

Our Ref: TRI/BE

22nd June 2010

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s),

Following the previous announcements and letters, that our pastoral system is changing, I write to you to confirm details regarding these arrangements for Monday July 5th, when the 2010/11 timetable becomes 'live'. We have chosen to start our new timetable at this time so that students can begin new courses (for example, current Year 9 students starting GCSE courses), and so that we can establish our new pastoral system, allowing personal tutors approximately three weeks to get to know students, before our new Year 7 students start in September.

As a consequence of our new timetable becoming active on July 5th, please note that the other changes recently communicated to you will also start at this time. This includes the new timetable (the timetable that your son or daughter will be following from September), the revised school day and its minor changes as well as the Monday mentoring sessions, during period five.

The school day, starting on Monday 5th July will run from 8.35 am, until 3.00 pm Monday to Thursday, with Friday still starting at 8.35 am but finishing at 2.40 pm. Students can, of course, simply arrive at the same time that they do now. However, on Monday 5th July, we are staging the entrance of students into the school, so that tutors can establish their new groups and have some time with them. Therefore, on Monday 5th July (please note that all Year groups have been prompted):

Year 11 students should arrive at 9.35 am
Year 8 students should arrive at 10.00 am
Years 9/10 should arrive at 10.25 am

The other major change is that on Monday, Period 5, we will start our mentoring sessions with students. As this was described previously, this does mean that some students will leave the school site at 2.20 pm on that day. Therefore, the mentoring sessions during the last three weeks of term will be running as follows:

Monday 5th July-Period 5-all students to stay in school until 3.00 pm. There will be a number of House assemblies and activities with personal tutors during this first session.

Monday 12th July-Period 5- Years 9/10 to remain behind until 2.40 pm, with Years 7/8 leaving at 2.20 pm. Students in Years 9/10 will start to focus on the challenges that lay ahead for them and how to deal with them.

Monday 19th July-Period 5-Years 7/8 to remain behind until 2.40 pm, with Years 9/10 leaving at 2.20 pm. Year 7/8 students will discuss the changes that they face, including new subjects and how to cope with the demands of Year 8 to ensure that all students continue to make progress as they should.

Please note that you will receive a letter explaining the mentoring sessions that will take place from September until July, before the end of term. However, from September, one (possibly two) students will also stay behind from 2.40-3.00 pm during most Mondays.

We understand that these sessions are new and that some parents may want students to stay on the school site during the Monday afternoon sessions. If this is the case, please inform your child's current Year Leader in advance of July 5th and we will be happy to arrange this.

From July 5th please note that we will move to our new House system, with personal tutors and mixed aged tutor groups. Until September, these groups will not be full, as our new Year 7 students will not arrive until then. To help facilitate this transition, your son/daughter will be informed of their new tutor group and personal tutor during the week starting Monday 28th June. During the last three weeks of this term, your child's personal tutor will be working very hard to get to know them and help create new relationships amongst their tutor group. There will not be any changes to these groupings during this time. However, one of the first tasks that Heads of House will undertake when we come back in September is to review these groups. The new tutor groups and Houses have been formed taking into account, a number of factors including:

- Creating an even spread of students between houses ready for inter-house competitions;
- As far as possible, ensuring that houses and personal tutor groups have a balance of year groups and gender;
- Friendship factors based on information from current tutors, Year Leaders and students themselves.

If it is not possible to place somebody with a friend, then they will, for the vast majority of students, be with someone from their current tutor group. All students who are in the current system started off knowing some people but not everybody when they first met in tutor groups. This process will now start again on July 5th. The new Houses and their Leaders are:

Aspiration-Mr Jefferys, Discovery-Mr Evans, Enterprise-Mrs Hutcheson and Integrity-Mr Mansell.

As always, if you have any concerns regarding your child, their personal tutor is the first point of contact, with more serious issues directed to the Head of House. As with any new system and the changes that take place with it, some students will get used to it very quickly and others will take longer. It is vital that during the last three weeks of this term, that all children allow the system to start and become part of it. As promised, groupings will be reviewed in September once our new Year 7 students start with us.

Thank you for your continued support in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

S Trimble
Deputy Head Teacher