



12th March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Introducing the new House System and Vertical Tutoring System

We would like to inform you of a number of important whole school improvements that are being introduced in September 2020. These have been designed to improve the existing student support systems and complement Brookfield's "committed to excellence" ethos.

We firmly believe that outstanding academic progress is underpinned by outstanding safeguarding, pastoral support, guidance and care. We are pleased to inform you that from September 2020, students will receive increased levels of pastoral support from their Form Tutors, Co-tutors, Heads of House and via the introduction of four new Pastoral Support Assistants. The new Pastoral Support Assistants will be non-teaching members of staff, allowing students access to pastoral support and guidance throughout the school day.

From September 2020 there will be five Houses: House A, House B, House C, House D and House E. All students will be assigned to a House. The names of the Houses are currently being decided in consultation with the student council.

Vertical Tutoring Groups (VTG)

Part of the new House System is the introduction of vertical tutor groups. From September 2020, students in Years 7-11 will be organised into new, smaller tutor groups that will contain a balanced mix of students from each of the five year groups. This system is used in all Redhill Academy Trust schools and is celebrated as good practice. Vertical tutoring is also used in a number of other local secondary schools including Dronfield Henry Fanshawe, All Saints (Sheffield) and High Storrs (Sheffield).

Key Benefits of the House System:

- Our House System will promote a sense of student and staff belonging
- Our House System will help embed the school's culture of being committed to excellence
- Our House System will improve the school's rewards policy; from September, achievement points for good work/effort will also count as a House Points
- Our House System will promote healthy competition, including inter-house tournaments, timetabled subject competitions and inter-house attendance competitions
- The new Pastoral Support Assistant roles will provide our students with additional pastoral support, guidance and care throughout the school day. These roles will also provide additional safeguarding support for all students at Brookfield.

Key Benefits of the Vertical Tutor Group System:

- VTG will create smaller tutor group sizes, enabling Form Tutors to dedicate more time to each student
- VTG will help build a sense of community where students from all year groups will support each other
- VTG will provide parents and families with a clear point of contact in the school (the Form Tutor)
- VTG will enable students from different year groups to support and peer mentor each other
- VTG will reduce anxiety for students transitioning from primary school to secondary school as our older students will be able to offer support to our younger students



- VTG will provide a heightened focus on progress and attainment as the Form Tutor will monitor academic progress alongside pastoral support.

Organisation of Tutor time:

- All students will be placed in a new, smaller vertical tutor group consisting of 4-5 students from each year group
- Tutor time will be for 30 minutes each day
- There will be no difference to how lessons currently operate (all lessons will continue to be delivered in year groups)
- Each tutor group will belong to one of five Houses
- Each House will be led by a Head of House, supported by a team of non-teaching Pastoral Support Assistants
- A new tie will be designed for each House, with our students voting on their design preference, the first tie being presented to each student free of charge.

What will happen in Form Time?

There will be a weekly timetable where a range of learning activities will be delivered through form time including a carefully constructed personal, social and health education programme of activities. Clearly there will be times when topics in this programme, such as relationships and sex education, will be most appropriately delivered with students of their own age. Arrangements will be made to manage the delivery of sensitive topics that are age related in order to protect our children's emotional development as they move through the school.

There will be opportunities for peer mentoring about achievement and progress, target setting, cross curricular activities, community and charity activities and House challenges to engage all of our students. In addition, private reading, buddy reading, Student Council contributions and House assemblies will operate through the Vertical Tutoring System.

Information Evening

We recognise that any change to routines can generate anxiety amongst students, staff and parents. We have met with staff this week and will inform all students in assemblies next week. We hope these assemblies will alleviate any anxieties that students may have, so that they can look forward to these changes with enthusiasm and optimism.

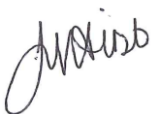
We also want you to feel informed. To this end, we have created a FAQ sheet which is attached to this letter to answer some of the frequently asked questions. This FAQ sheet can also be found on our website.

If you would like further clarification, there will be an information evening in the Main Hall on 17th March 2020 at 6.30 pm. If you would like to attend this evening, please email events@brookfield.derbyshire.sch.uk to reserve a seat(s). Please note that this meeting is for parents only.


We passionately believe that the benefits that a House system and Vertical Tutoring System will bring will improve the levels of support, enabling all students to be the best they can be throughout their journey at Brookfield Community School.

We look forward to your support in this important matter.

Yours faithfully



Mr K Hirst
Headteacher



Mr R Cronin
Deputy Headteacher