



CHESSWOOD JUNIOR SCHOOL
Home of Bright Sparks
Chesswood Road Worthing West Sussex BN11 2AA
Head Teacher: Mr Andrew Jolley



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Thursday 9th December 2021

Dear Parent,

In recent days my office team, (who are without doubt the very best and most dedicated team, I could wish for) have been fielding an increasing number of challenging phone calls from and to parents. Whilst it is a small proportion and we will follow up with individual families, I am writing to all families to ensure we can be clear about expectations for courtesy, care and kindness when speaking or communicating with members of the Chesswood team.

I am writing to all families to request their understanding that our office team are following national guidance and or school medical policies when contacting parents. On that basis, whether it is COVID symptoms, a medical issue or an injury that the medical team have determined a child either needs to be collected or should not attend school on that day for a period of time, it is vital that all families accept their request politely and take action in a reasonable timeframe to collect their child. A reasonable timeframe would include travel time from a parent's current location, and knowing unless it is an acute emergency, other arrangements may need to be made, for instance to ensure you could leave work. However, if on a shopping trip then we would expect the shopping experience to end and their child put first.

My team have endured for instance whether a COVID symptom exist

- Bartering and negotiation
- Hostility and rudeness
- Aggression and threats

My team will always act with understanding and will seek to work in partnership with a family to place a child's needs first. They are the first to recognise that sending a child home or keeping them at home is likely to be challenging, inconvenient and disruptive in some measure. As a consequence, they are very careful about such decision making but once the decision has been taken it does need to be respected.

It is important that there is a common understanding that once the medical team have assessed a medical need or an injury and determined a course of action, they will contact parents and will rightly expect a positive discussion and support to place their child's needs first. With the behaviour described above from a minority of parents, it has not and will not change the decision, it simply delays the process, potentially places the child and others at further risk i.e. refusing to collect a child when they are coughing or have a high temperature; makes for a pretty rubbish day at work when trying to place children's needs first and ultimately can lead to arising safeguarding concerns where a parent or family does not prioritise their child's health and well-being.

Whilst bartering and negotiating will wear the team down; and hostility and rudeness brings the team down; any aggression and threats will lead to robust action this may include banning parents from the school premises. There is a zero-tolerance approach enforced in response to any aggression or threats from members of the community. We have developed clear guidance on controlling access to the school premises and this may be read at:

<https://www.chesswood.w-sussex.sch.uk/page/?title=Concerns+and+Complaints&pid=190>

In summary:

Parents and visitors will be warmly welcomed to the school premises as long as the following rules are followed:

- Act with courtesy, care and kindness to all other site users at all times
- Ensure behaviour is not reasonably perceived to be discriminatory, abusive, threatening or violent by any other site user, at any time.

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- Ensure any communication online (including any form of social media), telephone or in writing including email is not reasonably perceived to be discriminatory, abusive (including defamatory comments that may or may not have a specific named individual noted), threatening towards any member of the school staff, volunteers or governing body

We have a zero-tolerance approach to any discriminatory, abusive, threatening or violent behaviour towards any member of the school community, at any time either whilst on site, off site or on-line (in relation to the school community or individual/s in it). We will always take the strongest possible action in response to such behaviour.

If we could all return to the warm spirit of Christmas so clearly on show at the Winter Wonderland event this week (organised and led by the very same team who are now facing the challenging phone calls) that would be very welcome in the final days of term. The whole community can arrive feeling positive, respected and valued.

Best Wishes



Andrew Jolley, Head Teacher
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