Hall Green School
An Academy

20th May 2024

Dear Parent / Carer,

As you are aware, in the Spring Term we completed a consultation that aimed to understand the views of different stakeholders regarding our current vertical tutoring system and find out whether it continued to be the pastoral structure that meets our needs.

The consultation had different phases:

Phase 1 – Heads of House consultation

Phase 2 – staff consultation (which included a focus group led by the Staff Behaviour and Attitudes Group)

Phase 3 – pupils, parents and carers

The outcome of the consultation is clear and in favour of moving towards a horizontal tutoring system with Heads of Year, instead of continuing with the current vertical tutoring system with Heads of House. I have included summary tables at the end of this letter. This outcome has also been discussed with our Governing Body on 1st May 2024, who complemented the leadership team on their transparency and diligence in the consultation process. As a result, we will be moving to a horizontal tutoring system in September 2024.

Please be reassured that this will not mean a change of uniform for September 2024, as pupils will continue to belong to Houses so that we can use them to continue building a sense of belonging, for example via raising money for charities or via sports competitions. Siblings will continue to belong to the same House (and have the same colour tie and colour for their PE kit).

From September, your child will have an assigned Head of Year (and not Head of House) and during form time, your child will be in a group with pupils of the same year group. If there is a competition, for example, within year 8, we will then use the House system and pupils in different houses can compete against each other.

There are a number of points why horizontal is preferred:

- It is viewed as a more effective system to support pastoral issues as it increases capacity of Heads of Year, who will have less pupils in a year group than in a house group.

- The general view is that it will support the school to continue to improve the behaviour and attitudes of our pupils, for example by ensuring they play a highly engaged role in creating a positive school environment with a consistent commitment to their education.
- It reduces workload for pastoral leaders, enabling them to provide more effective pastoral support for all pupils in their year group.
- It is a better system to tailor interventions, including for SEND pupils.
- It is a better system for the transition process from primary to secondary as the Head of Year for Year 7 becomes an expert on pupils when transitioning to secondary school.
- Form time inputs and assemblies are better tailored to a year group than to a house group. For example, any inputs on personal, social, health and economic development delivered during form time can be now tailored to each year group (e.g. careers inputs for year 9 can be very specific to their needs before choosing GCSE options).

As we explained in the consultation, all systems have some perceived advantages and disadvantages. The feedback provided by stakeholders is very useful in continuing to use elements of the vertical tutoring system that we all as a collective think are worth keeping.

We will inform you in due course as to which pastoral leader will be the Head of Year for your child(ren) from September 2024. We will keep you informed and updated during the summer term and further details will be shared before the end of the academic year. We will also hold assemblies in school to explain these changes to our pupils.

Many thanks for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Mr Rodriguez
Deputy Headteacher – Pastoral Care

Summary tables:

Phase 1 outcome (Heads of House)

Areas discussed:	Horizontal is a better option	Vertical is a better option	It does not matter what system we use
Workload and pastoral capacity	83%	0%	16%
Interventions	83%	0%	16%
Behaviour	100%	0%	0%
Assemblies	66%	0%	33%
Form time activities	83%	0%	16%
Unstructured times	83%	0%	16%
Sense of belonging	50%	33%	16%
SEND	50%	0%	50%
Student leadership	33%	16%	50%
Year 7 Transition	100%	0%	0%

Phase 2 – staff

	Horizontal is a better option	Vertical is a better option	It does not matter whether it is vertical or horizontal
1. Workload and pastoral capacity	60%	32%	7%
2. Interventions	67%	20%	12%
3. Behaviour	60%	31%	7%
4. Form activities	68%	17%	14%
5. Sense of belonging	29%	43%	26%
6. Pupil leadership	39%	46%	14%
7. Year 7 transition	47%	46%	14%
8. Overall	53%	34%	12%

Phase 3 – Pupils

Part A – Years 7 to 10

	Horizontal	Vertical	Both equally important
What is more important to you?	50%	17%	32%
Overall, what system do you prefer?	55%	31%	13%
	Horizontal	Vertical	I am not sure
What type of form do you prefer?	61%	29%	9%
When thinking about siblings, what system do you prefer?	36%	44%	19%
	Horizontal	Vertical	It does not matter what system
What system do you think that it is best to know pupils from other year groups?	26%	48%	25%
What system do you think is best to reduce bullying in school?	27%	45%	26%
What system do you think that it is best for parents?	40%	47%	12%
What system do you think it is best to develop your leadership skills?	44%	36%	18%

PART B – Year 11

	Horizontal	Vertical	Either system
Overall	64%	16%	20%
	Horizontal	Vertical	I like both equally
What type of form have you preferred?	76%	12%	12%
What is more important to you?	80%	8%	12%
	Horizontal	Vertical	I am not sure
When thinking about your siblings?	37%	37%	25%
Getting to know pupils in other year groups?	24%	32%	44%

PART B – Year 11 cont.	Horizontal	Vertical	It does not matter which system
For parents and carers?	44%	36%	20%
Reducing bullying?	32%	28%	40%
Leadership skills	40%	36%	24%

PHASE 3 – Parents and carers

	Horizontal is a better option:	Vertical is a better option:	It does not matter whether we have horizontal or vertical
The Head of House and the Head of Year.	63%	29%	7%
Relationships between different year groups.	57%	36%	5%
Form time	65%	28%	5%
Sense of belonging	60%	28%	10%
Year 7 Transition	57%	31%	10%
Overall	63%	31%	5%