



# CHESSWOOD JUNIOR SCHOOL

**Home of Bright Sparks**

Chesswood Road Worthing West Sussex BN11 2AA

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## School Amalgamation Response Guide – Action Needed

Dear Parent,

I am writing to all families following the initial communication yesterday regarding the proposed school amalgamation. Since then, we have been approached to share our views and believe it is important to do this transparently with the whole community. The purpose of this letter is two-fold:

1. To confirm the importance of ALL families responding to this consultation as it will affect the majority now and in the future. We urge you to respond to this consultation.
2. To share the view of school governors and senior leaders in relation to the two options provided in the consultation.

**Please ensure you take 5-10 minutes to respond to this important consultation:**

<https://yourvoice.westsussex.gov.uk/worthing-primary-provision-review>



You will find a wide range of additional information on the dedicated school amalgamation web page and an online form where you are able to share questions, queries and concerns with school leaders about the models and the process:

HOME > SCHOOL INFO > SCHOOL AMALGAMATION

<https://www.chesswood.w-sussex.sch.uk/page/?title=School+Amalgamation&pid=1708>



In line with the West Sussex Education service under the direction of Paul Wagstaff; school governors and school leaders at Chesswood believe the most appropriate primary age school arrangements for this area of Worthing would be:

**One primary school across two sites, with one governing body.**

The above model provides very significant advantages for stability and therefore effective provision leading to the best school experience and achievement for ALL children. As such, **parents and families are advised to support the above model when responding to the consultation.** The model proposed significantly reduces duplication across individual schools and therefore ensures finite school funds can be used more effectively, providing greater capacity to provide direct early intervention and support for all. The opportunities, expertise, capacity, support and choices available in this model are significantly greater than the alternative below. Hence, a strong recommendation to support the model above for all parents and families.

**A Primary School on Chesswood Site and a separate independent Springfield Infant School**

Governors and school leaders believe the model of a primary school on the Chesswood site



with Springfield infant school continuing as a separate school with a separate governing body is a significantly less desirable and a significantly less effective model for children and families from September 2024. The West Sussex Education service wrote: "This option is not preferred by the Education Service as it would not benefit from the opportunities to secure consistency across the early years and Key Stage 1 as part of a single school with single governance, overall leadership, and common policies and approaches to supporting teaching, learning and children's experiences. It also risks fragmentation as all schools move towards the government's ambition for all schools to be a part of a strong Multi Academy Trust (MAT) partnership by 2030 and risks the potential of the two schools moving into different MATs. "

The rationale for dissuading parents and families from this model are very clear as it undermines all of the advantages of the one primary two site model.

It is important to be clear at this point that the above is in relation to the potential future models in this consultation and our considered and professional opinion of what is best for all families now and many years into the future. This will effectively be one new primary school in existing facilities with a newly formed leadership team determined by a future recruitment process of existing staff and a new governing body to represent families across all current schools.

It is independent of our strongly held belief that Chesswood, Lyndhurst and Springfield are highly effective schools with talented and dedicated professionals serving their community diligently. We have long had effective partnerships and collaboration in the best interests of children locally. However, the current circumstances are that we have been asked to provide a view on the models as it seems clear the status quo is no longer a viable option. On that basis, if change is required, our strong preference is to change to a coherent arrangement that will stand the test of time and serve our local community in the best way possible given the options available.

## Benefits of proposed Change

All three schools are highly effective and independent but a set of circumstances has arisen that leads to the proposed consultation model being the best option available to sustain effective stability and provision.

The rationale for this is:

- Reduction of duplicated costs across schools i.e. school leadership posts and external contracts; enabling a greater proportion of finite funding to be placed closer to children.
- One consistent and sustained curriculum design supporting children's engagement, achievement and readiness for the next stage of their education at secondary school
- One set of coherent and consistent policies applied for the benefit of all children ensuring they have a seamless school experience from 4-11 - children knowing and applying expectations and values is a critical part of pastoral development
- Larger response teams with high levels of expertise bring enormous benefits to different aspects of school life e.g. special educational needs; pastoral support; specialist subject teachers; breadth of extra-curricular activities and experiences; IT infrastructure and management

Yours faithfully,