

The Stepney Star

Stepney Primary School



A Small School With Great Expectations

Weekly Newsletter
Week: Easter March 2010
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Sierra Leone Visit

Last week, as part of the Global Schools Partnership, which is funded by the British Council, Mr Browning visited our partnership school: the Industrial and Cooperative Preparatory Primary School in the Wellington district of Freetown.

“My visit to the school in Sierra Leone was certainly an eye-opener. On the first Monday morning, I had the surreal experience of teaching in a mud-floored building with a corrugated iron roof and no amenities. The school had no electricity, running water or toilets to speak of. All hundred pupils were taught in one room, which was sectioned off by chalk boards hanging from flimsy wooded frames. There were few resources.

Unlike our English classrooms, with their computers, interactive whiteboards, carpets, modern furnishings and heating, this was the exact opposite. The children started writing in their tatty exercise books, but the pages soon became dusty. The chil-

dren sat on rickety benches and leaned on equally dubious desks. All lessons were in English, which is the main language of the country, although Krio is spoken by the majority of people.

Despite the poverty, all of the staff and pupils were so friendly and prepared to share their meagre resources with me. I had to adjust to being called ‘Uncle Paul’ as the terms Auntie and Uncle were used for all the teachers!

I had the opportunity to see the neighbourhood, visit people’s houses and sample life from the local’s perspective, rather than as a tourist. Unlike other tropical parts of the Earth, which are geared up for tourism, Sierra Leone is definitely not. As the seventh poorest country in the World and still recovering from years of incredible brutality during a civil war, the country has a long way to go. Traditions of polygamy have resulted in extended families with many children. Only a few can attend school, so there are scores of children who are on the streets or tips.

Rubbish lines all the streets; there are few metalled roads with most being little more than rough tracks. For a capital city there are few imposing buildings, apart from the Parliament, Courts and High Commis-

sion. All this compounded to give us feelings of guilt and sadness for the people. I had joined the headteachers from Pearson and Collingwood primary schools and we all came away with a sense of the enormity of the situation. There were many positives, including the eagerness of the Sierra Leonians to make links with us. There are many things we hope to do in the coming months and years. What an experience!”

Mr Browning

Year 2/3 Assembly

Another brilliant assembly was given by Miss Atkinson’s and Miss Baitson’s classes on Thursday. We learned about different types of penguin, including their habitats and main characteristics. There was wonderfully clear speaking from all the children. A thoroughly professional performance from all concerned.

Chicks!

After Easter the Foundation Stage Children will be having some chicks in their classroom. In order to pay for them, the pupils have been doing some fundraising. Many thanks for those who have supported us, including the family who sent us £20 to kick start the appeal. We know this family didn’t want this publicising but we are very grateful to them.

Easter Holidays

School closes at 3.15pm on Friday 26th March and re-opens on Tuesday 13th April at 8.55am.

Rugby League Draw

The winning draw for the next Hull FC match was Tegan in year 5.

What the children need next week

Foundation Stage PE kits Monday and Friday.

Year 1 Bookworm on Friday morning. 8.55 –9.20. PE kit Monday.

Year 2/3A PE Kits Monday & Wednesday

Year 2/3B PE Kits Tuesday & Wednesday

Year 4/5B PE kits Wednesday please.

Year 4/5N PE kits Wed/Friday.

Year 6 PE kits Tuesday.

EVENTS FOR THE WEEK AND MENU

Monday

Art Club-Year 2-3 (creative room at 12.30pm)

Horse and Pony years 2,3,4 &5

Today's Menu Braised Sausages, with Onion Gravy, potato wedges, mixed vegetables. **Dessert** Jam Sponge & Custard. **Vegetarian Option** Vegetarian Sausages

Tuesday

Gymnastics, Years 4,5, & 6

Today's Menu Roast Pork Steaks & Gravy, Roast Potatoes, mashed Swede & Carrots. **Dessert** Chocolate Crackle & custard. **Vegetarian Option** Vegetable Chow Mein

Wednesday

Needlecraft 3.15pm—4.15p

Today's menu Minced Beef & Potato Pie, Mashed potato, broccoli and carrots. **Dessert** Rice Pudding & Peaches. **Vegetarian Option** Cheese & Tomato Arrabiatti with Penne

Thursday

Steel Drums (year 6 small room) 12.30pm
Athletics years 1, 2,3,4,5,& 6 3.15pm-4.15pm,
Cookery Club (staffroom) 3.15pm—4.15pm

Today's menu Roast Chicken, Boiled potatoes, Savoy cabbage & carrots. **Dessert** Fruit Flapjack & Custard. **Vegetarian option** Curried Vegetable Pasty

Friday

Today's Menu Breaded Fish, Chips and Peas. **Dessert** Hungarian Chocolate Biscuit **Veg option** Vegetable Risotto.

Always available Flavoured Bread, Yoghurt or Fresh fruit, fruit Juice, milk or water.