



Mountjoy School Newsletter



Head Teacher

Welcome to our latest Newsletter.

As I sit and write this I am approaching finishing my running challenge. Today was day 95. I am tired, sore and frankly looking forwards to the end, but, I am also immensely grateful for being able to attempt this.

Our pupil numbers continue to grow and we have welcomed several new pupils and will continue welcoming more in the coming months.

I often visit classes and spend time watching/ interacting with our amazing kids; their resilience, honesty and kindness never fails to utterly astound me; against the odds they learn to do things, achieve their goals and usually do this with an incredible grace.

I regularly have the pleasure of showing visitors around the school and they are overwhelming positive about what they see. Working here is a real privilege, which I try daily to remind myself - that said, things are not always easy and tricky decisions have to be made and situations are not always favourable, but one thing I can guarantee is the fantastic greeting that we all receive from our children.

So thank you to all of my children, thank you to their amazing, resilient and supportive parents and thank you to my incredible, dedicated and wonderfully kind staff team - you make my day, every day.

Jackie - Head Teacher



Deputy Head Teacher

Well the Spring term is almost over, proving that time really does fly when you're having fun! The Christmas play, a resounding success with some outstanding individual performances, is but a distant memory!

The term has been a busy one as always, with classes attending Magdalen Farm, WOEC, RDA sessions, and a variety of additional off-site visits, including work experience placements and college visits for those in the Sixth Form. In school we have continued to be supported by Dorset Music Services, and The Friends of Mountjoy have continued to fund Rebound Therapy through Action Van. I am glad to report that five staff are now trained to deliver Rebound Therapy in school, so this very important therapeutic activity will be able to continue long term here at Mountjoy – we thank Paul from Action Van for the donation of a trampoline!

We welcome Alex to our staff team as our new lifeguard! We look forward to working with him to further improve our hydrotherapy provision – and our pool will be available to let by arrangement, should you require it.

I wish everyone a very happy and healthy Easter and look forward to seeing everyone in the Summer Term.

Tracey - Deputy Head Teacher



Governors

It has been another successful term for all involved at Mountjoy. The pupils continue to be happy and purposeful. The teaching staff have shown a commitment to the learning and well being of the pupils that is well above expectations. The group of people that have particularly impressed the Governors in recent months are the Teaching Assistants. They have taken on many varied and valuable tasks within the school that really enhance the opportunities that the school is able to offer the pupils. In all my years of experience in education, I have never met such a brilliant group of highly motivated, enthusiastic and capable Teaching Assistants. All of the above makes the role of a School Governor not only easy, but a real privilege.

Congratulations also need to be given to Jackie on the completion of her challenge to run 101 half marathons on 100 days. Her energy and enthusiasm are quite remarkable! This seems to be infectious and is a major reason that the school is doing so well.

John Ryde – Chair of Governors - J.Ryde@mountjoy.dorset.sch.uk

Acorns

It's been a busy but fun term in Acorns. We have been looking at shapes and sizes and everyone is becoming very clever and can recognise different shapes. Everyone really focused when we had our group sessions looking at shapes painted on the windows.

Our special story has been 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. We have been focusing on big, medium and small. Everyone loves the story and now knows it very well.

We have had lots of outside learning; the puddles have been great fun and we have been experiencing the different weather. The frost and thick ice felt very cold and the ice made a big impact when it broke! We have had lots of trips to the park and we plan to go to Lyme Regis park, as there's lots of different climbing equipment. We have had some very good horse riding sessions and lots of the pupils passed their grade one in riding and horse care. We are now back visiting the donkey sanctuary. We have also been learning about money and how we use money when we visit the local café.

We have had lots of visitors in the classroom from our Buddies' sessions, enjoying a play session and familiarising themselves with the environment.

Have a wonderful Easter, let's hope the sun shines!

Vicki and Acorns Team

Willow

A big hello from Willow Class.

Willow Class can only be described as 'little sponges' this term. They have soaked up massive amounts of excellent learning, and are all moving forward in all areas of their learning.

Maths focus is on shape this half term. We have looked within our environment for the different shapes of the week. This week the excitement builds as we look at shapes out and about including road signs!

Numicon lessons continue on Fridays, where most are learning to subtract and developing their numeracy skills well using the visual tiles.

English focus this term is poetry for both groups. One group is looking at the Tony Mitton poems and the other group are enjoying the book 'All afloat on Noah's Boat'.

Science this term is animals and looking at the differences between reptiles, birds, mammals, amphibians, and fish. This topic will finish with a trip to the RSPB Centre in Weymouth later this term.

Julie has led a fantastic trip around the UK, and the landmarks within our country in Geography on Friday afternoons. We have now switched to History for a trip with Christopher Columbus and all he discovered.

The Willow dancers all performed well at the annual pyramid Dance Festival at Freshwater. We received a big round of applause from a couple of hundred other children.

In RE, we have all learnt the creation story, and each pupil has done some creating of their own and got to exhibit it in the light up box.

A small group have started travel training, learning road safety in and around Beaminster.

On Monday mornings we are all learning our signing in our sign a long lesson - please get your children to teach you at home.

Sue and Willow Team

Maple

Exciting events happening again in Maple Class this term. We have welcomed another new member, who is settling in well.

This half term we are visiting Magdalen Farm every week which is the success it always is. We have been walking the goats, feeding the pigs, bug hunting, making wormeries, making compost and planting/ watering in the poly-tunnels.

We have begun cooking again and so far we have made bread rolls, jam tarts, pitta bread pizzas and we will shortly be creating some Easter delights.

We enjoyed the Skate Park who came to school as part of Action Van, and are hoping to have a repeat visit next term. There are some great photos of this on the school website.

Caroline has worked hard to show us how to create lighthouses with working lights as part of our Design and Technology lessons, and we have all enjoyed the Shakespearian experience of Macbeth.

This term, Sarah has been teaching us some simple German vocabulary. We can count to 10 and know some colours. We even sang Frere Jacques in German as well!

Davina has organised Mardi Gras for the end of the month and we have lots of exciting creative activities to look forward to.

Our Music inclusion has been reinstated with Beaminster. We waited a term to let the new music teacher settle in and now some of Maple and Ash join in every other Friday. All the pupils enjoy these lessons and their behaviour is always exemplary.

We are hoping to offer some physical activities during the lunch playtime this term. A running club with Nigel and Vicky is ready to start and there will be some team games/athletics/ basketball with me following shortly. These sessions will be open to all students, not just Maple Class.

The summer term is almost upon us, during which time we have lots of activities already planned, including the Freshwater experience and the Fossil Festival in Lyme Regis. Watch this space.

Bev and Maple Team

Cedar

Students in Cedar are enjoying the spring term and continue to work hard and learn together.

We have been focussing on learning and exploring shapes in Maths and Art and especially like our staff singing "four shapes in the ring" with us.

We have been learning all about taking care and looking after the school guinea pigs in Science. We found out that yellow peppers are a favourite for them.

We enjoy our outings to cafes on Fridays and, as the weather improves, we hope to get out to the local park.

All our therapy activities remain very important to us, really helping us stay regulated and healthy.

We have a fun sensory story of the Lion King and really chuckle at the animal noises, particularly those coming from Pumba the warthog!

Richard, Tracey and Cedar Team

Ash

This has been a busy term for Ash, with all students making good progress. English work has used the work of Roald Dahl, and poems of Tony Mitton, as the basis for improving literacy, while Maths has been focussed principally on Geometry. In Science, we have studied Forces, and Earth and Space. Their newly acquired knowledge of the planets inspired some great fictional short stories.

Ash students really enjoyed their visits to Magdalen Farm, where the group showed excellent teamwork skills and support for each other. The Arts Award Group, with Caroline, have created some really beautiful pieces and linked with the expertise of Bridport Arts Centre. Humanities, with Emma, has seen History replace Geography, and the study of World War II.

Learning Signalong, in combination with French, has proved both entertaining and an effective way of remembering. In PSHE we have looked at safety, bullying and started Sex and Relationships Education. Ash and some Maple students have joined in with Beaminster Music lessons, learning to sing and play percussion for a song to be performed in Assembly at the end of term.

Our daily five minute morning exercise has started to include a run or walk in the playground. We can't wait for some summer weather!

Nigel and Ash Team

Oak

Spring is in the air in Oak Class and we have been celebrating the arrival of the warmer weather by getting out and about as much as possible.

Our weekly forest school sessions are proving a great hit with everyone getting involved and getting up close with nature. We were lucky enough to find a badgers' sett in the woods and have enjoyed looking out for their footprints as they come and go. We also made mobiles, did treasure hunts and built dens to test our team work and survival skills!

This term has been a term of new experiences for many of the group as we have ventured out and about on public transport, used the library, used lifts and vending machines, started new work experience placements and visited colleges.

In class we have been working very hard on our curriculum too! Our adult numeracy and literacy sessions are going well and we have done lots of great OCR modules, including creating displays in school and finding information by ourselves.

After Easter, we are welcoming a new pupil into our class and will also look forward to Matthew starting as our new teacher when Emma goes off on maternity leave.

Lots of exciting times and hopefully sunny weather to look forward to in the summer term when we will be continuing with learning outdoors as much as possible! Thank you to everyone who has helped make our spring term so enjoyable and successful.

We wish you all a lovely Easter holiday and well-earned rest.

Emma and Oak Team

Juniper

This term Juniper class have been learning about life cycles. We have been reading the Very Hungry Caterpillar, and making a display of the book.

On Tuesday afternoons the class have been splitting into two groups. One group have been going to West Bay park, enjoying the variety of apparatus. The other group have been having Harp Therapy, with Sarah K. In our cooking lessons, we have been practising our cutting skills, and we have been making yummy caterpillars out of salad, smoothies and fruit pancakes.

Natalie and Juniper Team

Absence

Should your child/young person be unable to attend school for any reason, please contact the school reception as soon as possible. This will need to be repeated daily until your child returns to school.

Free School Meal Eligibility

If you wish to check for free school meal eligibility, please visit **Dorsetforyou.com**, to complete the electronic application form.

The online application can be found at
<https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/free-school-meals>

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

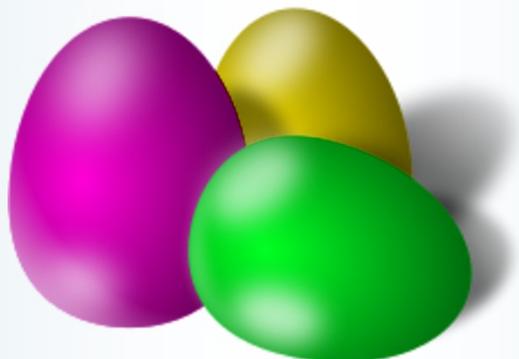
Friends of Mountjoy School (FOMS)

This term, we have purchased two solid wood benches for use in the Horticultural area. These will be used for potting up seeds, etc.

We have also agreed to fund the food and entertainer for Mountjoy's 50th Anniversary Party.

Our next major event is the Summer Bonanza, to be held on Saturday, 17 June, from 1.00 pm - 4.00 pm. The Bubbleman will once again be entertaining the children. A barbecue will be on the go, plus there will be lovely cakes to buy. Please come along and bring the family for a fun time.

Cheryl – Chair of Friends of Mountjoy School (FOMS)



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Making a difference today for tomorrow



Dates for your Diary

Friday, 7 April	Last day of term
Monday, 10 April - Friday, 21 April	Easter holidays
Monday, 24 April	Staff Training Day - school closed to pupils
Tuesday, 25 April	Pupils return to school
Monday, 1 May	Bank holiday - school closed
Monday, 29 May - Friday, 2 June	Half term week
Monday, 5 June	Pupils return to school
Monday, 5 June - Friday, 9 June	Freshwater Residential Week Maple Class
Tuesday, 13 June	Parent & Carer Coffee Morning 10.00 am - 12.00 pm Mountjoy School
Friday, 16 June	Staff Training Day - school closed to pupils
Saturday, 17 June	Friends of Mountjoy School (FOMS) 1.00 pm - 4.00 pm Summer Bonanza at Mountjoy School
Friday, 21 July	Last day of term
Monday, 24 July - Friday, 1 September	Summer holidays
Monday, 4 September	Staff Training Day - school closed to pupils
Tuesday, 5 September	Pupils return to school