

# Self-Evaluation Form 2023-24



# MULBERRY SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

## School Self-Evaluation Form – Spring 2024

### Context and Headlines

#### Context

The provision offered at Mulberry School for Girls is unique and exceptional.

**Mulberry School for Girls is an over-subscribed, fully comprehensive, highly ambitious school with a commitment to social justice, which includes working to achieve social mobility for pupils and their families and better economic prosperity. This ambition pervades every aspect of the school's work every day. Mulberry School for Girls also fulfils an extensive system-wide remit for school-to-school support and improvement. It is the lead school for the East London Teaching School Hub and has a number of other partnerships.**

The school's mission statement is '**Confidence, Creativity, Leadership and Love of Learning for Young Women**' under the Trust's banner seeking '**Outstanding Achievement For All**'. This expresses the DNA of our approach to education at Mulberry. Despite being amidst the wealth and affluence of the City, Docklands and the artistic, sporting and entrepreneurial business hubs of Spitalfields, Shoreditch, Tech City and the Olympic Park, we serve families whose children experience some of the highest rates of child poverty in the UK at 53% (End Child Poverty Coalition 2018), health poverty and worklessness (Tower Hamlets Fairness Report 2018). The school's deprivation index is 5 – in the highest quintile. Most families live in over-crowded social housing and during the second wave of the Covid pandemic mortality rates for Bangladeshi women were four times higher than for white women (ONS, 2022). Yet serious social and financial disadvantage does not hold us back. Whilst much of our work entails addressing the barriers disadvantage brings through pastoral care, safeguarding and inclusion, we are unapologetic in the rigour of our curriculum and our approach to learning and teaching, which expects the best achievement from all our pupils and staff.

**Mulberry is a unique school.** The majority of pupils (95%) are practising Muslims, most of whom are of British Bangladeshi heritage (84%) with the remaining students from a variety of other ethnic backgrounds. Over the past 15 years, the Muslim community has experienced significant turbulence with Islamophobia, extremism and community division since Brexit combining to produce difficult territory for inner London pupils – especially Muslim girls – to traverse. Breaking down external stereotypical attitudes towards our school community as well as providing outstanding qualifications and a rich extra-curricular experience for our pupils (and their families) has driven our work relentlessly. The school is committed to improving equality, diversity and inclusion.

We believe that pupils should have access to the wealth and prosperity of the area where they live through high skills jobs with good salaries. At present, City, Docklands and other big employers still recruit out of borough to such posts. We want to change this pattern. We want to ensure our young women leave us well-qualified with a full portfolio of skills, attributes and achievements, enabling them to lead successful, happy and prosperous lives – socially and economically – and have access to great employment prospects locally, making a full, impactful contribution to Britain and the wider world.

<b>School Roll</b>	1664 including 440 in the sixth form
<b>Ethnicity</b>	British Bangladeshi 84% Black Somali 4% 35 other ethnic groups all at <2%
<b>Pupil Premium</b>	50%
<b>Deprivation Index</b>	5
<b>SEND</b>	10% of pupils in the school have SEND of which 2.4% have an EOP (higher than average for girls which is 1.7% nationally).

The school belongs to a multi-academy trust (MAT), of which it was the founding school in 2016. Initially, Mulberry sponsored a University Technical College; Mulberry was then asked by the RSC in February 2017 to intervene in a critical incident at another local school. That school has now joined the MAT and is known as Mulberry Academy Shoreditch. Mulberry is working with the Local Authority and the DfE to build a new secondary free school in Wapping called Mulberry London Dock, opening in September 2024. In November 2021 Mulberry was also approved by the RSC to sponsor Wood Wharf Primary School, which opened in 2022. Another local secondary school, Mulberry Stepney Green opted to join the Trust in October 2021 and another local primary school and London secondary school, Mulberry Canon Barnett and Mulberry Woodside, in Summer 2023.

In February 2021, Mulberry School for Girls was designated as one of 87 Teaching School Hubs in the country. Under the name East London Teaching School Hub, Mulberry School for Girls leads the delivery of DfE approved teacher development programmes for all schools in Hackney and Tower Hamlets. Working collegiately with a range of local partner schools, by the end of Year 2 of its operation (August 2023), we had 954 participants engaging with our Early Career Framework Full Induction Programme with lead provider UCL; 571 participants studying one of our National Professional Qualifications and 300 ECTs from 54 schools benefitting from our Appropriate Body Services. 349 schools were engaged with our hub. This included 84% of schools from our DfE designated area. We have recruited 44 expert teachers and leaders from local schools to facilitate our programmes. 198 staff from the Mulberry Schools Trust have engaged in our programmes. By October 2023 (Year 3) we had 450 additional ECTs enrolled on ECF programme as well as 191 additional NPQ participants (Autumn 2023 cohort). We have become the largest local Appropriate Body provider for 130 schools and 525 ECTs. This is an example of our commitment to local partnership working underpinned to by a desire to ensure every student is taught and led by the very best teachers and leaders.

Mulberry School for Girls has a unique place in the MAT as the catalyst for support and development amongst the group of schools – and as a resource for improvement of pupils' achievement across the Trust. It takes seriously this responsibility, continuing to self-evaluate and improve itself as well as partnering others to do so. We believe that we benefit significantly from the reflective practice these school improvement relationships engender for senior leaders and staff. Pupils at Mulberry School for Girls also benefit from being part of a much more ethnically diverse, mixed gender peer group (pupils at Mulberry Girls' are predominantly girls from one community) and learning together with others. Achievement over the years bears out this hypothesis, especially at KS4 where progress has placed the school in the highest quintile of schools nationally in 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2022 (CAG and TAG years not included). Progress in 2023 exams places the school in the top 11% of schools nationally.

Compared only to other schools with free school meals ever 6 at 50% or higher in 2023 (MSfG was 52%), the P8 at Mulberry is the 12<sup>th</sup> highest nationally. In 2023 there were only 12 schools nationally that had a free school meal ever 6 at 45% or higher, entered 90% or more students for the full English Baccalaureate, and had a positive Progress 8 score. Mulberry is one of these 12 schools.

## SEF Headlines

The **quality of education** at Mulberry School for Girls engenders a love of learning with the development of independent learning skills so pupils can continue learning throughout their lives. We have created a seven year learning journey of connected key stages with high levels of academic and technical ambition, with knowledge of how to learn and how to communicate one's learning with strong understanding through high quality, confident writing and speaking. Reading for pleasure is a key component.

The curriculum is broad, balanced and deep. Almost all pupils study 10 GCSEs including the EBacc plus compulsory RS and an art – this combination is known as the 'Mulbacc'. Academic scholarship and intellectual rigour sit at its heart, alongside a focus on supporting the success and achievement of girls. The curriculum promotes global citizenship and awareness, along with a commitment to British identity and the richness of a multi-cultural society. An exceptional personal development and extra-curricular learning programme is a core part of this offer for every student.

Pupils are able to develop independence in their learning. The curriculum is inclusive of all pupils and celebrates their achievements. It is reflective of local families' ambitions and aspirations for their daughters as future leaders and change makers in society. The curriculum is appropriately varied for pupils with severe learning difficulties – and, through our close links with Mulberry UTC, for a very small number of pupils for whom technical learning is their preference in Year 10.

Outcomes reflect excellent progress from KS2 to KS4 from a curriculum in which the majority (over 95%) of pupils study 10 GCSEs including the EBacc – over the last 6 years, the school has had P8 scores that place the school in the top quintile and almost every year in the top 12%. Whilst the pandemic has contributed towards a gap that is larger than usual for the school, for disadvantaged pupils (over 50%), attainment and progress is exceptional. **Both the Progress and Attainment 8 scores for disadvantaged students at Mulberry in 2023 was higher than non-disadvantaged students nationally.** Achievement at KS5 is good or better over the same period with exceptional progress and destinations for disadvantaged post-16 students.

<b>Absence 2021/22</b>	4.3% compared to English state funded average of 9%
<b>Progress 8 score banding</b>	Well above average
<b>Entering EBacc</b>	95% compared to England average of 39% with an average of 9.2 GCSEs compared to England average of 7.3
<b>2021 leavers</b>	99% of KS4 leavers remained in education for at least 2 terms after KS4 compared to national average of 86% 80% of KS5 leavers remained in education compared to 51% nationally
<b>KS5 leavers (2020)*</b>	89% progressed to a degree compared to a national average of 64%, of which 39% progressed to Russell Group universities compared to national average of 18%.

\*Figures and data used throughout the SEF are mostly from 2023, unless this data has not yet been published, in which case they are 2022 or the most recent year currently published, which is indicated

Nationally, students eligible for pupil premium are more likely to pursue technical or vocational routes at post-16; just 14% of students studying A levels nationally were eligible for FSM at the end of Year 11. Mulberry bucks this trend. At Mulberry nearly half of A level students have been eligible for PP at the end of Year 11. Despite PP eligibility at over three times the national average, and inclusive entry requirements, the average attainment in 2023 was C+, in line with state funded schools nationally.

The sixth form is inclusive and regularly retains 70%+ of the Year 11 cohort. We have exceptionally strong post-18 destinations (generally 80 - 90% go on to university including a quarter to a third to Russell Group universities) and the remainder of students move on to apprenticeships or a gap year. Over the last three



years, four students have secured places at Oxbridge and 7 students have taken up a place on a degree level apprenticeship. This is growing. The % of 2021 leavers staying in education for at least two terms was 80% compared to a national average of just 51%. 77% of disadvantaged students stayed in education. Students not in education or employment for at least two terms after study is considerably lower than both the local authority and national average. Amongst 2020 leavers, 30% of disadvantaged students progressed to Russell Group universities, compared to a national average of 19% for non-disadvantaged students. Sutton Trust research tells us that Russell Group universities offer the best chances for social mobility, but that only 4% of students at these universities were eligible for FSM at school. FSM eligible students at Mulberry are reaching this destination, and this is changing life chances.

A high standard of **behaviour and attitudes** amongst pupils is expected – both towards their learning and towards others, be they peers, staff or the local community. There is a strong framework of pastoral care that promotes and supports outstanding behaviour, eradicating through well-planned and thoughtful inclusion work the barriers to learning pupils face from their socio-economic circumstances. There are strong, positive relationships between adults and pupils in a culture of openness and respect. Bullying, child abuse or discrimination are extremely rare and are not tolerated: occurrence meets with swift remedial action using a range of fair and consistently applied measures.

Safeguarding is highly effective and attendance is outstanding. Absence was in the lowest 20% nationally in 2016/17, 2017/18, 2018/19 as well as the terms in which school was open in 2019/20 and 2020/21. Persistent absence was also in the lowest 20% during this time period. Pupils take pride in their achievements and respond extremely positively to a wide range of opportunities to represent the school through leadership positions and engagement with higher education and the professional workplace. Attendance in the 2022-23 year was 95%, over 4% above national average, and persistent absence is less than half the national average. Leaders work relentlessly to ensure that school is a place that students want to come and that they attend every day. Attendance during the first term of 2023/24, including for the sixth form, was nearly 95%.

At Mulberry, pupils receive rich **personal development** tailored to the context of our school. The taught curriculum, the pastoral or 'hidden' curriculum and extra-curricular enrichment are strategically planned together to promote '**character education**' that includes a strong moral, spiritual and social foundation to foster a confident sense of identity and place in the world. Our provision nurtures self-belief and voice, helping pupils to develop sophisticated skills for self-expression, becoming confident, critical thinkers with a 'can do' philosophy and resilience. Pupils have an exceptional range of opportunities to develop their talents and interests, through the Mercedes Benz sponsored Trust STEM Academy and the Mulberry Production Arts Academy with an extensive arts provision in partnership with leading providers such as the Women of the World Foundation, the Donmar Warehouse, the National Theatre, the Female Lead, Magic Me and many others. Careers education that meets the Gatsby benchmarks and work experience are also a part of every pupil's provision. Pupils develop their leadership skills through outdoor education that includes Outward Bound courses and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and they have opportunities for leadership in many different ways, including being a prefect, school councillor and peer mentor. Engagement in personal development is tracked for every pupil and regularly reviewed to ensure that every child, and particularly those who are most vulnerable, actively participate. All year groups participate in year group curriculum linked visits and the sixth form have a specific weekly enrichment programme and sixth form super curriculum. We partner with Gresham College to host world leading academics in meeting and talking to sixth form students. There are approximately 50 clubs that run each week and 80 trips took place in the autumn term alone.

Pupils are local, national and global ambassadors for their school – and for British society – able to encounter challenge, to negotiate solutions and to work actively for positive social change. For example, Mulberry's pupils lead the UK's UNA USA Model UN programme, bringing together pupils from 40 schools locally, nationally and internationally at least twice a year to consider in depth key world issues such as climate change, refugees and asylum seekers or the UN development goals. Citizenship, RS and PSHE make a strong contribution to pupils' understanding of life in modern Britain, complementing the wide range of other active citizenship that makes up the daily life of the school.

The **leadership and management** of Mulberry School for Girls is visionary, thoughtful, ambitious and self-

reflective at all levels of the organisation. Mulberry is a Professional Learning Community with a shared passion for learning, teaching and educational leadership that places the pursuit of great pedagogy and practice at its heart. There are strong values of service to the public at its core which mean that all staff take seriously their responsibilities to pupils and their families and that the provision of as outstanding an education as possible for all is unconditional.

Leaders have developed policy and practice that focuses on constant evaluation in a termly, cyclical 'do, review and apply' model of classroom and curriculum improvement. Much importance is placed on formative feedback for pupils and attention to workload is carefully considered in relation to this. Colleagues engage in an extensive range of professional development opportunities, through the Teaching School Hub and through the Trust, in order to refine their classroom practice so the quality of teaching is high. Mulberry has developed its own programmes for leadership and is actively involved in a number of partnerships at all levels from Initial Teacher Education to senior leadership.

Governance is strong. The school benefits from being involved in the MAT. Trustees regularly interact with governors of the school's Local Governing Body (LGB) so that the school has a voice in the decisions that are made at Trust level. The Chair of Governors is a trustee and two of the company members, who hold the values and vision of the Trust, are on the LGB of Mulberry School for Girls. Training is regular, visits are undertaken by governors and challenge to the leadership team is built into all meetings. Being in the Trust allows for trust-wide opportunities for talent management, leadership and other professional development, peer review and other means of validation of each school's work and coaching. We share the burden of financial constraint and maximise opportunities for pupils amongst the schools. The Trust CEO is a NLE, who since being designated in 2011, has undertaken much support for other schools in challenging circumstances. Leaders in education and beyond deem the work of the school as being worthy of sharing with others and we are often asked to do this. This academic year the school has hosted visits from school leaders in London and further afield in the UK (the Yorkshire 100 Aspiring Headteachers group and South West 100 Aspiring CEOs group, for example) as well as internationally (a group of school leaders from India) and from the Department for Education (who requested to look at our leading work in supporting mental health). The Headteacher has run training externally in another MAT and for aspiring Teach First ambassador Headteachers, and one of the Deputy Headteacher's is a member of Challenge Partner's Education Advisory Board. In December 2023 we hosted the away day of a team of top engineers from Mercedes, focused on mutual learning from each other about high-performance leadership in challenging contexts. This year we are partnering with Gresham College who want to look at how Mulberry has been so successful in enabling young people to access their world-class academic lectures, and how this model could be rolled out to other schools.

## **Conclusion**

The school is an outward facing school and has worked exceptionally hard to provide its pupils and families to the same opportunities as the most advantaged children in the UK. This hard work has led to access to opportunities for international engagement. The former First Lady of USA, Michelle Obama, visited the school in 2015 to launch her 'Let Girls Learn' programme. She said: 'Maybe you read the news and hear what folks are saying about your religion, and you wonder if anyone ever sees beyond your headscarf to see who you really are, instead of being blinded by the fears and misperceptions in their own minds ... but here's the thing – with an education from this amazing school, you all have everything, everything, you need to rise above all of the noise and fulfil every last one of your dreams.' Mulberry girls have since visited her at the White House and, true to our ethos of paying back to society for the privileges you have received, they have since established 'Girl Leading' as a legacy of those visits - as their commitment to improving access to education for girls around the world. Rishi Sunak chose to visit the school in July 2023, and Lewis Hamilton in December 2023. Lewis Hamilton's visit was organised so that every single student was involved. He said: 'I hope the students continue to believe in themselves, and go on to show the rest of the world what they are capable of'. Despite disadvantage, our girls know that they are still relatively privileged. Our girls must leave us as confident, creative leaders, with a love of lifelong learning, ready to make a positive difference to their families, community, wider society and the world.

## Section 1: The Quality of Education

The intent of our curriculum at Mulberry School for Girls to ensure '**outstanding achievement for all**', the mission of our multi-academy trust and the purpose of all that we have ever done at the girls' school. It generates a rich curriculum experience in the taught and extra-curricular provision that we implement, influencing the life of the school and our wider community. The impact of our curriculum leads to outstanding outcomes at KS3 and 4 and outstanding destinations at KS5. We are also able to track alumna, most doing very well in degree courses and careers as time goes on. The current MPs for Bethnal Green and Bow, and for Poplar and Limehouse, are both former students of the school, as is our school Chair of Governors, a Deputy Headteacher, and the Trust's Director for Governance and Development.

### Curriculum Intent

A number of years ago, we consulted all staff, pupils, parents and governors about how best we could express this for our school community. We looked at all that young women need to be successful, prosperous (economically, socially and spiritually) and happy with the power of choice in 21<sup>st</sup> century Britain – and at the context of our families and local community. We decided that an education which helps our pupils be **confident, creative** and critically reflective young women, able to **lead** and have a **love of learning** with excellent progress for all would best fit this ambition. We have revisited this mission statement every 3 years as part of our strategic planning and found that it remains as important for our girls now as it was then. Our curriculum reflects these intentions and so every pupil is given an education within this context that:

1. Engenders high levels of ambition in academic scholarship and technical learning
2. Provides rich personal development (character education)
3. Enables the development of high aspirations, self-determination and self-actualisation

Provision for pupils' learning is framed by a formal curriculum and extra-curricular offer known as 'Mulbacc' (the Mulberry Baccalaureate) – the hallmark of a Mulberry School education. Mulbacc is characterised by rigour and high expectations at all levels. It is a seven year sequential learning journey with an emphasis on high quality subject teaching reinforced by high quality support for learning and intervention. At KS4, Mulbacc includes the EBacc curriculum plus a compulsory arts subject. Inclusion services support personal development and there is excellent pastoral care. Leadership is strong with high levels of expertise in education supported by knowledgeable, committed and challenging governance.

The experience of learning, teaching and curriculum at Mulberry provides:

1. Curriculum pathways appropriate to high levels of academic challenge in the traditional curriculum and intellectual rigour in the applied learning curriculum and will consist of across KS3, 4 and 5:
  - Subject mastery with academic voice and love of number
  - High quality, confident writing and speaking
  - Computing and the creative use of technology to support knowledge, innovation and invention
  - Confidence gained from performance, self-expression and public speaking
  - Creative and artistic skills as well as development of cultural capital and critical thinking
  - Collaborative learning and purposeful group work
  - SMSC dimensions of learning and sense of identity which includes Britishness and global citizenship
  - Physical fitness and motor skills
2. Preparation for and fostering of a love of learning in subject / technical disciplines in all phases and will consist of:
  - The National Curriculum
  - Skills in scientific and technological enquiry

- Proficiency in at least 1 other modern foreign language other than mother tongue
- Understanding of the globe and the chronology of human history
- Citizenship, politics, religious education, PSHEE and RSE
- The arts, sport and culture

3. Academic intervention programmes and support for learning at all levels, consisting of:

- Prep
- Y11 Intervention for GCSE
- Literacy and numeracy catch-up
- Voice work
- Specialist intervention including withdrawal where appropriate, speech and language therapy, educational psychology, counselling and other specialist support for learning
- Family learning programmes

4. Entitlement to curriculum enrichment in all key stages, consisting of:

- Sports coaching in particular cricket, football, martial arts, fencing, trampoline, rock climbing, gymnastics, rounders and basketball
- Arts and cultural visits including art galleries, museums, theatre and places of religious significance
- Visiting lecturers and speakers
- The Duke of Edinburgh's Award
- Outdoor education
- Model United Nations
- The Women's Education programme
- Peripatetic music lessons
- A full offer of clubs and after school activities including choir, orchestra and dance

All subjects have a clear, shared curriculum rationale that reflects these whole school curriculum principles and values and supports an ambitious programme of study which is inclusive of all pupils. Middle leaders take ownership of this development, working with subject teams to plan the curriculum they deliver. Many subject leaders have been involved with local primaries at KS2 so that we plan effectively for primary transition in our curriculum.

Love of subject characterises all teaching and learning, with careful and thoughtful planning of lesson content, assessment and activity seeking to fulfil the intention for pupils to leave us as confident, creative leaders with a love of learning. The curriculum in each subject intentionally provides pupils with the qualifications and cultural capital that they need to be successful in life and is sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills for future learning and employment so they can be economically self-sufficient and independent women. Pupils are taught to be independent learners who are resilient about their learning.

It is intended that pupils should leave Mulberry well-qualified and able to take up destinations at university or in high quality apprenticeships. Key Stage 3 (which is commensurate with the national curriculum and follows the local agreed syllabus for RE) is an important foundation for the GCSEs, A' levels and technical qualifications to come. Thus, all pupils in Y7 - 9 study physical and religious education alongside English, maths, science, computing, modern foreign languages, humanities, citizenship, art, dance, drama, music, food technology, textiles, resistant materials and graphics. Teaching is in subject disciplines. Teachers are passionate about their subject and convey this to pupils, drawing pupils in to share their enthusiasm for the content and skills they are teaching.

At Key Stage 4, at least 95% of pupils study 10 GCSE subjects which include the EBacc plus a compulsory art and compulsory full course RS. At least 25% of pupils study triple science (sometimes it has been as high as 50%), depending on the cohort. All pupils study PE for enjoyment and physical fitness. The post-16 curriculum comprises of A' levels or either the extended diploma or level 2 in health and social care. The

majority of sixth form students study subjects at level 3, usually 3 or 4 A' levels offered in many subjects



including English literature, maths, the sciences including physics, MFL, the humanities, social sciences, economics, the arts and technology.

All KS3 students study Art, Music, Dance and Drama and at the end of Year 9 every student takes part in a live performance which integrates all four of these subjects. This project is formative for pupils. Every pupil in the year group must speak lines, devise and perform dance and music and create the set, props, costumes and script. Feedback from pupils over the years cites it as a moment at which they each realised they had a voice to be valued and heard – and learned how to make this so. As part of the Mulbacc, all students study a creative subject at Key Stage 4 and have the opportunity to continue at KS5 if they wish. Our broad arts curriculum is designed to give students joyful, practical experiences, develop technical skills, celebrate a wide range of artistic voices and provide pathways of progression from KS3 to KS5. The Arts will also develop the whole learner through habits for learning and a climate where collaboration, creativity, bravery and interdependence can be fostered. Our curriculum challenges stereotypes of gender, ethnicity, class and physical ability, & supports young people in personal expression. Process and practice is valued and nurtured alongside high quality public performance outcomes. The Arts at MSfG expand critical curiosity and imagination, create cultural capital opportunities and enable students to take up careers within the creative industries. Our curriculum is directly informed by research into artistic knowledge. Our students learn to perform as actors, dancers and musicians. They improvise, create, refine and evaluate their ideas in groups and by themselves and they learn to critically assess and analyse their own and others' work.

Pupils' arts experience is enhanced through extra-curricular visits to the theatre, concert venues and dance productions. Pupils are encouraged to take instrument lessons and to be involved in the Mulberry Theatre Company and Mulberry Dance Company. The school has previously won an Edinburgh Fringe First Award and took two shows to the Edinburgh Festival in Summer 2022, one devised and performed by current students and one by alumni.

It is intended that pupils should leave Mulberry with strong knowledge and skills in how to stay safe and emotionally and physically healthy, as well as the capacity and desire to promote inclusion and diversity in society. PSHEE is taught at all key stages, covering relationships and sex education as well as personal finance, personal care and anti-racism and anti-bullying education. The rights of LGBTQ+ people, those with disabilities, women and others who experience discrimination are promoted.

Our intention is that all pupils achieve outstanding progress, regardless of their starting point, within a rich curriculum experience that is personalised to individual need. For example, pupils with severe and complex needs, those with serious ESMH needs and those with EHCPs are supported to have full access to curricula appropriate to need. For almost all pupils, this is our mainstream provision with personalisation and adaptation. For a very small number with very complex needs and working below the expected national standard, a rich alternative curriculum is taught by subject specialists (currently four students). Careful planning in discussion with pupils, families and specialists underpins thoughtful teaching and pastoral support.

The curriculum continues to be reviewed, developed and changed according to the needs of the school community and to ensure it remains fit for purpose in relation to our curriculum intention.

## Curriculum Implementation

Our curriculum intention is implemented through thoughtful structures and systems that underpin a constant drive to achieve consistently high standards of teaching, learning, progress and quality of curriculum experience at Mulberry School for Girls. Planning for teaching and learning collaboratively within teams of differing experience and expertise is crucial, so departmental meeting time is set aside for this. Excellent comprehensive professional development helps teachers to standardise and moderate internal assessment to ensure we are pitching ambitiously for pupils of all abilities. Our termly self-evaluation cycle, led by middle leaders, enables leaders to review the implementation of their curriculum and collect evidence of students learning and progression through the curriculum. This is done through learning walks, pupil voice and book looks, ensuring that teachers and leaders are constantly reflecting on progression of students through the curriculum and how all students are supported to learn more, do more and remember more over time. Subject leaders also have a designated period a week when they are given time for lesson visits.

Termly data analysis of pupils' progress through the curriculum against carefully personalised targets is carried out at senior leader and subject-lead level to ensure that where pupils fall behind, appropriate interventions are introduced. This is also reported to governors on a termly basis. Communication with parents about pupils' progress is very regular and there is an extensive personalised programme of family learning to support identified parents / carers to help their daughters. All teachers make phone calls to parents weekly and parents' consultations run over a four-hour period to ensure adequate time for teachers to meet and talk with parents, regularly reviewing students' progress. We hold specific meetings for parents about Year 7 transition and mock results in Year 11 and Year 13. Communication about progress is also frequent in other ways where concerns arise or where praise or rewards are appropriate. Parents / carers can contact us at any point and we aim to respond very swiftly.

**The quality of teaching.** Teaching is regularly observed and feedback given. Middle leaders visit lessons every week and plan their weekly department CPD time based on their observations. The analysis of formal lesson observations, which happen at least twice a year for every teacher, shows that almost all lessons are judged to be good or better. On the relatively rare occasion when teaching is judged to 'require improvement', a comprehensive, personalised support plan is actioned to ensure all colleagues are able to become consistently good quickly as part of the school's appraisal policy. All appraisers have been trained to make accurate judgements about the quality of teaching and learning over time. Internal QA standardisation confirms accuracy in judgements which have been triangulated with Ofsted trained Inspectors through joint observations with SLT. In the extremely rare occasions where support has had limited impact, robust capability procedures have been followed. **As a result, almost all pupils are making substantial and sustained progress** (see Outcomes for Pupils below.)

**Planning for high quality teaching.** Teachers have high expectations of pupils. The pedagogical principles that underpin outstanding teaching and learning at Mulberry are known by the abbreviation of RAISE: Recall and retrieval; AfL; Instruction and modelling; Scaffolding, and Evaluation. These are understood and followed by all teachers in the school and form the basis of whole school and department level CPD. RAISE is underpinned by evidence and research about how students learn. It ensures that there is consistency in the quality of teaching and learning and is used to ensure continuous improvement in practice. Literacy and reading are a focus throughout: teachers know which students in their classes are reading below expected standard and they employ specific strategies to support them. The curriculum is adapted to meet the needs of students with SEND using 'STEPS': a second framework based on pedagogical research about how SEND learners are supported to make outstanding progress through the curriculum.

Teachers plan lessons that encourage pupils to be imaginative, creative and curious learners: pupils question new learning and actively engage in considered debates where they evaluate and reflect on differing viewpoints. Homework is also used in a variety of ways to consolidate learning, review and reflect as well as to encourage independent learning skills. For example, all subjects have revision tasks for Year 11 students which set high expectations about the level of independent study required to best prepare for the new GCSE specifications. These scaffolded independent learning tasks (called 'The Weekly Tasks') help pupils manage their retention and application of learning over time.

Subject leaders monitor the quality of teaching against RAISE through learning walks, peer learning, weekly department time, department INSET and coaching of colleagues. Heads of Department have time set aside each week to visit lessons. SLT drop-ins also verify the typicality of teaching and learning. Weekly department time enables Heads of Subject to address subject-specific CPD in relation to RAISE. Formal lesson observations for appraisal purposes use RAISE to help reach a judgement. Lesson observation documentation has been revised to place greater focus on what pupils say about their learning and how this is evidenced over time by looking at their books with them during an observation.

An annual Learning and Teaching Conference is held each year which focuses on key pedagogy and practice, as identified in the SIP, and involves several colleagues working collaboratively to share their expertise. There are also whole school RAISE workshops calendared throughout the year and a weekly 'learning boost' showcasing an aspect of teaching practice in relation to RAISE. Teaching Assistants are strategically deployed to support students across the curriculum. Non-contact time is scheduled to allow for preparation. TAs attend and contribute to staff INSET about children with additional needs.

Professional dialogue about the rationale for the sequencing of the curriculum is encouraged and supported, and middle leaders will regularly discuss the sequencing of the curriculum with their teams and with senior leaders. Interleaving of related topics and skills is built into curriculum planning, and retrieval practice means that students are supported to connect their learning and remember more over time.

**Marking, feedback and assessment.** Understanding pupils' progress against the national standard for a subject area is crucial for making accurate judgements about achievement. We also know from the research that feedback to pupils quickly on their learning - and in different ways through assessment for learning - is one of the most effective ways in which pupils make progress. Systematic checking for understanding is a key part of the RAISE framework and teachers demonstrate AfL strategies regularly in every lesson including cold calling, use of a seating plan to individually check key students in the room, and careful crafting of questions asking not 'if' but 'what' students know. Mulberry places significant emphasis on feedback to pupils on their learning and progress whilst considering and mitigating the impact on teachers' workload in a variety of ways, including making more protected time available for marking, feedback and assessment.

**Intelligent use of data for improvement of teaching and intervention for pupils.** We use data intelligently to assist us in understanding how well pupils are making progress, how best to continually strengthen our curriculum, and where to target interventions in each year group. Our analysis is designed to prompt questions about learning, teaching and how to make further improvements whole school and for individuals and groups of pupils. Senior leaders work with the data manager to distil the information that is needed and to direct questions for subject leaders and heads of year to consider around the impact of the curriculum. This leads to the identification of actions to improve teaching and to inform intervention where progress for pupils is falling behind. It also enables middle leaders to review the impact of curriculum delivery and understand better the areas where students are making progress informing future planning and teaching.

At KS3, KS4 and KS5, there is a comprehensive and thorough intervention programme that carefully targets pupils according to identified needs to ensure they make the progress they should. This includes question-level analysis from internal exams as well as use of more general data on progress. Building on practice that has been previously successful, a variety of subject-based and whole year group interventions are carefully planned each term, monitoring impact and calibrating them accordingly.

Compulsory 'Prep' is one of our most successful academic intervention programmes. Prep provides targeted pupils with the space and support to engage in independent learning to help stretch and challenge individuals. Current data is used to accurately identify key groups for Prep intervention; internal impact evaluations evidence how effective this approach has been in closing the gap and raising attainment. Parents are involved from the outset and pupils are mentored by 'Prep Facilitators' from within the sixth form student body. Prep Facilitators apply, are interviewed and trained to support younger pupils with their studies.

At Key Stage 5, a number of students are also involved in compulsory Prep, though many more students choose to undertake additional study at school, and the sixth form library is open and used until 6pm across

the week. Support and Intervention is led by academic mentors and Key Stage 5 leads. Students at sixth form receive individual personalised help providing support not just for academic progress but also planning for the next stage in their journey. All students have a mentor or referee who will give individual support in researching university options and courses. This mentor also works with the student to write a personal statement for UCAS and/or applications for apprenticeships. In addition, there are also Progress Tutors who provide support to students during their Private Study periods and extend aspects of the curriculum through small group coaching.

All subject areas have constructed their curriculum design around the concept of the Mulberry Graduate. Colleagues have articulated what key knowledge, skills and attributes are required for excellence in their subject by the end of KS5 and have mapped this back to KS4 and KS3 milestones. In doing so, common misconceptions or potential blocks have been identified and planned for and the appropriate time required to embed and deepen subject security continues to be mapped across seven years.

Internal assessments are regularly reviewed to reflect the process of ongoing curriculum review and to provide accurate internal data in assessing progress through the curriculum. Faculties continue to develop internal standardisation materials to ensure consistency across departments in the assessment of students' progress. This continues to be a whole school priority to ensure that data collection is accurate, robust and incisively points to students who need additional support in securing and exceeding expected levels of progress. Curriculum overviews identify the knowledge, understanding and attributes required for a Mulberry girl to become a scholar in each subject over time. Subject teams ensure that internal assessments are developed, standardised and moderated to accurately show progress towards these intended end points.

Parents are informed about their child's progress through annual reports and parents' consultation meetings. Parents and carers can access live information about their child's attendance, punctuality achievement and behaviour through 'EduLink'. Form tutors and YLCs are in regular contact with parents, inviting key parents in for additional one-to-one progress meetings. HOFs host subject information events when appropriate and the extended community learning team run workshops to help parents know how best to support their daughter's progress as well as considering safeguarding issues in their use of ICT and social media at home.

**A strong culture of reading for pleasure.** The school libraries are excellent learning environments and are well used by students who all have timetabled access through a whole school library rota of registrations regularly. They are well stocked and requests from students and staff are quickly acted upon. Sixth form students have access to a range of subject specific journals, academic texts and JSTOR (an online digital archive of journals) to support their academic studies. This is designed to reflect HEI institutions. The library has extended its opening hours to further support students' independent study.

It is whole school policy for students to read regularly in registration time in all key stages and high-quality displays can be found around the school promoting reading for pleasure. At Key Stage 3 this includes a programme of 'Drop everything and read'. Sixth form students also read in the mornings with students from lower school. Specific reading interventions are in place for students who start Year 7 below the expected standard; teachers know who these children are and plan carefully so that they are supported to develop their reading throughout the curriculum. Where required, this includes the teaching of phonics and specific targeted reading support that runs after school. The reading strategy is led by an Assistant Headteacher and one of the school's Lead Practitioners.

**Digital learning platform to support independent study.** Mulberry has an online platform – Mulberry Learn – for supporting learning and prep for lessons, and allowing pupils to access resources from home. During the pandemic lockdown Mulberry Learn was used for remote live teaching, and during periods of student and staff isolation it allowed all students to be in lessons either in school or joining from home. It means that students have access to curriculum resources at any time so they can prep or recap for lessons.

**Device distribution to support independent study.** Students across the school are loaned a device based on an assessment of their access to IT at home which enables them to carry out independent

learning.

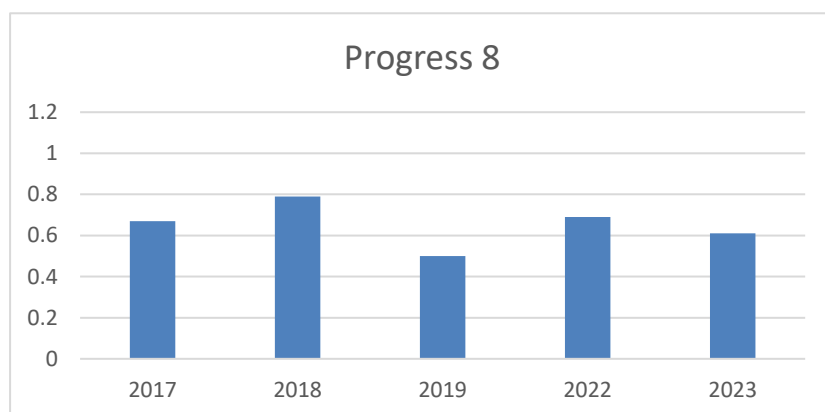
A school wide survey is carried out for pupils on an annual basis which allows the school to identify the students who are in need of support in terms of having access to a device and Wi-Fi connection at home. The survey results have been used to prioritise the allocation of laptops to students who have the most need. We have been able to ascertain whether students have access to a device at home, as well as whether their device is effective and reliable in enabling home learning and, if they share the device, whether they can access it when they need it. Students eligible for pupil premium funding, and those with SEND are prioritised.

## Curriculum Impact - Outcomes for Pupils

The impact of a rich and well-planned curriculum can be seen in our outcomes for pupils over time. Over the past 7 years (and more), pupils' academic outcomes are outstanding at KS4. Attainment is high and progress is good at KS5. Pupils make so much progress at KS4 that it is harder to show added value at KS5 through progress measures, however attainment is in line with state funded schools across England despite an inclusive intake and there is no disadvantage gap. Destinations for students' post-18 are outstanding because of high attainment, with 80% of 2021 leavers sustained in education after two terms compared to a national average of just 51%. We are however not complacent, and we continue to work on improving KS5 progress and going further in terms of destinations to Oxbridge.

### Key Stage 4

#### Five-year trends 2017-2023 (exam years only)



KPI/Year	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023
A8	55.0	54.0	51.2	58.8	56.4
P8	+0.68	+0.80	+0.46	+0.68	+0.61
Basics 9-7 %	17	15	14	26	29
Basics 9-5 %	54	58	42	64	56
Basics 9-4 %	75	74	69	80	74
EBAC APS	-	4.95	4.73	5.44	5.15
P8 English	+1.12	+1.19	+0.77	+0.95	+0.77
P8 Maths	+0.07	+0.24	-0.12	+0.23	+0.25
P8 EBacc subjects	+0.87	+0.66	+0.38	+0.49	+0.43
P8 open subjects	+0.59	+1.05	+0.66	+1.03	+0.85



**Overall five year averages of years with external exams (2017, 2018, 2019, 2022 and 2023)**

**A8: 54.9**

**P8: +0.66**

**Basics 9 – 4: 74%**

Over the past 5 examination years, the trend for progress is significantly above national average. This is in a context where pupils study a traditional academic curriculum with ten GCSEs and where over 50% of pupils are entitled to the pupil premium. Our progress score across all five of these exam years is significantly above national average, placing the school in the highest quintile nationally and most years in the highest 12%. Compared only to other schools with free school meals ever 6 at 50% or higher in 2023 (MSfG was 52%), the P8 at Mulberry is the 12th highest nationally. In 2023 there were only 12 schools nationally that had a free school meal ever 6 at 45% or higher, entered 90% or more students for the full English Baccalaureate, and have a positive Progress 8 score. Mulberry is one of these 12 schools. Mulberry is committed to outstanding education in the context of a broad and traditional curriculum. The most recently published destinations data for the 2021 Year 11 cohort, showed that 99% of students stayed in education for at least 2 terms after Key Stage 4 compared to 86% nationally. The attainment in 2023 suggests that this level of progress will be maintained.

52% of the 2023 Year 11 cohort were eligible for pupil premium funding, compared to 27% nationally. In 2023 disadvantaged students at MSfG made exceptional progress compared to both disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students nationally, as shown in the table below:

	Progress at MSfG (2023)	Progress of 'other' students nationally (2023)	Difference between disadvantaged students at MSfG and 'other' students nationally
Disadvantaged students	0.31	0.17	<b>+0.14</b>

The progress of the disadvantaged students at MSFG show that students at the school experience high-quality teaching and high expectations in a nurturing and supportive environment.

In addition:

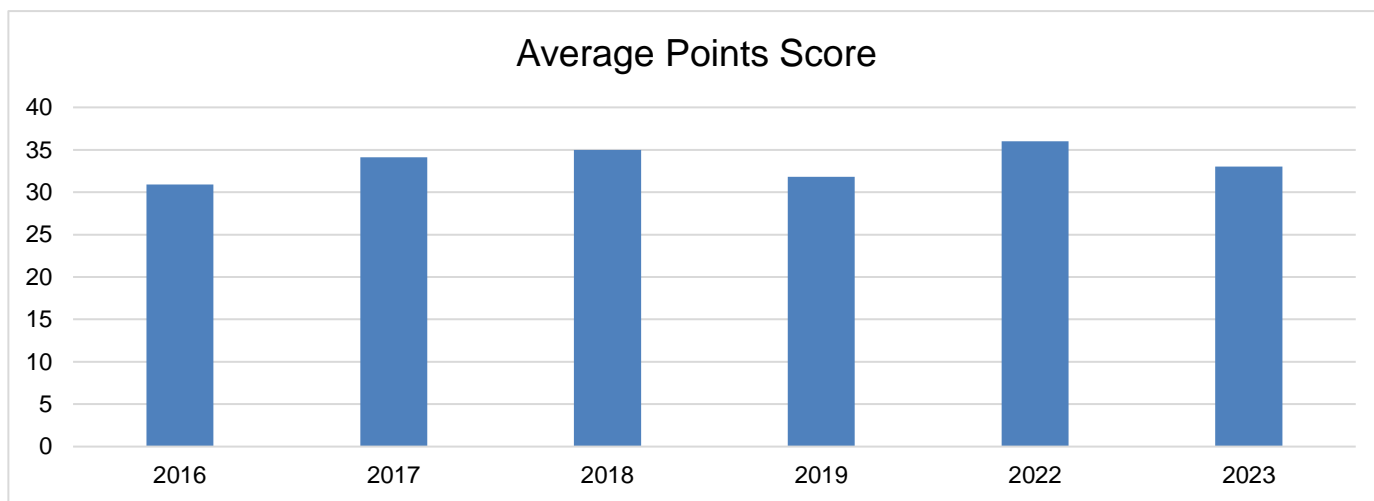
- The overall A8 score for the school in 2023 is 56.4 compared to a borough average of 48.4 and England average of 46.2. For disadvantaged students, it is higher than non-disadvantaged students nationally.
- In 2023 the number of 8-9 grades awarded in both English and maths is twice as high as the national average. In combined science it is three times as high
- Over one third of students in 2023 had a progress score of +1 or higher and 70% of students had a positive progress score.
- 56% of all pupils achieved a grade 5 Strong Pass in both GCSE Maths and English compared to the national average of just 45%
- Keeping step with national expectations and in most cases exceeding them in GCSE English and Maths is vital to improving the life chances of students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds. The provision for students at the school ensures they have the tools to confidently move forward in further education and employment.
- It is well-known that the poorest young people are most likely to miss out on studying a broad and traditional curriculum, with disadvantaged pupils only half as likely to be entered for the EBacc as their

classmates. The brightest pupils at primary school, if they are eligible for free school meals are still less likely to take history, geography, a language or triple science at GCSE than their peers. However, at Mulberry we buck the trend as we believe that all students deserve the chance to attain these qualifications at school and this is further demonstrated in the excellent outcomes of the most recent GCSE cohort.

- **All key headline attainment measures are higher in 2023 compared to 2019**

## Key Stage 5

### Average point score 6 year trend 2016-2023 over exam years



At Mulberry, eligibility for the pupil premium has little impact on progress to A levels and progress to HEI. Unlike the national picture, students eligible for FSM in Year 11 are just as likely to progress to studying A levels as 'other' students, and the vast majority remain at Mulberry. Russell Group progression show that FSM students are just as likely to gain a place at a RG institution as other students. This is outstanding as it suggests that the culture of aspiration and the opportunities offered at Mulberry (in both the lower school and in the sixth form) are countering barriers, which are linked to deprivation. In 2023 nearly 80% of students progressed either to university or to a degree level apprenticeship, with nearly one third of these students going to a Russell Group university.

The average A level grade in 2023 was a C+, in line with state funded sixth forms nationally despite significantly higher PP eligibility (over 3 times higher)

- Destinations over the last five years are excellent: multiple students each year have secured places to read Medicine and Dentistry. Destinations include: Oxford, Cambridge, Imperial, LSE, UCL, King's College, York, Edinburgh, St Andrews and Queen Mary. Approximately a quarter of students progressed to Russell Group universities in 2023. Over the last three years, four students have progressed to Oxbridge, and seven students to degree level apprenticeships
- Progress for disadvantaged students in Applied General subjects is the same as for non-disadvantaged students. These students had an average grade of Distinction+
- The large number of extra-curricular opportunities offered as part of the Realising Aspirations Programme, also continues to play a significant part in supporting students in progressing to university.
- Students applying to study at Oxbridge and those applying to study Medicine or Dentistry benefitted from interview practice at a private school, St Mary's in Ascot and the aspiring medics and dentists from a practice interview with a Medicine Admissions tutor from Kings College London, as well as support from Barts Health Trust as part of the SAMDA programme, and other courses related to BMAT/UKCAT tests and interviews. All of our students applying for competitive entrance have individual interview practice workshops.

## Section 2: Behaviour and Attitudes

A high standard of behaviour and attitudes amongst pupils is expected at Mulberry School for Girls – both towards learning and towards others, be they peers, staff or the local community. Many of our pupils experience high levels of socio-economic disadvantage and most live in often over-crowded, rented properties and social housing. Many parents still do not speak English and many mothers do not work, have large families to manage and little personal space. Child poverty is high in our ward. There is easy access for vulnerable pupils to street life and so drug and alcohol abuse, incidents of sexual exploitation and other abuse by adults and emotional, social and mental health needs are high. Health poverty is also a problem. For these reasons, our systems for pastoral care, safeguarding and inclusion have to be very strong to make sure that as many of the barriers as possible are eradicated and that all girls can get to class ready to learn and achieve.

The atmosphere of the school is calm, orderly and productive with pupils focused on the business-like pursuit of their learning. Attendance is strong throughout the school, and very strong compared to the national average post Covid. Last year it was 95%, with persistent absence at just 11%. Pre-pandemic it was at an average of 96.1% over 3 years (higher than the LA and national average) with low levels of lateness, persistent absence and suspension/exclusion (there was only one suspension last year). Attendance from August to December 2021 was 95.5%, 5.6% above national average. Attendance for students eligible for PP was 9.3% higher than PP students nationally and 4.7% higher than non-PP nationally. For students with an EHCP it was 8.2% higher than other learners nationally with EHCPs and 5% higher than those without. Learners are supportive and respectful of each other throughout the school. Pupils are considerate to each other and actively demonstrate inclusivity as well as tolerance for differences. On the rare occasion where pupils are disrespectful, they are dealt with swiftly by the pastoral and senior leadership team. The PSHEE programme addresses equality and diversity issues. Pupils have high aspirations and are committed to their own learning and support others to be successful too. Learning is rarely disrupted and if it is, the issues are picked up almost immediately with appropriate remedial action taken.

The behaviour for learning policy highlights that students should receive praise to sanctions in a ratio of 3:1; this is reflected in school practice with the number of achievement points that are given weekly in recognition of positive behaviour for learning far exceeding behaviour points. Student achievements are celebrated regularly on a weekly and half termly basis.

**Pastoral Care.** There is a strong framework of pastoral care that promotes and supports outstanding behaviour. Our approach is based on the belief that in a state education system that has in its core a universal entitlement to education, pupils who come to us deserve our unconditional support to be the best that they can be. The school is divided into year groups, each led by a Year Learning Co-ordinator who takes responsibility for the daily experience, progress and care of 240 pupils, their families and a team of form tutors. In line with the school's ethos and the aim to ensure that pupils learn to be confident, creative leaders with a love of learning, YLCs work with senior leaders to provide a rich programme of activity to promote this - through tutor group activity, year group activity and strong connections with families. YLCs pick up daily referrals about individuals and groups from adults in school where they see concerns, dealing with such matters swiftly. We draw on EEF research on improving behaviour in schools. We have reflected on how best to create parity of experience for all pupils and consistent high expectations while retaining strong relationships between staff and pupils, which is a key strength of the school. Disruption to lessons is rare, uniform is smart and conduct in classrooms and corridors is respectful.

Given that poor behaviour, punctuality or attendance is usually a symptom of unmet need, Mulberry School for Girls has developed systems for picking up and responding to incidents quickly so that either learning needs or ESMH needs can be targeted effectively and quickly. YLCs are assisted by pastoral support staff and a dedicated, multi-agency Inclusion team. This team is led by an Assistant Head for Inclusion and a senior middle leader responsible for pastoral care. The team includes a learning mentor, an attendance and welfare officer, a social worker who is with us as part of the Social Workers In Schools' pilot, and a school police liaison officer. We also have two Educational Wellbeing Practitioners who are part of THEWS (Tower Hamlets Educational Wellbeing Service) and a school counsellor through partnership with Place 2 Be. The

team forms a panel to which referrals are made by YLCs for pupils experiencing difficulties and appropriate individual care plans are made for each identified child. Families are involved in decisions about pastoral interventions.

YLCs, form tutors and senior leaders work together to uphold high standards of behaviour around the school site, managing all spaces effectively to reinforce safety and respectful, responsible behaviour. There are strong, positive relationships between adults and pupils in a culture of openness and respect. Pupils are given responsibility for their form bases at break and lunchtime and are taught to manage these environments sensibly in order to teach self-management, maturity and stewardship of resources. Students of all years have access to a library of games and cards and can often be found playing cooperatively together. Form rooms serve as quiet study and social spaces and older students regularly study independently and in peer-led groups. A rota of adult supervision ensures that any issues are picked up and resolved quickly. Older pupils and staff model the behaviour that is expected. There is a behaviour policy which is applied consistently and which is shared with pupils and families.

Pupils are encouraged to mediate in order to solve problems and move forward. A pupil peer mentoring scheme is in place for Year 8. Pupils may apply for this role and supervised by a member of staff. They are trained professionally to support Year 7 pupils with their transition to secondary school. Additional support and mediation work is carried out with individual pupils or whole classes by the Learning Mentor team when necessary. There is an on-site Inclusion Base for pupils who may need time for reflection out of lessons but this is only used very formally with referrals made through the senior leadership team and a personalised programme for each pupil. It is led and managed by a seconded Assistant Headteacher and staffed throughout the day by senior teachers. As a result, fixed term suspensions and permanent exclusions are extremely rare – there were no permanent exclusions and only one fixed term suspension in the last academic year.

**Safeguarding.** Safeguarding is highly effective. Pupils display outstanding regard for the safety and well-being of others as evidenced by the low levels of exclusion and evidenced by good conduct across the school. They know how to live healthy lives and how to assess risk. This is taught through our comprehensive PSHEE programme, which includes RSE. Relationships and sex education is carefully planned and has involved consultation with parents and our community. The confidence of all stakeholders (pupils, parents and staff) in our provision of a safe and caring environment is very high as shown in our feedback systems. We commission an annual safeguarding review by a qualified Ofsted inspector to help us critically assess our practice and policies and our governor with responsibility for safeguarding visits regularly.

Comprehensive safeguarding training has been delivered to all teaching and support staff and we receive updated training each year. The training includes specific reference to updates in KCSIE as well as how to respond to disclosures including abuse, FGM, radicalisation and forced marriage. Governors receive safeguarding training. Safer recruitment practice is embedded and appropriate staff and governors are trained. The SCR is regularly checked and updated. Policies to keep children safe are comprehensive and they are regularly reviewed by governors. 'Prevent' training is also given to staff and governors. The school has a strategy for Prevent.

To maintain strong safeguarding practice, the school uses CPOMS (the Child Protection Online Monitoring System). It promotes effective tracking and information sharing to ensure pupils are safeguarded as effectively as possible. For all our vulnerable pupils, we record all phone conversations, calls, meetings, actions and documents securely. This automatically creates a chronology for each student which previously we had to record separately. The chronology plays an important part in knowing our students and offering tailored support. Key pastoral staff have access to these records instantly as needed. For example, if we are contacted by an outside agency or we need to inform social care or health professionals of an emergency issue, we immediately have full relevant information to hand and it helps us to ensure better targeting of external multi-agency responses.

**Family and community.** The important role of families in the education of disadvantaged pupils who make

outstanding progress is well-known in research. For the past 18 years, we have sought strong relationships with families and invested heavily in projects to secure the commitment of parents to their daughters' high achievement. Through the provision of family learning projects and initiatives which bring parents together with their daughters in support of their education, we have changed the pattern of parental engagement with Mulberry. Parents are involved in academic consultation and other usual forms of school engagement. However, we have also introduced a comprehensive programme of activity to draw in parents who are 'hard to reach' or where there are family concerns with aspects of our provision, such as for example allowing their daughters to apply to Oxbridge universities or to perform publicly in dance or drama productions. Relationships and sex education has also been a subject of anxiety for parents which we have resolved through our engagement with them. Our Parent Liaison officer works very closely with YLCs, the senior team and the headteacher to target families and to lead consultations that help parents to overcome such concerns.

Adult learning opportunities are also offered to parents to help them with their own personal learning journey, to develop parents' confidence and to also raise their aspirations. Courses such as parenting courses, health and well-being workshops on issues affecting the local community such as diabetes and breast cancer, visits to sites of cultural significance and fitness classes, are some of many that have been delivered to our parents. There are at least 10 different classes or activities for parents that run every week.

Our Parent Liaison officer runs very successful projects for parents to engage in activities alongside their child. Arts projects for mothers and daughters, such as the writing and performance of plays, and filmmaking, are some of many. Through her work, we are taking our mission statement of confidence, creativity, leadership and love of learning out to parents. In this way, their daughters' education is supported. Her work has had significant impact on the position and importance of girls' education in families over time. The economic benefits of a good education for girls post-18 is now generally accepted in our community in a way that was not the case 16 years ago. Our school Social Worker also runs parent workshops and drop in sessions on issues identified by referrals made to her. This includes advice and support in monitoring pupils use of mobile phones, the internet and social media as well as supporting with positive parenting strategies.

**Inclusion.** Difference is valued and celebrated at Mulberry School for Girls. Pupils have consistently high levels of respect for others and actively support each others' well-being. Bullying, child on child abuse or discrimination are never tolerated: any occurrence meets with swift remedial action using a range of fair and consistently applied measures as already outlined. For example, we actively work to prevent cyber-bullying and peer on peer abuse through PSHEE, Citizenship, assemblies and policies, and we monitor pupils' internet use using filtering software. However, where it happens (usually outside of school hours on home devices) we take responsibility and work with pupils and families to resolve it, using sanctions and remediation as appropriate. We also respond to institutional issues if they arise. In 2018, we noticed a rise in racist incidents. We reacted swiftly, setting up an internal enquiry and establishing an anti-racism working party to explore all issues of race equality affecting both pupils and staff. The work was reported to governors and to trustees 2019 and they have been updated each year since; we have followed up the internal recommendations we made with further action. The School Improvement Plan for 2021-22 reflected the deepening of this work as the pandemic exposed structural inequalities still existing for people of Black, Asian and minority ethnic background. Diversity at all levels of leadership is essential and is continually promoted to the benefit of the school.

Pupils are provided with a plethora of opportunities to develop their sense of self and resilience. Where pupils find this challenging, they are given a range of support through resources such as learning mentors and 'buddies'. Pupils are encouraged to develop a 'growth mind set' in approaching their sixth form study. Our display within school profiles the richness that diversity gives to our society. An ethos of Inclusion is practised visibly across the school, within all our structures and in the way in which pupils with severe and complex needs are integrated and supported by all pupils and staff. For example: pupils with SEND are active participants in all whole school and performance events. The school SEND curriculum provides a wide range of courses and options for pupils working significantly below the expected standard for their age including multi-sensory learning.



There has been a rise locally and nationally in the number of girls experiencing serious emotional, social and mental health issues. Mulberry has seen this problem grow and responded by developing acknowledged expertise in this area of educational development. We are part of the 'Mental Health Trailblazer' project led by East London CAMHS and have school based Educational Wellbeing Practitioners. We have introduced a therapy dog to support the work of supporting pupil wellbeing and now run a vet club for students in school.

### Section 3: Personal Development

The quality of pupils' **personal development** – character education – is a critical dimension of our work to ensure that pupils have access to the world beyond our school and local community walls. Our school serves people who are predominantly from one ethnic and faith background (85 % of pupils are of Bangladeshi heritage and 95% are practising Muslims). Our community has also experienced serious Islamophobia and racial intolerance since 9/11 and the 7/7 London bombings, which affected Aldgate, our nearest underground station. Islamophobia particularly targets Muslim girls and women with the hijab (headscarf) being a visual stimulus for aggressive responses. As a result, our community is very protective and a natural response is to close down to outsiders. The experience of Islamophobia overlaid with socio-economic disadvantage means that the barriers can appear insurmountable to our pupils at times. As members of a diaspora, families are naturally concerned about dilution of their daughters' heritage and faith and girls have sometimes felt excluded from the many opportunities that their more privileged peers have access to, such as Oxbridge university places or high paid jobs in the City of London, our local area of employment. These are just a few examples of the varied complexity of the problem to which personal development at Mulberry has to respond.

A multitude of carefully planned, rich extra-curricular experiences is fundamental to our work to ensure that girls leave us with confidence, as creative leaders with the power of choice, knowing they can overcome the barriers they face. We help pupils to know how to negotiate their way through complex territory in balancing responsibilities to family with the demands of careers, economic independence and the desire to be authentically themselves. For this reason, our extra-curricular provision has a vital status as part of our Mulbacc curriculum.

We take up every possible chance that comes our way for enriching the experience of pupils' learning at Mulberry, actively seeking them within the partnerships we build with organisations. Whilst we do this respectfully, we are unashamedly ambitious on behalf of our girls to find as many of the best opportunities as possible. This has led to some exceptional experiences. For example, Mulberry girls have taken one of the main stages at the Glastonbury festival to advocate for feminism and delivered performance poetry in front of 3000 people at Wembley Arena. Over the last 15 years we have taken 7 original plays to the Edinburgh Fringe festival, one of which won a national drama award. Over the past decade, we have been fundamental to the development and delivery of the Women of the World Festival at Southbank Centre, speaking at keynote events, performing, being part of panel discussions with senior professional women and politicians, and delivering 'WOW-Bites' as well as participating in the WOW Market. Our pupils have visited Michelle Obama at the White House and then followed a civil rights study tour in Washington, Alabama and Memphis created by Mulberry. Pupils also visited Singapore and Malaysia on a programme we designed to build a global alliance of girls advocating for each other across international boundaries. Students travel annually to participate in Model United Nations, often going to New York, taking part in sessions in the General Assembly room. We have hosted conferences with students dialling in from schools across the world. In July 2023 we showcased our personal development work, particularly in the field of STEM, to the Prime Minister on a visit to the school. In December 2023 when Lewis Hamilton visited, over 1700 students were involved and participated in the visit – every single child at Mulberry School for Girls, plus others from Trust schools.

Mulberry School for Girls (MSFG) is part of the Mulberry STEM Academy which has been developed in partnership with Mercedes-Benz Grand Prix Ltd. The aim of the Mulberry STEM academy is to inspire students across the Trust and beyond to learn, innovate and be inspired in fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. Students from Year 10 and Year 12 can participate, following a carefully

developed programme which includes taking part in Robotics, Python programming, a Greenpower 'design and build' project, the CREST Silver Award and the Extended Project Qualification. Students take part in conferences and webinars where they meet young people in fields of Engineering, raising students' aspirations and making careers within STEM something that they feel they can achieve in the future. Our first cohort of students will graduate in late 2021. These students will have an understanding of STEM subjects that builds on and goes beyond that which they acquire at school; they will have developed skills and knowledge within engineering, design and science which will act as a passport for their future in STEM education and careers.

The school is also part of the Mulberry Production Arts Academy, a groundbreaking specialised technical and production arts programme that equips young people with the necessary skills and connections to take up their rightful place within the global cultural and creative landscape; enabling more young people from underrepresented groups to access rewarding careers in this sector. In partnership with the National Theatre and The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, the academy offers training in the field of production and technical arts and providing a specialist pipeline for students to develop career aspirations in this industry. The academy was established to take explicit positive action to address the current skills shortage in the UK's production and technical arts workforce and the wider chronic crisis in representation within the UK's cultural and creative industries. We believe the UK's cultural and creative industries should be truly reflective of the diversity of this country, inclusive of all people regardless of gender, race, disability, socio-economic background, faith and age. Students in the academy learn the principles of production and technical design, and undertake extensive training in practical elements, mentored by an industry professional with the opportunity to deploy the skills learnt in professional placements.

**Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.** The quality of SMSCD is high and underpins everything that the school does to instil confidence, creativity and a love of learning in all our pupils. Our curriculum ensures that SMSCD forms an important dimension in all subjects. Teachers account for SMSCD in their lesson planning. Religious Studies GCSE is compulsory at KS4 and at post-16, students study religion and worldviews as part of their PSHEE programme. At KS3, PSHEE, Citizenship and RE are an important group of 3 subjects that ensure all pupils learn about their rights, the rule of law, British values, pluralism, equality, diversity and the importance of respect, as well as enabling pupils to become confident in their own identity and sense of self. RS staff are skilled in Islamic scholarship and this helps to ensure misconceptions that sometimes arise amongst pupils about interpretation of the Qur'an can be explained.

Pupils are very interested in faith and politics worldwide and controversial matters that arise internationally and in the UK are always a feature of whole school discussion as they occur. PSHEE, RS and Citizenship combined with assemblies and tutor time provide safe, well-informed spaces for debate where pupils can explore their responses to crises such as the Charlie Hebdo attacks in Paris, the English Defence League march down Commercial Road or the conflict in Israel/Palestine in June 2021 and again in autumn 2023. Through good relationships with pupils, senior staff keep themselves well informed in what pupils are concerned about, responding quickly. For example, when our community has been targeted by Islamophobia such as in 2018 with the 'Punish a Muslim Day' letter, the school finds ways in which pupils can make a positive, powerful informed public response – in this case making it central to the plot of the play they wrote and performed at the Edinburgh Fringe festival that summer and then at the Duke of York's theatre in London's West End. If national and international crises arise, senior staff respond by producing materials quickly for tutor time to aid discussion between staff and pupils. This has been true for the most recent escalation of conflict in the Middle East, with the school running a programme of Philanthropy Thursdays since October 2023.

**The extended learning programme.** Opportunities for developing confidence, creativity, leadership and love of learning outside the taught curriculum are brought together strategically at Mulberry under the leadership of one department – the Extended Learning team. This helps Mulberry to drive more effectively enrichment, to monitor its quality and impact and to ensure all pupils are included. It also means we can quickly take advantage of new possibilities, which often arise at short notice. We have divided opportunities for enrichment into four broad areas: global education; out of hours learning; pupil voice; and women's education.

*Global education programme:* Mulberry pupils have a real desire to make a positive difference in the world and, by providing opportunities for political engagement, we ensure they graduate from school empowered and ready to lead positive change. Mulberry is the lead school in the UK for 'Global Classrooms: London Model United Nations', the UNAUSA's world-wide network and largest MUN programme for secondary schools in the UK. Two MUN conferences are organised by Mulberry pupils each year for 400 school age delegates drawn from over 30 schools across London and the UK. All the MUN leadership positions, such as Secretary General, are held by pupils and all committees, caucuses and reporting are led by pupils too. Staff act in supporting roles to help pupils with planning and training of delegates and to ensure safeguarding. In September this year, 26 Chairs - recruited from across the Mulberry Schools Trust, and 14 Directors - alumni from universities including the University of Oxford, UCL, and King's College London, have started their training journey. 150 student Rapporteurs, Delegates, Press Team, and Administrative Team leaders also began 10 weeks of intensive training – a programme designed to support the development of leadership, public speaking skills, and confident global citizenship.

At the most recent December conference, we were joined by 18 schools from the UK to debate issues connected to UN Sustainable Development Goal 6: Ensure access to water and sanitation for all. The conference was the biggest yet, with 326 students attending as Delegates. MUN is challenging, engaging, and fun. It also encourages the development of lifelong networks with future leaders from across the world. Many of today's leaders in law, government, technology, science, business, and the arts – including those at the UN itself – participated in Model UN as students. It is a continuing privilege to witness our students' confidence and leadership develop, and to see the heights that their MUN journey will take them to.

*Out of Hours Learning and trips and visits:* Mulberry School runs a vast range of lunchtime and after school clubs each week alongside trips and visits. They are vital to pupils' success and wellbeing, providing the opportunity to develop existing talents, learn new skills or develop new interests. Through these clubs, pupils are supported in developing their creativity and self-expression as well as healthy, active lifestyles. Approximately 50 clubs are usually offered each week including fencing, dance, drama, gardening, languages, music, sport, fitness and political and social interests. Nearly 200 trips ran in the 2022/23 academic year, and 80 in the autumn term alone of 2023/24. We ensure that there are trips related to the curriculum, such as visits to the theatre and places of worship; visits to foreign countries for languages and many visits to places of cultural, scientific and religious significance all year round. Not only do these visits supplement learning, they provide experiences that lead pupils to view it as their entitlement to go to museums and galleries, when they might not otherwise feel confident to go.

*Pupil Voice:* Voice is a central in Mulberry's work to develop confidence and leadership, particularly since the voices of women, minorities and young people often go unheard in the public sphere. There are many ways in which we develop the voice of our young women and ensure they have platforms to make themselves heard. These include the annual Youth Conference for sixth form students from Mulberry and partner schools. Originally, it was established as a positive, powerful response by students to their experience of 9/11. Students form the planning committee, supported by staff. They profile issues they care about, inviting high profile speakers from a range of backgrounds to address the conference themes and they organise workshops, inviting external workshop leaders. There is always a platform for student speeches. Year 12 students have the opportunity to apply to go to the UNIS conference at the UN headquarters in New York. This ties across to the MUN programme.

Pupils have the opportunity in Year 10 and Year 13 to be prefects and pupils in all year groups have the chance to join School Council. They must apply for these roles, which require them to be involved in leading and organising public events, parent consultations, VIP visits and duties around the school. Prefects often have to speak publicly or to be ambassadors for their peers at key events where they must network with leaders of arts and culture or business and industry. The School Council has wide-ranging involvement in school life, consulting pupils about uniform, environmental matters or school services such as meals or cleaning. The School Council has been involved in school improvement such as speaking to staff about their experience of learning and teaching or pastoral care. They have also been involved in strategic planning activities.

The arts programmes at Mulberry also have a key role in developing pupil voice, confidence and self-expression. Magic Me is one example of an inter-generational arts project that brings Mulberry girls and a diverse group of older community women together for a year to explore identity, using the arts as a vehicle for their voices. Each project culminates in a final arts piece that expresses their collective voice in some way. In one year, for example, the group collectively produced a walking tour of the local area with a map and podcasts recorded by participants about points of significance in their lives marked on the map – such as, where they worship or were married or experienced as a child a key historical local event such as the march of Oswald Moseley’s black shirts or where their family work. Pupils have produced many important pieces of work through our arts programmes, such as the Community Tapestry, based on the picture at the front of this document or the film about survivors of the Bosnian war and the genocide at Srebrenica or the Community Opera.

Our rich extra-curricular Arts offering, includes a wide range of clubs, from Choir to K-Pop Dance and all Key Stage 3 students go on at least one whole-year group Arts related trip per year to support their curriculum. For example, in 2023 all of Year 9 attended a performance of *Sylvia* at the Old Vic. Students also have the opportunity to attend additional reward trips, including a visit to Holland Park Opera. There are numerous large-scale and small music, drama and dance performances throughout the year (including the Winter Gathering, Year 9 Project, Winter Concert, Summer Concert, Dance Show and more) and a visiting art exhibition, which comes to our Mulberry Bigland Green Centre. The school fully funds instrumental lessons from the THAMES music service and last year 128 students participated in Peri music lessons. This year every child in Year 7 will have at least one Music Peri lesson. A new ambassador programme will enable students to develop their leadership as well as giving them further opportunities to explore artistic careers in authentic settings. The school has welcomed and/or worked with prestigious artists, including Beverley Knight, David Lan, Fin Kennedy and Phyllida Lloyd, and is fortunate to count prestigious arts organisations as its partners, including the National Theatre, the British Film Institute, Southbank Centre, and Donmar Warehouse. We celebrate and elevate the arts by participating in high profile projects such as the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, and will look at staging a Community Opera in the coming years.

*Women’s Education and Global Girl Leading:* Given the quite specific issues for women in the workplace and wider society, especially if they are of minority ethnic background, Mulberry has developed a programme designed to ensure that girls have access to female role models from a wide variety of backgrounds as well as considering quite explicitly the challenges many of them have faced and how they have overcome them. Girls are also taught the skills of negotiation and public speaking. They learn resilience and how to manage a patriarchal world. In this work, we aim for a ‘partnership of equals’ – girls with boys, women with men. Our programme of work includes our very popular large conferences for girls, which invite the participation of other schools. Through the conferences, girls have access to a large variety of women in different spheres of life ranging from finance, STEM, the arts, business and social entrepreneurship. Usually they find many inspiring role models. The conferences explore key issues for women and their leadership in depth and there is always at least one platform for student speeches. Students lead the conference, supported by staff. We share the resources we make for these conferences freely.

Our programme also includes work with the ‘Women of the World’ (WOW) festival which we have been heavily involved in supporting. Both the head and a former Mulberry pupil are trustees of the WOW Foundation and work closely with its CEO Jude Kelly, former Artistic Director of Southbank Centre. We have worked with the Donmar Warehouse and film director Phyllida Lloyd on her trilogy of all female Shakespeare productions, transferring a week’s run of *Henry IV* from the Donmar theatre to Mulberry so that our Tower Hamlets community could have access to it. We ran a community learning programme of workshops for schools and local people alongside the play, exploring gender, theatre and Shakespeare. Pupils have developed as a year-long leadership programme including a residential camp for disadvantaged girls like themselves called ‘Girl Leading’, funded by Children in Need.

*The Super curriculum:* All Sixth Form students have access to a diverse, high-quality, and engaging super curricular programme. Super curricular activities develop self-motivation, curiosity, critical thinking, and a

deep understanding of complex ideas. Engagement also improves students' chances of gaining entry onto highly competitive degree and degree apprenticeship courses as it allows students to demonstrate a genuine love for learning and engagement with their subjects beyond the classroom. The super curricular programme involves trips to academic lectures, study days at eminent institutions, and a programme of virtual and live lecture events hosted here at Mulberry.

Students are surveyed about their aspirations half-termly and engagement monitored. This enables us to plan a high-quality, relevant and valuable student-centred programme. We were proud to host the inaugural Gresham College Schools lecture event - held here in the MBGC. Together, Mulberry and Gresham College have developed an amazing lecture programme for Mulberry Schools Trust students where high profile academics will deliver lectures here - the first time that Gresham College has ever hosted lectures exclusively for schools. Over 125 students from 4 MST schools watched the first lecture live, and the event was livestreamed to 5 additional schools across the UK. It was a huge privilege to host award-winning barrister and Gresham College Professor of Law, Leslie Thomas KC, as our first speaker - a leading expert in claims against the police and other public authorities and expert in all aspects of inquests and public inquiries. Leslie has acted as counsel and advocate in dozens of high-profile inquiries, such as the Grenfell Tower Inquiry and the Covid Enquiry. Students hugely enjoyed his reflections about his childhood and journey into law, and the legal complexities related to the cases he has acted in. Students hugely enjoyed the lecture and relished the opportunity to pose questions.

In Spring 2024 the virtual lecture series launches in partnership with a range of high tariff universities. Each week an average of 4 virtual live lectures take place during the school day. Each subject area has a minimum of 4 academic lectures on offer, delivered by university lecturers. In addition, each week, two interdisciplinary lectures are offered, that student may attend either as part of their studies, their university aspirations, or personal interests. Students will have access to over 15 in person lectures with a high-profile academics for a diverse range of lectures featuring Professor Chris Whitty FRS, Dr Marc Warner, Dr Shabnam Holliday, Professor Victoria Baines, Professor Leslie Thomas, Professor Sarah Hart, and Professor Myles Allen.

**Outdoor education and sport.** There is a wide range of outdoor experiences for pupils at Mulberry because many pupils do not have access to them outside of school. There is an annual Outward-Bound trip and all students have the opportunity to engage in kayaking and other outdoor activities at a local centre. Pupils often cite these experiences as fundamental to building their confidence. Pupils also undertake the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, which is very popular in Years 10 – 13. There are daily sports clubs and training sessions. Student compete regularly at borough level and frequently have the opportunity to watch professional sports games at high profile venues across London.

The engagement of every child with extracurricular activities is carefully tracked to ensure engagement of every child. Participation in activities which have limited numbers (Model United Nations, School Prefects, School Council, Peri music lessons for example) is carefully tracked to ensure that the most vulnerable students in the school access and benefit from this. There is a minimum core offer for every child in every year group, this varies slightly from year to year but as an example, the programme for 2023-24 is below:



<b>Year 7 Core Personal Development offer</b>	<b>Year 10 Core Personal Development offer</b>
TRIP: Queen Mary, University of London, Russell Group destination visit for all students (Careers)	TRIP: Visit to SOAS, UCL & Birkbeck (Careers)
TRIP: Year 7 Pantomime Trip at Theatre Royal Stratford East with Drama Department (Expressive Performing Arts)	TRIP: Y10 History trip to Hampton Court Palace Trip & Geography Fieldwork in Walton-on-the-Naze
TRIP: Year 7 Humanities trip to a place of worship (Religion and Society)	TRIP: Y10 Science trip to Greenwich to carry out their GCSE fieldwork practical study, followed by a picnic and visit to the Maritime Museum and Planetarium
TRIP: Year 7 Year Day - Zoo visit (Science)	TRIP: International trip to Paris/Rotterdam
Year 7 Enrichment Takeover day (e.g., steel drums, Islamic Geometry)	TRIP: Year 10 Year Day
Careers Fair	Careers Fair and Industry Week
Visiting exhibition at MBGC - Photography exhibition	Visiting speaker
Attendance to the Winter Gathering	Visiting exhibition at MBGC - Photography exhibition
Visiting speaker i.e., an MP	Attendance to the Winter Gathering
<b>Year 8 Core Personal Development offer</b>	<b>Year 11 Core Personal Development offer</b>
TRIP: Visit to SOAS, UCL & Birkbeck (Careers)	TRIP: Visit to SOAS, UCL & Birkbeck (Careers)
TRIP: Year 8 trip to the Science Museum (Science & Maths)	TRIP: Year 11 Year Day
TRIP: Year 8 Art Gallery trip (Art - EPA)	Careers Fair
TRIP: Year 8 Languages trip to BFI (Languages)	Visiting exhibition at MBGC - Photography exhibition
TRIP: Year 8 Year Day	Attendance to the Winter Gathering
Year 8 Enrichment Takeover day	Visiting speaker
Careers Fair	
Visiting exhibition at MBGC - Photography exhibition	
Attendance to the Winter Gathering	
Visiting speaker	
<b>Year 9 Core Personal Development offer</b>	<b>Year 12 and 13 Core Personal Development offer</b>
TRIP: Visit to SOAS, UCL & Birkbeck (Careers)	Enrichment Wednesdays: a varied programme of weekly enrichment
TRIP: Year 9 trip to a musical (EPA) and Dance show	Sixth form Super curriculum
TRIP: Year 9 Science trip - Planetarium & Maritime Museum (Science & Humanities)	Attendance to the Winter Gathering
TRIP: Year 9 trip to the Globe (English)	Gresham lectures visiting speakers programme
TRIP: Year 9 Outward Bound trips	TRIP: Year 12 and Year 13 Year Day
TRIP: Year 9 Year Day	Careers Fair
Year 9 Enrichment Takeover day	Visiting exhibition at MBGC - Photography exhibition
Careers Fair	
Year 9 Project Performance and visit to Visiting Exhibition	
Participation in International Global Girl Leading Conference and Winter Gathering - audience	

## **Careers, advice and guidance.**

Destinations are very strong at both KS4 and KS5. After KS4 99% of students from 2021 were in education two terms later compared to 86% nationally. This year nearly 80% of students progressed to Mulberry's sixth form, with a number also enrolling on technical courses at Mulberry UTC. Quality first teaching and strong outcomes, alongside strong careers education and work-related learning opportunities support these outstanding destinations. The range and quality of opportunities is considerable. They contribute to outstanding provision that develops leadership, resilience and a global awareness amongst students. The enrichment offer supports students to move to destinations of which we are very proud. Our careers programme meets and exceeds Gatsby criteria and was recognised as being particularly strong in our last internal whole school review.

At Key Stage 5, students are involved in university outreach programmes including Kings College K plus and UCL uni-link. An annual careers fair is attended by all students, and students in sixth form regularly attend university open days and UCAS university fairs. All sixth form students have a dedicated UCAS mentor. Amongst 2020 leavers (latest data available) 89% of students progressed a degree compared to just 64% nationally, with 39% of these students going to Russell Group universities compared to 18% nationally. The % going to Oxford or Cambridge was double the national average. All students take part in at least two careers related trips and a calendared school wide careers week highlights and demonstrates careers links throughout the curriculum.

**Work with external partners.** We actively seek partnership with employers and higher education institutions as well as arts partners. We value these partnerships because they provide pupils with insight into the world of higher education and employment, promoting ambition and supporting aspiration. We currently work with Sky and the London Stock Exchange Group on girls and technology, as well as with KPMG, Lloyds of London, Varde and Deliveroo on STEM. Year 10 students receive mentoring through Clifford Chance, and Lawyers in Schools regularly run workshops. A particularly important partner is Pinky Lilani, founder of the Asian Women of Achievement Awards and the Women of the Future Awards. Pinky has found sponsorship for us to attend at least one of these professional awards ceremonies each year and the girls engage with her ambassadors' programme. Attendance at these events has enabled pupils to learn valuable networking skills and to have access to the stories of more than 50 women nominees from different walks of life all in one evening. Often, they have invited some of those women to speak at Mulberry to provide greater access for other girls.

**Family and community learning.** An important contribution to pupils' personal development comes through strong family and community engagement. Parents and carers matter at Mulberry. Their engagement leads to more involvement in their daughters' learning and raises achievement. Disadvantage leads to social exclusion and so more effective support of families by schools builds the confidence of the community, promoting access to employment and the wider cultural assets of London. Whilst almost all parents and carers are involved in the school through academic consultation, Mulberry believes that much more extensive engagement (especially with 'hard to reach' families) has significant benefits for attendance, punctuality, the capacity for pupils to make good progress and their wider emotional and social well-being.

Strong engagement has also helped us to overcome a range of barriers for pupils in their personal development. These include: parents' hostility to the teaching of arts and any public performance of the arts by girls or women; parents' concerns about girls going to university, residential visits and outdoor education, visits to places of religious significance, school uniform, PE, swimming, RSE and PSHEE, imagery, English literature texts and the study of media; lack of financial capacity to take up places on school visits or other activities; and support from families for participation in enrichment outside school hours.

We offer an extensive range of ways to engage families beyond the academic life of the school, including:

visits to places of cultural importance such as Hampton Court, Kew Gardens and the Olympic Park; social events such as a women only karaoke for mothers, a dinner dance for women, a visit for mothers and daughters to Edinburgh university, staying overnight and a trip to Brighton; classes to learn ESOL, ICT, literacy, fitness, Zumba for mothers, badminton for fathers, first aid for children, jewellery making, bag making, fruit carving (for weddings and other family celebrations) and cake decorating; parenting and volunteering courses – volunteering courses have led to employment; workshops on health and well-being, such as breast cancer, mental health, diabetes, universal credit and personal finance, ICT and social media and child protection; cultural activities including a term long opera course with the ENO, work with the Donmar Warehouse on Shakespeare, the establishment of a women's theatre company which has written and performed its own plays, performing them publicly. When parents were concerned about their daughters and Syria, we brought the National Theatre's production of 'Another World' (a verbatim drama about Belgian families whose daughters left to join fighting in Syria) with several workshops and a panel discussion about the issues for families to discuss. Mothers have also been involved in WOW. There is a termly Community Newsletter for parents.

This extensive work has led over time to better progress for pupils, better attendance, more girls going to university and apprenticeships and participation much more freely in public performance. In addition, mothers have gained employment, performed drama publicly and set up their own NGOs as well as organising their own celebrations of International Women's Day. Over time, the number of families entitled to free school meals has fallen from 73% in 2006 to 56% in 2020 and for the past 7 years, the birth rate locally has fallen as girls go to university, on to careers and thus marry and have families later than before.

## Section 4: Leadership and Management

The **leadership and management** of Mulberry School for Girls is visionary, thoughtful, ambitious and self-reflective at all levels of the organisation. Mulberry is a Professional Learning Community with a shared passion for learning, teaching and educational leadership that places the pursuit of great pedagogy and practice at its heart. There are strong values of service to the public at Mulberry's core which mean that all staff take seriously their responsibilities to pupils and their families and that the provision of as outstanding an education as possible for all is unconditional. Policy and practice is self-evaluative. Mulberry has developed its own programmes for staff leadership development and is actively involved in a number of partnerships at all levels, from Initial Teacher Education to senior leadership. We think carefully about the well-being of staff and the conditions they work within, ensuring that all our decision-making considers workload and matters of equality, diversity and inclusion.

Governance is strong. The school benefits from being involved in the MAT. Trustees regularly interact with governors of the school's Local Governing Body (LGB) so that the school has a voice in the decisions that are made at Trust level. The Chair of Governors is a trustee and two of the company members, who hold the values and vision of the Trust, are on the LGB of Mulberry School for Girls. Training is regular, visits are undertaken by governors and challenge to the leadership team is built into all meetings. Being in the Trust allows for trust-wide opportunities for talent management, leadership and other professional development, peer review and other means of validation of each school's work and coaching. We share the burden of financial constraint and maximise opportunities for pupils amongst the schools. The school is a National Support School and the CEO is a NLE, who since being designated in 2011, has undertaken much support for other schools in challenging circumstances.

**Strategic planning for improvement.** Planning for improvement at Mulberry is strong, led by the head, SLT and middle leaders with their teams annually in the summer. Governors are also consulted. The pupils' School Council is usually involved and parents are consulted through our coffee mornings, led by our Parent Liaison officer. We also take a range of feedback from parents, staff and pupils during the year in many different ways. Relations with Trade Unions are excellent – feedback on workload is always considered very carefully by SLT when planning for the following year. Union guidance on directed time is adhered to when planning the academic calendar for the routines that underpin the school year, such as data collection, and we consult MLT on the calendar to ensure that as far as possible we have reduced

pressure points in the year. Mulberry follows the Trust strategic plan and has an annual school improvement plan (SIP) from which HOFs and YLCs plan an annual year improvement plan with their teams. Plans are approved by governors in the summer meeting.

Plans are reviewed constantly throughout the year and work is redirected where necessary. For example, a sudden dip in maths in 2019 which affected our basics led to a more intensive focus on this subject.

Reviews of the SIP are presented termly to governors by SLT in the papers and discussed as part of the head's report. These reviews are underpinned by our termly SEF cycle, led by MLT. The SEF cycle takes a termly focus on an aspect of curriculum, progress and teaching that has been identified by SLT and MLT as an area for improvement. Middle leaders and their SLT line managers set a hypothesis or question to explore that specifically relates to their area. Then, through a range of evaluative activities such as learning walks, book looks, curriculum analysis, pupil voice, scrutiny of progress data, middle leaders and their teams form an answer and further actions for the school. There is then a plenary discussion with the SLT line manager and the lead for progress, teaching and standards which feeds back to SLT meetings and termly review of the SIP. The SEF cycle ensures that we are constantly reviewing practice and responding quickly to the learning needs of pupils as they arise which leads to better progress.

Middle leadership structures give strength to a subject-based curriculum and an effective pastoral care system. Policies are regularly reviewed by leaders and governors – some policies are updated annually.

**Ethos and daily practice.** The daily operations of the school are effective, efficient and well led and managed, with the health and safety of pupils on site (and off site) a daily focus. Mulberry has equality, diversity and inclusion at its heart for pupils, staff and families. We try to ensure all our practice is as ethical as possible. We have never 'gamed' the system. Mulberry offers a rigorous, EBacc curriculum to almost all pupils because it is in their interests, even though at times this has been to the disadvantage of the school's position in the performance tables. We do not offer BTec or other alternative qualifications unless appropriate to need. Pupils with SEND working below the national standard have a similar rich curriculum offer as to others. We take pupils on managed moves from other schools (the majority of which are successful) and we help other local schools with short term placements for suspensions over 5 days. We aim to keep all our pupils on our roll unless it becomes evident that a managed move or alternative provision (AP) is more appropriate. It only follows after we have tried all other possibilities and can evidence this. To help us reduce these occurrences to nil, we are responding to increased need for AP for girls due the rise in ESMH needs by developing our own provision as a Trust – both for our pupils and for those of other schools.

The workload and wellbeing of staff has always been a central consideration of decision-making at Mulberry. Teachers rarely cover lessons and we have only one meeting a week in the calendar which often is used for curriculum development. Teachers have 17% non-contact time as standard (the national is 10%) for PPA and observation. All leaders have additional non-contact time equivalent to responsibilities. We have made other changes where we see possibilities, for example we have altered the way we report progress to parents both to improve feedback to pupils so that all reporting is formative and to reduce workload for teachers. This has the benefit of increasing the frequency of progress reports, setting aside 2 days in the academic year for quality discussion on progress with pupils and their parents, ensuring that all progress reporting becomes formative as well as summative. We have retained a full written academic report for Year 11 and 13 pupils after their mocks so that the detailed advice on improvement is captured in a document to aid pupils and parents in the remaining months of their GCSE studies. We also offer a two week October half term to teaching staff, which allows for a week of enrichment for all students with a variety of trips and visits and other opportunities offered.

Financial planning is responsible and targeted, with value for money for pupils at its core. This has led to highly effective management of reduction in available funds over the past decade due to the education budget freeze and rising costs. We have managed austerity without making staff redundant and without impacting on pupils' progress, wellbeing and personal development. A range of staff benefits have been made available and we have introduced small financial scholarships for sixth form pupils.

**Continuing professional development and leadership development.** Mulberry has always invested heavily in the development of teachers and support staff. The school was designated a National Support

School in 2011 and a Teaching School in 2012. In February 2021, Mulberry was designated as a Teaching School Hub by the DFE with responsibility for teacher development for all schools in Hackney and Tower Hamlets. We run a wide range of professional development opportunities focused on the strategic priorities of the school and as required by staff through the appraisal process. Where requests arise in year, we try and respond to these. Most members of the senior leadership team have made career progression through Mulberry school – as have most staff. In a number of cases, former students of the school have returned and have held senior and middle leadership responsibilities on the teaching and support staff – current pupils benefit from seeing such role models. Our Teaching School Hub status affords many professional development opportunities for staff to facilitate on DFE national teacher development programmes and to benefit from a local professional community of practice coordinated by Mulberry.

Mulberry is a lead school for School Direct initial teacher education. Over the past 5 years over 50 School Direct salaried trainees, placed at a range of our partner schools and at Mulberry, have qualified as teachers. Most graduate with a HEI moderated grade of outstanding. 90% have been retained in local schools and many have remained for longer being promoted to senior leadership positions. We have established an in-house ITE CPD programme which is reviewed and tailored to suit the needs of each cohort and to keep up with current pedagogical practice: PGCE training sessions are run by in-house experts to provide student teachers with a range of experience as well as giving existing staff opportunities to lead training, thereby fine-tuning their own professional practice. We offer all routes into teaching and have established a cluster of schools working in partnership to deliver ITE. Mulberry has designed an exciting and engaging School Direct programme with a specific emphasis on high quality inner city education. As part of Mulberry's TSH remit, we coordinate a PCM working group to ensure the enhanced professional studies programme we offer is underpinned by the best available evidence and is tailored for the specific contextual needs of trainees. The school has a close relationship with Teach First – the CEO having been a former trustee and subsequently Chair of the National Headteachers' Board and then the Fair Education Alliance, a social enterprise incubated within Teach First. Feedback from trainees about their experience is very positive and most go on to work in one of the cluster's schools.

We benefit in our professional learning from belonging to a MAT. The MAT provides opportunities for shared professional practice and self-reflection. We have built an effective programme for internal review of learning and teaching, curriculum and leadership drawn from experienced leaders across the Trust. We undertake two day reviews of each school with a written report to support improvement and development. Some senior colleagues work across schools in the Trust to ensure information flow between them. The principals meet together monthly to share good practice and we are able to offer coaching, secondment and other immersive professional learning experiences across the Trust. The Executive Services team of senior support staff is drawn from within the Trust as well and are based in each of the schools, ensuring that support staff are fully included in the Trust's leadership. As the lead school for East London Teaching School Hub, we benefit from being in a network of 87 high-performing schools with this status and are in a position of influence for national teacher development. Our CEO is also a member of the Teaching School Hub Council.

**Governance.** Governors are fully engaged in the life of the school. They act as a critical friend and support and encourage high aspirations. Many governors have great knowledge and expertise that not only support the work of the senior leadership team but also provide greater opportunities for pupils. Governors are forward thinking and keen to promote and strengthen and promote the school and extend the success of the school in response to requests from the local community. The governing body of Mulberry School for Girls led the establishment of Mulberry UTC (approved in 2012 and opened in 2017) and of the MAT in 2016, incorporating as the Mulberry Schools Trust in 2017. Currently, two governors are independent Company Members of the Trust and two governors are Trustees (one chairs the Finance Committee and the other the Standards Committee and Pay Committee of the Trust). The Chair of the Trust was Chair of the local governing body Mulberry School for Girls. Governors visit regularly and participated in a governor away day in March 2022.

There is excellent, regular communication between the MAT and the local governing body (LGB) of Mulberry with a Trust wide celebration event for all staff and governors in the autumn, the Trust's annual lecture for all



and the Trust's governor and trustee conference in the summer term. Bespoke and purposeful training is run for governors and they have access to two online professional learning portals for governors. An external review of governance was commissioned in the year 2020 – 2021 to provide an objective insight into the effectiveness of the Trust's governance arrangements. The review identified that the approach to governance is effective and well supported. Trustees and Governors have a strong commitment and contribute significant time to the strength of the Trust and its governance. The review also found that the Local Governing Body provides valuable scrutiny, with accountability and visibility of governance. Governors bring strong community links and understanding of their local context, drawing on experience in local government, education, employers and the business community, religious and community groups. There is a wide range of training and development opportunities for Governors and visits to the school takes place termly. Governors have access to Virtual Boardroom which is a board management software which enhances support for governance.

**Outreach.** Mulberry is involved in a range of professional outreach and school to school support. The school is often asked to host visits from around the world focused on CPD and ITE. We have hosted educationalists and politicians from Malaysia, India, Australia, Sweden, Finland, China, Iraq, Singapore, the Parliamentary Select Committee, the Prince's Teaching Trust, the UCL Institute of Education and the Chartered College of Teaching. Mulberry also belongs to Challenge Partners, leading the East London Hub and the Tower Hamlets Education Partnership; both are collaborative networks of shared good practice. Mulberry leads the East London Teaching School Hub and Mulberry College of Teaching.

As a National Support School, Mulberry has contributed significant support to a number of schools in difficulty at the request of the Regional Schools Commissioner and previously, the London Challenge. Most recently in 2017, Mulberry was asked to step in to help with a serious critical incident at a local school when the head and 4 deputies were suspended leaving a leadership vacuum. Mulberry was then asked to provide emergency support to another local school in 2018 and in July 2019, we were contacted again to provide emergency support to a UTC in outer East London for 18 months to 2021. We have supported a further 6 schools in this way since 2011 and the CEO was invited to chair the board of the Somerset Challenge for 3 years from 2015 – 2018. She set up and chaired the headteachers' board for Teach First and has recently become chair of the Fair Education Alliance. Other senior colleagues and staff have been involved in this work, providing opportunities for development as well as making a significant contribution to the wider education system.

Mulberry's long-term strength and commitment to the arts and creativity closely informs our work with the local community. We aim to spread both a love and appreciation of the arts throughout our local community beyond the gates of the school through a wide range of participatory projects targeted at parents, and opportunities to experience arts and performance at the highest level. In recent years, parents have participated in a series of singing workshops and projects with the English National Opera, performed on stage as part of our Alumni Theatre Company's first original piece of theatre, worked with Tamasha theatre on a site specific audio performance about the local area, had the opportunity to see high quality theatre both at Mulberry itself and in the West End, and much more. We believe that through engaging our community in the arts, we will not only help to develop voice, communication and leadership skills in women that we work with, but also strengthen the appreciation of the value of the arts throughout our parent and wider community. This in turn will strengthen the support that the community offers to our students taking part in creative activity themselves.