

**The
Economist**

**EDUCATIONAL
FOUNDATION**

Noel Park Primary School

Graveney School

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BURNET NEWS CLUB 2019-20 • ISSUE 1

HONG KONG IN CRISIS

SHOULD BRITAIN INTERVENE?



**BURNET
NEWS CLUB**

For this Issue, the Burnet News Club reacted to the unfolding protests against the Chinese and Hong Kong governments. The Issue culminated in a decision about whether the British government should intervene.

SEE EDITOR'S PICKS
bit.ly/HK-EP

Throughout the Issue, students confidently used their newly acquired knowledge of the region and its history to support their opinions on the past, present and future of the crisis. In this edition of Hub Highlights, we showcase a selection of the best comment and analysis of the events.

Pick of the points

entertaining_strawberry

Birchwood C of E Primary School

If we make another agreement, either saying we keep Hong Kong or the laws should change, China is going to restrict something from us as well.

sincere_piccolo

Bruche Primary School

Britain put them into this mess by making a deal for China and for Britain to do a one country two systems, which we thought was right for Hong Kong and it wasn't.

cheerful_photograph

The Sherwood School

Freedom has a definition and nobody can change that. Nobody should.

and this just isn't right. A promise is a promise, after all. Just because one party has decided not to stick to it, doesn't mean we should break it too.

We strongly believe that everyone deserves at least basic human rights. Here are just a few things that are going on in China that make us wholeheartedly side with Hong Kong:

- China has been criticised on multiple occasions for not protecting human rights. They say that the goal is 'a people's democratic dictatorship' and 'democracy' but this is so far from the current situation that it seems almost impossible.
- Freedom of speech is prohibited in China. Censorship is the norm, with newspapers and television channels being controlled by the government. If anything is said against the government, there are severe punishments that could include going to prison!
- China's courts are run by the government, meaning that fair trials are a rarity (99.9% of people who are tried for a crime are found guilty!)

We simply have too much of a shared history to just be ignored. Our country ruled Hong Kong as a colony for 150 years and 119,990 people who were born in Hong Kong now live in Britain. Imagine how these people are feeling as they watch the country they love being torn to shreds. The majority of people currently living in Hong Kong do not identify as Chinese citizens, with 71% of these same people going as far as to say that they do not feel proud of their connections to China.

If nobody stands up to China, they will keep trying to get away with more and more and eventually the people of Hong Kong will lose what they value so much completely. With your standing and position in Parliament, you can do more than just protest.

We recommend involving the UN more, as we know how much they value human rights. No reasonable country wants to be seen as doing terrible things and we strongly believe that, despite everything, the Chinese government are still reasonable people.

We implore you to act now, before the violence turns even more brutal and leads to the loss of more innocent lives. ■



Dave Coulson Photography / Shutterstock.com

brilliant_blackberry and fairminded_cat

Dear Catherine West MP

PRIMARY SCHOOL

Noel Park Primary School

DEAR MS. West,
 We are writing to persuade you that the UK needs to get involved in the situation in Hong Kong, and quickly. In the agreement, China and Britain both promised to ensure that the way of life and the economy in Hong Kong remained unchanged until 2047. At this moment, we can only assume that China have decided that it can't stick to that promise



Dave Coulson Photography / Shutterstock.com

beloved_chocolate

How far should free speech stretch?

SECONDARY SCHOOL
Graveney School

My opinion is that, in most scenarios, people should be able to say almost whatever they want, however in some cases it can be harmful to others and themselves.

1. If what is said is discriminatory or prejudiced in some way. If somebody says something racist,

sexist, xenophobic or homophobic, this could cause the recipient to be discriminated against by others (especially if the person who first said it was important), causing them a lot of upset and offending them, which could be bad for their self-esteem and mental health.

2. If what is said is provocative. If somebody says something that enrages people, or provokes, them, this could possibly cause them harm. This is because the subject may get angry, possibly putting the other person in danger.

3. Saying things that are classified. For many politicians and people working for the government, police, or justice system, they are told classified information. If they could say whatever they want, this classified information may be leaked, and this could cause political uproar – though the leaking may be beneficial to the public, it could be bad for the global position of the country and ruin international relations if other countries disagreed with what was leaked, or if concerned them.

Free speech is a good thing as well. Many people have changed the world for the better by speaking out. For example, Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela and other activists against segregation in the US and the apartheid in South Africa all helped to end racism in these countries, and improve the lives of many BAME (Black and Minority Ethnic) people. Just one person can change laws and people's views, positively. ■

succinct_leaves

Should citizens of Hong Kong emigrate?

PRIMARY SCHOOL
Braiswick Primary School

I have seen a lot of news and information about the escalating protests and it got me thinking if citizens of Hong Kong should emigrate? I think that people in Hong Kong should decide whether they should emigrate or not and it isn't needed for us to get involved because I think that Hong Kong should make their own choices and – even if we think we're being helpful – we shouldn't make them for them.

I think that lots of people would want to stay in their home country – they wouldn't want to leave just because other people are showing violence. For some people it might be too expensive to get a form of transport out of Hong Kong and they might think that nowhere would accept them. Also, lots of people won't want to go as they could be afraid of police or the Chinese catching them. Of course, there is a risk in trying to leave but those who do emigrate will just hope for the best. In leaving Hong Kong, there is

danger that could be waiting for them and you can't ignore that. If they have family there or their family has lived there for generations they don't want to ruin it by emigrating to another country.

In summary, I think the choice is in the hands of the Hongkongers and Britain doesn't need to make that choice for them. Even though I understand all these opinions on why they wouldn't leave Hong Kong, I think the best idea would be to leave because they need to avoid danger. Leaving and finding a better life could be the better option, but it is not our place to change their minds. ■

Comment

vibrant_tiger
Woodhill Primary School

Imagine if you were made to leave your country over a disagreement, would that be fair? The people of Hong Kong shouldn't be forced to move, they should be treated fairly, and should have their rights in their own country. Other countries should help so that the Hong Kong people are not turned into refugees.

creative_sparrow

Another new world order?

SECONDARY SCHOOL
The Ruth Gorse Academy

CARRIE LAM'S reason for banning face masks is to curb out the most violent rioters. She stated that 'other countries do the same' to justify her decision.

In most of these cases, there's no need to hide your face. However, this is China, and with their massive surveillance operation, most people will now be fearing for their lives because even the most peaceful protester will be seen radical. It could deter some people from going on further marches – which is what China wants, of course. However it may fire up the defiant ones.

I fear that the fate of HK people could end up just like the Uighurs (pronounced 'wee-gurs'). Their situation is shocking because there are more than 1 million Uighur Muslims from Xinjiang, China (from as young as 2 to the elderly) innocently locked away to be brainwashed into becoming more 'Chinese'. My evidence the BBC News, and their documentary: 'A New World Order', containing detailed testimonies

of the people taken away, and parents that have lost their young children and many old and frail grandparents were not spared either. It's a shocking and cruel and appalling abuse of human rights and yet the world still continues to deepen their trade links with China. This is China's cruel way to eradicate people's language and culture. China tells the world it's a 're-education' camp but in my definition it's a prison.

Taking citizens to be placed in a camp, just like the poor Uighurs, is much easier to do so without the face mask. ■

Comment

free_iceberg**Ormiston Sudbury Academy**

Many other countries such as Canada and France have banned face masks in protests to help them decipher who is being violent and who isn't. But if they ban face masks they will lose their freedom of speech. Face-masks help protect their identity if they're caught on different news organisations, and means the police in Hong Kong will struggle to find out who the main protesters are.

steady_harmonica

How is technology holding 'One Country, Two Systems' back?

SECONDARY SCHOOL
Highdown School

WHEN THE 'One country, two systems' agreement was introduced, technology was not what it is today, or as it will be in 2047. So how can the technology developed since the early 1980s affect how well the agreement works?

China's stance on censorship has not changed much. Because of Hong Kong's laws on freedom, censorship is not as much of an issue there. In China, internet censorship means that a lot of websites allowed in Hong Kong would be inaccessible in China. A noticeable example of this censorship being used is on the online platform Blizzard, where players have been removed for talking about Hong Kong. Also, "One country, two Systems" was introduced when online news wasn't the main way to receive news and learn information. However, as the internet grew through phones and computers, the world became more reliant on online news

websites. Hong Kong, because of its 'high autonomy' allowed by China, has the same dependency on this as most of the world, whilst China has some highly controversial censorship laws.

Technological freedom is one of the things holding 'one country, two systems' back from being a working system. The population of Hong Kong doesn't want Chinese laws to be put in place, regardless of whether they are technological or not. We know this from the outrage that the proposed extradition law caused. And as 2047 grows nearer, Hong Kong and its rapid growth of technology could easily be stunted by the reversion to Chinese law. And Hong Kong is vital to the Chinese economy. ■

