

## **Vertical Tutoring Student Conference**

Student representatives from Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 met on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March to discuss the implementation of the new Vertical Tutoring system. The notes taken from that meeting are outline below.

### **Summary**

- The students involved in the Conference established a process for allowing all students in the school to decide the name of the four Houses
- Ideas were presented for modifying the school uniform in order to make it unique to each House
- It was widely agreed that students have very little to do at lunch and break times. The students agreed that a larger and more varied range of clubs and activities should be would help to overcome this problem and improve school life generally. Students should be given the responsibility to set up and run their own clubs. Teaches would still assist (and where necessary supervise) these clubs and activities, but in many cases they would remain student led
- The school should introduce competitions involving the entire school. Sports Day should be reintroduced in an improved form, and competitions should be extended to include non-sporting activities. These competitions would bring the whole school together, while at the same time encouraging students to support their Houses.
- Introducing a House points system may prove more popular than the current credit system. The reward system should recognise all forms of achievement within the school. A rewards day could be held at the end of the year, culminating in the House with the most House points being awarded a trophy/school shield
- Each House should be linked with several charities. This would allow the House to focus its fundraising and volunteering activities on particular charities throughout the year, while ensuring that the school as a whole supports a wide range of local, national and international charities
- It was agreed that students should take on more responsibility within the School. New roles, such as House Captains, should be created to help achieve this. The school's council system should be reformed. The Year Councils would be replaced with a single School Council. The School Council would consist of five representatives from each House (one student from each year), four House Captains, and a Head Boy and Head Girl. This would produce a single twenty-six member School Council.

### **Names of Houses**

The students recommended a scheme for involving the entire School in the naming of the Houses, as well as offering many of their own suggestions for House names.

- The names of the four Houses should have a common theme
- All students will be able to post their suggested House names on the FSVLE's vertical tutoring forum
- Students are encouraged to look at and contribute to this forum
- After a certain period of time, the forum will be closed

- Each form will then be required to provide a shortlist of the House names they prefer most. The shortlist will include three sets of House names (each set will include four names, based around a common theme)
- The Year Reps will visit each form in their year and collect these shortlists
- These shortlists will then be reduced to just one final list of suggested House names (either the Year Councils or School Council will perform this process)
- All students in the school will then be able to vote for one set of House names on the final list. The vote will be done by ballot.
- There could also be competitions within the school as part of the House naming process
  
- Suggested themes for House names included
  - Pubs
  - Using the names of the gates around the York city walls (Micklegate, Walmgate etc.)
  - Famous Yorkshire sites
  - Names of Streets in York
  - Hill ranges around York
  - Rivers
  - Famous sports people/musicians/artists/authors
  - Continents
  - Names related to York's history (Roman House, Saxon House etc)
  - Naming one of the Houses the 'Dennis Baker House'
  - Planets
  - Animals

## **Uniform**

Ideas were presented for modifying the school uniform in order to make it unique to each House.

- Each House would create a House badge. The students would attach their particular House's badge to their uniform. The badges could be sewn on initially (for example on the front or sleeve of the jumper). The school could then ask the local school uniform supplier to incorporate these badges into the uniform permanently. Students would not be required to purchase the new school uniform items immediately. The modified uniform would be phased in, ensuring that parents would not have to spend any additional money.
- The House badge could either be placed on the school jumper only, or be included on the school polo shirts as well.
- The badges or any other modification of the school uniform should be designed by the students. Again competitions could be run as part of this process.

It was also suggested that House ID cards could be introduced.

## **Extra-Curricular Activities**

It was widely agreed that students have very little to do at lunch and break times. The school does not have a coherent plan for break times, with most students not being provided with a place to go during break. Even when doing nothing wrong students are moved on from the

corridors and classrooms. It was noted in particular that the decision to spend money on putting a bench in the entrance to Archimedes, and then refusing to allow students to sit on that bench at break time, defies common sense. A larger and more varied selection of clubs and activities would help to overcome this problem, as well as serving to reflect the broad range of talents and interests at Fulford School. The introduction of Vertical Tutoring provides an opportunity to achieve this.

- Older members of the forms should be allowed to set up and run clubs. This would involve Year 10, 11 and 6<sup>th</sup> Form students in particular taking on more responsibility. Teachers would still assist, and where necessary supervise, these clubs and activities, but they would remain student-led. All students would benefit from having more extra-curricular activities on offer, while the older students in particular would benefit from the opportunities for personal development.
- Young students too could take on responsibility for ensuring these clubs and activities are run properly
- More drama productions directed and performed by the students. The school has a great deal of talent when it comes to drama and theatre (as was demonstrated by the recent Grease production). This talent should be expressed more often.
- Clubs and activities should be well publicised
- A wider range of sports could be offered. Again, students could take responsibility for setting up and running sports clubs depending on their own interests
- Debating, public speaking and political discussions

There should also be social areas for all students, where they can relax without being moved on and forced to stand outside. Students should discuss lunchtime rules with the dinner staff, in order to create a better system for lunch and break times.

### **Whole School Activities**

With the introduction of the new House system, there is an opportunity for establishing school competitions in which all students could participate. These competitions would bring the whole school together, while at the same time encouraging students to support their Houses.

- Sports Day must be reintroduced and made an important and enjoyable feature of the school calendar. The number of sports involved could be widened, again with some activities being led by older members of the school. Some activities would require the House based teamwork (e.g. heptathlon event, tug of war). Students competing in events would earn points for their House, with the winning House being presented with a trophy/reward.
- There should also be an equivalent to the Sports Day for non-sporting interests (e.g. an Arts Day)
- School karaoke competition
- Competitions in other subjects (e.g. DT cooking competition)

### **House points/rewards/awards**

The current system of rewards for students was seen as inconsistent. A House points system could lead to a much more effective rewards system at the school.

- Credits and stamps could be replaced by a simpler House points system
- Students would be able to earn (and lose) House points. This would culminate in a final awards day the school, in which the House with the most points would be awarded some sort of trophy/shield. The student with the most points in each House would receive an additional reward.
- The awarding/removing of points should incorporate as many areas of school life as possible: attendance, completion of work, behaviour, test results, personal improvement, attending clubs, representing the school, volunteering, showing visitors/new students around the school, participating in shows/performances. The achievements of all students must be recognised and rewarded.
- The points system must be consistent and fair (e.g. a fixed number of points for different standards of work)
- Bigger rewards (i.e. not just House points) for higher level achievements
- Query over too many awards/certificates within year groups
- Each student could start with a certain number of points at the start of the year. This number would then increase/decrease depending on the student's actions throughout the year

### **Charity Links**

Vertical tutoring offers an opportunity for Fulford to increase its support for local, national and international charities.

- Each House should be linked with several charities (at least two). This would allow the House to focus its fundraising and volunteering activities on particular charities throughout the year, while ensuring that the school as a whole supports a wide range of local, national and international charities
- Each House may decide to focus on just one of the chosen charities at a time (e.g. concentration on one charity for half the first half the year, and a second charity for the second half of the year). However, it may be preferable for the House to support all of its associated charities throughout the year. In the second half of the year a number of the older students leave to take exams
- The students should be able to choose which charities their respective House should be linked to. There was some concern that students may not feel motivated to support the chosen charities if their preference was not included. However, by allowing several charities to be selected, and allowing fundraising efforts to occur throughout the year, this should not be an issue
- All four Houses could come together when supporting big charity events (e.g. Comic Relief, Children in Need), or in the event of a humanitarian crisis.
- A House could twin with a school in a poorer region of the world

### **Student Responsibilities**

It was agreed that students could be afforded more responsibility by creating new roles within the school.

- House Captains – a Year 12 student with the responsibility to oversee all House activities and to meet with the Director of Learning

- Vice Captains
- Prefects – most likely Year 10 and 11 students. These could assist in supervising areas of the school (thus allowing students to access more areas of the school at lunch and break times), as well as taking other responsibilities. Concerns were raised about whether the position of prefect would be treated seriously.
- The School Council system should be reformed. The Year Councils would be replaced with a single School Council. The School Council would consist of five representatives from each House (one student from each year), the four House Captains, and a Head Boy and Head Girl. This would produce a single twenty-six member School Council.