

# MOUNTJOY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

*Making a difference today, for tomorrow*

Autumn 2023

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Dear Parents and Carers,



As always, autumn term has been a busy one. The children and young people have worked hard and it all pays off when they are filled with the joy of the festive season, which we do very well at Mountjoy! At the time of writing I have yet to see the Christmas Show, but am very excited to see all of our budding stars up on the stage.

We have had a special focus on belonging this year, as this is an important part of feeling safe and well. Mental health is in the forefront of all our thinking and it is being flagged up as a national issue in schools in the aftermath of COVID. I love the autumn colours but don't relish the dark mornings and evenings and barely seeing daylight during the working week. I have found some good tips on the NHS site 'Every Mind

Matters' which can be found here: <https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters>

We try to encourage everyone in school to express their feelings, and I believe this is the best way to be. If you are worried or anxious about anything in school, always let us know so we can find a solution together.

There is a tremendous demand for places at Mountjoy, and the local authority are trying to find solutions to avoid overcrowding here. A temporary Key Stage 4 modular building has been built on a site adjacent to the school and plans for a new school on an adjoining farm are being developed, hopefully for a 2025 opening. I will keep you informed once things are a bit more definite.

I wish you and your friends and family a truly wonderful time together this holiday.

Remember to talk about how you are feeling and to encourage them to, as well.

Thank you for all of your support, the greatest gift we could receive.

Happy Christmas



## Governors

The Governing Body oversees the work of the School and ensures that the School provides a good quality education for its pupils. The Governors work in partnership with the Head Teacher and other staff and are involved in such matters as:

- Setting the School's aims and policies;
- Improving standards of teaching and achievement;
- Setting the School's budget plan and monitoring expenditure;
- Interviewing and appointing staff;
- Acting as a link between the Local Authority and the School;

Drawing up an action plan after an inspection and monitoring the success of the plan.

The Governing Body consists of one Local Authority Governor, two Parent Governors, one Staff Governor, the Head Teacher and eleven co-opted Governors who are elected for a four year term of office. The Governing Body meets twice a term as does the ancillary committees: Resources Committee (Formerly Finance & Staffing and Premises, Pupil Welfare and Curriculum Committee. The Governors regularly visit the School and observe the work that is being carried out by the staff.

Copies of minutes of Full Governing Board meetings are available from the clerk on request

Tom Easterbrook, Clerk  
to Governors



Helen Farmer  
Chair of Governors



## Deputy & Assistant Head Teachers

Behaviour; we all have it! We talk about it all the time at school but what do we mean when we say 'behaviour'?

Well, as some of you will know, Mountjoy, alongside the other four TADSS Schools in Dorset (Wyvern, Yewstock, Beaucroft and Westfield) are Therapeutic Thinking Schools and this informs our practice and policies around supporting and understanding why a particular behaviour might be happening.



Therapeutic Thinking is an approach to behaviour that prioritises giving students and staff positive experiences and feelings, which hopefully leads to positive behaviour. There is strong evidence linking positive experiences and feelings to positive behaviour. We use the term 'prosocial' to describe this.

Many visitors to school comment on how smiley staff and students are and how there is an aura of happiness in school. This is not by chance! All staff work hard to create and maintain positive, trusting relationship with students, so that they feel 'that the sun shines on each and every one of them'

Richard and Tracey

## News from the office

### What parents/carers need to know about attendance

At Mountjoy School, we believe that education is essential for all. Punctual and regular school attendance promotes social inclusion and effective learning. We believe that children should attend school regularly and punctually because school plays a vital part in their learning and enables them to reach their full potential.



There is strong statistical evidence to show a direct link between attendance and progress children make. Therefore, school does not authorise holidays during term, shopping trips, for example to purchase school shoes, or for leisure days out. Unless there is an exceptional circumstance, pre-planned absences cannot be authorised.

Attendance below 90% is particularly harmful to a child's education and will trigger intervention by the local authority.

Where a child is genuinely ill or needs medical treatment, school will be understanding and can provide home-learning for any extended periods. Please keep us informed, including if you are having any issues with school refusal, so we can support you. Current NHS guidance for common childhood illnesses that require children to be kept off can be found here: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

Thank you for giving your child the best possible chance to make progress at Mountjoy.

## School clothing

My Clothing who supply our school clothing (link below) offer free delivery for orders over £50.

If you are thinking of placing an order, it might be worth seeing if any other parents/carers are also ordering, and arranging a joint order to avoid the postage charge.

[My Clothing](#)



# FROM THE CLASSES

## Hazel Class



The new School year has been very busy for Hazel class, and has started very positively. We are getting used to the new structures and routines in class, and are learning to develop new friendships.

In English, we have spent the last half term thinking about our favourites. We have spent time discussing what we like and the reasons why, and then we have written about them. Hazel class students have very clear ideas about their favourite food, hobbies, colours and TV characters. In Maths, we are continuing to work steadily through the White Rose Maths curriculum. We have also been completing some Beach School activities focussed on time over a few sessions. We will finish this by going to West Bay to look at shop opening and closing times, how the area is different throughout the day, and completing some beach-based activities. Hazel class have been participating in Forest School sessions every Wednesday afternoon, weather permitting. We have used a PHSE focus to look at how to play games with our friends, and learning about each other.

In Science, class have been looking at 'Forces'. We have had great fun with magnets, and have also enjoyed riding bikes and scooters in the playground over different surfaces to see which creates



more friction. We have changed topic to 'Light' this half term and have already planted some daffodil bulbs in pots to keep outside of class. We will look at how a plant grows, and how the sun plays an important part in this. Hopefully the daffodils will be ready to take home in early Spring.



Hazel class have enjoyed learning about 'belonging' in Religious Education, with a focus on Hinduism. We have thought about festivals that we celebrate and enjoy with our families. We have made Diva Lamps from salt dough, and have decorated boxes for a special family member to take home.

Hazel class have been fortunate enough to continue to enjoy weekly swimming sessions at our local Aqua Centre. Everyone is very keen to learn, and the enthusiasm and motivation from all is very positive.

It has been a whirlwind start to the Autumn term, and we are very much looking forward to what is coming next.

## Elm Class



What a great start it has been for Elm class this term from making new friends, reading stories, art work, numicon and phonics. We have grasped this term with both hands and have made some great memories already!



We started the term by looking at Numicon in maths and learning how to place our numicon in order 1 to 5 and 1 to 10! We also looked at different 3D shapes starting from cylinder, sphere, cuboid and cube!



In phonics we have looked at different letters and have learnt how to write them with chalk, shaving foam and virtually on a board so far we have looked at the letters; m, a, s, d and t.



As a class we also learnt the story of the three little pigs, in art we made straw houses, wood houses and even brick houses! We also had puppets and acted out the story for our own school play in assembly. This was great fun for Elm class!



At the end of October, we had Halloween celebrations starting with dressing up as spooky characters and having a class party as well as sensory play and carving a class pumpkin.



At the start of November; we all made poppies for Remembrance Day with red tissue paper for the flower and black wool for the centre of the poppy. We practiced our cutting skills with a poppy worksheet and picking up items with mini tongs to help with our fine motor skills!



In the next few weeks will be heading to Magdalen farm where we will meet and feed lots of animals as well as planting some plants. We can't wait to tell you all about it in our next newsletter so keep your eyes peeled!

Elm Class

## Maple Class

### Hello from all in Maple Class!

We have had a busy autumn term and cannot believe that Christmas is fast approaching. We have begun the Arts carousel on a Monday and so before half term we had music every week looking at rhythms, learning some Salsa rhythms and performing a HAKA. After half term, we had drama with Natalie in the hall. WE care enjoying the creative work we are doing.

We have been very lucky to have a Samba workshop for the last 10 weeks provided by Dorset music Hub. We have learnt about the various instruments used in Samba and performed our own compositions with help from Mel.

We have worked hard in English studying Fantastic Mr. Fox and have written what has happened so far in the story and made up our own endings. Some of us have worked on Read Write Inc. with Davina.

In science, we have been looking at Force; making paper airplanes to see whose would fly the furthest, making boats out of paper to see how they float and looking at what does and does not float. We have carried out investigations in small groups, predicted what we think will happen, and recorded our results.

We are now busy practicing our part for the Christmas Play- we each have something to say and do and hope you will all enjoy it , if you are able to come to see it.

We wish you all a very happy Christmas and look forward to returning in 2024!! 😊



Love Carrie, Kevin, Davina, Juliet, Jo and Maple Class xx 😊

## Juniper Class

What a fantastic start to the school term for Juniper class! From heatwaves in September to the downpours of October, we have embraced the first term and engaged in our learning through many different ways.



Our secondary students in Juniper started this term with a weekly boccia session as part of our PE carousel that also aims to encourage us to interact with our peers across the whole school. The boys thoroughly enjoyed all of the boccia sessions and gained independence as well as incorporating some physical activity within our timetable. We cannot **wait** for the next activity!

In Science this term, we have explored different materials and their properties. This has involved squeezing, stretching, melting and freezing various objects to see if we can change anything about them. One of our favourite class experiments involved toasting some bread and seeing if it would turn 'hot' or 'cold' – and we particularly loved tasting it afterwards!



Alongside our everyday learning, we took part in 'Hello Yellow' day again this term for World Mental Health day supporting the YoungMinds charity and dressed in our best yellow clothing, from socks to dresses, we certainly went all out! Halloween has also been something we have all enjoyed celebrating with fancy dress and pumpkins to Halloween crafts!

It has been such a positive start to the school year and from all of us in Juniper, we look forward to what's in store for us next term!

## Ash Class

A warm welcome to Autumn term which has been a busy one for the Ash students.

At the beginning of term, we welcomed volunteers who brought The Bank of Dreams and Nightmares into our class on Thursday mornings. They worked with us to make our own You Tube review channel which we named Mash Review Channel. We reviewed 4 gadgets over the six-week period.



One morning we visited a previous Ash student who has a farm. We joined them for a morning of lambing and saw two lambs being born! We enjoyed feeding the lambs in the special care pen and found we may have some future farmers within our group.







Maths focus has been on money please use cash with your young people whenever possible to enhance this learning.

In English we have looked at the shops we use in our local high streets and how we can see opening hours, what's for sale, what's on offer and what services are available.

Fridays has seen the start of the secondary PE carousel. This term students have enjoyed football and hockey and yoga.

Arts carousel also started with Art the first half term looking at the artist Yayoi Kusama, a Japanese artist famous for her art in spots.



We have also started The Duke Edinburgh awards learning a new skill each, ranging from sewing, drumming, cooking, Lego, photography and hair & beauty so busy times ahead.

We now start to practice our part in the Christmas production which we hope to see you at later in December. We continue preparing for summer examination for students who will take them.

Have a fabulous Christmas and Ash Class are already looking forward to an exciting 2024.

## Laurel Class

It has been a busy and productive first term for the new Laurel Class and its students. We have celebrated birthdays, day trips out, play performances, Harvest Festival and

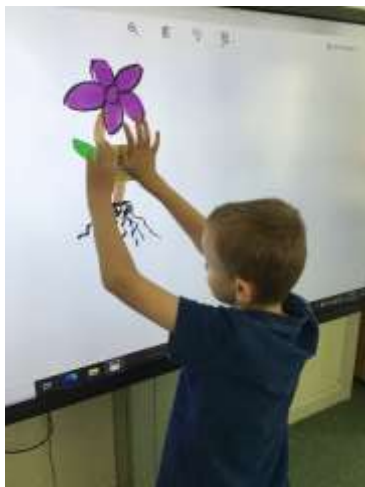


Remembrance Day. As you can see, we have been very busy! All these events alongside academic learning and working on fine motor skills. We are so proud of the new class and we want to share some of the amazing work students have been working on.



Logan has been working very hard on learning maths equations, and patterns. He has used numicon shapes and playdough to make different adding equations. This method has helped him visualise the numbers and

support him finding the right answers. Well done Logan you are a super star.



Another pupil has also been working hard with his phonics and handwriting. He takes time out of Laurel class to work 1 to 1 with Elaine a HLTA to improve his literacy and to work on his pen control. He is using the ribbon dance to improve the strength and control in his

wrists, which will improve his handwriting. He is also working hard to keep within the lines when colouring and uses the correct colours for animals and characters. Great work!!



We celebrated Sienna's 8th Birthday with a party, which was great fun. We played party games and tried some new foods. Sienna has also been working on her fine motor skills to help with her pencil grip. She is working on making her fingers stronger using cloths pegs and numbers, super work Sienna. She has also made lots of new friends in her new class and she is very good at turn taking and waiting patiently for her choice.



machine to separate them into different sizes. After lunch, we took part in Vegetable Garden Jobs and complete valuable day-to-day jobs such as pulling up carrots and putting down compost to feed the ground. Finishing the day with making bird feeders and decorations for the Christmas tree.

In art, the class have been learning about primary colours and made some wonderful poppy day landscapes. We used potato prints to create our masterpieces. Everyone choose the correct colours to match the poppy and were able to identify that grass is green. Well-done class Kelly and the Laurel team are super proud of you all.

Have a lovely Christmas, Laurel Team



On Friday 17th November, we spent the day at Magdalen Farm learning about all aspects of the farm life. This was an amazing day and all the students were fully engaged in all the activities. We helped care for the farm animals and learnt about organic welfare standards. We fed the pigs and goats, and used kind caring hands to hold the chickens. We collected some eggs and used a special

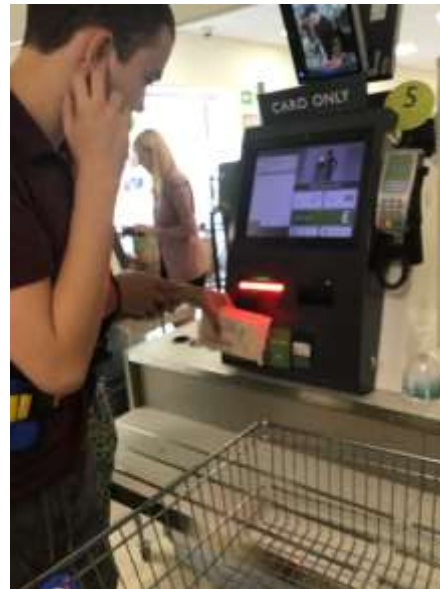
## Oak Class

Oak Class have had a busy start to the year. We are splitting time between school, Bridport and forest school activities. Starting much later than we hoped, Mapperton Mondays finally got underway for a couple of weeks before their December break. We are working with Sarah there to find ways we can utilize areas to support our forest school activities whilst being out and about in the local community. We have had a couple of visits using the area in front of the café as our base for activities that have included a scavenger hunt, stick hunt – look out for these featuring in our Stickman performance, and some mud painting. The students were fascinated by workers putting up and taking down the tents for their Christmas fayre on our visits, and have been able to see and say hello to several of the Mapperton team as they go about their daily duties on site.



Using the Bridport Youth Centre as a base we have been working on making simple meals, making a shopping list, buying ingredients, sorting instructions for making our meals, making and eating the meals and clearing up afterwards.

We have found that there are things we don't like eating but others that we do and now we have completed the range of meals we'll be picking from a 'menu' to choose what they would like to make for themselves.





During our time in school we are taking part in Secondary Carousel for both Arts and PE. We have enjoyed mixing with other students across the school and learning new skills.

The Art carousel has seen us all take part in work linked to Yayoi Kusama's spot work creating 'a room with an item inside it' then this half term some have looked at the work of Picasso and others have taken part in drama sessions.

In PE we have had Boccia, yoga, football and hockey (or Golf as it is termed by one of our students) all going on. We also have students attending 'You Do Music' and Sing2sign choir regularly. Alongside literacy and numeracy work, physio/OT programs running daily, hydro and attention autism sessions it all makes for a very busy Oak Class!!!



We're sure students, and staff, are looking forward to the Christmas break. Wishing you all a Merry Christmas from Oak Class team and students.





## Acorns Class

What a busy first term we have had! We have welcomed 11 new pupils to Acorns class with 13 children in total. The children have settled in so well and have learnt our daily routines, already becoming much more independent with transitions and activities. Some beautiful friendships have already started to form between several of our pupils which is so lovely to watch!

We have now got a strong circle time routine of 6 short activities including our sensory weather song and mark making pre-writing patterns to the wheels of the bus song. The children are really thriving in this activity and take great delight in seeing the same marks being made at the same time as their peers.



Physical exercise and teaching regulation strategies has been a key focus for us this term and we are already seeing a fantastic increase in the children's mobility, flexibility, balance and confidence. We use the equipment on the field

and the PE apparatus in the hall on a weekly basis and also consistently use our stepping stones, tunnels, balancing sets, bikes and trikes to continue to improve on these skills during the week.



Total communication is of paramount importance for us at Mountjoy and we are keen to introduce as many different communication aids early on to help support children's communication. From here we can begin to see what tools best suit which pupils and start to focus on these. We have been having daily PECS sessions with 2 adults to one child and also use PECS throughout the day, making the photo cards available in our continuous provision.

We have introduced Aided Language displays and have been using Grid on the iPad for focused activities such as turn taking, mark making and circle time.







Acorns class is a very explorative and fun environment to be in. We absolutely love our sensory trays and exploration sessions, helping us to work on any



sensitivities the children may have and to encourage giving them the confidence to try new experiences and tastes.



Our Attention Autism sessions have been met with such

enthusiasm and engagement and we are now starting to use similar activities in our lesson inputs such as exploding lemonade in Science and water balloons and shaving foam snakes in Maths.

Our Science sessions have also been met with lots of interest with the pupils and we are encouraging the pupils to be inquisitive, create chemical reactions with support and begin to get used to hearing scientific vocabulary such as floating and sinking.



It has been such a positive start to the year! We look forward to seeing the children to grow in their learning and confidence as they progress throughout the year. As ever, thank you for all your continuing support! 😊

Becki & The Acorns team.



## Rowan Class

Rowan Class have had a brilliant autumn term and settled really well into their new class and routines.

We have been focusing on our curriculum and working hard in all of the subject areas. In English we have read 'Why the Whales Came' By Michael Morpurgo and 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland' By Lewis Carroll. The students have looked at imperative verbs in instructional writing and then using these to create potion recipes on bottles. We have also written recipes for jam tarts, and made them too! We have even written our own versions of a chapter and created invitations to some mad parties. The Mad Hatter himself would be proud!



In maths, we have continued with our WRM scheme. This mastery approach helps students to make deep connections in maths and to understand the trickier concepts in a practical and fun way. We have been working on place value, addition and subtraction; including column methods. More recently, our focus has been on multiplication and division. The students in Rowan have shown a very positive attitude to maths and have worked very hard. I am proud of all of them for their achievements so far this year.



The rest of the weekly timetable is made up of science, PSHE, RE, geography, ICT and Design technology. We have also introduced an art carousel and a PE carousel on Monday and Friday afternoons. This has proved to be very successful and the students really enjoy interacting with other classes and specialist teachers.



We have been very busy with our learning this term and naturally we have also been getting ready for Christmas by decorating trees, making decorations and making many things to bring home for the holidays! We are also very excited to see you for the Christmas show!



We would like to wish you all a very happy Christmas and best wishes for 2024.  
Natalie and Rowan Team



## Chestnut Class

We have had a great Autumn term in Chestnut Class. Everyone has settled in to their new group fabulously and some lovely friendships are being formed. New routines are all in place and becoming second nature. The students are all encouraged to be as independent



as possible with their daily activities and are doing really well, well done!

There is some really good learning going on. The class have enjoyed the new ARTS and PE carousels and have tried their very best at the different skills they have been learning.



This term we have been focusing on 'number' and 'time and money' in maths and leaning about instructional language in English (and enjoyed some cooking too!). Our focus has been on the 'oi' and 'a-e' sounds in phonics.



We have been learning about different material properties and practising our investigation skills in science.

We have enjoyed our weekly swims in Crewkerne this term too.

We would like to wish all the students and their families a lovely festive break.

## The Chestnut Team



# Classroom Charter



## Our School Classroom Charter

Every classroom should:



### Environment

- Be welcoming
- Be accessible (check lighting, acoustics, temperature, furniture, AAC, visual schedules (l-r), sensory equipment)
- Have zoned areas and a seating plan
- Put up learning support and celebratory displays
- Be tidy, well organised and encourage independence (e.g. labelled resources, coat pegs).

### Information

- Display timetables, timings and routines and easily available planning
- Have folders with pupil information (MAPs, pen-portraits, therapy programmes, planning, risk assessments, medical protocols etc.).

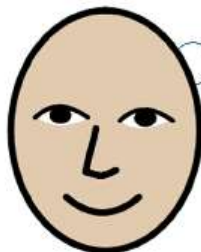


### Lessons

- Be well-prepared; planning, resources, symbols all done in advance
- Have Learning Objectives which are clear and on display
- Include learning to learn, encourage independence, accommodate learning styles, be differentiated and scaffolded, show problem-solving and demonstrations, provide thinking and speaking frames
- Always have openers, opportunities for varied overlearning and plenaries
- Include plenty of assessment opportunities to inform precision teaching.

### Language

- Be therapeutic (use the language of Therapeutic Thinking & Zones of Regulation to help pupils to take ownership)
- Be positive: point out success, say what you want not what you don't
- Encourage pupils to know *how* they are learning
- Be showing consideration to which vocabulary is essential for pupils to learn and ensure they are given lots of opportunity to use it
- Include Signalong and hand gestures to scaffold understanding
- Demonstrate effective questioning to promote good learning.



Remember, children and young people want to do the right thing, especially when they feel part of a team. They thrive on consistency.

Make learning irresistible and encourage them to try new things and to believe that making mistakes is an important way to learn.

Created by Mountjoy Teachers / HLTAs 2023

## The Friends of Mountjoy (FOMS)

Well HO, HO, HO and Merry Christmas to everyone from FOMS!

On Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> December we held a very successful Christmas Fayre raising over £2000 with the fair and the raffle.

This money will all go directly to the pupils of Mountjoy School to fund enrichment activities like theatre trips, residential visits, visiting experiences.



Without the Friends these kinds of experiences would not be possible in school or would only be available at substantial cost to families.

This year we have also held a series of Family Discos - these events are less about fundraising and more about providing social contact for the pupils and their families - we hope to continue these events in 2024.

So, have a great Christmas and a very happy new year and see you all in 2024 - thank you for supporting us!

From the FOMS Committee

## Online Safety

Mountjoy has been very fortunate to be named as the beneficiary from two estates, with funding specifically to spend on computer equipment. It is so very kind of people to think of Mountjoy pupils at such a time in their lives. Therefore, we have purchased some new iPads for the students to use in their lessons. The students are learning how to use the iPads and the many apps that we use within school, alongside keeping them safe whilst using the internet.



You may have already noticed that we also have a new website and this links into our social media page on Facebook. We also share posts on Facebook of

“WakeupWednesday” from National Online Safety. We hope they are useful to you at home on enabling your children to stay safe whilst using the internet. Please do have a look.

## MOVE programme

What an impressive term our students on the MOVE programme have had so far! The programme itself is underpinned by three main principles (opportunity, motivation and progress) that we apply within our school day to enable our students to be given the opportunity to move, learn and explore further.

All students who partake in MOVE will each have their own individual goals; here are just a few pictures of them working hard to achieve this, well done to everyone!!



Thank you!

Mountjoy School is very grateful to Neil Barnes at Devondale Electrical in Bridport and Amy Stephenson for raising £6,465 via Just Giving. Devondale Electrical got together with RN Stephenson Electrical Contractors to do a 15,000 feet charity skydive, a HUGE raffle and a bingo event to raise the money for us. What inspirational ideas!

**devondale**  
ELECTRICAL TRUSTED BY TRADE

**RN Stephenson**  
Electrical Contractors Ltd.

We are going to use this generous donation to purchase a Mobii mobile sensory unit.

The Mobii is a self-contained, height adjustable, mobile system designed for floor and table use. It can project a motion-activated interactive surface onto the floor or different sized tables at the touch of a button ready for all ages and abilities to enjoy. It is mobile so it can glide between class rooms.

The system comes pre-loaded with the Sensory Suite, a treasure trove of 300 Activities and games with audio-visual effects designed to stimulate, engage and relax pupils. Staff and students can create their own activities with their own visuals or sounds.

This unit will make a big difference to our pupils, sparking their curiosity to encourage them to interact with their environment in a fun and educational way.

Here is a demonstration of what the Mobii can do: [OM interactive Mobii Magic Surface Interactive Table/Floor System - OMi Promotional Video - YouTube](#)

**omiVista**  
**mobii**



## School Council & Pupil Voice



© UNERC Article 31

I have a right to relax and play

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 we respect their right to be heard by adults.



**ARTICLE 12:** You have the right to an opinion and for it to be listened to and taken seriously.

School Council meetings are a way for students to tell senior leaders what they think is going well at school, and what could be improved. Any issues which pupils have can be brought up and discussed. Classes elect up to two students to represent them at the half termly meetings.

Our Autumn term meeting was exciting! Shal and Hanna from Dorset Youth Voice very kindly agreed to visit Mountjoy to tell the School Council about what they do for young people in Dorset. One of their current projects is 'Play' and what that means for young people. The School Council reps brought ideas from their class about what they think 'Play' means. They then used symbols to post votes into a ballot box to let Youth Voice know what play is like for them.

The ballot result is: to play inside, with toys and others, in a quiet space sitting down. A lot of students spoke about their favourite things, like their lovely dogs and Roblox.





## You Do Music

This term, we have started a new venture in school, in place of the Open Orchestra which ran successfully for two years. Gary Pickard, a local musician, is doing a series of sessions with students, focussed not only on making music together but also on the technical side of recording and mixing music. It has been a variable group of up to twelve young people, and they have enjoyed singing, playing and recording. From this term's work we have a final version of 'Barbie' and 'Last Christmas'. All the students who have taken part in the sessions will receive a CD copy of their work to take home.



Louise Heatley

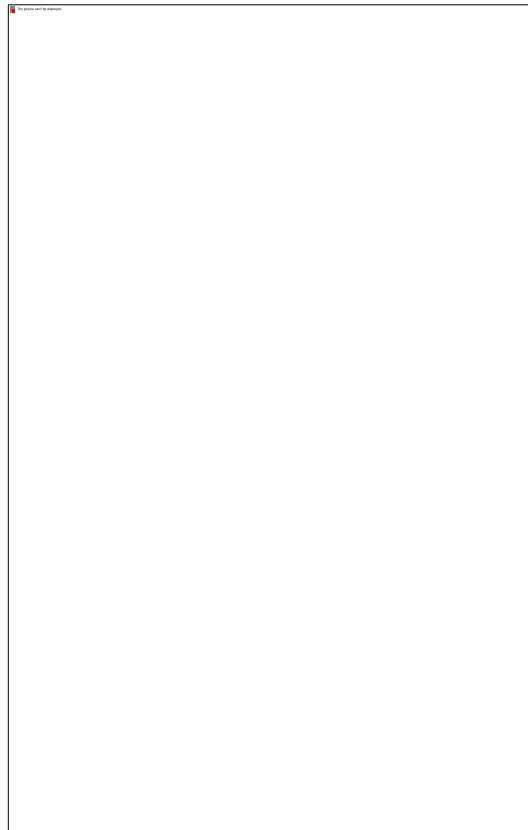
## Rainbow Harp

I work as a Music Therapist at Mountjoy School in Beaminster. I was recently introduced to the therapeutic benefits of the Rainbow Harp which is a harp specifically designed for children with Special Educational Needs. The strings are coloured to make it easier to learn to play. The gentle sound of the harp is calming and has therapeutic benefits. The children and staff at Mountjoy school would benefit from the opportunity to listen to and learn to play this beautiful instrument.

Every Christmas my family and I put on a Christmas concert to raise money for a charity of our choice. This year we have decided put the proceeds of the concert towards the cost of buying this exciting Christmas present for Mountjoy school.

Please click here if you would like to donate:

[Crowdfunding to buy a Rainbow Harp for Mountjoy School in Beaminster. on JustGiving](#)



Happy Christmas everyone!

Polly Orr-Ewing  
Music Therapist

# Accessible cycling

If you find riding a traditional bike challenging, the Accessible Cycling programme can open up the joy of cycling to you.

We are an accredited Wheels for All Centre operating from the Golf and Activity Centre at Moors Valley Country Park and Weymouth.

## Accessible cycling at Moors Valley Country Park






We have a fleet of adaptive bikes to suit a range of needs, from a lack of cycling confidence to physical or mental impairment. These include side-by-sides, recumbent trikes, a wheelchair bike, tag-a-longs, tandems, tricycles and handcycles.



### Getting started

All new participants must have a 1-2-1 consultation to get started. This can be carried out with individuals or as a group.

Visit this website for more information: [Accessible cycling - Dorset Council](#)

SAFEGUARDING			
Designated Safeguarding Lead			
Gill Howard			
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads			
Tracey Page		Sandra Hutchings	
Richard Bowskill		Emma Lambourn	

### Safeguarding – our highest priority

Gill Howard is our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in school and she is always available for a chat if you have any concerns. We also have 4 Deputy DSLs, all of whom do Level 3 training regularly, so we are covered at all times with knowledgeable staff. All staff complete annual training in Keeping Children Safe in Education and have regular top-ups on specific areas. We also have two online safety champions, Jenny and Iain. If you have any worries, the best thing to do is get in touch and we will help out or sign-post you to the relevant service. If you do not feel able to talk to school, the Dorset Multi-Agency Support Hub can be contacted on 01305 228866.

### Private Fostering

Private fostering is the term used when someone who is not a parent or a 'close relative' (e.g., great aunt, cousin, mum's friend or a neighbour) is looking after a child or young person under the age of 16 (under 18 if they are disabled) for 28 days or more in their own home. If this is the case, anyone involved is required by law to notify the local council's Children's Services of the arrangement. A social worker will visit the home to speak to the carer and the child to ensure the child is safe, carry out background checks and make sure support is being provided. Support available for private foster carers may include:

- advice on benefits and possible funding for some essential items
- parenting support and advice

- help in bringing families in crisis back together

Consider contacting school and speaking to Gill Howard if you need support in informing the council, or visit the Dorset Council website for more information.

<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/children-families/childrens-social-care/children-in-care/family-and-friends-care/private-fostering>

## Pastoral Support Team



Sandra, Colette and Kate



School Counsellors Emily & Helen

<b>DATES FOR YOUR DIARY</b>	
Last day of Autumn term	15 <sup>th</sup> December 2023
Teacher training Days (non-pupil days)	2 <sup>nd</sup> January 2024
First day back at school	3 <sup>rd</sup> January 2024
Half Term	12 <sup>th</sup> February 2024
MOUNTJOY SCHOOL, TUNNEL ROAD, BEAMINSTER, DORSET DT8 3HB	
T: 01308 861155    W: <a href="http://mountjoy.dorset.sch.uk">mountjoy.dorset.sch.uk</a> E: <a href="mailto:office@mountjoy.dorset.sch.uk">office@mountjoy.dorset.sch.uk</a>	