

# Mountjoy School

## SEND Policy

**June 2023**



**This is a Mountjoy School Policy**  
**Reviewed by: Senior Leadership Team**

**Date:** June 2023  
**Date of next review:** June 2024

The Mountjoy SEND Policy helps to promote inclusion for all of our pupils, whatever their additional needs are.

We are committed to Unicef UK's Rights Respecting Schools project and we have adopted a child rights approach based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child which is embedded in school policy, practice and culture (UNCRC Articles 23, 28 and 29). Our SEND Policy is essential in ensuring that this can happen. At Mountjoy School, we are committed to offering a range of inclusive curriculums that ensures the best possible progress for all of our pupils whatever their needs or abilities. Mountjoy is a day school for children and young people between the ages of 2.5 and 19 years, who have mild, severe, profound and/or complex learning difficulties. Some pupils may present with specific areas and/or particular areas of need, such as autism, sensory impairments, physical disabilities, speech and language needs or emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The development and review of the school's SEND Policy contributes to a clear and shared vision of our purpose in learning which enables the school to effectively meet the needs of all pupils in the fulfilment of our aim to welcome and develop partnerships with parents, carers and a range of professional and lay people with whom we can share advice and develop best practice, so that we may:

- prepare pupils for their future lives
- enable pupils to be happy, successful and keen to learn
- provide our pupils with a variety of quality educational experiences in all aspects of life
- enable pupils to develop effective communication skills, in order to express thoughts, feelings and choices
- provide a safe and happy environment in which pupils can work towards achieving their best
- enable pupils to build in confidence, develop self-esteem, self-reliance and make informed choices
- offer school curriculums that are well researched, broad and balanced, based on statutory requirements, whilst being appropriately adapted to meet the needs of all pupils
- encourage the development of good social skills, so that pupils are able to develop friendships and become sensitive to the feelings and needs of others
- develop the moral, cultural and spiritual awareness of all pupils including preparing them for life in modern Britain through helping them to maintain fundamental British Values.

The specific objectives within our SEND policy focus upon:

- working with all our pupils in partnership with other agencies, to ensure that needs are met and learning is maximised
- ensuring that students at Mountjoy School join in with all the activities of the school, to the greatest degree possible (with reference to an individual's particular need)
- ensuring that all learners make the best possible progress
- ensuring that we work closely with parents as partners, to ensure that there is effective communication and a sharing of information between parents and school

- ensuring that all learners at Mountjoy School are taught to express their views and are fully involved in decisions which affect their education
- promoting a range of effective partnerships and involving outside agencies and the wider community.

The Head Teacher works within the Local Authority admissions criteria for admissions into Special Schools. We do not discriminate against pupils with special education needs or disabilities: our Admissions Policy has due regard for the Equality Act 2010 and the guidance in the Code of Practice that accompanies the Children and Families Act 2014. Admissions to Mountjoy School can only occur through close liaison with the SEN Team and Locality Teams at Dorset Council.

Pupils will be admitted to Mountjoy School subject to the following conditions:

- i) the school is suitable for the age, ability, aptitude or SEN of the child or young person concerned
- ii) the attendance of the child or young person at Mountjoy would be compatible with the provision of efficient education of others at the school
- iii) an EHCP has been completed
- iv) parents or carers request admission of a pupil at Mountjoy School
- v) an Admissions Panel agrees to the admission.

All pupils at Mountjoy have a Learning Disability or Learning Difficulty

### **Identification and assessment of special educational needs**

Mountjoy School is committed to work with a number of agencies in the early support of young people who present with special educational needs. We work with the local Children's Centre, local nurseries, portage, Swifts and other multi-agency staff to ensure a smooth transition and sharing of information for our youngest students. We liaise and work alongside multi-agency expertise in the identification and assessment of the needs presented by our young people. We work with our local and wider community in the support of best practice for young people with special educational needs through our Outreach/In-reach Work and wider provision.

### **Provision that is available to all**

All pupils have their 'small learning steps' recorded in the form of MAPs - My Aspirational Progress. These are typically written by the class teacher in liaison with SLT, whenever needed. MAPs are written in consultation with pupils, parents/carers and teaching assistants.

The MAP will set targets for the pupil and will detail:

- the short-term targets set for, or by, the pupil
- when the plan is to be reviewed

The MAP will be reviewed each term, and the outcomes will be recorded. Pupils will participate fully in the review process where possible. Parents/carers will also be invited to participate in the target-setting and review process.

The school will liaise with other agencies, to arrange Transition Plans in Year 9, and ensures that Transition Plans are thereafter reviewed annually as part of the Annual Review/ EHC Plan process. When pupils move to another school, their records will be transferred to the next school within 15 days of the pupil ceasing to be registered, as required under the Education (Pupil Information) Regulations 2005.

Where specialist services or specialised interventions are needed, we provide nurture and focus areas for individuals and/or groups of young people. This is done alongside the expertise of individuals already within the school staff, or with close liaison with other professionals linked to Mountjoy School.

## **Facilities at Mountjoy School**

Facilities include:

- Hydrotherapy pool
- A multi-sensory room enhances the education of Mountjoy pupils by providing a safe space for creative, sensory and exploratory learning
- Library 'Book Nooks' throughout the school
- Technologies including pupil i-Pads, eye gaze, and interactive whiteboards. Technical resources include computers, laptops and interactive plasma screens, interactive projectors, video and digital cameras, and recording and editing equipment.
- The school owns four vehicles, two of which have tail-lifts and tracking to ensure accessible and secure transport for all. Seat-belts or harnesses are provided for all pupils, and a school mobile telephone is carried on excursions.
- Specialist seating, tables, physiotherapy equipment and hoists are provided to meet physical needs.
- The Community Room is the main meeting and conference room within school. Person Centred Reviews, LAC meetings, and coffee mornings take place in this room.
- A Therapy Room is situated within the school, which is set up with a small meeting table. This room is used by multi-agency professionals who work with pupils in the school.
- Outdoor areas including play areas and sensory stream.

In addition, Our Family Liaison Officer works closely with families to ensure that barriers to attendance and learning can be removed and work either in their office or by visiting families in their homes.

## **Behaviour and SEN**

We follow a therapeutic approach to behaviour management, called Therapeutic Thinking (Dorset). We closely monitor and track pupil behaviour within Mountjoy School. Pupils have behaviour management strategies and protocols appropriate to any particular behaviour needs. This serves to minimise the impact negative behaviour can have upon learning, and ensures that all members of the school community feel empowered to act positively. We follow and train in Therapeutic Thinking, a whole school approach to behaviour management, which discourages restrictive physical intervention in all but the most serious or extreme cases in which a child poses a risk to themselves or others.

## **Links with Other Schools**

Inclusive links with other schools are on-going for all classes at Mountjoy School. These Inclusive links include reciprocal visits with Primary and Secondary schools, and taking part in joint projects with local and national schools.

Some pupils are able to attend lessons in a mainstream school. Although rare, it is possible for pupils to be 'dual registered' if this is seen as the best way to meet need. We also work closely with TADSS, The Teaching Alliance of Dorset Special Schools.

## **Student Placements at Mountjoy**

Mountjoy offers vocational experience opportunities to students from a variety of schools and further education establishments. Students attend for regular and specific periods of time to work alongside Mountjoy staff, in order to gain experience in connection with their own courses and career aspirations.

## **Equal Opportunities**

At Mountjoy School we believe in the moral, as well as the legal entitlement, of all pupils and staff to have equality of access to teaching, learning, resources and opportunities, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation (please see Equal Opportunities Policy). In all activities, positive attitudes towards, and respect for, difference, diversity and individuality will be promoted. Resources and subject plans are differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils and will reflect and celebrate worldwide cultures as well as those of the local community. We have a Gold Unicef Rights Respecting Schools Award.

## **SEND Policy and Safeguarding**

Mountjoy is a school that ensures strong safeguarding practices. As a Special School, we are aware that the young people who attend Mountjoy School may be particularly vulnerable, due to possible physical, cognitive, communication, sensory and/or intimate care needs. We work safely together in a supportive atmosphere, within an ethos of open, supportive and constructive challenge.

## **Further Information**

The schools' **complaint procedures** are set out in the school prospectus. A pupil's class teacher, or Family Liaison Officer, and wider team, will work closely with parents at all stages in a young person's education, and should be the first port of call in case of any difficulty.

The school will provide information about support to all parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs. All of our parents/carers can have access to the support afforded to them through liaison with the Dorset Parent Carer Council for independent support and advice or other organisations such as SENDIASS.