



CHESSWOOD JUNIOR SCHOOL

Home of Bright Sparks

Chesswood Road Worthing West Sussex BN11 2AA

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Wednesday, 27 January 2021

School Opening Update & Lighter Learning

Dear Parent,

I am writing to confirm some important information regarding school opening and learning arrangements for children and families.

February Half Term

In line with government guidance, I am writing to confirm that Chesswood Junior School will be fully closed over February Half Term; 15-19th February. It is unfortunate that, at this stage, government continues to refuse to reimburse staffing costs for Easter 2020 and May 2020 opening, despite every effort to bring this to their attention and the impact this additional unexpected staffing expenditure will have on the school budget.

INSET 10th March

Our planned INSET day will continue as planned on Wednesday 10th March. This has been a difficult decision but, on balance, we are keeping it as planned to avoid placing it later in the year when the school will be fully open again and we will want to get back on to our catch-up programme. Chesswood Junior School will be closed. However, if families with a critical worker parent, require an INSET child-care space due to working commitments please email kbrown@chesswood.w-sussex.sch.uk. There is a charge for the child-care provision of £25. The child-care provision will open between 7:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.

Consolidation and Lighter Learning Days

As you might imagine, staff at Chesswood, like so many other schools, have been working tirelessly to build and then sustain both the on site and home learning provision. We are expecting these arrangements to be in place for an extended period of time. Our estimate, and the timing we have organised for currently is the beginning of the summer term. On that basis, it is important that our staffing organisation is sustainable and staff are well looked after so they can continue to support families in the incredible way they have so far. On Friday 12th February and Friday 26th February, we will have a lighter learning day in school and at home. There will be no English or maths set for the day. Instead, children and families will have space to:

- Enter competition for 2020-2021 Computer Screen Background – see below
- Review work so far, making adjustments and improvements to those pieces.
- Complete any pieces of work that may have been missed either from daily or home learning
- Continue with reading practice and IXL skills development

Computer Screen Background Competition

We have not run this competition in recent years, however we think it would be a great time to run it again. We are asking all children to get involved.

The Brief

Use plain A4 paper, landscape orientation



NOT portrait



Create a future Chesswood Junior School computer background.



It must include:

- Dream Aspire Achieve
- The school logo
- 2020-21

It could include a line or words from the Chesswood community code.

The design should be simple bold and clear – see the winning examples from previous years. It may be drawn with colouring pencils, felt tips or painted.

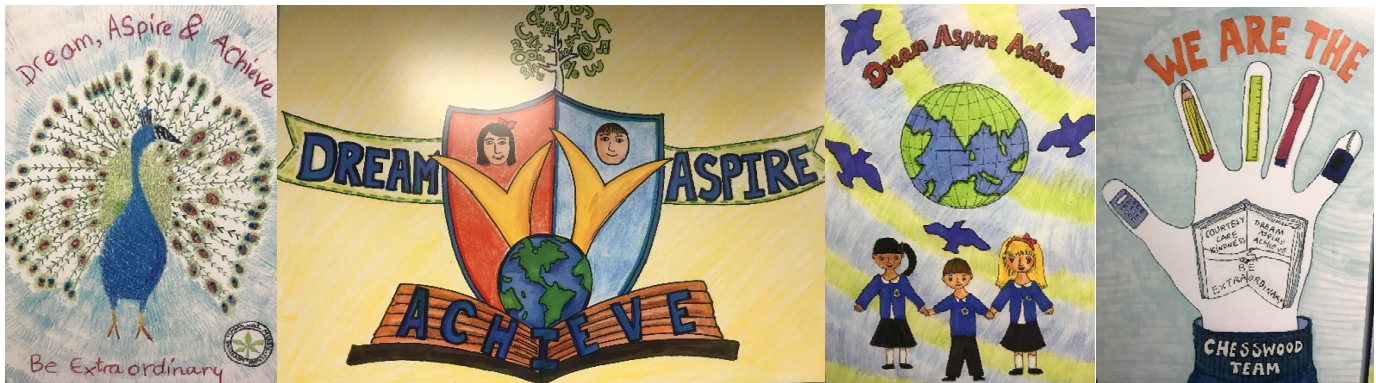
To be considered as part of the competition all entries must be submitted by 12:00 p.m. Monday 1st March. Children in school will hand a hard copy to their class teacher. Children at home will photograph their picture and email to office@chesswood.w-sussex.sch.uk . Judging will take place by Friday 5th March.

The winning entries

As ever, there will be a winner, it is a competition after all. The winning design will be placed on school computers until the next time the competition is undertaken, which is likely to be in June/July ready for the September 2021.

- The overall winner will receive 100 house points and an art gift
- The winners from each year group will receive 75 house points and an art gift
- Highly commended entries will receive 50 house points

All winners and highly commended entries will be included in the competition entry book with children's names. The book will be sent out to the whole school community.



IMPORTANT: Know when enough is enough for you and your child

We know so many children and families are working incredibly hard to be the best they can be in the most difficult of circumstances. Parents and children, particularly at home, simply cannot maintain high standards in everything, it is not sustainable and it would be daft to try – be kind to yourselves, prioritise and know when enough is enough – this is, in case you haven't noticed, a marathon, not a sprint 😊

We set learning tasks each day to cover a very wide range of abilities. It is important that families tailor the daily learning to suit themselves and their circumstances. DO NOT compare and contrast with other children and families, that is likely to be pointless as it will be comparing apples and oranges. Ensure, wherever possible, you and your child remain in a positive frame of mind and within your limits – this is NOT a time to push the boundaries of learning, it is a time of damage limitation, keeping things ticking over at home and broadly heading in the right direction.

We would like to clarify, as a general guide, prioritise English and maths and tasks that we have identified for submission to the class teacher, there are approximately 4 per week. Seek to complete half or more learning tasks over the course of the week, then determine what capacity and positivity there is for



completing further learning tasks given the many other competing demands working parents are juggling at this time. Possibly the best tip I could give to parents, is to set reasonable targets for your child and stick to them. Build trust so your child knows when they can stop; this may be time limited, number of questions answered, or the amount of writing completed – but ENSURE ANY TARGET IS GENUINELY IN YOUR CHILDS COMFORT ZONE – working out what can be achieved in that comfort zone is a critical factor in maintaining or returning to harmony for home learning. It is important for children to learn from where they are not where we would like them to be. Building enthusiasm and confidence for children is most successful when set on reasonable foundations for them. In the immortal words of Kenny Rogers, The Gambler, “You’ve got to know when to hold them, know when to fold them, know when to walk away and know when to run”, it might not be your taste in music but it has good advice for managing learning at home during a world pandemic 😊.

Ultimately, a focus on keeping good habits, maintaining a daily structure, keeping reasonable positive expectations (knowing that good is good enough) for yourself and your child is a fantastic achievement right now.

Remember, to stop and take a break before you (particularly parents!) break as a result of the competing demands placed on you – it is not fastest to the finish nor those that have complete the highest quality or the most tasks, it is that we all get there in one piece and ready accelerate progress for children when school is fully open again.

We are confident, despite all of the frustrations and school closures in the last year, that we, in partnership with families and children will be able to accelerate progress quickly once we are fully open. It will take time but children will bounce back, they always do when the conditions are right.

Half term Contact Tracing

This applies to children and families attending during the limited community opening period.

Schools remain responsible for contact tracing during the February half term. It is vital that parents continue to use the school COVID ALERT form throughout the school holidays to report the onset of symptoms and then the outcome of any test when it is known. School staff will contact trace and alert appropriate groups, should a test be found to be positive and when the symptoms started within 48 hours of Friday 12th February.:

HOME > PARENTS > COVID 19

<https://www.chesswood.w-sussex.sch.uk/page/?title=COVID+19&pid=330>

Finally,

My staff and I are genuinely proud to be part of the Chesswood school community and to be working with so many fantastic families overcoming the challenges that are being presented in such a positive and determined way. Please don't hesitate to get in contact should you need any help, guidance or support.

Yours faithfully,