

THE MOUNT SCHOOL ACCESSIBILITY POLICY AND PLAN

2024-2027 plan reviewed for 2026-2027

Policy detail	Information
Version	2.0
Policy writer	Euan Burton-Smith
Last updated	October 2026
Plan period	2024-2027 with revised priorities for October 2026 to August 2027
Effective from	On approval of this revision by the Director / Proprietor
Monitoring	Termly and following significant changes or individual needs
Policy review and next plan	August 2027; successor plan to cover 2027-2030
Approval	Approved by - Chris Sellers, Director / Proprietor

1 Purpose and scope

Accessibility is part of ordinary planning, teaching and leadership. It includes admissions, lessons, assessment, assemblies, play, meals, clubs, performances, swimming, educational visits and transitions. Staff must consider communication, sensory, cognitive, physical and medical barriers as well as wheelchair access.

Individual support must not wait for a building project, the next review or entry onto the SEND register. Arrangements for disabled staff, parents, carers and visitors are also considered under the equality duties applicable to them.

2 Legal and regulatory framework

The principal disability framework is the Equality Act 2010. The School's duties include avoiding unlawful disability discrimination and making required reasonable adjustments, including appropriate auxiliary aids and services. Schedule 10 requires a written accessibility plan covering curriculum participation, physical access and information delivery, which is implemented and kept under review with adequate resources considered.

For school pupils, changes to physical features are addressed through accessibility planning rather than the physical feature element of the reasonable adjustment duty. This distinction does not remove the duty to plan improvements or consider practical changes to provision. The School will assess the applicable duties for Nursery services, employment and visitors separately; the school-pupil distinction must not be applied as a blanket premises exemption.

The policy also supports the Independent School Standards, the current EYFS framework and the School's SEND approach. The SEND Code of Practice is used as a framework for good practice, with its legal application considered according to the provision and placement. The Mount does not assume that all duties applying to maintained schools apply identically to an independent school.

The Director / Proprietor will make this plan available for inspection on request at reasonable times and provide it to the relevant authority where legally required.

3 Disability SEND and individual needs

Under the Equality Act, disability generally means a physical or mental impairment with a substantial and long term adverse effect on normal day to day activities. Substantial means more than minor or trivial. Long term generally means an effect lasting, or likely to last, at least 12 months or for the remainder of the person's life. Recurring effects and the statutory rules about treatment must be considered where relevant.

Disability and special educational needs overlap but are not identical. Sensory impairments, neurodevelopmental differences, learning difficulties and medical or mental health conditions may meet the definition depending on their effects; some conditions receive specific statutory protection. Staff must not assume that a diagnostic label always establishes or excludes disability.

Needs may be visible, hidden, temporary or fluctuating. Support is based on the barrier and the child's circumstances. English as an additional language, cultural, religious or dietary needs do not themselves establish disability, but the School addresses relevant access and equality needs through its wider policies.

4 Responsibilities

The Director / Proprietor approves the policy and plan, oversees implementation, considers resources and capital priorities, and reviews assurance and unresolved barriers.

The Headteacher coordinates implementation, assigns action owners, ensures individual decisions are recorded and reports progress to the Director. The SENDCO advises on learning, communication and reasonable adjustments, coordinates support planning and supports transitions.

The School Manager coordinates premises audits, facilities, procurement and emergency arrangements with relevant staff and competent advisers. The Nursery Manager and EYFS staff ensure age appropriate access to rooms, play, routines and care. Class and subject teachers implement teaching adjustments and evaluate progress and participation.

The DSL and DDSL lead safeguarding responses and ensure children have accessible ways to seek help. Staff responsible for IT and communications support accessible systems and resources. All staff report barriers promptly and implement the arrangements relevant to their role.

5 Consultation assessment and decisions

The School listens to the child and parents or carers, seeks relevant information from previous settings and professionals, and reviews experience across lessons, routines and activities. Children's views may be gathered through observation, play, symbols, signing, supported conversation or another accessible method.

Before admission, transition, a room move or a significant change in provision, leaders consider access needs, adjustments, staff competence, healthcare and evacuation arrangements. Admissions and taster activities are adapted where required. SEND or disability must not lead to a blanket refusal or an assumption that needs cannot be met.

An adjustment decision records the disadvantage, evidence and preferences, options considered, effectiveness, practicalities, costs and resources, safety issues, chosen provision and review date. Where an option is not adopted, reasons and suitable alternatives are recorded. Health and safety, the age or character of a building and resource limitations must be assessed specifically rather than used as general reasons for exclusion.

6 Reasonable adjustments resources and charges

Reasonable adjustments can include changes to teaching, communication, routines, grouping, room allocation, resources, assessment, behaviour approaches and auxiliary aids or services. The School plans ahead for disabled pupils and applicants and responds to individual needs as they become known.

The School must not require a disabled child or their family to pay the cost of an adjustment it is legally required to make. A charge for additional support must never be assumed to be lawful merely because it is described as a learning support assistant fee. Any proposal for separately charged optional provision requires a clear distinction from required adjustments, individual consideration and appropriate advice before agreement.

The Director considers adequate resources to implement the plan. External support or funding may assist delivery but does not replace consideration of the School's own duties. Urgent access needs are addressed promptly while longer-term projects are assessed, with interim arrangements recorded and checked.

7 Access to the curriculum and wider school life

Teachers plan ambitious, accessible learning with adaptations to presentation, pace, vocabulary, materials, sensory demands and ways to demonstrate understanding. Support enables participation, independence and appropriate challenge, including for children with advanced abilities and SEND.

One Page Profiles and support plans identify useful strategies and are reviewed at least termly in line with the SEND Policy. Healthcare and care plans are coordinated where applicable. Relevant information is shared with staff, including supply staff and activity leaders, who need it to teach, supervise and support safely.

Trips, swimming, clubs, meals and performances are planned with attention to transport, fatigue, communication, facilities, medication, allergies, personal care and supervision. Staff must consider adjustments before excluding a child. Where a

particular activity cannot safely be accessed despite reasonable adjustments, leaders record the reasons and consider a meaningful alternative.

Assessment arrangements follow the applicable rules and the child's needs. Attendance support and behaviour responses consider disability and agreed provision; reduced attendance or repeated send-homes must not substitute for appropriate support.

8 Physical access and emergency arrangements

The audit covers arrival and collection, routes and surfaces, thresholds and doors, classrooms and specialist rooms, dining, play, toilets and changing, signs, lighting, acoustics and emergency routes. It includes current Nursery and EYFS room locations and movement between buildings.

Options include changing room allocation or timetables, providing accessible routes and suitable equipment, improving signs and sensory conditions, and commissioning physical works with required advice and approvals. Ramps must be suitable for the route and user, safely deployed and maintained; a proposed detachable ramp must not be assumed to solve every access or evacuation issue.

Where a person needs assistance during an emergency, staff agree suitable personal emergency evacuation arrangements, including responsible and backup adults, equipment, communication and procedures for all locations used. Plans are coordinated with fire risk assessment and other emergency procedures, practised appropriately and reviewed after changes. Staff must not improvise unsafe lifting or rely solely on fire service rescue.

9 Accessible information and technology

Information normally provided to pupils is made accessible within a reasonable time, taking account of disability and the preferences of children and parents. Formats may include clear print, large print, accessible electronic text, audio, symbols, visual timetables, simplified layouts or supported explanation. Staff check whether the child can understand and use the information.

School notices, instructions, learning resources, safety information, reports and relevant policies are considered. Parents and carers can request accessible communications and assistance with forms or complaints. An accessible alternative can be provided where a digital system creates a barrier.

Staff review the accessibility of School-approved systems and learning tools, including Compass where used and the Nursery's approved platform Famly. Assistive technology is assessed for usefulness, privacy and safe use. Filtering and monitoring must not unnecessarily prevent access to legitimate accessibility tools; adjustments are arranged through authorised staff.

10 Safeguarding wellbeing and dignity

Disabled children may face barriers to recognising or reporting harm, isolation, bullying or dependence on adults. Staff must not explain away changes in presentation or injuries as consequences of disability. Children must have an accessible means of expressing discomfort, refusal and concerns.

Safeguarding concerns are reported directly and immediately to the DSL or DDSL and recorded promptly on the approved system. Urgent protective action must not wait for a system entry or an available lead. Concerns about adults follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, including the Director route for concerns about the Headteacher.

Intimate care, moving and handling and healthcare support protect privacy, dignity and developing autonomy, use agreed plans and competent staff, and follow the dedicated policies. Staff challenge discriminatory behaviour and review whether participation and wellbeing are improving.

11 Records concerns and monitoring

Individual access records are accurate, proportionate and stored securely on approved systems, with access limited to staff who need the information. Public versions of this plan do not identify children or disclose medical or safeguarding details. Information sharing, retention and disposal follow the Data Protection Policy and approved retention schedule.

Families can raise access concerns with the class teacher, SENDCO, Nursery Manager or Headteacher. Unresolved complaints follow the Complaints Policy with suitable communication adjustments. Safeguarding concerns are handled without delay through the safeguarding route.

12 Accessibility action plan

The following priorities update the remaining period of the 2024-2027 plan. Dates are proposed milestones for approval with this revision. The three original building proposals retain their 2027 delivery targets. Completion must be supported by records and a check of actual access; the original plan contains no completion dates for those works.

At approval, the Director and Headteacher will confirm resources and operational responsibility. Owners will maintain dated progress notes, evidence of completion and any revised target. A significant immediate barrier triggers individual action without waiting for the listed milestone.

Priority	Action	Lead and milestone	Success and evidence
C1 Identify current barriers	Review pupils' access to lessons, routines, play and wider activities with families and relevant staff. Record needed adjustments and review dates.	SENDCO with teachers and Nursery Manager Initial review by December 2026; termly thereafter.	Each identified barrier has an action owner and reviewed support. Pupil and parent feedback and participation evidence show whether it works.
C2 Teaching and assessment	Review adaptive teaching, accessible resources, challenge and assessment arrangements. Coordinate One Page Profiles and support plans.	Headteacher and SENDCO with subject and EYFS leaders By April 2027; termly review.	Planning and work review show suitable access and challenge. Assessments use appropriate permitted arrangements.
C3 Staff competence	Identify training needs in disability, communication, sensory support, assistive tools, care and emergency procedures. Arrange focused training and brief supply staff.	Headteacher and Nursery Manager with SENDCO Training needs by December 2026; priority training by July 2027.	Training and briefing records; staff can explain and implement the relevant arrangements.
C4 Activities and transitions	Check access to clubs, swimming, visits, meals and performances before participation. Review room/class transitions and external provider support.	Activity and trip leaders; SENDCO and Nursery Manager Before each activity or transition.	Risk and support plans enable participation. Any limitation has a recorded rationale and reviewed alternative.

12B Physical environment

Priority	Action	Lead and milestone	Success and evidence
P1 Hall access	Verify status of the original detachable-ramp proposal. Assess route, gradient, thresholds, safe deployment, storage, maintenance and evacuation. Confirm suitable design and delivery arrangements.	School Manager; Director approves works and resources. Planned completion by August 2027.	Status to verify. Suitable access demonstrated and documented; staff trained where needed. Any delay has an interim arrangement and revised date.
P2 Cedar Annexe (Baby Room) access	Verify status of the original external ramped-access proposal and present use. Assess the complete route and required approvals; implement the agreed solution.	School Manager with Nursery Manager; Director approves. Planned completion by August 2027.	Status to verify. Safe access tested against intended use, with records of approvals, installation and maintenance as applicable.
P3 Library access	Verify status of the original detachable ramp proposal. Assess entrance and route and consider suitable alternatives or room/resource relocation while works are planned.	School Manager with Headteacher; Director approves. Planned completion by August 2027.	Status to verify. Children can access library learning and resources; suitability and maintenance of the agreed route recorded.

12C Information delivery

Priority	Action	Lead and milestone	Success and evidence
I1 Accessible formats	Record preferred accessible formats for children who need them. Agree who prepares information and reasonable delivery times.	SENDSCO and class teachers; Nursery Manager for Nursery By December 2026 and on entry or changing need.	Children receive usable information at the relevant time; preferences and feedback recorded.
I2 Learning and safety information	Review selected worksheets, books, instructions, visual timetables and emergency information for readability and accessibility. Adapt priority resources.	Class and subject teachers with SENDSCO and EYFS leaders Initial sample by January 2027; ongoing.	Children understand and use resources and safety messages; sample review records identify improvements.
I3 Digital access	Check practical access to approved pupil and family platforms, documents and assistive tools. Provide an alternative where needed and route technical changes through authorised staff.	Headteacher and staff responsible for IT and communications with SENDSCO and Nursery Manager Review by February 2027; respond promptly to individual barriers.	Users can obtain essential information; reported barriers have fixes or workable alternatives without unsafe workarounds.
I4 Policy and parent access	Make this plan available on request, explain how to request adjustments and provide accessible forms, meeting and complaints arrangements where needed.	School Manager with Headteacher and Nursery Manager On approval; review by December 2026.	Requests receive a clear response and suitable format; families can use the relevant procedures.
I5 Evaluate and renew	Review progress in all three areas with children, families and staff. Identify unfinished actions, resources and priorities for the successor plan.	Headteacher and Director with action owners Termly; successor plan by August 2027.	Dated reviews show impact and decisions. The 2027-2030 plan carries forward unresolved actions and new needs.

Appendix A Individual adjustment decision record

Use within approved support records where possible. Coordinate with SEND, healthcare, care and evacuation plans and avoid unnecessary duplication. This record contains personal information and must not be included in the public accessibility plan.

Field	Record
Child name class or room and date	
Barrier and effect on learning participation or information access	
Child and parent or carer views and preferred arrangements	
Relevant evidence and professional advice	
Options considered including aids services and changes to provision	
Chosen adjustment responsible staff and implementation date	
Resources training and any interim arrangement	
Reasons for options not adopted and alternatives	
Links to support healthcare care risk and evacuation plans	
How effectiveness will be assessed and review date	
Review outcome child and parent feedback and next action	

Appendix B Termly plan review record

Field	Record
Review date and participants	
Action references and progress with dated evidence	
Impact on curriculum physical access and information delivery	
Feedback and new barriers identified	
Delayed actions reasons interim measures and revised dates	
Resources or decisions needed from the Director	
Actions owners deadlines and next review date	

Appendix C Related policies and references

Policy group	Accessibility connection
Curriculum and Able Gifted and Talented	Ambitious accessible learning, suitable challenge and fair assessment.
SEND and Equal Opportunities and Equality	Individual assessment, graduated support and required reasonable adjustments.
Admissions and Nursery Admissions	Accessible enquiries, tours, assessments, forms and individual placement decisions.
Safeguarding and Child Protection Behaviour and Anti-Bullying	Accessible reporting, protection from harm, wellbeing and individual response
Attendance and Suspension and Permanent Exclusion	Address barriers and review support before significant decisions.
Educational Visits and School Journeys Health and Safety and Missing Child	Accessible activities, supervision, routes, risk assessment and emergency arrangements.
Medical Conditions Medication Allergy Safety First Aid and Intimate Care	Coordinated healthcare and care arrangements supporting participation and dignity.
Online Safety Acceptable Use and mobile device policies	Safe assistive tools and access to approved digital learning and communication.
Data Protection Privacy and Records Management	Secure individual records and lawful sharing; no identifiable information in the public plan.
Complaints Whistleblowing Staff Handbook Conduct and Safer Recruitment	Accessible concerns routes, staff responsibilities, competence and safe adult support.
RSE and PSHE and Restrictive Intervention and Reasonable Force	Inclusive teaching, respectful relationships, prevention and individual support

Legal and guidance references: Equality Act 2010, including sections 6, 20 and 85, Schedule 1, Schedule 10 and Schedule 13; Department for Education Equality Act 2010 advice for schools; Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, as amended, and current guidance; applicable EYFS, SEND, safeguarding and data protection requirements.

Equality Act 2010: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

DfE Equality Act advice for schools: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools>