



THE MOUNTBATTEN SCHOOL

School Improvement Committee

Curriculum Policy

November 2020

Review Date: July 2022

Company No. 07560175

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The Mountbatten School

Curriculum Policy and Organisation

Principles

The school curriculum broadly follows the National Curriculum but goes well beyond it to provide appropriate breadth and challenge. The curriculum also includes the “hidden curriculum” which is all the other things students learn from being part of the school community: how the members of the community interact with each other, the co-curriculum opportunities including trips, visits and the many societies, assemblies and the school’s attitudes and core values.

The curriculum is designed to be broad and balanced so that all students are given experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education. It covers a wide range of subjects and we ensure that it is balanced so that post-16 choices will not have been unduly restricted by earlier decisions. Through the curriculum students gain the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to prepare them to seize the opportunities and responsibilities of later life, and to foster in them a life-long love of learning. The curriculum is also designed so that all students have access to it regardless of race, disability, gender or cultural background.

Students acquire skills in speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy through the core curriculum, especially English, Mathematics and Modern Foreign Language(s). Citizenship and Personal, Social, Health and Careers education is provided for students of all ages through the Personal Development programme. Appropriate careers guidance is provided initially through the Personal Development programme and Form Tutor sessions. The Head of Careers is always available for one-to-one appointments.

Organisation

The timetable is based on a one week, six lessons each day of fifty minutes. Between 8:40am and 9:05 every day there is registration and/or assemblies/briefings. Afternoon registration takes place in Lesson 5.

In Lower School (Years 7, 8 and 9), some lessons are initially in mixed ability form groups and some are in ability sets. This helps to develop the relationships which are vital for a happy learning environment.

During Year 8, ready for the beginning of Year 9, students take part in a mini options process which allows students to spend more curriculum time working on fewer subjects in preparation for their GCSE courses.

Students then complete a further options process during Year 9, ready for Year 10, where most students select nine GCSE subjects to study until the end of Year 11. Some will take more, some fewer. The number will be appropriate for each individual student.

In Upper School (Years 10 and 11), core subjects and MFL are taught in ability set groups. Other subjects are taught in option columns where setting is not generally possible. The school will offer a wide range of GCSE and BTEC courses to suit the needs and interests of

students. Religious Studies GCSE is compulsory for all students (unless parents exercise their legal right to withdraw their child). A detailed Upper School Curriculum Plan is presented by the Senior Leadership Team to the Governors' School Improvement Committee in the Spring Term.

Number of Lessons

The number of lessons allocated to each subject is reviewed regularly. The number of lessons for 2020-21 per week is:

Subject	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
English	5	5	5	5	5
Mathematics	5	5	4	5	5
Science	4	4	4	6	6
Computing	1	1	5 mini options of 3 periods = 15 periods		
MFL	3	3			
History	1	2			
Geography	2	1			
RS	2	1			
DT	2	2			
Expressive Arts (Art, Music and Drama)	4	4			
PE	2	2	2	2	2
Option Subjects x 3*				12	
Option Subjects x 4					12

*The number of option subjects offered to Year 10 for their GCSEs in 2020-22 has been adjusted to 3 subjects. This was done to take into account their lost learning time in Year 9 due to the pandemic as it enables students to have an additional period for each of their option subjects.

Support and Alternative Curriculum Experiences

The SEN Policy refers to the very wide range of intervention and support programmes available for each student including:

- Full-time education in classes, with additional help and support by class teacher/subject teachers through a differentiated curriculum
- In-class support with adult assistance Classroom support across the curriculum is provided by Teaching Assistants (TAs) – ensure consistency of TA or LSA. Support is allocated to specific students after negotiation with the class teacher
- Support from specialists within class or as part of a withdrawal programme
- Special Arrangements for examinations, which reflect the nature of support offered
- Periods of withdrawal to work with a Support Teacher or Learning Support Assistant
- Clinic provision in sessions outside curriculum time
- Clubs or Workshops to support specific skills
- Modified curriculum –usually at Key Stage 4 (including Work Related Learning)
- Provision of alternative learning material / special equipment
- Access to the Learning Support room as appropriate

More-Able Students

The Mountbatten School recognises that a variety of grouping strategies can be used to help more-able and talented students to develop. Within learning groups, there should be opportunities for these students to work with other students of a similar ability, especially in discussion work and problem solving work. The school provides all staff with a toolkit of strategies for developing higher order thinking, independent learning, and the engagement of able underachievers.

Setting Arrangements

During the academic year 2020/21 arrangements have been made to create 'Core Bubbles' (consistent groupings in English, Mathematics and Science) and to keep students in tutor groups in Year 7. This has been done to limit the transmission of COVID-19 which has taken priority over our normal setting decisions. In normal circumstances out setting arrangements are:

Year 7: Students are set by ability in **Mathematics and MFL** during the Autumn Term. Other subjects are taught in mixed ability groups.

Year 8: Students are set in **Mathematics, Science** and jointly set in **English, History, Geography** and **Religious Studies**. Students are separately set, although typically not by ability, in **Expressive Arts, Technology, MFL** and **PE**.

Year 9: Students are set by ability in **English, Mathematics** and **Science**. All other subjects are option subjects. **PE** groups are organised to support students as necessary.

Upper School: Students are set separately by ability in **English, Mathematics** and **Science**. In option subjects there may be a degree of setting by ability as deemed appropriate. **PE** groups are organised into the range of practical and recreational sporting opportunities that individual students may select.

Subject leaders will regularly review classing arrangements and use monitoring data to ensure that students are in the most appropriate class according to their needs. As a result, there may be changes in a student's group throughout their school career.

Policy Agreed

Signed by: Andrew Gunn

Chair of School Improvement Committee

Signed by: Jill Hall

Chair of Governors

Date: 04.02.21