

MILL HILL SCHOOL CURRICULUM POLICY

AUGUST 2017

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:

- give pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education;
- ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress
- provide subject matter appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of pupils, including those pupils with a statement of educational need;
- enable pupils to acquire skills in speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy;
- provide for any pupils who may attend the School who have a statement of educational need or a learning difficulty or disability education which meets their requirements;
- provide a programme of personal, social and health education 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)
- provide appropriate guidance and information for pupils on subject choices, higher education and careers information and guidance;
- for pupils above compulsory school age provide a programme of activities which offers a wide range and which is appropriate to pupils' needs

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 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 / Housemistress / Houseparent and on the advice of the Head of Learning Support. Where a pupil has a statement of special educational need, the requirements of the statement are closely followed in order 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.

Personal, Social, Health, Religious Education (PSHRE)

The School runs a PSHRE programme which is designed to complement the academic curriculum and 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)

A modular programme runs in all year-groups in the School. Further details of the PSHRE courses are set out below and in the detailed PSHRE schemes of work.

Careers Guidance

Through the tutor system, presentations and information evenings, pupils are helped to make the best possible choices of GCSE/IGCSE, AS and A level courses. They are similarly helped to make the best and most appropriate higher education choices and in the Sixth Form they are assisted in this by visits to universities and colleges as well as by presentations, workshops and information evenings. Careers Education is also included within the School's PSHRE programme and specific Careers Education units are provided in the Fourth Form, Remove and Lower Sixth.

The School has an active Careers Department which provides information and advice on possible future career paths. It is based in the Piper Library, where a wide range of careers-related information and guidance is available. Careers interviews are arranged for pupils in the Fifth Form and in the Lower Sixth, and also on request through the Head of Careers or the Assistant Head (Teaching and Learning) for pupils in other year groups.

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 French/German/Spanish. If it is appropriate for an EAL pupil to take one of these three modern languages, special arrangements are 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 four mainstream courses in the Lower Sixth.

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. Some of them also sit public examinations in their own language (if available).

In the Upper Sixth most EAL pupils take three taught A level courses. At the end of the year some also sit the A level examination in their own language (if available), thereby achieving four A level examination results. Guidance is given to pupils so that their exam entry strategy is one which maximises their chances of meeting their university offers.

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 come from a variety of educational backgrounds, although the majority come from preparatory schools. The Fourth Form curriculum has three principal aims. The first is to consolidate what has been learned in the previous two years, to ensure that all pupils are at or above a common minimum standard across all of their subjects, in preparation for the start of their GCSE/IGCSE courses in the Remove year. The second is to enable pupils to experience as wide a range of subjects as possible in the Fourth Form year, so that they are able to make informed choices for their GCSE/IGCSE option subjects. The third is to maintain pace and progression as pupils prepare for the start of GCSE/IGCSE courses.

The structure of the Fourth Form curriculum is as follows:

Core subjects, through to GCSE	English, Maths, Science (Biology, Chemistry and Physics, taught as separate subjects). French (or English as an Additional Language, where appropriate) is compulsory; either French or Spanish is pursued in Remove and Fifth Form as a core subject.
Other subjects, taken by all pupils	Art and Design, Design Technology, Digital Literacy & Computer Science, Drama, Geography, History, Music, Personal Social and Health Education, Physical Education, Religious Studies and a second Modern Language (German or Spanish).
Latin	The most able Latinists are able to continue their study of Latin, in addition to their other subjects.
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 or Spanish; pupils are able to express a preference with reasons, and places are allocated in accordance with the preferences and reasons given, taking into account availability of spaces in each language. Pupils who speak English as an Additional Language are assessed for their ability in English on entry to the School and their curriculum is adapted to suit their needs and abilities. English as an Additional Language is taught to those pupils who need it and usually replaces the lessons in French/German/Spanish.

In some subjects (including Maths and Sciences) the GCSE course is started in the Fourth Form; in other subjects the GCSE/IGCSE courses are started at the beginning of the Remove.

The Fourth Form PSHE programme is modular and includes: citizenship and respecting equality, relationships and sex education, emotional wellbeing and mental health, physical health and wellbeing and online safety. Pupils rotate through all of the units over the course of the year. There units are interspersed with whole year group presentations and guidance to pupils on specific modern day issues.

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.

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.

The Remove and Fifth Form Curriculum

The curriculum at Key Stage 4 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 focussed 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, Maths, Science (Biology, Chemistry and Physics, taught as separate subjects but certified either as two or three GCSEs) 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	Personal, Social, Health and Religious Education Physical Education
Option subjects, from which pupils select three GCSE/IGCSE courses	Art and Design, Classical Civilisation, Computer Science, Design Technology, Drama, Geography, German, History, Information and Communication Technology, Latin, Music, Physical Education, Religious Studies, Spanish
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 **Remove 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 Housemasters / Housemistresses / Houseparents.

The PSHRE programme is modular 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 Curriculum Guide** which is issued to all Fourth Form pupils and their parents in the Spring term.

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 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 and to create adaptability and resilience befitting the realities of working life in the 21st century
- 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

From September 2017, almost all subjects will be taught as two-year linear courses with all examinations at the end of the Upper Sixth. Many parents will recognise this examination system as the one they experienced when they were Sixth Formers. Indeed, the basic structure represents a return to the way A levels were organised up until the introduction of Curriculum 2000 at the beginning of this century.

There are a number of different possible approaches to A level reform, and each school has to determine a way forward which most suits its own pupil body. At Mill Hill we have reflected very carefully on how to accommodate the changes and offer our pupils their best opportunity for a successful and enriching Sixth Form experience under the new system.

In general terms, new A levels are more rigorous. In some subjects there is a broader and deeper level of content. Most of the examinations will be more stretching because they will be testing two years' worth of material in a way that draws together different themes and topics from within the course.

Universities are telling us that they will be looking for three very good A level grades, plus evidence of breadth and engagement – which can be shown in a variety of ways both academic and non-academic. In addition to this, we are

aiming 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.

For these reasons, from September 2017, we will require pupils entering the Sixth Form to take three subjects from the outset (four if taking Further Maths or EAL). This will allow them to focus in depth on their chosen options, with an expansion in lesson time and prep allocations for each subject.

We will also be creating an exciting enrichment programme for all Sixth Formers, to develop study skills, to provide opportunities for academic extension through a variety of internally and externally accredited courses and to give time for broader engagement and individual development through entrepreneurship, community service, teamwork and presentation projects, lectures and age-appropriate Personal, Social, Health and Religious Education.

Lower Sixth Form Entry Requirements

The minimum academic requirement for entry to the Sixth Form is two GCSE passes at grade A (or grade 7 where relevant) and three at grade B (or grade 6 where relevant) plus minimum grade 4 in Mathematics and English Language or Literature. In addition to this general requirement, each subject has specific minimum entry requirements.