



MOUNTJOY SCHOOL SELF EVALUATION 23-24

At Mountjoy, we want to prepare our children and young people for adult life so they have options and aspirations. They need to be confident and happy so they can thrive in the real world. **Making a difference today for tomorrow**

Context

Mountjoy is a school catering for children aged between 3 and 19 with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) with Post 16 provision and early years (EYFS). We currently have 105 on roll and a number of local children waiting for spaces to become available. All pupils have an Education, Health and Care Plan and although we are designated a school for children with Severe Learning Difficulties (LD) and Profound and Multiple LD, there are around 10-15% of children/young people who have Moderate LD, usually with additional complexity such as autism or physical disability.

We are located in rural West Dorset and have a wide catchment from Dorset, and Somerset and Devon. We are an active member of TADSS, the Teaching Alliance of Dorset Special Schools and benefit from collaborating with our colleagues across Dorset. We also offer outreach to mainstream schools in the area.

The current Head Teacher has been in post since June 2020, supported by a part-time Deputy Head who oversees EYFS and Primary, and a full time Assistant Head who oversees secondary and Post 16 provision. We have TLR posts in EYFS, Post 16 and covering English and maths. Our teachers and Teaching Assistants are engaged in continuous professional development and are a highly skilled team.

We have a strong focus on preparation for the next stage of education or employment and life skills. This includes having an emphasis on English including communication, maths and PSHE, which takes up a large percentage of our morning teaching in school. Lots of teaching and learning utilises the benefits of being outside and we have a beach and forest school area within the school grounds and do many activities within the community.

We have undergone an unprecedented period of growth in the last 5 years, partly due to the enormous demand for special school places in Dorset and the popularity of Mountjoy with parents and carers. The school was built for 65 pupils; we have reorganised classes and repurposed rooms in the building to accommodate this expansion. We have excellent facilities, such as our hydrotherapy pool, sensory and soft room and have well-used outside areas with sensory, play and learning equipment.

Therapy is interwoven into the school day and usually delivered by our expert team of TAs under the guidance of a therapist. We have a Speech and Language Therapist (15 hours/week) who works with pupils and families, and writes programmes for staff to deliver. We have an Occupational Therapist 4 hours/week, to support sensory processing who is able to write programmes to be delivered in school. We also have two school counsellors, one whose focus is working directly with pupils and one who supervises staff working with the pupils. We have a music therapist to support the emotional wellbeing of pupils. Therapists also deliver staff training to build capacity. We work closely with NHS services and Dorset Swifts, a multidisciplinary team to support challenging behaviours. We have two part-time family advisers, who help with barriers to learning by supporting parents/carers.

We emphasise pupil and staff well-being and have created a culture of collaboration and shared ownership; we are proud to have gained Right Respecting Schools Gold Award last year. Members, including the Deputy, either have children at the school Staff are significant stakeholders. They hold us to account as parents as well as staff.

At Mountjoy, we live by our values of PASSION, RESPECT, OPTIMISM, UNDERSTANDING and DETERMINATION.

Key demographic information September 2022		Pupils with an SEN Education, Health and Care Plan	
Total number of pupils on roll (all ages)	105	SLCN	99.99%
Girls on roll	30%	ASD	34%
Boys on roll	70%	SEMH	91%
PMLD	7%	SHI	60%
MLD/SLD	74%	HI	10%
PD	17%	VI	8%
NEETS	0%	Pupils eligible for free school meals at any time during the past 6 years	39
Pupils whose first language is not English	3%	Pupils who have between 5 and 9 ACES	10

Progress against previous inspection	
Areas to improve (Ofsted '22)	Progress
■ Some leaders have not had the opportunity to monitor the subjects they lead. This means they do not know if pupils are acquiring the knowledge and skills they need. Leaders need to ensure that subject leaders are able to check the quality of provision to assure themselves pupils are learning the intended curriculum.	Whilst rigorous monitoring is carried out by the Senior Leadership Team, staffing levels during the period preceding this report had been lower than usual, due to the difficulties with COVID and following winter flu. This is now being addressed by a timetable of time off timetable for subject leaders. Despite this, during this period, Subject Leaders were able to rewrite the curriculum to better meet the needs of all pupils: Ofsted '22: 'Leaders have crafted an ambitious and well-planned curriculum. It is bespoke to the needs of the pupil. Pupils follow clear pathways from Reception Year to post-16. Leaders ensure pupils receive independent careers guidance from Year 8. This ensures pupils are well prepared for their next steps.'

Quality of education SEF Grade - Good	Evidence
Strengths: ☐ Staff are ambitious for the pupils – there is a good understanding that many limitations are created through adult attitudes ☐ Early reading and developing phonic knowledge has become strong in the last 18 months ☐ Maths is taught using a mastery approach; teacher and TAs have received extensive training in pedagogical methods Our new approach to maths is strong across all cohorts within the school ☐ Bespoke assessment model (MAPs) that clearly indicates pupil achievement and informs planning and targeted interventions: this personalised approach means that there is no attainment gap between Pupil Premium pupils and others ☐ Pupils make the best possible progress through accessing the correct curriculum, including having the opportunity to access the Mountjoy Sensory Curriculum where needed and complete accredited courses where appropriate ☐ The curriculum has a broad range of opportunities for learners as they progress through school beyond the National curriculum and learning can be seen everywhere in school, not just within lessons. A pupil passport ensures all learners have wider opportunities ☐ We prepare our pupils for the next stage of education and into adulthood with preparation for adulthood driving teaching and learning from Year 9/10 onwards (depending on pupil need) and offering functional skills qualifications ☐ Our Deputy and Assistant Head maintain a sharp focus on teaching, learning and assessment practice throughout the school: leading the Subject Leader Group, supporting curriculum planning and assessment, developing resources ☐ There is a strong focus on developing communication skills, including alternative and augmentative methods of communication ☐ There is a planned cycle of observations and monitoring involving the SLT and Subject Leaders ☐ Teaching Assistants have training alongside teachers and are able to impact on pupils' progress as a result ☐ Teachers use assessment effectively, to precisely plan for next steps and to support robust monitoring of outcomes for pupils ☐ There has been an improvement of inside and outside learning spaces to support physical and sensory development Areas to develop: ☐ Science and ICT curriculum needs to be broadened for all abilities and greater depth taught for the most able ☐ Connectedness of learning: ensuring learning can be applied in different contexts using metacognitive approaches is developing ☐ Pupils writing skills can be further improved, to form each letter, spell correctly, and compose their ideas step-by-step, and improving writing, spelling and grammar so that it is in line with reading skills ☐ Improving access to PE and Arts (art, design, drama and music) education (Many aspects of QE are outstanding but as some areas lack consistency across all pupils, they are assessed as good.)	Ofsted SLT Monitoring Curriculum design Data Parent Questionnaires Planning Staff meetings/CPD schedule Subject leader folders ECL reports Performance Management Targets

Behaviour and attitudes SEF Grade – Good with Outstanding aspects	Evidence
Strengths: ☐ Mountjoy is a happy, harmonious place and pupils begin to modify their behaviour in just a few weeks after starting; it is a safe, calm, orderly and positive environment ☐ Pupils are excited to learn, are resilient to setbacks and take pride in their achievements through skilled staff and our therapeutic approach towards behaviour management including the emotional support teams in school ☐ All staff are Therapeutic Thinking trained and have ongoing updates, at least termly. Individual support and advice is offered in school by staff with enhanced training so that patterns of behaviour and triggers are quickly identified and modified: all staff know how to analyse behaviours through the use of better recording such as anxiety mapping ☐ Staff know how to analyse behaviours through the use of effective recording such as anxiety mapping, which enables them to be in a just right state for learning, thus maximising progress: behaviour is understood as communication by all staff and unmet needs are met ☐ Staff maintain unconditional positive regards for pupils, creating a culture of acceptance in which pupils thrive. They are excited to learn, are resilient to setbacks and take pride in their achievements ☐ Therapeutic Thinking (Dorset), (therapeutic behaviour model) is well-led in school and has a clear pathway for analysing individual behaviours so that pupils can learn how to regulate. All pupils learn to recognise their feelings through school wide 'Zones of Regulation' ☐ Staff work in collaboration with external agencies and in-school family support to create a joined up approach with families ☐ Lesson obs/visits consistently cite excellent behaviour for learning during classes, with teachers consistently having high expectations ☐ There were no incidents of bullying in the last 6 months – any issues between pupils are dealt with quickly with restorative practice ☐ Pupils benefit from person-centred approaches and the pupil voice is encouraged and listened to developing their ability to make choices and have autonomy leading to independence ☐ Pupils feel emotionally and physically safe at Mountjoy as shown in pupil and parent surveys ☐ Pupils understand about community and what positive contributions they can make within a community ☐ Pupil's confidence and self-worth increases significantly at Mountjoy as described in parent feedback ☐ Pupils learn to communicate using their words or communication systems and not via their behaviour Areas to develop: ☐ Pupils are not always confident to talk about and/or aware of how they learn or do not see themselves as 'good learners' ☐ Pupils attendance: school wide attendance is at 90%, and affected by medical appointments and illness. In order to achieve outstanding we want to raise this to 95% (We are developing towards outstanding, and think we will be once the identified areas to above becomes embedded into practice.)	Learning walks School Council minutes SIMS reports Visitor logs Lesson observations CPD records Parental feedback SALT reports Pupil surveys

Personal development SEF Grade – Good	Evidence
Strengths: ☐ Relationship, health and sex education is sensitively taught taking into account age and stage of development ☐ PSHE is taught discretely and woven through all learning in school ☐ There is a strong emphasis on teaching and nurturing personal qualities such as emotional awareness, empathy and self-regulation and learning virtues such as curiosity, creativity and working collaboratively ☐ School Council represents pupils in an effective way and requests are acted upon, developing a sense of control. ☐ From a young age, pupils are thinking about their future plans, are informed of options and are working towards achieving a level of independence through better communication skills so they can exercise choice and control ☐ Pupil mental health and well-being is very important at Mountjoy with School Counsellors, and Emotional Support TAs being part of each class-team so that they respond in the moment and carry out interventions; learning can easily be brought back into the classroom. ☐ Pupil voice is well-developed through our School Council, interview processes and school improvement planning ☐ Preparation for next stage of learning/careers guidance is evident throughout all year groups ☐ Keeping our pupils safe, and developing their own understanding around their safety, is always the highest priority. The safeguarding culture and work on personal safety and online safety, ensure that the development of all pupils is at least good and often outstanding ☐ British Values and SMSC can be seen throughout the curriculum and our work towards Rights Respecting Schools Gold Award ☐ Person-centred approaches are given high importance, with each child or young person having a One Page Profile and a concerted effort is made to capture the voice of non-verbal pupils ☐ Pupils are encouraged to be ambitious for their own futures ☐ Most pupils are able to self-regulate to be in a 'just right state for learning' from a sensory and emotional perspective rather than relying on a staff member to support them. ☐ More of our pupils are able to access the internet independently and need to be even more equipped to recognise the dangers of inappropriate use of mobile technology and social media Areas to develop: ☐ Some pupils need to develop the confidence to move into mainstream college provision rather than staying in school Post 16 through the introduction of qualifications such as Duke of Edinburgh, Arts Award and Functional Skills at higher levels ☐ Online safety will be an area of focus for the foreseeable future, in order to keep up with the latest trends ☐ Communication skills in most pupils is on their EHCP. We are constantly refining our practice to ensure this is outstanding (Personal development is strong at Mountjoy, but we recognise that we need to continue focusing on these development areas in order to achieve outstanding, including integrating therapy into the day in a way which positively impacts on learning.)	Parent Questionnaires Pupil surveys Lesson observations Learning walks Staff rotas Intervention schedules and evaluations of impact CPD records DSL supervision notes RRS CAUK

Leadership and management SEF Grade – Good	Evidence
Strengths: ☐ Strong senior leadership team has clear vision and drives the school forward with positivity, enthusiasm and determination ☐ Strong middle leaders have had an impact on pupil progress through coaching, monitoring and training staff ☐ High aspiration to make the school an exceptional place across all areas of the Ofsted inspection at all levels ☐ Robust safeguarding procedures and practices are immersed within the school's systems and processes, leading to good outcomes for pupils and their families ☐ There has been an intensive programme of CPD to enable teachers to support all pupils including more-able pupils effectively in every lesson. This has involved work on improving basic pedagogical skills such as questioning and differentiation ☐ Training time and access to course has been prioritised for middle leaders, resulting in effective leadership at all levels, including HLTAs in school. ☐ There is a culture of growth mind-set in the school and strong engagement with training for TAs leading to greater progress for pupils ☐ Stakeholder voice is held in high regard creating a culture of ownership, which has strengthened the school ethos ☐ Health and safety is monitored and concerns acted upon swiftly; existing premises are maintained to a high standard ☐ The sense of, and involvement in, the community is a strength, which enables preparation for adulthood ☐ Teaching School Alliance (TADSS) continues to provide staff across the region with exceptional opportunities for professional and personal development (CPD Impact Assessment). ☐ The Staff Meeting/Training calendar focuses on developing skills and pedagogical knowledge to maintain high quality T&L ☐ Governance has rapidly developed with a focus on curriculum through learning walks, observations, interviews with leaders and other staff and follow up on questions and challenges ☐ Governors have undertaken a skills audit identifying strengths and areas for development and have created an action plan with clearly defined roles, responsibilities and activities to support and challenge senior leaders Areas to develop: ☐ In addition to induction, new staff need a mentor and online information in order to maximise personal effectiveness. This includes new governors who have access to NGA resources but would benefit from a thorough school-specific induction which is underway ☐ Some leaders have not had the opportunity to monitor the subjects they lead due to staff shortages during the pandemic. They are now working with senior leaders to improve the effectiveness of their monitoring and will be presenting their findings to Governors (We believe there are many aspects of leadership at all levels that are excellent and we are quickly moving towards outstanding.)	Safeguarding audit and monitoring visits Governance reports Governor subject reports Governor Committee and Board minutes Staff Questionnaires Performance Management docs SLT minutes NPQs

Quality of Education in Early Years SEF Grade - Outstanding	Evidence
Strengths: ☐ Early Years curriculum that is ambitious and designed to give the most disadvantaged children the skills they need to succeed in learning ☐ Interactive curriculum through the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning: playing and exploring observations show that our children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'; active learning in which our children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; and creating and thinking critically our children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things ☐ Curriculum is personalised through My Aspirational Progress (MAPs) and school staff work closely with families to ensure progress happens in both settings ☐ Curriculum is a blend of play-based experiences and the structure needed to support complex children including those with autism and other special educational needs which leads to rapid progress ☐ Baseline assessment enables progress to be measured accurately as children move through the school, enabling gap analysis ☐ Pupils make at least good and often outstanding progress as a result of teaching that is well focused, well-paced, challenging and differentiated ☐ Well-staffed with a good level of additional qualifications amongst the EYFS team and training is ongoing ☐ Staff in EYFS are effective at supporting pupils' learning and the targets they set for pupils are challenging yet achievable. ☐ Lessons are effectively planned, making maximum use of TAs and coordinating lesson resources well. As a result of this work, our EYFS curriculum is planned and sequenced towards building the necessary foundations for the rest of their learning at Mountjoy. ☐ Provision accommodates child-led learning and includes practical and experiential learning in small, sensory groups, intensive interaction, the use of visual cues, visual timetables, Singalong and a multi-sensory approach to ensure all learning styles and needs are effectively catered for. The use of the outside space, Sensory Room and soft play area has further enhanced provision for all our children. PECS and assistive communication is embedded with staff receiving training and supporting children in communication ☐ EYFS staff liaise in partnership with parents and carers so that parent/carers feel fully involved in their children's education. Children's progress and next steps are discussed fully at Child Centred Reviews ☐ Mathematics curriculum provides a strong basis for more complex learning later on. Staff are knowledgeable about the teaching of mathematics for children with complex SEN and well-supported through the Maths Subject lead in school ☐ Increased engagement in outreach support: SLT need to find ways of releasing staff from the timetable to carry this out Areas to develop: ☐ The use of ICT to ensure parents are given detailed feedback and photographs on a daily basis	Observations Learning Walks Assessment data MAPS Staff appraisal EHCP reviews

Quality Of Sixth-Form Provision SEF Grade – Good	Evidence
Strengths: ❑ Students in Post 16 are positive and enjoy coming to school regularly and participating in P16 activities. They act as role models for younger students. They are consistently respectful of peers and staff ❑ Students demonstrate that they can commit to memory content they have been taught, and to integrate new knowledge into larger concepts: they can apply learning to real-life scenarios and demonstrate this through their work in the community ❑ Post 16 at Mountjoy provides a curriculum that prepares students for the next stage in their education and or life through weekly visits ❑ We work with partners in the community to develop 14-19 provision for the benefit of pupils, including community participation, Work Experience and Work Related Learning opportunities such as in local business and service providers ❑ The Sixth Form curriculum consists of study programmes that includes qualifications in ASDAN and OCR Life and Living Skills ranging from Entry Level 1-3 as well as activities appropriate for the needs and goals of each student ❑ Post 16 staff are ambitious for all of our students and encourage independence, choice and control ❑ The Sixth Form teaching and support staff are fully qualified and have a great breadth and depth of knowledge in the area of preparation for adulthood ❑ Lessons and activities in Post 16 are planned and taught in a way that provides relevant and appropriate repetition and transfer of skills to ensure consistent use of knowledge and skills ❑ A variety of assessment strategies are used in Post 16 such as verbal and written feedback, photographic evidence, self-reflection and ASDAN challenge evaluation, to accurately assess where gaps in learning exist so they can be addressed ❑ Students are prepared for life after Mountjoy, whether this is further education or training or employment or even a bespoke care package. Students' interests and goals are consistently discussed and regularly reviewed to keep them current and relevant. Students have choice and control within curriculum goals in order to shape their future plans. ❑ Available resources, materials and equipment are utilised effectively such as the green gym, poly-tunnel, classrooms, local facilities ❑ Regular access to larger towns such as Bridport give pupils enable exploration of different services such as the gym and library, and pupils are exposed to a range of careers to encourage ambition Areas to develop: ❑ Post 16 learning space is limited so the leadership team alongside Dorset council are actively seeking new premises, for which funding has been approved ❑ We need to explore ways in which to provide greater challenge to some of our most able students in Post 16 through introduction of other relevant courses and experiences	Student voice Attendance figures Observations Learning Walks Assessment data MAPS Staff appraisal EHCP reviews Destination data

School improvement priorities - Quality of education

- ☐ Science and ICT curriculum needs to be broadened for all abilities and greater depth taught for the most able
- ☐ Connectedness of learning: ensuring learning can be applied in different contexts using metacognitive approaches is developing
- ☐ Pupils writing skills can be further improved, to form each letter, spell correctly, and compose their ideas step-by-step, and improving writing, spelling and grammar so that it is in line with reading skills
- ☐ Improving access to PE and Arts (art, design, drama and music) education

School improvement priorities - Behaviour and attitudes

- ☐ Pupils are not always confident to talk about and/or aware of how they learn or do not see themselves as 'good learners'
- ☐ Pupils attendance: school wide attendance is at 90%, and affected by medical appointments and illness. In order to achieve outstanding we want to raise this to 95% through a focus on belonging activities

School improvement priorities - Personal development

- ☐ Some pupils need to develop the confidence to move into mainstream college provision rather than staying in school Post 16 through the introduction of qualifications such as Duke of Edinburgh, Arts Award and Functional Skills at higher levels
- ☐ Online safety will be an area of focus for the foreseeable future, in order to keep up with the latest trends
- ☐ Communication skills in most pupils is on their EHCP. We are constantly refining our practice to ensure this is outstanding

School improvement priorities - Leadership and management

- ☐ In addition to induction, new staff need a mentor and online information in order to maximise personal effectiveness. This includes new governors who have access to NGA resources but would benefit from a thorough school-specific induction which is underway
- ☐ Some leaders have not had the opportunity to monitor the subjects they lead due to staff shortages during the pandemic. They are now working with senior leaders to improve the effectiveness of their monitoring and will be presenting their findings to Governors



School improvement priorities – EYFS
☐ The use of ICT to ensure parents are given detailed feedback and photographs on a daily basis
School Improvement Priorities – Post 16
☐ Post 16 learning space is limited so the leadership team alongside Dorset council are actively seeking new premises, for which funding has been approved ☐ We need to explore ways in which to provide greater challenge to some of our most able students in Post 16 through introduction of other relevant courses and experiences