



Mountjoy School Newsletter



Welcome to our Summer 16 Newsletter. How quickly did that year go by? And how much has changed ...

We have gone from being a Requires Improvement school to one that is now judged as Good with Outstanding elements. Thanks to staff, parents, governors and pupils for working hard, supporting the school and always doing their best.

We have raised our pupil numbers to 53 and hope that the local authority will agree to a further increase. They have been asked, and we are awaiting feedback ...

We have, finally, moved forwards with the kitchen and had the money agreed. Alongside this, we also have been given a budget to relocate the Beaminster music room back across to their site. We are hoping that this will be completed in the next academic year and again allow us to consider growing our school and using our facilities as best we can. It will mean that, during this period, our library will become our meeting room, and our current meeting room will need to be a temporary staff room, but the upshot is that we will, in the Autumn term, be able to provide meals for our children that are cooked on site and pertinent to their specific dietary needs. I am certain that I can rely on your support and patience whilst these changes occur.

Our curriculum has been overhauled, schemes of work are now in place and the curriculum is in line with the new National Curriculum. This means that continuity throughout the school can happen and progress will be clearer to measure. The MSI Curriculum is also being further developed and refined, ensuring that this is as relevant to our individual pupils as possible. We have also increased our classes, so that we now have a junior and senior MSI group, and can ensure that all of our pupils get the curriculum that is best for them.

Staffing has also changed throughout the year. Tracey has been appointed to Deputy Head, Bev has reduced her days to four a week, and Caroline is re-joining the school for two days per week - she will spend one day in Maple and one leading the Arts Award across the school. Emma and Nigel have joined our staff and are between them leading Oak and Ash. ASDAN will be reintroduced, allowing our pupils to have several opportunities to gain awards and qualifications throughout their time in the senior end of the school. We have also had changes in our support staff and have received many new faces into classes, all of whom have fitted in quickly, have been welcomed by the pupils and are making outstanding differences to the progress and learning of our pupils.

The White Paper from the Government still stands and Academisation is still very much on the Government agenda. The timescales have been removed, but be assured that, as a senior leadership team and governing body, we will ensure that we keep on top of changes and that Mountjoy's future and the pupils' welfare is at the heart of any decisions that we make.

The pupils have, as ever, been an utter joy to work with and I again must emphasise that working here, at Mountjoy, is a total privilege. The pupils never fail to make me smile, try their very best and demonstrate to all of us what true resilience is. They are amazing. We say goodbye to 3 pupils at the end of term, and wish them all the very best in their next ventures. Please do keep in touch and let us know how you progress.

With kindest regards

Jackie, Head Teacher

Deputy Head Teacher

As this school year draws to a close, it is a good time to reflect on another excellent year for Mountjoy. Children have enjoyed topics on Music (Autumn Term), Clothes (Spring Term) and The Jurassic Coast (Summer Term).

Our Christmas show, "Music through the Decades", rounded off the Autumn Term in style, with each class performing a decade of their choice. Through the Spring Term, children experienced a variety of creative activities, experimenting with pattern and colour, creating clothes and enjoying a whole school fashion show. In the Summer Term, classes have created 3D giant dinosaur sculptures and enjoyed exploring our terrific and spectacular local environment. Community and off site visits have continued all year with weekly visits to Magdalen Farm, WOEC, RDA Riding and Hillview Riding, The Donkey Sanctuary, and everyday access to local shops, cafes and parks. Children have also participated in residential trips to Freshwater Holiday Park, and Magdalen Farm, and attended special events such as The Fossil Festival in Lyme Regis, music days and boccia contests, to name but a few. Phew!! We have been busy!

Our school family has experienced some changes this year, with good friends leaving for new challenges, and new faces joining our amazing school team and bringing different talents and enthusiasms. New equipment and therapy provision (funded with the help of the Friends Of Mountjoy School), continued development of our outside areas and the acquisition of our school guinea pigs have all further enriched our children's school lives.

I'm sure you'll agree that it's been a great year. So, it leaves just this to be said; I hope that everyone at school – pupils, parents and staff – has an amazing summer break, full of health and happiness, and that the weather is kind to us all! I look forward to seeing you all in the Autumn Term.

Tracey, Deputy Head Teacher

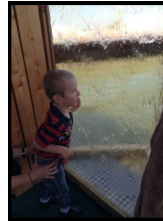
Acorns

Wow! What an exciting term we have had in Acorns! The summer term brought with it the exciting topic, the Jurassic Coast! This provided us with heaps of exploration opportunities and we have had lots of fun discovering what we can find on the beaches in our beautiful local area, as well as learning all about the Jurassic Coast and how it came to be. Dinosaurs have been the main attraction in Acorns this term and the children have loved making swamps and jungles, using dinosaurs in maths, literacy, and art activities and even helping to make Dave, our life-sized baby dinosaur!

We have been out and about as much as possible this term, taking regular trips to the park, the village, the river, Lyme Regis, West Bay and even Dorchester funfair! Our visit to Seaton Jurassic was a real highlight. The children behaved exceptionally well and loved the variety of activities, especially the water wall! We learnt a lot about the creatures we can find in a rock pool and what happens when the tide comes in and goes out. The children have all done so well during their time in Acorns and I have thoroughly enjoyed working with each and every one of them.

I would like to thank all of you for your support during my time in Acorns class. I wish all of the children well in their new classes next year, and hope they continue to have lots of fun!

Emma and Acorns Team



Willow

Summer is finally here in Willow class. We have been out and about travel training around Beaminster, visiting the local church for drop in Wednesday and trips to the park. We also went to WOEC for a day of Canadian canoeing, which we all enjoyed.

Our English story this half-term is "Dinosaurs in our school", which we are all enjoying. On Monday mornings we write about our weekend news, so we would be grateful if you can pop a note in the home school books to help us talk about what they have done at the weekend, as sometimes the children forget.

In Maths, we are still focusing on Numicon in one lesson, and 2D and 3D shapes in our second lesson of the week. Please encourage your child to look out for 2D and 3D shapes around the home environment, and feel free to send in any pictures of shapes they find.

We have enjoyed our days looking after the new Mountjoy guinea pigs, cleaning them out, feeding them and learning how to care for small animals.

On Mondays, some of us are continuing with horse riding lessons at the local RDA stables, and a group are going to Magdalen Farm, where we are all gaining great experiences. This summer, the Magdalen lady pigs have all had piglets and we have all fallen in love with the little piggies, which have come in a range of colours, and we all have our favourites!

We would like to give a warm Willow welcome to our new TA who has joined us this year, Amy, who was our student until she secured a full-time post at Mountjoy, after finishing her college course.

We look forward to seeing you all for Sports Day at the end of term and wish you all a happy, sunny summer

Sue and Willow Team



Maple

Maple Class have participated in some exciting activities recently. We have been to Westfield School in Weymouth for a musical activity day with other special schools. We were involved in drumming, singing and even a beat box which was very exciting. We were fortunate enough to be given some small percussion instruments and a cohon to bring back to school. All children across the school will have access to these new instruments.

We have continued to visit Magdalen Farm every week where we have been working on activities as part of the John Muir Award Scheme. We spent three consecutive days at the farm for a residential trip, which was great fun, and the first time some of our pupils had stayed away overnight from home.

The new guinea pigs in school are a great success with Maple pupils. They are applying their new skills from Magdalen Farm into looking after these animals on a regular basis. They take turns to clean out the cage, transfer the guinea pigs to the hutch and run outside, make sure they have enough food and water and generally have enough cuddles. They like listening to the little noises the guinea pigs make when they are being stroked.

We went to the Fossil Festival in Lyme Regis, where we listened to the story of Mary Anning, and looked at and compared fossils. We looked at fossils through the microscopes and compared their shapes and properties.

Every week, Maple class have prepared a healthy snack with great enjoyment. They are learning about the importance of healthy eating and exercise. We are looking forward to the Health and Fitness Week, when we will be participating in many different activities and practicing for Sports Day at the end of term.

Have a good summer break, and see you in September.

Bev and Maple Team

Cedar

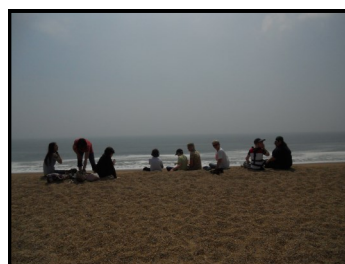
What a busy term we've had!

This term's Jurassic Coast topic has given us lots of opportunities to go out and about in the community - weather permitting!

We have enjoyed Beach School activities at Charmouth Beach and a week of fun at Freshwater Caravan Park. Three of our students stayed for a week's residential and we all had a great time using the facilities.

We have also enjoyed our Science activities, learning about plants and building our giant T-Rex from paper mache!

Tracey and Cedar Team



Ash

Ash class have really enjoyed learning about the Jurassic Coast this term. We have been out and about visiting local beaches; fossil hunting and making beach art about dinosaurs. We found out about the amazing life and work of Mary Anning, one of the very first fossil hunters, who lived in Lyme Regis.

In Maths, we have focussed on Time and are beginning to get to grips with the 24 hour clock. We are also learning about Financial Capability, budgeting, saving and spending.

It has been very interesting to find out about the six major world religions, particularly the things they have in common and their differences. We have visited our local church in Beaminster and discovered much about the inside and outside of a church.

We've had lots of fun learning about the Ancient Egyptians, culminating in a trip to the Tutankhamun Exhibition in Dorchester, which some of us found a bit spooky.

As a second modern foreign language, we are tackling German and now know how to greet each other, the days of the week and the weather. We hope the summer is heis and sonnig! (hot and sunny).

We welcome two new students to Ash Class - a big hello to you two and your families.

We hope you all have a relaxing summer break and look forward to welcoming you back in September.

Richard and Ash Team

Oak

Summer has been a term of change – I took over from Kevin at the start of term. Bev started as Teaching Assistant a week later, at which point Lisa and Bryony became one job share. It has been an enormous privilege to teach Oak class. The students have all shown Bev and me that they have absorbed the Mountjoy ethos to welcome and support us.

The focus for the term was the Jurassic Coast. We learnt about smugglers in Dorset, the tides and coastal erosion by building a mud cliff and simulating erosion with a hose instead of the sea. We all enjoyed a lecture from Grant the Geologist, who showed the group what fossils looked like when they were alive and inspired fossil artwork.

The group have met challenges, climbing and kayaking with WOEC, and through work experience with the Dorset Wildlife Trust at Kingcombe. Everyone spent at least two days at Freshwater Holiday Park, while Senior TA, Helen, survived four nights in the caravan full of blokes and getting thrown in the outdoor pool by Captain Blood. As I write, our walking talking Triceratops is being assembled for the Sports Day procession.

These are just a few of the activities the students have given their support to. At the end of term, we say a sad farewell to 3 pupils from our class, but also look ahead to next year, to a challenging and more settled year.

Nigel and Oak Team



Family Liaison



Summer holidays are here again and it has been a very busy term. We have welcomed new pupils who have joined us and I look forward to meeting the new families. Our Facebook page has gone from strength to strength and statistics show great results so, if you enjoy what you see, please like our page, and we will do our best to keep regular posts and information going.

We have two school holiday clubs this year:

26, 27 and 28 July	10.00 am – 2.00 pm	4 hours per session
1, 2 and 3 August	10.00 am – 1.00 pm	3 hours per session

All of you who have already signed up, thank you for being so prompt, and if you haven't signed up yet and want a space, please telephone 01305 228528 or email jo@theartsdevelopmentcompany.org.uk, as only a few places remain.

We will be continuing to encourage more holiday activities at Mountjoy, ensuring that your children have a fun experience with great workshops. We aim to work in partnership with The Arts Development Company, and the workshops available will be supported by our Mountjoy staff.

Please remember to send in lunch if needed and/or a snack and drink for your child/young person, if they are attending.

The coffee mornings will now be in school and, although I see many of you at home visits, it would be good if those of you who can make it come along to the quarterly coffee mornings that will be offered during term time. I will be sending out the dates for these in September. Please let me have any suggestions or comments, for instance your preferred days and times.

I hope you all enjoy the summer break - see you next term.

Sandra

Sandra, Family Liaison Officer (FLO)

Friends of Mountjoy School (FOMS)

The Table Top Sale held on 19 March at St Mary's Church House, South Street, Bridport was well attended, and we made £185 profit.

Our Annual Summer Bonanza held on Saturday, 18 June was a huge success; it was well supported by family, friends and the local community. The weather was fine and the children's entertainment was a big hit. The amount raised will be confirmed shortly, but is set to exceed last year's total. The money raised will be used towards enhancing our school environment and therapy needs.

So far this year, the Friends have funded Rebound Therapy for three terms, the purchase of new bikes and scooters, funding of children's Christmas parties, birthday and leaver's celebrations, contributed towards the Equicizer (Rumble), and we will be contributing towards the development of the horticultural area, including a poly tunnel, raised beds, etc.

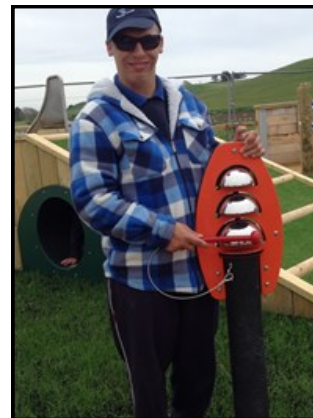
We will be serving cream teas and running a Table Top Sale again at the Salt House, West Bay. This will take place on Sunday, 31 July, time to be confirmed.

Cheryl – Chair of Friends of Mountjoy School (FOMS)

School Council

The group have been busy preparing for the opening of the new equipment at the West Bay Play Area. We went to try out the new equipment before it was open to the public, and we have helped with the new signs. We attended the official opening on Thursday, 7 July, which we all enjoyed very much.

Taryn (Co-ordinator)



**We still have a Parent Governor vacancy. If you are interested, please contact
Vicky Reed (Clerk to Governors) for more information on 01308 861155 or
clerk@mountjoy.dorset.sch.uk**

Mountjoy School

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Making a difference today for tomorrow



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Dates to Remember - 2016/17

Friday, 15 July	1.30 pm Sports Day - Beaminster MUGA (Multi Use Games Area)
Wednesday, 20 July	Last day of term
Thursday, 21 July - Wednesday, 31 August	Summer holidays
Thursday, 1 and Friday, 2 September	Staff Training Days - school closed to pupils
Monday, 5 September	Pupils return to school
Monday, 24 October - Friday, 28 October	Half-Term Week
Monday, 31 October	Pupils return to school
Friday, 16 December	Last day of term
Monday, 19 December - Friday, 30 December	Christmas holidays
Monday, 2 January 2017	Bank Holiday - school closed
Tuesday, 3 January 2017	Staff Training Day - school closed to pupils
Wednesday, 4 January 2017	Pupils return to school

Please remember that Thursday, 1 and Friday, 2 September are non-pupil days.