

School dinner blog ban U-turn

Today a Scottish council saw common sense and reversed a decision it made 24 hours earlier banning a schoolgirl from posting her pictures of her school dinners on her blog *Neverseconds*. Martha Payne, nine, was celebrating with her father after being inundated with support for her cause. Argyll and Bute council performed the astonishing U-turn, just hours after issuing a rambling, and defiant statement, defending its decision while attacking the nine-year-old for her critical blog. Insisting there was no room for censorship, Roddy McCuish, the SNP leader, today announced the ban had been overturned amid mounting public criticism, including on Twitter, the micro-blogging site. He told BBC Radio 4's World at One programme: "There's no place for censorship in Argyll and Bute Council and there never has been and there never will be." He added, "I've just instructed officials to immediately withdraw the ban on pictures from the school dining hall. It's a good thing to do, to change your mind, and I've certainly done that." Mr McCuish said there was "absolutely no place" for newspaper reporting attacking school dinner ladies, but agreed "100%" this criticism was not directed at Martha.

His dramatic intervention came after celebrity British chef Jamie Oliver led the public backlash against its ban, which came to light after the *Scottish Daily Record* published a story under the headline "Time to fire the dinner ladies..." Mr Oliver posted a message of support to the nine-year-old. He asked others to support her cause. They did by the thousands... So far her blog has received more than 4.1 million hits and sparked debate about the state of school dinners across the globe. By this afternoon Martha's blog, which is also raising money for school children in Malawi, had raised more than £45,000 (€56,250) for charity. She has now raised enough money to build a kitchen shelter in a school in Malawi.

Previous to the U-turn by the council Martha from Lochgilphead in Scotland, was said to be devastated by the sudden ban. Her father Dave, 39, was originally angry at the "unfortunate" decision to ban her continuing her blog. By mid morning today this story was the No 1 trending topic in Britain. The question is - could you or your child live on a pizza slice, a croquette, sweetcorn and a cupcake for lunch?

Category: Food / Blogs / School dinners

Level: Intermediate / Upper intermediate

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EXERCISES

1. School dinners: Think of three things you remember about school dinners. Go round the room swapping details with others.

2. Dictation: The teacher will read four to six lines of the article slowly and clearly. Students will write down what they hear. The teacher will repeat the passage slowly again. Self-correct your work from page one - filling in spaces and correcting mistakes. Be honest with yourself on the number of errors. Advise the teacher of your total number of errors. Less than five is very good. Ten is acceptable. Any more is room for improvement! More than twenty - you need to do some work!

3. Reading: The students should now read the article aloud, swapping readers every paragraph.

4. Vocabulary: Students should now look through the article and underline any vocabulary they do not know. Look in dictionaries. Discuss and help each other out. The teacher will go through and explain any unknown words or phrases.

5. The article: Students should look through the article with the teacher.

- a) What is the article about?
- b) What do you think about the article?

6. School dinner survey: First, write down five things you ate at school for lunch. Then go round the room comparing meals eaten? Find out who actually ate school dinners or went home etc... Discuss together. What are your conclusions?

Did you...	What you ate at school for lunch
1 Eat school dinners	1 _____
2 Go home for lunch	2 _____
3 Bring sandwiches	3 _____
4 Go without lunch	4 _____
5 Other	5 _____

The teacher will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

7. Let's think! In pairs. On the board write as many words as you can to do with **School dinners**. *One-two minutes*. Compare with other teams. Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

8. Let's roleplay 1: In pairs/groups. One of you is the interviewer. The others are one of the following people. You are in the *Discussion FM* radio studio in Scotland. Today's interview is about: *School dinner blog ban U-turn*. *10 minutes*.

1 Roddy McCuish	3 Jamie Oliver
2 Martha Payne	4 A child in Malawi

The teacher will choose some pairs to roleplay their interview in front of the class.

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9. **Let's roleplay 2:** In pairs. You are in the school canteen. Start a conversation about 'School dinners'. *5-minutes.*

10. **Presentation:** In pairs, groups or individually: Prepare in class or at home a two minute presentation on: **Martha Payne's blog:** '*Neverseconds' and her fund raising efforts to raise money to build a kitchen shelter in Malawi.* Stand at the front of the class to give your presentation to the class. The class can vote on the best presentation.

11. **Let's do 'The Article Quiz':** Have the students quiz each other in pairs. They score a point for each correct answer and half a point each time they have to look at the article for help. See who can get the highest score!

Student A

- 1) Who is Jamie Oliver?
- 2) Who is Roddy McCuish?
- 3) Who is Martha Payne?
- 4) Who did a U-turn?
- 5) Name the paper.

Student B

- 1) Who banned what and why?
- 2) How much has been raised for charity?
- 3) What is the money raised going to be used for?
- 4) Describe the lunch.
- 5) Sum up what Mr McCuish said.

12. **Jamie Oliver...** In pairs/groups. Discuss what you know about him.

13. **Let's write an e-mail:** Write and send a 200 word e-mail to your teacher about: **School dinner U-turn.** Your e-mail can be read out in class.

14. **Sentence starters:** Finish these sentence starters. Correct your mistakes. Compare what other people have written.

- a) Jamie Oliver _____
- b) School dinners _____
- c) The ban _____

SPEAKING

Let's discuss! School dinners in my country

Allow 10-15 minutes – As a class / small groups / pairs / 1 to 1

20 things about school dinners in my country today and when you were at school
--

The teacher can moderate the session.

DISCUSSION

Student A questions

- 1) Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- 2) What do you think of Martha Payne's blog?
- 3) What do you think of her fund raising efforts?
- 4) When you were at school what did you think of school dinners? Explain.
- 5) How many kitchens do you think now might be built as a result of Martha's efforts?

Student B questions

- 1) What do you think about what you read?
- 2) Have you learnt anything in today's English lesson?
- 3) Is eating a school dinner a good idea? Explain.
- 4) What did you eat for lunch today?
- 5) Did you like this discussion?

BLOG CORNER

Bloggers questions – Ask your classmates!

Think of five questions to ask your partner about blogging.

Question 1 _____

Question 2 _____

Question 3 _____

Question 4 _____

Question 5 _____

School dinner questions – Ask your classmates!

Think of five questions to ask your partner about school dinners.

Question 1 _____

Question 2 _____

Question 3 _____

Question 4 _____

Question 5 _____

GAP FILL: READING: edited.

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

School dinner blog ban U-turn

Today a Scottish council saw common sense and reversed a (1)_____ it made 24 hours earlier banning a schoolgirl from posting her pictures of her school dinners on her blog *Neverseconds*. Martha Payne, nine, was celebrating with her father after being inundated with support for her (2)_____. Argyll and Bute council performed the astonishing (3)_____, just hours after issuing a rambling, and (4)_____ statement, defending its decision while attacking the nine-year-old for her critical (5)_____. Insisting there was no room for censorship, Roddy McCuish, the SNP leader, today announced the (6)_____ had been overturned amid mounting public (7)_____, including on Twitter, the micro-blogging site. He told BBC Radio 4's World at One programme: "There's no place for (8)_____ in Argyll and Bude Council and there never has been and there never will be."

U-turn
censorship
ban
defiant
cause
decision
criticism
blog

His dramatic intervention came after celebrity British chef Jamie Oliver led the public (1)_____ against its ban, which came to light after the *Scottish Daily Record* published a story under the headline "Time to fire the dinner ladies..." Mr Oliver posted a message of support to the nine-year-old. He asked others to support her cause. They did by the thousands... So far her blog has received more than 4.1 million (2)_____ and sparked debate about the state of (3)_____ dinners across the globe. By this afternoon Martha's blog, which is also raising (4)_____ for school children in Malawi, had raised more than £45,000 (€56,250) for (5)_____. She has now raised enough money to build a (6)_____ shelter in a school in Malawi. (7)_____ to the U-turn by the council Martha from Lochgilphead in Scotland, was said to be devastated by the (8)_____ ban. Her father Dave, 39, was originally angry at the "unfortunate" decision to ban her continuing her blog.

kitchen
previous
school
money
hits
sudden
backlash
charity

GAP FILL: LISTENING: edited

Listen and fill in the spaces.

School dinner blog ban U-turn

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Insisting there was no room for censorship, Roddy McCuish, the SNP leader, today announced the ban _____ amid mounting public criticism, including on Twitter, the micro-blogging site. He told BBC Radio 4's World at One programme: "There's no _____ in Argyll and Bute Council and there never has been and _____."

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Previous to the U-turn by the council Martha from Lochgilphead in Scotland, was said to be devastated _____. Her father Dave, 39, was originally angry at the "unfortunate" decision to ban her continuing her blog. By mid morning today this story was the No 1 _____ Britain. The question is - could you or your child live on a pizza slice, a croquette, sweetcorn and _____?

GRAMMAR: edited

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

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Today a Scottish council saw common sense (1)___ reversed a decision it made 24 hours earlier banning a schoolgirl from posting (2)___ pictures of her school dinners (3)___ her blog *Neverseconds*. Martha Payne, nine, was celebrating with her father after being inundated with support for her cause. Argyll and Bute council performed (4)___ astonishing U-turn, just hours after issuing a rambling, and defiant statement, defending (5)___ decision while attacking the nine-year-old for her critical blog. Insisting there was no room (6)___ censorship, Roddy McCuish, the SNP leader, today announced the ban had been overturned amid mounting public criticism, including on Twitter, the micro-blogging site. (7)___ told BBC Radio 4's World at One programme: "There's no place for censorship (8)___ Argyll and Bute Council and there never has been and there never will be."

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SPELLING TEST

The teacher will ask the class individually to spell the following words that are in the article. Afterwards, check your answers with your teacher, using the following ratings: **Pass = 12, Good = 15, Very good = 18, Excellent = 20**

1	decision	11	previous
2	defiant	12	backlash
3	schoolgirl	13	celebrity
4	inundated	14	intervention
5	council	15	originally
6	croquette	16	immediately
7	cupcake	17	blog
8	kitchen	18	withdraw
9	censorship	19	absolutely
10	astonishing	20	criticism

LINKS

<http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/2012/06/15/council-ban-school-dinners-blogger-martha-payne-from-taking-pictures-then-do-a-u-turn-after-outcry-86908-23896283/>
<http://neverseconds.blogspot.co.uk/>
<http://www.justgiving.com/neverseconds>
<http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/2012/06/15/read-the-martha-payne-article-that-made-council-bosses-overreact-and-ban-her-blog-86908-23896447/>
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-18454800>

ANSWERS

GAP FILL: School dinner blog ban U-turn: Today a Scottish council saw common sense and reversed a **decision** it made 24 hours earlier banning a schoolgirl from posting her pictures of her school dinners on her **blog** *Neverseconds*. Martha Payne, nine, was celebrating with her father after being inundated with support for her cause. Argyll and Bute council performed the astonishing **U-turn**, just hours after issuing a rambling, and **defiant** statement, defending its decision while attacking the nine-year-old for her critical blog. Insisting there was no room for censorship, Roddy McCuish, the SNP leader, today announced the **ban** had been overturned amid mounting public **criticism**, including on Twitter, the micro-blogging site. He told BBC Radio 4's World at One programme: "There's no place for **censorship** in Argyll and Bute Council and there never has been and there never will be."

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