ENGLISH SCHOOLS' ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION RULES
2026 Cross Country Schools' Cup Competition

19. **The Cup Final** shall normally be held annually on the first Saturday in December.

20. **Ages.** The age groups for the competition shall be:
    i. Junior 12 years and under 14 years (Years 7 & 8)
    ii. Intermediate 14 years and under 16 years (Years 9 & 10) Ages as at midnight 31-8-27
    iii. Seniors 16 years and under 19 years (Years 11/12/13)

21. **Entries.**
    i. This competition is for ***individual school teams only***.
    ii. Only ***one team per school*** may be entered in each Competition.
    iii. Entries from schools must be completed on-line via the ESAA website at www.esaa.org.uk by Friday 11th September
    The relevant contributions per team can only be made using a debit/credit card.
    The rate of contributions per team shall be determined by General Committee. Should a school subsequently withdraw a team from the competition the entry fee will not be refunded. The 2026 Entry fee is £18 per team.
    iv. The ESAA Winter Events Committee reserves the right to refuse entries from schools in any area where no school has expressed a willingness to act as a first round host.
    v. For each match, meeting organisers will send out a declaration form showing the numbers allocated to each school taking part in that meeting. This form must be completed and returned at least a day before each match or earlier if requested to do so by the competition organiser.
    vi. The team declaration form must be printed and a signed copy handed to the race organiser at least half an hour before the first race of the meeting and any changes to the pre-declared team must be clearly marked on this copy.
    viii. For the Cup Final each team shall make up to twelve (12) nominations within five (5) days following the Regional Final from which they declare a maximum of six (6), but not less than four runners, on the day.
    vii. Any team fielding an ineligible runner shall be disqualified.

22. **Distances.** The length of the course in all rounds shall be:

Junior Boys:	2,300 – 2,700 metres	Junior Girls:	2,300 – 2,700 metres
Intermediate Boys:	4,000 – 4,500 metres	Intermediate Girls:	2,600 – 3,000 metres
Senior Boys:	4,800 – 5,300 metres	Senior Girls:	3,000 – 3,500 metres

    The severity of the course shall be considered when determining the distance within the above limits. The course should be clearly marked, free from dangerous hazards, with an unhindered run of the appropriate length to the finish line.

23. **The Competition**. The competition shall be run in three stages:
    (a) A First Round to take place in September/October, preferably mid-week, at "host" schools within reasonable travelling distance of the visiting schools. Teams tying scores both progress to the next round.
    (b) A Regional Round to take place on the second Saturday in November or during the preceding week. The matches to take place at "host" schools in nine (9) Regions, the number and definition of these Regions to be decide by the Winter Events Committee in the light of the annual entry. Teams tying scores both progress to the next round.
    (c) The Cup Final. All arrangements for the Cup Final shall be the responsibility of the Winter Events Committee.

24. **Progress within the competition**
    A minimum of two schools shall proceed from each match in the competition to the following round.

25. **Scoring.**
    i. At the conclusion of each match, the official judges shall decide the respective places of the scoring competitors of each school team and add these together. The team with the lowest aggregate shall be declared the winner.
    ii. The leading ***four runners in each team shall be the scoring competitors*** and, in the event of aggregate scores being equal, the winning team shall be that whose last scoring runner finished nearer to the first place.

26. **Officials.**
    i. For first and Regional Round matches it is advisable that the following officials be appointed: Referee; Judge; Finish Position Recorder; Funnel Controller; Disc Distributor; Timekeeper; Starter; Results Operator/Declaration Steward.
    ii. Visiting schools may be asked to assist with the provision of officials.
    iii. The duties of officials shall be in accordance with the recommendations of the ESAA.