



Hotspur

Bulletin

Friday 21st September 2018

Dear Parents and Carers,

Today has had its challenges. We started the day with no Internet connection and then were part of the massive local power cut which threatened lunches and plunged classrooms into darkness. The fire alarms went off which we initially thought was due to the power cut but was more likely to have been caused by water leaking through roof tiles that were broken by thieves stealing lead from our roof last week. When power returned we were without internet connection again. Despite that school has been remarkably calm and children have been very sensible.

Meat-Free Mondays

Last academic year the School Council requested that we implemented Meat-Free Mondays. We agreed to trial this and have a referendum at the end of the summer term, which we did. The School Council decided the terms of the referendum and ensured that the count was carried out properly. Our Facebook page received a range of comments on this – as with most things we do in school some people were very much in favour and others were not. For the first time I actually turned off the notifications during the summer holidays as some of the comments seemed a little disproportionate. This included an accusation of a fascist regime that imposed food choices on children and other less inflammatory remarks that charged us with forcing children to eat vegetarian food. I had two specific thoughts on this:

- The change was in response to a request from School Councillors who are democratically elected by their peers. The trial period was followed by a vote in favour of continuing Meat-Free Mondays. People do not always like the outcomes of referendums and might want to redesign the question or eligible electorate afterwards. This process therefore seemed to offer relevant learning for our children. I can't accept that it was evidence of a dictatorship.
- Comments about 'forcing children to eat vegetarian food' also seemed a little unnecessary. By having a menu children are to some extent forced or restricted to certain choices. That these might include a margarita pizza or cheesy pasta is not really imposing an alien or objectionable cuisine on our pupils. I presume that we don't have any children who eat just meat exclusively? Consequently they all eat 'vegetarian' food at times. One meal a week without meat is not going to harm children – indeed many would argue it will be beneficial.

An interesting addition to all of this is that the City Council have now decided to provide a meat-free menu on Mondays across the City's schools – so this is what all school lunch children will eat. A vote against Meat-Free Mondays in our referendum would have necessitated us asking for a special exemption from the council menus at Hotspur – which would have surprised many people! I can imagine the headlines – 'Hard-line Hotspur Carnivores Demand Meat on Mondays' – quite different to the reputation we have had in the past as the 'Hotspur Hippies'.

Miles Wallis-Clarke

Headteacher



Events next week

Monday

- 5B Anne Frank Exhibition at Byker Community Centre (am)
- Y5 Art Afternoon

Tuesday

- 5Y Anne Frank Exhibition at Byker Community Centre (Pm)
- Y5/6 Football at Walker Riverside Academy

Wednesday

- Year 6 Safety Works Visit (am)

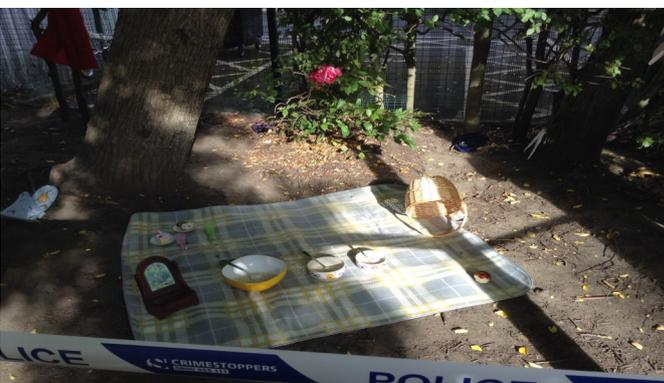
Thursday

- 09:15 Reception Tours for Sept 2019

Friday

- 08:45-10:00—Family Coffee Morning

Year 6 children enjoying the new reading area they are busy developing in Unit 3



Year 2's messy picnic was the stimulus for their work this week

Golden Children This Week



Data Collection and Parental Consent Forms

Annual data collection sheets and parental consent forms are being sent home with children today. These are important so that we can ensure we hold the most up to date information about your child. Please complete and return to the school office by Friday 28th September.

The parental consent forms are not ordinarily sent out annually as the information stands for the duration of your child's time at Hotspur, however, this year the form has been updated in light of new data protection legislation. If you wish to change any of your contact details or permissions at any other time, please complete new forms at the school office as we are required to have written consent.

After School Clubs

Thank you to everyone for returning the forms to take part in after school clubs this term. We have had a massive response and certain clubs have proved really popular. Cookery, Coding Club, Creative writing and Multi-Skills in particular, all have a waiting list. Letters have gone out to those children who have a place this term. Coding Club will start Tuesday 25th for the 1st group and letters will be sent out nearer the time for the remaining groups of children.

