

THE MOUNT SCHOOL

CURRICULUM POLICY

2026-2027

Policy detail	Information
Version	2.0
Policy writer	Euan Burton-Smith
Last updated	September 2026
Effective from	1 September 2026
Review date	August 2027
Approval	Approved by Chris Sellers - Director / Proprietor

1. Introduction

The curriculum is all the planned learning through which The Mount School promotes pupils' knowledge, skills, understanding, personal development and readiness for the next stage of education and life. It includes formal subject teaching, the wider curriculum, enrichment, visits, assemblies, clubs and other planned experiences.

As an independent school, The Mount is not required to follow the National Curriculum in every respect. The School uses National Curriculum programmes and expectations as an important reference point while ensuring that its own written curriculum policy, plans and schemes of work meet the Independent School Standards and the needs of its pupils.

The curriculum is designed to be broad, balanced, ambitious and coherently sequenced. It is intended to enable pupils to know more, remember more, apply what they know and make good progress according to their abilities.

2. Regulatory framework

The proprietor ensures that a written curriculum policy, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, is drawn up and implemented effectively in accordance with Part 1 of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, as amended, and current DfE Independent School Standards guidance.

The policy, plans and schemes of work take account of the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including pupils with an EHC plan, and must not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

The curriculum also reflects applicable statutory requirements including Relationships Education, the current EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers, KCSIE 2026, equality and SEND requirements, and other duties relevant to the subjects and age groups taught.

3. Values

- We value high-quality educational experiences, continuous improvement and the development of independent, responsible learners.
- We value each child as an individual and promote respect for other people, cultures, backgrounds and perspectives.
- We value spiritual, moral, social, cultural, intellectual, creative and physical development.
- We value fairness, honesty, responsibility, cooperation and positive contribution to the community.
- We value the environment and seek to develop pupils' understanding of their responsibilities towards the world around them.

These values are implemented in a way that actively promotes the fundamental British values and encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

4. Curriculum aims and required areas

The Mount provides full-time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age. The curriculum gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education, as required by the Independent School Standards.

The curriculum aims to enable pupils to:

- feel safe, valued and ready to learn within a caring community;
- acquire secure knowledge and skills in English, mathematics, science and the wider curriculum;
- develop speaking, listening, reading, writing and communication across subjects;
- develop mathematical fluency, reasoning and problem-solving;
- become curious, independent and resilient learners who can ask questions, think critically and solve problems;
- develop physical confidence, creativity and appreciation of the arts;
- understand people, places, society, history, culture, technology and the natural world;
- develop spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding;
- respect themselves and others and understand diversity and protected characteristics in an age-appropriate way;
- understand and uphold fundamental British values;
- develop personal, social, health and economic understanding, including Relationships Education;
- develop age-appropriate economic and financial awareness;
- be prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society; and
- be prepared effectively for the next stage of education.

5. English and communication

The curriculum gives all pupils the opportunity to develop speaking, listening, literacy and communication. English teaching includes reading, writing, spelling, grammar, vocabulary and spoken language, with systematic phonics used where appropriate to pupils' stage of development.

Reading is prioritised as a gateway to the wider curriculum. Pupils encounter increasingly demanding texts and subject-specific vocabulary. Where pupils require additional support, intervention is timely and designed to enable access to the wider curriculum.

6. Mathematics

Mathematics develops fluency, conceptual understanding, reasoning and problem-solving. Planning provides progression in number, calculation, geometry, measurement, statistics and other age-appropriate mathematical content, with opportunities to apply mathematics across the curriculum.

7. Science, technology, humanities, physical and creative education

Schemes of work provide coherent progression in scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education. Subject leaders identify the essential knowledge, vocabulary and disciplinary skills pupils should learn and revisit over time.

Practical work, visits, visitors, outdoor learning and cross-curricular links are used where they strengthen learning. Cross-curricular approaches must not obscure the distinctive knowledge and progression of individual subjects.

8. PSHE, Relationships Education and preparation for life

The School provides personal, social, health and economic education appropriate to pupils' ages. Relationships Education is taught in accordance with the revised statutory guidance in force from 1 September 2026 and the School's RSE/PSHE Policy.

The wider curriculum helps pupils understand healthy and respectful relationships, consent and boundaries at an age-appropriate level, physical and mental wellbeing, online life and safety, economic understanding, citizenship and preparation for future education and adult life.

Primary sex education beyond statutory science is taught only where the School has determined it is appropriate and is governed by the RSE/PSHE Policy, including the applicable parental withdrawal arrangements.

9. Safeguarding through the curriculum

Safeguarding is embedded across the curriculum rather than confined to isolated lessons. Pupils are taught, in an age-appropriate way, how to recognise unsafe situations, seek help, understand boundaries and stay safe online and offline.

KCSIE 2026 requires a whole-school safeguarding approach. Curriculum planning therefore connects with the School's arrangements for online safety, child-on-child abuse, sexual harassment, exploitation, harmful content, attendance, mental health and other safeguarding risks.

Staff must follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy if teaching prompts a disclosure or concern. Curriculum discussion must never become an investigation of a pupil's personal experience.

10. Online safety, digital literacy and AI

Online safety is taught through an age-appropriate, whole-school approach. Pupils learn about privacy, security, online relationships, harmful or misleading content, reporting concerns, digital footprints and responsible technology use.

Teaching reflects contemporary risks, including manipulation of images and information, generative artificial intelligence and the need to question the reliability and provenance of digital content. AI tools used for learning must be age-appropriate, safeguarded and subject to School data-protection and acceptable-use requirements.

11. EYFS curriculum

Children in the EYFS follow the statutory EYFS framework for group and school-based providers in force from 1 September 2026. The educational programmes and seven areas of learning and development provide the framework for an ambitious, language-rich and developmentally appropriate curriculum.

Practitioners consider the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning and use professional knowledge of each child to plan experiences, interactions and environments that support progress. Assessment should support learning and must not create unnecessary paperwork.

The EYFS curriculum includes careful attention to communication and language, early literacy and mathematics, personal, social and emotional development, physical development, understanding the world and expressive arts and design. Screen use, where any is used, is purposeful, limited and consistent with the current EYFS framework and safeguarding expectations.

12. Planning and curriculum documentation

The School maintains long-term and medium-term planning and subject schemes of work. Documentation should make clear what pupils are intended to learn, how knowledge and skills build over time, important vocabulary and how teachers will know whether pupils have learned the intended curriculum.

Medium-term plans remain working documents for teachers. They should support consistent entitlement while allowing teachers to respond intelligently to pupils' prior learning, misconceptions, interests and needs.

Planning should identify meaningful links between subjects where these deepen understanding, while protecting subject-specific progression.

13. Sequencing, progression and prior learning

Curriculum content is deliberately sequenced so that new learning builds on secure prior knowledge. Subject leaders identify important concepts, knowledge and vocabulary and ensure that unnecessary repetition or gaps are addressed.

Teachers check prior understanding, revisit important content and provide opportunities for retrieval, practice and application. Curriculum adaptation should support access without lowering ambition unnecessarily.

14. Inclusion, SEND and reasonable adjustments

Teachers set high expectations for every pupil and plan appropriate challenge for pupils whose attainment is above or below age-related expectations.

The curriculum is designed to provide access and opportunity for all pupils. Where adaptation is necessary, the School works with pupils and parents/carers as appropriate.

For pupils with SEND, including pupils with EHC plans, curriculum planning takes account of individual needs and outcomes. The School complies with applicable SEND requirements and considers reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils.

Adaptation may include changes to teaching, communication, resources, environment, pace, scaffolding, assistive technology or assessment. It should enable pupils to access ambitious curriculum content rather than automatically narrowing entitlement.

15. Disadvantage and other barriers

Leaders and teachers identify barriers that may affect learning, attendance, participation or progress, including disadvantage, safeguarding circumstances, English as an additional language, medical needs or interrupted learning. Support is targeted according to need and its impact is reviewed.

16. Equality and respect for others

Curriculum content and resources are selected and taught in a way that supports equality, avoids unlawful discrimination and promotes respect for other people. Pupils encounter a range of people, cultures, experiences and perspectives without stereotyping or tokenism.

The curriculum must not undermine fundamental British values. Political issues, where taught, are handled in accordance with the School's duties to prohibit partisan political views and secure a balanced presentation of opposing views where political issues are brought to pupils' attention.

17. Assessment

Assessment is used to identify what pupils know and can do, diagnose gaps and misconceptions, inform teaching and evaluate progress. It should serve curriculum and learning rather than generate unnecessary workload.

Teachers use appropriate formative and summative approaches. Standardised assessments may be used where they provide useful information. Subject-specific assessment reflects the knowledge and skills intended in the curriculum.

In EYFS, assessment is proportionate and consistent with the statutory framework. Across the School, assessment information is considered alongside pupils' work, discussion, observation and other evidence rather than relying on a single score.

18. Monitoring and quality assurance

The Director / Proprietor maintains oversight of whether the curriculum policy and associated plans and schemes of work are implemented effectively. The Headteacher is responsible for day-to-day curriculum leadership.

SLT and subject leaders monitor curriculum quality through a proportionate combination of planning review, lesson visits/observations, learning walks, pupil discussion, work scrutiny, assessment information and professional dialogue.

Monitoring focuses not only on whether content has been 'covered', but on whether the intended curriculum is being taught effectively, whether pupils are learning and remembering important content, whether groups can access it and whether identified weaknesses lead to action.

Subject leaders maintain sufficient subject knowledge to evaluate curriculum sequencing, resources, teaching and outcomes and to identify priorities for improvement.

19. Extra-curricular activities and enrichment

The School provides a range of lunchtime and after-school activities and recognises the contribution of enrichment to pupils' development. Outdoor learning, team-building, visits, visitors, performances, competitions and residential experiences may enhance the taught curriculum.

Enrichment is planned with regard to safeguarding, accessibility, equality, SEND, medical needs and educational purpose. Participation patterns are reviewed where necessary to identify barriers.

20. Parent and carer partnership

The School recognises the important role parents and carers play in children's education. It seeks to build positive partnerships by sharing appropriate information about what pupils are taught and how they are progressing.

Curriculum information, including statutory Relationships Education information and relevant policies, is made available in accordance with applicable requirements. Parents are encouraged to raise curriculum questions with the class teacher, subject leader or Headteacher.

21. Resources and external providers

Curriculum resources should be accurate, age-appropriate, inclusive and suitable for the intended learning. Sensitive materials are selected with particular care and must be consistent with safeguarding, equality and RSE requirements.

Where external speakers or providers contribute to the curriculum, the School remains responsible for what is taught. Appropriate checks, briefing, supervision and review of materials must take place; external provision must not bypass the School's safeguarding or curriculum controls.

22. Review and accountability

This policy is reviewed annually and sooner if there is a significant change in statutory requirements, inspection expectations, the School's age range or curriculum model. Subject plans and schemes of work are reviewed on a rolling basis so that documentation remains current and reflects actual practice.

Appendix 1 - Independent School Standards curriculum compliance map

ISS curriculum requirement	Where addressed
Written policy supported by plans and schemes of work	Sections 1, 2, 12, 18, 22
Ages, aptitudes and needs, including EHC plans	Sections 14-15
Fundamental British values	Sections 2, 3, 4, 16
Linguistic education	Sections 4-5
Mathematical education	Sections 4, 6
Scientific education	Sections 4, 7
Technological education	Sections 4, 7, 10
Human and social education	Sections 4, 7, 8, 16
Physical education	Sections 4, 7
Aesthetic and creative education	Sections 4, 7
Speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy	Sections 5-6
PSHE / preparation for life	Sections 4, 8-10
Relationships Education	Section 8
Effective preparation for next stage	Sections 4, 8
Assessment	Section 17
Effective implementation	Sections 18, 22

Appendix 2 - Subject leader annual curriculum check

- Is there a current scheme of work for every year group taught?
- Does sequencing identify essential knowledge, vocabulary and subject-specific skills?
- Does new content build logically on prior learning?
- Are SEND and reasonable-adjustment needs anticipated without unnecessary lowering of ambition?
- Are resources accurate, suitable, inclusive and age-appropriate?
- Is assessment aligned with the intended curriculum?
- Do work, pupil discussion and lesson evidence show the curriculum is being implemented?
- Are there gaps, duplication or weak transition points between year groups?
- Are safeguarding, online-safety and equality considerations addressed where relevant?
- What action is required, by whom and by when?

Appendix 3 - Curriculum adaptation prompt

- What is the essential learning that should remain ambitious for this pupil?
- What barrier is preventing access or progress?
- Is the barrier related to prior knowledge, SEND, disability, language, attendance, medical need or another factor?
- What reasonable adjustment, scaffold, resource, teaching approach or additional practice may help?
- Does adaptation preserve the core curriculum entitlement?
- How will we know whether the adaptation is working?
- When will it be reviewed and who is responsible?