Mentors. There is a Director of Pastoral Provision as well as a senior member of staff on the SLT, both of whom lead on Child Protection. We also have the service of a police liaison officer. These services are co-ordinated effectively by the Assistant Head in charge of Inclusion. Records are meticulously kept on CPOMS and referrals followed up conscientiously. Liaison with Social Services, CAMHS and other agencies is carried out actively. Monitoring of pupils’ internet access is regularly carried out to ensure they are safe.

9. **Governance**: the local governing body of Mulberry School for Girls is actively involved in the life of the school, supporting the pupils and their families to do well. There is broad representation on our governing body from our parent community, our partners in the arts and employment as well as education, finance and legal expertise.

This comprehensive approach to ensuring that pupils have access to the highest quality education which offers experience in the world beyond Mulberry to equip pupils to be successful in adult life both individually, within their own community and within wider British society is regarded by us as the best way in which to ‘prevent’ engagement in extremist activity of any kind. Pupils at Mulberry School for Girls are proud of their British heritage – whether it be British, British Bangladeshi, British African etc., and the school is proud of their achievements as they leave and go on to work, university and successful careers in fields such as teaching, clinical services, public health, political leadership and the City.