

Heathfield Knoll School
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I have been a pupil at Heathfield Knoll School since the summer of 2021, and I remember being driven onto the drive leading up to the school for the first time and having to stop in our tracks. There, staring wide-eyed at us was a Muntjac Deer. It was at this point that I knew that this was the right school for me. Our main school complex is surrounded by greenbelt, woodland and a rather substantial, recently purchased, meadow area and due to this we have a considerable amount of biodiversity. This area being purchased shows our commitment to our environmental agenda. It's not just Muntjacs, but Foxes, Tawny Owls and a whole family of Badgers. Since joining the school I have, as part of a regime put into place by the school's Eco Committee, set up a remote camera on site with which we can monitor our wildlife, and find out what happens after all the pupils exit the grounds in the evening.

It became immediately obvious that these sensitive mammals and birds were not present all the time, not because they are nocturnal, but because they are sensitive to noise. There seems to be no rhyme nor reason as to when the foxes decide to amble by our remote camera, but during break time, when all the pupils are enjoying themselves outside (often letting out a fair bit of noise), the foxes, badgers and muntjac alike cease to appear. As soon as it is lesson time, the wonderful fauna that occupies our site pluck up the courage to venture out of their hides once more.

Clearly noise, even in its smallest quantities, has a negative impact on the wildlife around us. Imagine the impact a quarry would have!

Students young and old come to our school from miles around, not just to make the most of the education we offer, but to enjoy our idyllic location. The indenture of the quarry would lead to noise pollution and air pollution, damaging our grounds and making us less able to use the wonderful natural resources that we have available to us, not to mention potentially disrupting our education. Education for which our school is prized.

Our grounds and relaxed learning setting are some of the main factors in what attract people to our school. It is our unique selling point, which in a difficult market is crucial to our long term survival. In a time when small schools are closing, the sector is facing VAT & National Insurance increases, can Heathfield Knoll School ride out a quarry on its doorstep as well? Just the perception of having a quarry next door to a school that

sells itself as delivering a calm, tranquil, environmentally focused education could be enough to stop people walking through the door to look around. I have friends that come in from as far afield as Cheltenham. They have the choice to go elsewhere, but our unique environment and small class size offering makes them feel safe and they thrive accordingly. Would they even make that first drive up to us to look around if after us saying we cherish all these environmental ideas they open google maps and see there is a quarry over the road?

~~We understand you would like~~
we would like to invite you to visit
our School when you are in the area,
So that ~~we can~~ you can experience
our wonderful environment for
yourself