



Tuesday, 01 March 2022

The Ukrainian Crisis – Supporting children’s Understanding

Dear Parent,

As you would imagine children are very aware of the current Ukrainian Invasion. Each individual child will be amassing a range of information from different sources – including the school playground. To ensure children can have information available that they can trust and rely on, I will be leading a school assembly tomorrow to support children’s understanding at an age-appropriate level. I have spent quite some time in the past day researching and gathering information that will help children’s understanding and importantly place it in perspective the invasion and the resulting crisis. In addition to information, we must also focus on positive relationships, we do have Russian families and children in our school and I want to ensure they continue to feel welcome, happy and confident in our school community, at all times i.e. we want to ensure that all children continue to show courtesy, care and kindness to everyone in our community.

I intend to explore the broad historic events from the second world war onwards, the geography of the current conflict, the use of sanctions and their effect – finance, sport, culture, the freedom to protest in democratic countries, World organisations such as the UN, news and fake news – judging whether information can be trusted, rules of war and leadership responsibility for war crimes i.e. the invasion, the careless use of weapons.

Parents may be assured that the assemblies will:

- show empathy to Russian citizens both in the UK and in Russia as not all Russians want their country to be at war either
- only include appropriate image
- focus on understanding events, reasons and consequences (broadly factual, unbiased information) from different perspectives
- Explore the complexity of choices leaders must take i.e. why not send armies from other countries and rely on financial, sporting and cultural sanctions – more people fighting rarely ends a fight rather fuels it.
- How children in school can share their love and support for children in Ukraine and child refugees escaping the conflict.

Ukrainian Blue and Yellow Days

For the remainder of the term – **EVERY WEDNESDAY**

- children will be encouraged to wear colours of Ukraine – **Blue and Yellow** at school. This may be as simple as a hair band to full blue and yellow clothing and anything in between. A clear demonstration of positive support by the whole community.
- staff will use symbolic items such as flags and balloons to support a short period of silence encouraging children to be thankful for the peace and safety they enjoy in England. We will also encourage children to think about children that don’t have that in



Ukraine and unsafe areas beyond.

Ukrainian School Support Project

We are encouraging all children to create a A4 poster, information leaflet (including how to deal with worries) or letter of support and understanding for Ukrainian children (Portrait or landscape). The posters may be collage, painted, coloured, computer generated – basically whatever you like. A theme of Blue and Yellow is encouraged. This project is about support, love, friendship and understanding NOT about hate. On that basis, any project submission **MUST** be focussed on positive support and information for the Ukrainian people. Please ensure that any entries do not have any graphic images, hurt or harm and that they would be appropriate for children to see.

We will place these on the web page dedicated to the Ukrainian Crises:

- HOME > LEARNING > ASSEMBLIES > PEOPLE, PLACES AND EVENTS ASSEMBLIES > UKRAINE CRISIS
- <https://www.chesswood.w-sussex.sch.uk/page/?title=Ukraine+Crisis&pid=1497&action=saved>

We will also use the external noticeboards to share a range of posters and letters beyond the school.

Please note on this weblink there is also a form should your child or family have any questions, worries, thoughts or feelings that they would like to be answered and they will be supported in the best way we know how.

Submissions should be children's best work and that takes time, therefore entries may be shared at any point during this half term. If the work is an electronic file please email:

head@chesswood.w-sussex.sch.uk

If the submission is hard copy, then children should take their work to the school office.

These are very difficult and confusing times for many, especially children who simply cannot comprehend or make sense of the situation without well intentioned support. We believe that addressing the issues and providing children with space to share and talk, along with space to reflect and learn more will provide the best route through difficult times and importantly will reduce their worries by answering their questions, queries and concerns.

If parents have any notable questions, concerns or complaints about any aspect of the school's approach to supporting children during this difficult time, we want to hear from you. In such circumstances, please email the head teacher: head@chesswood.w-sussex.sch.uk

Yours sincerely,