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Mill Hill School

Curriculum Policy

2023 2024

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Abbreviations

A Level	:	Advanced Level
EAL	:	English as an Additional Language
GCSE	:	General Certificate of Secondary Education
IELTS	:	International English Language Testing System
IGCSE	:	International General Certificate of Secondary Education
PSHE	:	Personal, Social and Health Education
UCAS	:	University and Colleges Admissions Service

Mill Hill School Curriculum Policy 2023/2024

1. Introduction

This policy sets out the main features of the School's curriculum and is supported by the School's various plans and schemes of work. The policy is available to parents, prospective parents and others through the School website and is available in hard copy upon request to the School Office. In addition, the policy may be inspected at any point in the School day in the School Office.

Mill Hill School aims to provide excellence in education and to support all of its pupils in the passage from childhood towards adulthood. At the same time, it seeks to develop in every pupil self-discipline, responsibility, spiritual and moral values, leading to the highest possible standards of behaviour, consideration for others, pride in oneself and in one's achievements. The academic curriculum provided by the School plays a key role in helping us to meet these aims, and we seek to offer a broad, flexible and forward-looking curriculum which encourages among pupils intellectual curiosity, sound learning and a spirit of enquiry in the pursuit of academic excellence.

The overall aims of the curriculum are to:

- provide a challenging, academically rigorous, and inspiring education which promotes a love of learning
- promote the pursuit of excellence and learning of the highest quality
- give pupils a broad and balanced experience of linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education which broadens horizons and promotes high aspiration
- enable pupils to acquire skills in speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy
- provide for pupils above compulsory school age provide a programme of activities which offers a wide range and which is appropriate to pupils' needs
- ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to make good progress, relative to their own starting point
- provide for any pupils who may attend the School who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or a learning difficulty or disability education which meets their requirements
- provide an age-appropriate programme of personal, social and health education which continues throughout a pupil's school career and which reflects the School's aims and ethos and which includes adequate preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life, according to the themes of:
 - health and wellbeing
 - relationships
 - living in the wider world (including economic wellbeing and careers education)
 - respect, tolerance and an understanding of protected characteristics
- uphold and promote fundamental British Values, and to value diversity and global perspectives, through the academic curriculum, the PSHE programme and the programme for tutor periods, Chapel services and assemblies
- provide supportive and impartial guidance and information for pupils on their futures, including; subject choices, higher education and careers

2. Provision for Pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities

The School is committed to allowing equality of access and opportunity to all pupils, regardless of their background, ability and any particular individual difficulties or disabilities which they may experience. The Learning Support Department plays a key role in this work, seeking to identify, through screening and ongoing monitoring, the particular needs of individual pupils and putting in place strategies (and, where necessary, additional assistance) designed to help them fulfil their potential.

Pupils who have an EHCP or a special educational need or disability may have their curriculum modified to take account of their particular needs, as appropriate. Such decisions are made by the Deputy Head (Academic) in consultation with the pupil and his/her parents/guardian and Housemaster/mistress and on the advice of the Head of Learning Support. Where a pupil has an EHCP, the requirements of the plan are closely followed to ensure that the School provides an effective and accessible educational experience. For pupils with a learning difficulty and/or disability an individual Pupil Profile is made available to assist with provision inside and outside the classroom. The progress of all pupils on the School's Learning Support Register is regularly reviewed and support is amended as appropriate.

3. Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE)

The School runs a PSHE programme, under the leadership of the Head of PSHE who reports to the Assistant Head (Pupil Development and Wellbeing), which is designed to complement the academic curriculum, underpinning attitudes and values of Mill Hill School whilst preparing the pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life, according to the themes of:

- Health and Wellbeing
- Relationships and Sex Education
- Living in the wider world (including economic wellbeing, digital literacy and careers education)
- Respect, tolerance and an understanding of diversity and equality

The PSHE programme of lessons runs throughout the academic year and Fourth Form to Lower Sixth have curriculum time supplemented by assemblies and presentations on a variety of key topics. The needs of Upper Sixth pupils are addressed through Form Time and specific events throughout the year, for example through the extensive support provided in writing applications to universities.

4. Subject Advice

Through the tutor system, presentations, taster sessions and information evenings, pupils are helped to make the best possible choices of GCSE, IGCSE and A Level courses. Guidance is given appropriately and impartially to whole cohorts and their parents in such presentations, and to individual pupils and their parents by Housemasters/mistresses, subject teachers, Heads of Department and senior academic staff. Further information is made available in Curriculum Guides, that are available on the School Website.

5. Careers Guidance

The School has an active Higher Education and Careers Department which provides appropriate impartial information and advice on possible future career paths. The Head of Careers is based within the Marnham Building, in the IT and Computer Science Department. A wide range of careers-related information and guidance is available in the Piper Library including the resources available through the School's subscription

to the Unifrog platform. Careers Education is also included each year within the School's PSHE and tutor programme. A Careers Fair is held biannually to provide further advice and guidance for pupils and draws on the expertise of parents and guardians. Further details about the Careers provision can be found in the Careers Education, Information and Guidance policy.

6. Higher Education

An extensive system of guidance on, and support for, Higher Education applications is led by the School's University & Post School Guidance Team, who are in the Sixth Form Centre. Expert guidance is provided by the Head of Sixth Form, a Higher Education Adviser specialising in overseas applications and a Higher Education Adviser team comprised of a Sixth Form Coordinator and three senior academic staff supported by Housemasters/mistresses and Heads of Department on applications to UK universities through UCAS, applications to non-UCAS options such as Art Foundation, applications for Degree Apprenticeships and applications to universities and colleges in the USA, Canada, continental Europe, Hong Kong and other relevant destinations overseas.

The School's support includes: briefings to Sixth Form cohorts and their parents; briefings to younger pupils and their parents if keen to acquire an early understanding of the various options; individual meetings for pupils and parents with the Head of Higher Education, senior academic staff, Heads of Department, Housemasters or Housemistresses; individual guidance and support for UCAS and other application processes; access to the online global course- finder platform BridgeU. Over the course of the academic year 2023-24, careers and university guidance will be migrating to the Unifrog platform.

7. English as an Additional Language (EAL)

For pupils whose first language is not English, additional support is provided, as appropriate, by the EAL Department. This provides class or individual tuition, as appropriate, in the four core areas of reading, writing, speaking and listening in order to allow non-native speakers of English fully to access the curriculum, to prepare them for appropriate EAL examinations, to exploit their academic abilities and to enjoy all of the social and cultural aspects of life at the School. In some individual cases, pupils who require EAL support follow a modified curriculum in order to accommodate this. For some pupils extra, individual, EAL tuition in addition to class lessons is needed. This is arranged through the EAL Department, in consultation with parents and guardians.

In the Fourth Form, EAL lessons are provided to those pupils who need it, usually in place of the core Modern Languages of French/German/Spanish. If it is appropriate for an EAL pupil to take one of these three modern languages, special arrangements can be made for their EAL lessons.

In the Remove and Fifth Form, EAL lessons are provided to those pupils who need it, usually in place of the core Modern Language. Pupils are prepared for IGCSE English as a Second Language and are also supported in developing the English language skills they need to use in their other subjects. The most advanced pupils are prepared for the IELTS examination during the Fifth Form, allowing them to follow three mainstream courses in the Lower Sixth, plus IELTS.

In the Sixth Form, EAL lessons prepare pupils for the IELTS examination and also provide language support for their work in their Lower Sixth courses. EAL pupils generally take three mainstream academic courses in the Lower Sixth alongside EAL lessons, which may include Saturday lessons if following the fast track route.

Some of these pupils also sit public examinations in their own language (if available), by arrangement with the Deputy Head (Academic) and parents must register their child to do so with the Examinations Department. Home language subjects cannot be taken off-timetable in place of one of the three mainstream A Level options in Sixth Form, and the School does not operate a two A Level programme in such circumstances.

In the Upper Sixth, most EAL pupils take three taught A Level courses. Over the course of their studies some also sit the A Level examination in their own language (if available), thereby achieving four A Level examination results. It is not possible to follow only two A Levels in School. Guidance is given to pupils so that their exam entry strategy is one which maximises their chances of meeting their university offers.

Full details can be found in the Foundation EAL Policy.

8. Blended and Remote Learning

Our blended and remote learning policy allows us to provide online support to large groups of pupils who have to self-isolate in response to a national pandemic or for some other long-term approved absences, at the discretion of the Head. Blended Learning refers to a hybrid system, whereby some individual pupils in a class may be learning from home while the majority of peers are in School. Remote Learning refers to whole classes, year group bubbles and/or the whole School learning from home. The latter would reflect a local or national lockdown situation in which schools were required to close. In either case, our teachers adopt one of two options in how they teach their blended and remote classes, as appropriate to the lesson content and intended learning goals of the pupils. Option A is live-streaming lessons through the online platform Microsoft Teams. Option B is the setting of specified independent tasks, to be completed and submitted in real-time during the timetabled lesson. Blended and Remote Learning is only available via permission from the Head, and cannot be made available on a day-by-day basis. Parents and guardians must contact their child's Housemaster/mistress in the first instance to discuss their child's individual circumstances and not teachers directly. Further information on learning from home is given in the **Blended and Remote Learning Policy**. In normal circumstances, there is no expectation to provide a remote learning facility to a single pupil who is absent from School, although appropriate resources should be made available to allow a pupil to maintain contact with their School and their learning.

9. Organisation of the Curriculum

The academic curriculum at Mill Hill is divided into three stages: the Fourth Form (Year 9); the Remove and Fifth Form (Years 10-11); and the Sixth Form (Years 12-13). Details of these are set out on the following pages.

• The Fourth Form Curriculum

Pupils entering the School in the Fourth Form (which is the first year at Mill Hill School) follow a curriculum which offers all the subjects of the National Curriculum, together with a second modern language for every pupil from a selection of German, Spanish and Latin.

The Fourth Form curriculum, , has three principal aims. The first is to provide a seamless transition between Year 8 and the Fourth Form, building on the prior experience gained as part of an effectively

sequenced knowledge-rich curriculum. The School recognises that pupils join the School from a variety of educational backgrounds and has modelled its Fourth Form curriculum to build on the key skills and knowledge pupils should have acquired from the first two years of Key Stage 3. This is to ensure that all pupils are at or above a common standard across all of their subjects, in preparation for the formal start of their GCSE courses in the Remove year (although some subjects - Sciences and Mathematics - begin the GCSE courses from the start of the Fourth Form). The second is to enable pupils to experience breadth and balance in their curriculum, so that they are exposed to an enriching and generative body of knowledge to deepen their learning and experience and are able to make informed choices for their GCSE option subjects. The third is to provide progression, stretch, and challenge to inspire, empower and challenge pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding as they prepare for the formal start of their GCSE and IGCSE courses.

The structure of the Fourth Form curriculum is as follows:

Core subjects, through to GCSE	English, Maths (set after the first half term), Science (Biology, Chemistry and Physics, taught as separate subjects) and French (or English as an Additional Language [EAL], where appropriate)
Other subjects, taken by all pupils	<p>Art and Design, Design Technology, IT and Computer Science, Drama, Geography, History, Music, Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE), Physical Education, Religious Studies and a second language (Latin, German, Spanish or EAL).</p> <p>Latin is also available to pupils who wish to study off timetable in addition to two modern languages on timetable. Classical Civilisation is not taught as a discrete subject, but pupils are exposed to the subject through drop down days ahead of being able to select the subject for study at GCSE.</p>
Games	All pupils have a session of Games each week, in addition to PE

The period allocation for each subject is set out in the Fourth Form Curriculum Guide.

The second modern language studied is either German, Spanish or Latin; pupils are invited to express a preference prior to joining the School and places are allocated in order of receipt of those preferences, taking into account availability of spaces in each language and any reasons given for the preferences expressed. Pupils who speak English as an Additional Language are assessed for their ability in English on entry to the School and their languages curriculum is adapted to suit their needs and abilities. English as an Additional Language is taught to those pupils who would benefit from it and usually replaces a pupil's lessons in French and German or Spanish.

The Fourth Form PSHE programme is modular. Pupils rotate through all units over the course of the year. These units are interspersed with whole year group presentations and guidance to pupils on age-appropriate issues such as smoking and internet safety.

In addition to the academic curriculum, all Fourth Form pupils participate in the School's Games and

Activities programme. The minimum expectation for each Fourth Form pupil is set out in the Activities Handbook, which is published annually, and is typically two activities minimum per week.

Further information on the Fourth Form curriculum is given in the **Fourth Form Curriculum Guide** which is included in the information pack issued to parents of prospective pupils by the Admissions Office and is available on the School Website.

- **The Remove and Fifth Form Curriculum**

The curriculum in the Remove and Fifth Form (Key Stage 4 in all subjects) ensures that all pupils follow a common core whilst allowing them to make choices about a number of the non-core subjects they study, to reflect their individual interests and aptitudes. When choosing their GCSE/IGCSE option subjects pupils are encouraged to select a combination of subjects which maintain a sensible breadth of study where that is appropriate for them. This advice is balanced with each pupil's relative strengths in his/her subjects. It will be easier for a pupil who is strong across a wide range of subjects to achieve breadth and balance in their subject choices than a pupil whose abilities are focused on fewer subjects. Ultimately, it is more important for each pupil to take option subjects which they enjoy and in which they are likely to do well, than for them simply to choose a broad spread of subjects.

The structure of the curriculum for these two years is as follows:

Core examined subjects	English (certified as two GCSEs – Language and Literature), Maths Science (Biology, Chemistry and Physics, taught as separate subjects but certified either as two or three GCSEs – the decision over which course to follow is determined at the end of the Fourth Form) and a Modern Language (French, German or Spanish) or English as an Additional Language, for those for whom that is appropriate
Other, non- examined, core courses	PSHE Physical Education
Option subjects, from which pupils select three GCSE/IGCSE courses	Art, Classical Civilisation, Computer Science, Design Technology, Drama, Geography, German, History, Information and Communication Technology, Latin, Music, Physical Education, Religious Studies, Spanish The School reserves the right to withdraw or add GCSE and IGCSE subjects to further develop the breadth and balance of the curriculum
Games	All pupils have a session of Games each week, in addition to PE

The School reserves the right to review the numbers of pupils requesting to access each available option subject, and may choose to remove the subject from the option list if numbers are too low to make its provision viable.

The period allocation for each subject over the two years is set out in the **Remove/Fifth Form Curriculum Guide**.

Each pupil's choice of GCSE/IGCSE option subjects is agreed in the light of suitability indicators provided by each department, in discussion with their tutor and with their parents and is monitored by Housemaster/mistresses.

The PSHE programme is modular in the Remove and Fifth Form and includes: citizenship and respecting equality, relationships and sex education, emotional wellbeing and mental health, physical health and wellbeing and economic enterprise education. Pupils rotate through all of the units over the course of the year. These units are interspersed with whole year group presentations and guidance on specific modern day issues.

In addition to the academic curriculum, all Remove and Fifth Form pupils participate in the School's Games and Activities programme. The minimum expectation for pupils is set out in the Activities Handbook, which is published annually.

Further information on the Remove and Fifth Form curriculum is given in the **Remove and Fifth Form Curriculum Guide** which is issued to all Fourth Form pupils and their parents in the Spring term.

- **The Sixth Form Curriculum**

The aims of the Sixth Form curriculum are:

- to provide an academic curriculum which is appropriate for each pupil in its range and demands
- to foster a love of learning, and a sense of aspiration in all pupils
- to provide a challenging, academically rigorous, and intellectually stimulating learning environment
- to encourage and develop academic skills of increasingly independent study, research and thought
- to encourage and develop wider personal skills to allow a confident entry into higher education or other post level 3 pathways and to create adaptability and resilience
- to encourage pupils to consider and discuss issues relevant to them as they move towards adulthood and participation in the full range of rights and responsibilities as citizens

Subjects are taught as two-year linear courses with all examinations at the end of the Upper Sixth, with the exception of Computer Science, that has an examined component at the end of the Lower Sixth, and Digital Media and BTEC Sport, which follow a programme of continuous assessment

Universities look for three very good A Level grades or equivalents, plus evidence of breadth and engagement – which can be shown in a variety of ways both academic and non-academic. Hence our programme at Sixth Form promotes a three subject model, with scope for a fourth, by arrangement with the Deputy Head (Academic) and Director of Studies. The options are arranged within four blocks in Lower sixth to accommodate this model. In addition to this, we aim to send our leavers out into the world with the adaptability and resilience to make a success of their studies and an impact in their early professional careers.



We require pupils entering the Sixth Form to take three subjects from the outset, four if taking Further Maths or a further subject by prior arrangement, EPQ or IELTS, allowing them to focus in depth on their chosen options. Lesson allocation is 6-7 50 minute periods per week per subject, excepting IELTS, which is taught across two periods. Further Mathematics may not be studied in the absence of Mathematics. Pupils in the lower Sixth also have one taught lesson of PSHE per fortnight, which incorporates the supercurriculum, to further develop their skills and aptitudes beyond the scope of the A Level curriculum. All pupils benefit from a lecture series which supports the curricular and super-curricular aims of the Sixth Form programme, and links closely with PSHE. Additionally, the pupils are individually developed through opportunities for entrepreneurship, leadership and community service.

The School reserves the right to review the numbers of pupils requesting to access each available option subject, and may choose to remove the subject from the option list if numbers are too low to make its provision viable.

This Review: November 2023
Next Review: Autumn 2024

This Policy has been approved by the Education Committee of the Court of Governors, 22nd November 2023

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