

MAESTEG SCHOOL

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MAESTEG
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Headteacher / Pennaeth: *H. Jones B.A. (Hons) N.P.Q.H.*

12th May, 2016

Dear Parents,

For some time now, we have been investigating the introduction of a House System which will run from September at Maesteg School. The key focus of the House System is to develop high-quality learning relationships that bring out the best in all who are engaged in the learning process, including all students and all parents. Our House System will encapsulate the following two elements: Firstly, a traditional "House System" in which every child belongs to a particular House (or 'School-within-a-School'); and secondly a vertical tutoring system in which each house tutor group comprises of students from each year group together with two tutors.

We have been carefully considering this approach to pastoral care and academic improvement through both discussions with experts in the field and visits to other schools that have adopted House systems. We are now keen to share with parents our plans and offer an opportunity for feedback in terms of our vision. To this end, an information evening for parents will be held on Thursday May 19th at 6pm in the Main School Hall. Special assemblies are also being held for all students so they are aware of this exciting change to their school.

Our research shows that the House System is the best means of ensuring that we deliver an even higher educational experience for each student. This System will also guarantee that every student is recognized, known, and supported. The learning relationships both between students within the tutor group and the tutors with each individual are not the only ones that the House System enhances. It is also important to us that parents benefit by having a personal and enhanced contact with tutors who not only know each child well, but who can listen to any concerns and ideas. We expect this change to the House System to have a significant and positive impact on every child's self-esteem, confidence and support that the school offers.

Students will be in tutor time for up to 20 minutes each day. The intention is that by having students of different ages trained in leadership and mentoring, they will be confident in assisting, guiding and helping others. It is important to underline that our teaching classes remain unchanged and pupils will learn alongside their peers in their year group for all subjects. The change to a House System means that all teaching staff employed by the school in a professional capacity will be involved in tutoring the students for 20 minutes each day. In turn, the new tutor groups will have 2 co-tutors, a significant investment in higher-quality learning relationships. The key change, however, involves the composition of the tutor groups. Each new tutor group will be populated by students from all year groups creating a balance of age, gender, ability, and ethnicity so that all groups share a similar profile. Each tutor group would then be allocated to one of four Houses:

Cadrawd is the bardic name of Thomas Christopher Evans an historian who wrote the history of Llangynwyd in 1887. He was also an essay winner at National Eisteddfod - (continued overleaf)

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Cynwyd is our local saint and founder of the settlement of Llangynwyd and in time the town of Maesteg.

Llynfi is the name our river which gives the name to our valley

Daren is the name of the hill we can see in Garth. It is a Welsh word which means escarpment in English

Our aim is to create an outstanding support system which is best suited to the children. This House System will allow us to develop excellent learning relationships to build success and character in our children.

I hope you will be willing to learn more about our house system and support the school in this important matter and I look forward to welcoming you on Thursday 19th May.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Tania Hill

Assistant Headteacher

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