



# MOUNTJOY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

*Making a difference today, for tomorrow*

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## Autumn 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

The last eighteen months have flown by and I feel very proud of all the school community has achieved in spite of going through some of the toughest times in terms of staffing and restrictions due to the pandemic. This term, we also had a 'short inspection' by Ofsted and managed to retain our 'Good' judgment and whilst we have work to do in terms of capturing our whole curriculum, we were very pleased that Ofsted recognised that 'pupils at Mountjoy develop academically, personally and socially'.

On a daily basis I am reminded of our school, most days I have the pleasure of visiting classes and seeing the wonderful teaching and learning going on. This has enabled me to get to know the pupils who are simply the best! Never a week goes by when I don't feel totally inspired by our children or young people.

I have also been able to get to know parents. Of course there are several who bring their children to school, but for others I have had to rely on emails, phone calls, school meetings and more recently our family picnic and coffee mornings. I really hope we can get back to normal and get parents through the door much more, without having to consider safety measures.

Public Health have advised we aren't able to have families in for Christmas celebrations like our show and fayre, but we are using technology to make sure you don't miss out. Our crafts can be found online and our show has been filmed for you.

Thank you for your continued support and I wish you all the joys of the festive season and a very happy new year.

Very best wishes,  
Gill



## Deputy & Assistant Head Teachers



What a busy start to the Autumn Term! And incredibly we are already beginning to talk about Mountjoy's plans for Christmas; plays, parties and all things festive!



This is a great term to be in school with so much going on..... Four classes attend weekly swimming lessons at Crewkerne Aqua Centre, a group of our Post 16 students spend four days of the week at the Prout Bridge Project in Beaminster. This was formerly Beaminster Youth Centre and is now a community run organisation. Mountjoy have sole use of the building which includes a sports hall, coffee bar, kitchen and work rooms. Post 16 also continue to use Bridport Youth Centre in Bridport on Fridays. In these settings the focus is on learning, practising and rehearsing the knowledge and skills to equip students with the ability to positively access the community in meaningful ways for them. We are always looking to expand our Post 16 offer, so if anyone has any work experience contacts please get in touch with the school in the first instance.

It is wonderful to see students using the Hydrotherapy Pool again for both therapy and pre-swimming activities. Hydrotherapy has huge benefits; it allows standing in those who are unable to weight-bear out of the water and improves walking technique. It improves balance and coordination and increases the range of joint movement alongside strengthening weak muscles. A typical weekly hydrotherapy session for one student is only about 20 minutes but with long lasting benefits.



We would like to say a BIG thank you to our two volunteers who help out weekly to enable hydro to happen, it couldn't be done without them. If you would like to get involved, please email Richard for a chat.

Our Beach and Forest School areas are now complete and classes are loving using them for outdoor learning. They are fully accessible all year round and are a great addition to Mountjoy.



## Governors

At last things seem to be getting back to normal, and by the time you read this the governors will finally have had a number of face-to-face meetings for the first time in months. A few of us enjoyed taking part in the first INSET day of the new term, sharing ideas on how to take the school forward. We also had time to chat, reacquaint ourselves with members of staff and meet new ones whilst eating some delicious cakes and cookies with our coffee.

Governors will be visiting the school again; this is something we've really missed during the pandemic. Trips out have recommenced and we are pleased that the Forest and Beach Schools were completed during the summer break; they enhance the wonderful opportunities our children have for their personal development during their time here at Mountjoy, something which was noted by the HMI during the recent Ofsted inspection.



And now here we are – it's nearly Christmas! I wish everybody at Mountjoy a Merry Christmas and look forward to seeing you in the New Year.

Gill Acton, Chair of Governors

[editor's note: Gill's article was written before Omicron]



# FROM THE CLASSES

## Acorns Class

A big Mountjoy welcome to our new Acorn's pupils who have started this term, to our new Teaching Assistant Tasha and to our apprentice Teaching Assistant Destiny. They have all settled into Mountjoy School life well.

Our topic this term is 'All about me'. We have explored this by singing the 'Hello' song every morning which has helped us to learn each other's names. We have also been using a big mirror to look at ourselves and discuss our features. All pupils have participated in making a book all about them which, once finished, will be shared with their friends to again aid in all pupils and staff getting to know each other.



This term we are enjoying getting to use different areas of the school to extend our learning experiences. We have been exploring the PE equipment in the hall and pupils have particularly enjoyed climbing up the PE tables and jumping off the top onto the mats. We also have the use of the Hydro pool this term which is definitely a favourite activity amongst a few pupils.

We have had great fun in pre-cooking skills: mashing bananas, peas and sweet potato, cutting bananas and playdough, grating, peeling, sieving and pouring squash and cereals. We have also enjoyed exploring our senses through our Dear Zoo and The Gruffalo sensory story and having a range of sensory experiences to immerse the

children in different textures, sights, smells and sounds such as gloop, ice, moon sand, light up objects, herbs and spices and many more!

We have been practising our communication and attention skills through daily bucket sessions, PEIC-D and starting to use PECs. The children absolutely love bucket and so are already being able to sustain their attention and communicate 'more' through the use of the exciting toys and by starting to exchange photos for the wanted items.



We had a fantastic #Hello Yellow day, taking part in so many activities to improve on our well-being and explore the colour yellow. We had great fun tasting and exploring yellow food, decorating cupcakes, creating sensory calming bottles, making collages and bunting and exploring our natural environment. Thank you for supporting us by having the children dressed in yellow to help celebrate the day.



## Willow Class

The new School year for Willow class has started very positively. We are beginning to be able to participate in off-site visits and meeting with our friends in school, when learning and socialising. These are both important when thinking about looking after our mental health, an important focus for Willow.



Our topic this term, 'All about me' has allowed for some impressive learning in the last few weeks. In Science we have focussed on our bodies: skeletons, body parts and

internal organs, and plan to concentrate on senses and life cycles in the coming sessions. In Geography we have studied maps of the U.K, and focussed more specifically on using aerial photos to recognise physical features of our local environment. We have found our own houses on Google Maps, and subsequently thought about types of houses that we live in, or could live in.

In English, we have continued to follow the Read, Write Inc. programme, it is terrific to



see how much has been remembered after the summer break. In Maths we have been fortunate enough to have had the new amazing Forest and Beach school areas to complete some

ordering and measuring tasks.

We have continued this in class on a Friday afternoon where we are beginning to use

functional maths skills to bake and make a number of tasty treats. We have made popcorn using measuring spoons, toasted sandwiches with a focus on halves and quarters, and cookies using grams. These



sessions are enjoyed by all, and allow us to learn some essential independence skills at the same time.

Willow class have been

fortunate enough to secure swimming sessions at our local leisure centre. I am proud to impart that we have some fabulous swimmers in class, and the enthusiasm and motivation from all is a pleasure to see. These sessions definitely play a huge part in looking after our mental health.

Some pupils have also been involved in the new 'Sign to sing' choir which is run by Louise. The rest of the class are treated to a rendition of

what has been learnt when the students return to class every week.

This has improved the confidence and self-worth of the students involved, again very important and great to see.

It has been a fantastic start to the Autumn term, and we are very much looking forward to what lies ahead.

Willow Class.



## Laurel Class

It has been so wonderful to welcome back the whole class for the beginning of the new school year. The children have been settling well into their new routines and friendships in Laurel Class and have coped remarkably well with new members of staff (we now have the lovely Sarah Gibbs as a TA as Simone has been tasked with working in Willow Class).

Despite feeling rather tired at times, the children have been keen to complete new tasks and activities and it has been great to observe how the children interact with one another and the ways in which they like to learn.



Throughout this first half of the Autumn term we have been exploring the topic 'All About Me'. We have looked closely at the differences between us (hair colour, eye colour, height, foot size) as well as labelling parts of the body and playing games/singing songs to help us to remember. During cooking we have been making foods linked to our topic including: funny toast faces, gingerbread



people and apple/marshmallow mouths. During this time, we have practised making choices, chopping carefully, spreading, mixing and, of course, tasting!

We are lucky to have Kelly Norton teaching on a Wednesday (Stacey's day off). During our time with Kelly we have been completing science activities and showing off our maths shape knowledge! With Stacey in maths we have been ensuring we can write our numbers correctly; adding and taking away 1 and making repeating patterns (amongst many other interactive maths activities).



Read, Write Inc. has continued each morning- with lots of quick activities to revise and learn our letter sounds to enable us to read and write words independently and confidently. Some of us have even begun to write sentences! Pen/pencil grip is a big focus in Laurel Class and we have lots of opportunities to exercise our fine and gross motor skills each day- the class particularly like playdough, pegboards and writing on really large sheets of paper.

As we move further into Autumn we will be embarking on a new topic 'Fairy tales; which will give us the opportunity to revisit some well-known fairy tales and maybe even discover some new ones. As the weather gets colder please remember to bring in a named coat and spare clothes and/or waterproofs in case we get wet playing outside.

## Hazel Class

Hazel class have settled really well into their new class and routines. We have really enjoyed this term, got through lots of exciting things and started off with a positive attitude to learning. We are very proud of all the children for a great start to the year.

Our focus topics this term has been 'All About Me' and 'Fairy tales, Myths and Legends.' We have discovered lots about ourselves, including where we live, what we look like, what is inside of us, made funky art work out of fruit and vegetables and enjoyed lots of different stories. After half term we have focused on a different Fairy tale every week. We enjoyed The Enormous



Turnip, The Gingerbread Man, The Three Billy Goat's Gruff and Jack and the Beanstalk. We have enjoyed acting these out, making puppets, sequencing the stories and making

food in our cooking lessons linked to the Fairy Tale stories.

We have also been busy learning phonics continuing with the new Read, Write Inc. scheme every day. The children have made some amazing progress with their phonics and are really enjoying Fred talking to sound words out and learning 'red words' which are not phonically regular. They all know the golden rule- 'You can't Fred a red!'



In our daily maths sessions, we have been building on our prior knowledge, as well as moving our learning on. We are now learning to count in twos, tens and fives, sort objects, adding to twenty and beyond, find number bonds to twenty and doubling.

The children have had the opportunity to work with Lynsey from The Sensory Trust. We have been exploring our nature trail with her and doing lots of outdoor learning.



Forest School is something we have all learnt a lot from, and being outside whatever the weather, has been food for the soul. We all come back inside feeling calm yet energised. It has also provided great

learning experiences including learning about hedgehogs, birds, butterflies and trees.

Another real highlight of this term has been our swimming sessions on a Thursday. The children have taken to this really well and their swimming has developed rapidly.



Some children are now swimming unaided! Amazing to see how much all of the children have progressed in the water- I am so proud!

Naturally, we have also been building towards Christmas which means lots of Christmas crafts, decorating our tree, and of course, getting ready for our Christmas show.

Wishing you a very merry Christmas and all the best for the New Year,  
Natalie and the Hazel Team

## Elm Class

Elm class have had a busy and exciting half-term getting to know each other in their new classroom. We have enjoyed learning about our topic 'All About Me' through a multi-sensory approach. A total communication environment has enabled us to 'cue in' what's happening throughout our day and the pupils have adapted very well to this new format. This has involved objects of references, the use of communication switches, colour, smell and musical cues.



We have also been using tactile cues for different subjects, our class favourite being "waving goodbye" at the end of the school day during reflection. In

sensology we have been exploring our body parts and identifying our eyes, nose, hair, ears, hands and fingers. We have been enjoying the September sunshine too and have been playing out in the playground on our bikes at every opportunity! Forest School has been a favourite activity for our class and we have all enjoyed finding different woodland objects and exploring the sensory trail; finding hidden objects in the boxes. We linked this back with our topic by making self-portraits of our faces out of sticks, leaves and anything we could find around Forest School.

We have been enjoying the September sunshine too and have been playing out in the playground on our bikes at every opportunity! Forest School has been a favourite activity for our class and we have all enjoyed finding different woodland objects and exploring the sensory trail;



finding hidden objects in the boxes. We linked this back with our topic by making self-portraits of our faces out of sticks, leaves and anything we could find around Forest School.

We have all settled in well to our new school year and can't wait to keep exploring and learning next term!

### Elm Class



## Maple Class



Maple class made a great start to the year this term. We have tried to get outside as much as possible, using our new outdoor learning areas for Forest and Beach school sessions and the children have really enjoyed helping to set up the area and explore all of the new textures, visuals and resources out there. We have been lucky enough to have such lovely weather that we were able to do most of our maths lessons outside, learning practically by measuring objects using a variety of different tools and natural materials to learn all about length, cm's and mm's; skills that the children can transfer to their everyday lives as they start to become independent teenagers.



In English, we started to look at Romeo and Juliet, which was very popular with the children. We looked at some of Shakespeare's weird and wonderful words and changed them for modern words to make it make sense, listened to and watched different adaptations of scenes from the play and made our own masks for Lord Capulet's masquerade ball! Next we started to look at creative writing, having a go at poems and short stories, writing to a word limit and using a wide vocabulary. We have even entered some of our work into writing competitions! In Read, Write Inc. the students have worked hard to improve their reading skills and have settled well into their groups.

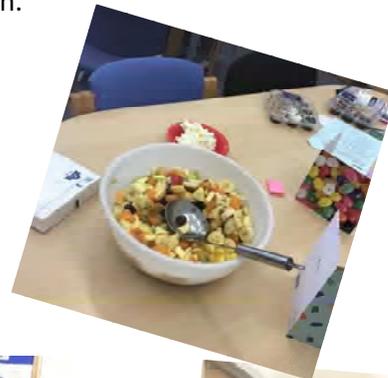


Everyone enjoyed cooking this term. We made some delicious sweet and savoury, baked goods and discovered that some of us are budding bakers, with a real eye for detail and a flare for design. Look out Great British Bake Off, Maple students might be heading your way one day!

## Ash Class

The Autumn term has whipped past us, and Ash class have enjoyed an interesting and challenging seven weeks.

We have been using Maths functionally to look at the idea of business start-ups in the Enterprise project. We have started to think about costs and expenses and concepts of budgeting as we launched a 'pop-up café'. Students conducted their own Market research and designed their own advertising campaign. We welcomed donations from staff which gave us experience of handling money. It's been great to create a project while at the same time gaining a reward for learning about important Lifeskills involving food preparation.



We plan to expand upon this successful start by bringing in other Arts and Crafts ready for Christmas stocking fillers. Through data handling, and reflecting back on finances, we have definitely created a viable business. In the board meetings to follow we will decide how to spend any donations which have come our way.

Read, Write Inc. continues to support the literacy of the class alongside all the functional language we're exposed to during the term. Students have consolidated the work on their respective phonics, gained confidence in spelling words which follow some common rules (and those which do not) and read a number of different texts. They have retold stories using their own words. They continue to enjoy both personal reading and the sharing of a group text, 'Holes', by Louis Sachar.

We've been delving into the 'past', looking at figures from black history - including Rosa Parks, Mary Bowser and Martin Luther King, while exploring and creating artwork in the styles of black artists Jean-Michel Basquiat, Jacob Lawrence and Chris Ofili. Ash have

created some beautiful pieces and made our classroom a vibrant, exciting gallery full of diversity and colour.

We have been investing in the 'future' through gardening where we've been re-herbing the sensory raised beds in the sensory garden as part of our 'Hobbies' life skills challenge. We have had the chance to explore many other pastimes and interests like photography, Qi Gong and decoupage upcycling.

We have practised being mindful, savouring the 'present' of Autumn through 'Forest School' challenges, foraging and identifying the flowers, trees and insects in our surroundings. We have looked at breathing techniques and ways to keep our physical and mental health in good shape. We've enjoyed the addition of some circuit training and returning to the Hydro pool. We hope to build on this when we visit Bridport Leisure Centre next term.



## Oak Class

### 6th Form / Oak Class

Oak class have enjoyed a busy start to the school year. Reviews have started at pace and I hope you have nearly all had the chance to speak with one of the three 6th form teachers Mari Walker, Kevin Broadway and new to the school this September, Emma Lambourn.

We have begun to use our two off-site learning venues; Prout Bridge Project, the Youth Centre in Beaminster (Mon – Thurs) and Bridport Youth Centre on Fridays. This is just the beginning of us enhancing the learning opportunities for our 6th Form at Mountjoy.

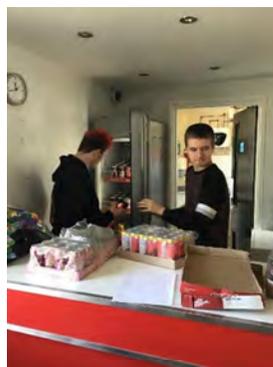
We hope to host a coffee morning in the near future for you all, giving you an opportunity to visit us at Prout Bridge Project.



With the future in mind our lessons have included:

- Health & hygiene (personal care)
- Cooking / shopping / budgeting / payment
- A lot of work has taken place on these headings resulting in some tasty results.
- Sensory stories
- Sensology
- Sign to sing
- Travel / road safety
- Number - and use of it in everyday life
- PE - Joe wicks and using both halls for basketball football and tennis.

Those at Prout have also been able to support the Centre staff by helping out with stocking the snack bar for Youth Club, linking in using skills to count stock, recording it and passing the information back to the Prout Bridge Manager.



All of our students in 6th Form have taken massive ownership of helping to run the department by dishing up lunches, washing up dishes, cleaning facilities, making hot drinks for each other, hoovering and general house-keeping. Please encourage your young people to practise these skills at home and they will all be ready to carve the turkey and wash up at Christmas 😊

We hope all our families have a happy healthy autumn and look forward to seeing you all soon.



## Juniper Class

This term in Juniper we have been exploring the topic 'All about me'.

We have been finding out about each other's likes and dislikes and making self-portraits using different materials such as playdough.

We also took part in the 'Hello Yellow' day and had great fun tasting different yellow foods and making yellow jelly.

The children have also had lots of sensory opportunities and sensory play this term including sensory walks in the new beach school and forest school areas and spending mornings in the sensory room.

We have also been able to do lots of therapy in class including, hydrotherapy, Rumble, water play and riding the bikes.

We have been doing lots of communication and making choices about what we would like to do and whether we like or dislike objects or activities.

Overall it has been a great start to the school year and we look forward to another great half term!



## Rowan Class



Rowan Class have enjoyed being back together after the summer. We have all enjoyed getting to know each other and forming new friendships.

This half term we have particularly enjoyed our swimming trips to Crewkerne pool. All pupils have done really well and we have seen lots of progress over the weeks. It has been amazing to see the pupil's confidence grow in the water.

Our topics over the term have been 'all about me' where we have focused on what we like, don't like, what we are good at and what is important to us. We then looked at 'Myths/Legends and Fairy Tales'. We enjoyed acting out the story of the gingerbread man, making gingerbread, designing our own and creating our own little mini story. We have also done some sensory sessions based on some myths and legends such as splatting the loch ness monster and painting with spaghetti to represent Medusa's hair. Pupils have been practicing watching and copying a simple task on their own.

In Art we have focused on portraits and pupils have made their own portraits using recycled cans, nature, with fruit and vegetables and in gloop/slime.

In PSCH we have spent time looking at and using coloured zones of regulation and finding strategies that help us to feel regulated. Pupils have enjoyed exploring different emotions and placing them in the correct zone. In Music we have been exploring a variety of instruments. We have done some activities which incorporate labelling and recognising these. Each lesson starts with copying the rhythm to different songs and the at the end of the session we watch a musician play different musical instruments. Each week

we watch a different instrument being played.

Rowan class have enjoyed social inclusion opportunities with Willow and Maple class over the term, especially at playtimes and are often seen laughing and smiling.



We wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New year from all in Rowan Class.



## Hello Yellow

A huge thank you for supporting our #HelloYellow Day on Monday 11th October in celebration of World Mental Health Day 2021.

With your generous donations we have raised £52.40 towards the Young Minds Organisation, who work with young people and their families, helping them with their wellbeing, at a time when it is most needed, particularly at this time when there is so much anxiety and uncertainty concerning Covid-19.

It was fantastic to see the whole school dressed in yellow! We had great fun in our classes tasting yellow food, communicating what made us happy, telling jokes, taking funny photos, exploring the colour yellow and taking part in mindfulness activities. We enjoyed practising mindfulness colouring, breathing exercises, becoming more in tune with nature with scavenger hunts, sensory exploration, yoga and other calming activities.

Thank you for supporting us to raise awareness that global mental health education is a key part of the fight against the social stigma often associated with mental health. By wearing yellow, we are standing together to show that we don't hide our mental health and that we can support each other.

Thank you once again for all your support.  
Becki Gould  
(PSHE lead)



Hi my name is Julie Sieg-Hogg and I have worked at Mountjoy for 18 years. I was first introduced to MOVE back in 2014 when I was asked to take on the manual handling task. I asked if I could meet with Sue Marshall from Wyvern School in Weymouth. Sue was a Senior Practitioner Trainer for the whole school. I remember feeling very excited about getting started with all our pupils. Sue told me that everyone needs to be on board, and to just start with three to five pupils initially, despite having around twenty pupils with mobility problems at that time.



### **Empowerment**

In June this year we had **MOVE** training. The **MOVE** programme gave us clear pathways to follow, made us feel empowered and very passionate to get started. All the staff that took part in the training are excited about it. Lead Practitioners are responsible for the pupils in their class who are on the **MOVE** programme. The equipment set up in the therapy room for the pupils to use includes: corner stairs, therapy bed and parallel bars. We also have aerobics steps in class rooms for pupils to use in their programme.

### **We will see the difference**

**MOVE** has been my passion and it will be so worthwhile to see the differences it can make to the lives of our pupils. I remember a pupil called Max very well. He had very few mobility skills about 14 years ago. He could not walk and was bum shuffling around everywhere. I was working in an Early Years class called Moonfleet when I noticed Max wanted a toy from the table top. I watched him slowly and with difficulty come off his bottom, bring his knees underneath him, and reach up to get the toy. After talking with his mum Antonia, we got Max a helmet and started doing lots of physio trying to strengthen his leg muscles and his core, while really encouraging him to want to high kneel to reach for things that interested him.

When choosing the goals with his mum, we took our time to pin point what long term goals could make the difference. Antonia told us she was worried about changing Max when he grew bigger and might have to stay close to home to manage his personal care because he needed to lie down for changing.

So the goal was decided upon: to teach him to stand for at least 3 minutes to have personal care carried out. This goal was achieved; it took a couple of years to achieve it, and Antonia cried when Max could stand and walk. That was my biggest highlight and achievement of my time at Mountjoy. With **MOVE** we can get that real sense of making a difference today for our pupils.

### **Embracing the MOVE ethos**

At Mountjoy School, **the MOVE Programme needs to be such an integral part of the ethos and way of thinking here.** We will develop our own **MOVE** swim programme - the swimming pool is such a great tool for teaching mobility skills! Pupils may not be able to stand or walk but can learn in the swimming pool first. The pool is sometimes the only place a child has freedom of movement and seeing a child realise that is immense. Rebound therapy programmes strengthen our pupils' muscles and stability.

With our therapy room ready to further the pupil's skills, they also have their own class therapy **MOVE** plans in the mornings and afternoons.

I will get emotional if I see a child start to walk independently. We currently have a young pupil in Early Years who uses his walker to walk down to Acorns. He is very

determined and really wants to walk along the corridor. How fantastic would it be to be able to walk with his class and no one holding his hand! With **MOVE** happening in School we would be able to achieve that together. Let's make memories for our staff, parents and especially our pupils.



**GOALS**



**Rebound**



**H  
Y  
D  
R  
O**



**Therapy**



## Musical Mountjoy

We are improving our music offer to all pupils at Mountjoy.

Teachers have had some additional training in implementing the music curriculum and we have an Open Orchestra which is being run by Louise who is one of our TAs, and a tutor from the Dorset Music Hub. Louise is also leading our Signing Choir.

After Christmas we have an instrumental tutor coming to school on a Thursday afternoon who can teach violin, clarinet, flute, keyboard, guitar, trombone, recorder, saxophone and cornet!



Although Dorset Music Hub charge for these lessons, there is a reduction for families who receive free school meals.

For more information about the Music Hub, please visit:

[www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/education-and-training/dorset-music-service/dorset-music-service](http://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/education-and-training/dorset-music-service/dorset-music-service)

## The Friends of Mountjoy (FOMS)

The Friends of Mountjoy is back and happy to be back in action again! Our AGM happened on 23rd September and from this we were able to elect a small, but highly functional committee to keep the charity live! The FOMS has been pivotal in the past at fighting to keep the school open back in the days when it was under threat of closure – unbelievable to even consider with current pupil numbers and the demands for special school places.



They are also an important funding option for the school for all those extras that stretched education budgets can find it difficult to provide.

Many school trips and residentials are either paid for by FOMS or heavily subsidised by them, so that costs to parents are reduced. The resources for school celebration events are frequently funded by FOMS as well as expensive special needs equipment – all the Eye gaze equipment currently used in school was funded by FOMS at a cost of 1000's of pounds! In addition, grants that can be won by schools for particular initiatives often have to go through an application by a charity and FOMS happily fulfils this role when required.

FOMS committee meet every term, and more frequently when planning a forthcoming event. I appreciate that not everyone wants to be on a committee, or can commit to this amount of time, so there are other ways that you can be involved. We have a list held in school by the me, the deputy head teacher, of parents and carers, or family members that are willing to help out and volunteer at events – help at such events can be manning a stall for example, or helping to set up or pack away meaning that only a couple of hours of time has to be given. Also, we welcome any contributions to our stalls – we will be asking families soon to commit to a contribution to some of the stalls we hope to have at the Christmas Fayre this year – we will need contributions for tombola prizes, cakes, raffle prizes, new to you stalls etc. And of course, please attend the events themselves and bring along your families and friends! Please look out for the letter in your child's bag that will be coming home in the near future regarding this event!

I must sign off by thanking some amazing ladies who have stepped down from FOMS this year after many, many years of service. FOMS would have folded long ago and indeed Mountjoy School may not have existed anymore, without these ladies and their campaigning and support so a heartfelt thanks go out to them:

Rosemary Russell (outgoing Secretary),  
Jan Tattershall (outgoing Treasurer),  
Linda Larcombe (outgoing Vice Chair),  
Sue Galpin (outgoing committee member).



We look forward to welcoming them as guests at future events.

It only remains for me to ask that you all support The Friends of Mountjoy School as much as you can, and in whatever way is possible. Please contact me if you wish to contribute in any way or have any enquiries.

Tracey Page, Chair of the FOMS

## SAFEGUARDING

Mountjoy school is committed to safeguarding children and young people and promoting their welfare. We expect all staff, governors, volunteers and visitors to share this commitment and to maintain a vigilant and safe environment. We are determined to work in a safe manner and challenge inappropriate behaviour.

If you have ANY concerns about a child's welfare or well-being or have a concern about the behaviour of any adult towards a child discuss your concerns without delay with the Designated Safeguarding Leads. Remember it is important to share your concerns even if you are unsure.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Gill Howard

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads:

Tracey  
Page



Sandra  
Hutchings



Richard  
Bowskill



Anyone can make a referral to Dorset Children's Advice and Duty Service Tel: 01305228866

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## PUPIL VOICE

As part of our whole school ongoing commitment to our Rights Respecting Schools Gold status, Mountjoy School is working with a Realising Rights project in Dorset and York. Realising Rights is holding some workshops to introduce the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) to agencies outside schools so they can work together with schools on ensuring children's rights are promoted and respected.



At Mountjoy we believe that every child and young person has a voice, whether it is verbal or another means of communication. We help children to communicate because they have a right to be heard by adults (Article 12 of the UNCRC).

At the workshops, we show some video clips of how we help Mountjoy pupils to use their voice and their communication to realise their rights. Thank you very much to the

pupils involved and to parents for consenting to their child's involvement.

We would really like parents/carers to be involved in the Rights approach too. Your involvement can be anything from asking for more information on what it is about, to offering ideas on promoting children's rights in the community.

If a parent or older sibling would like to offer to be videoed in a short clip talking about children's rights and/or children's voice, please contact us at [office@mountjoy.dorset.sch.uk](mailto:office@mountjoy.dorset.sch.uk) or call 01308 861155

## Online Safety

We are very fortunate to be supported by our Safer Schools Community Officer, Hannah Chelton, who visits classes every month and also does staff training so we are better able to support our pupils. If you are concerned about your child's online safety, there is support for you. Net Aware is a good source of information on different platforms: <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/> or you can speak to the NSPCC helpline on 0808 8005002.



STAFF TRAINING DELIVERED BY SSCT OFFICER, HANNAH CHELTON IN OCTOBER 2021

## Child Exploitation and Online Protection

We have added the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) button to our website on the Safeguarding page. CEOP is part of the National Crime Agency. The button on our website is for anyone to press if they are worried about anything they see online or how somebody is communicating with them.



Clicking on the button takes you to this internet page where you can find advice on what to do <https://www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre/>:



## Pastoral Support Team

Hello!

As we have now said a fond farewell to Emily, Kate and I are delighted to let you know we have two new pupil & family support workers joining us, Alison Edwards and Liz Canham, some may know Ali and may have seen her in school.

This will mean we can continue to liaise between school and home offering a range of support and advice and also be available during those difficult times when you need someone to reach out to you.



We will all be available through email and work phones, and these will be sent out in a letter to all parents and carers and be added to the FLO page on the website where you can find out more about what our roles entail. Just google: [Family Liaison Officers | Mountjoy School](#)



I know some parents are keen to have coffee mornings and they will start when our two new pupil and family support workers are in post.  
Kate & Sandra

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## News from the office

Please see the section about ParentPay if you are not using the system already. The majority of parents are now signed up and communications are much more efficient and it is a lot easier for you to give consent by email for trips.

Please return consent for trips by email or paper form and pay any voluntary contributions via ParentPay as soon as possible after you receive the letter.

A reminder that ParentPay meal orders will change from the 3rd January, the cut off for ordering meals will be midnight on a Monday (instead of Thursday), for meal orders for the following week. This is to allow Mark more time to order in the food. We hope your child is enjoying their school lunches, any feedback is welcomed. We are planning a whole school Christmas lunch on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> December. More details to follow.

Any questions you have, please email [office@mountjoy.dorset.sch.uk](mailto:office@mountjoy.dorset.sch.uk) or tel: 01308 861155



Best wishes, Karen

## Information on a PhD research study taking place at Mountjoy School



How do children with severe learning disabilities (SLD) and profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD) express grief? How do they communicate their questions, thoughts and concerns about grief?

### About this study

My name is Sarah Helton. I have worked in special education for over 25 years, specialising in teaching children with severe (SLD) and profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD). I am currently studying for a PhD at Kingston University. This study forms the research for my PhD.



During my teaching career I worked with many children who were sadly affected by grief. Grief due to a bereavement, but also as a result of changes in their life: illness, family members or carers moving away, having to change schools etc. Society is getting better at supporting individuals who are grieving, but sadly there is still a lack of understanding and acceptance that children with severe and profound learning disabilities are affected by grief and as a result there is a lack of support for these children. This study looks at how children/young people with SLD and PMLD express grief and communicate their questions, thoughts and concerns about grief.

### What is the purpose of the study?

This study aims to:

- investigate how children with SLD and PMLD express grief
- examine the ways in which children with SLD and PMLD communicate their questions, thoughts and concerns about grief and
- explore what helps children with SLD and PMLD to communicate their grief.

The study will involve gathering the views of the children/young people, plus the views of adults that support them at home and school (the child/young person's parents, family members, carers, teachers etc.)

If you are interested, please contact me for information on why this research is taking place, how it will be carried out and if you agree to take part, what your participation will involve.

### Sarah Helton

Kingston University  
Faculty of Health Social Care and Education  
Penrhyn Road  
Kingston upon Thames  
Surrey  
KT1 2EE  
Email - [K2036175@kingston.ac.uk](mailto:K2036175@kingston.ac.uk)

Covid Information – Please remember to call or text our Covid line if you have a positive test following symptoms within 48 hours of being in school:  
07775 317017

## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

Last day of Autumn Term	Friday, 17 December
Staff training day (school closed to pupils)	Tuesday, 4 January
First day of Spring Term	Wednesday, 5 January
Staff training days (school closed to pupils)	Friday, 8 April
Spring half term	Monday, 21 to Friday, 25 February

MOUNTJOY SCHOOL, TUNNEL ROAD, BEAMINSTER, DORSET DT8 3HB

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