

Our Ref: BMc/TKi/221020

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> October

Dear Parent/Carer,

### House Transition

Baysgarth School prides itself on our family ethos. Our house system is fundamental in creating these strong relationships and providing a sense of community and belonging within the school. It provides the support, care and guidance which is so important for every student to be successful and achieve their best.

As you will be aware, the number of students joining the school has steadily increased over the past 5 years. We have gone from being a school of 700 students to one of nearly 900, with predictions that we will soon have over 1,000 students in our Baysgarth family. We are committed to ensuring that the students living in the local area should be able to attend Baysgarth if they wish, receiving the high standard of education and pastoral care that we provide. We have worked hard with the local authority on plans to expand the school to ensure that we can grow to meet this demand, preventing the problems that we have seen with being over-subscribed for the last few years.

The increase in student numbers is putting a significant demand on our House system and our predictions for next September show that the increased numbers will impact on a student's experience at Baysgarth. For example, we do not have enough space in the main hall to allow us to have House assemblies from September - we simply cannot any longer fit every member of each House in the Hall! This is a fundamental part of our school, with assemblies being the opportunity to come together as a family and celebrate individual and collective success. We are also stretching our House leadership team increasingly thin, as the Heads of House and Learning Managers have gone from supporting 175 students in each House to predictions of 230 students in each House from September 2021.

Therefore, we cannot continue to provide the same level of care and support to your child, without amending our House system. We know that this will involve some disruption to families but in order to maintain our standards, we will be adding an additional house to the system from September 2021. This means the school will have 5 houses rather than 4 moving forward.

The balance of the houses in terms of gender and year group is critical to develop the family ethos, therefore the new cohort in September 2021 cannot all go into the new house. The use of older students to support and mentor the younger students, taking leadership roles within houses is an integral part of the house dynamic. This means that unfortunately whilst we value consistency and the relationships and allegiances students have developed within their current houses, in order to ensure a fair process, we will be radically overhauling all the Houses, whichever option is chosen below, and most students will be allocated to a new house in September.

This is a huge change for the school and we know that staff, students and parents will all want to be involved in the process and voice their opinions on how this transition will take place. There is a lot of work to be done but the first stage is to decide on how we will facilitate this additional house.

There are 2 options for this:

### **Option 1: Create 5 brand new houses**

Within this option, the 4 current houses (Ancholme, Barden, Newton and Treece) will be abolished and we would look towards the Baysgarth community to create the 5 new house names and the students to develop their new house's identities and ethos.

All students will be reassigned a house based on achieving equality in terms of gender and age across the 5 houses.

### **Option 2: Create 1 brand new house and maintain the 4 current houses**

Within this option, the 4 current house names will remain (but students will be reallocated and most will find themselves in a different house) and an additional house will be added and named with the support of the Baysgarth community.

All students will be reassigned a house based on achieving equality in terms of gender and age across the 5 houses.

Staff, students and parents collectively need to decide on the option above they think works best for our school community and you can submit your vote through a survey that will be sent out to your email address on the 16<sup>th</sup> November. This survey will be open for 2 weeks. At the same time, staff and students will be casting their votes as well.

This is a huge change for our school community and you may well have questions you wish to talk to us about. To facilitate this we will be hosting an online session where we will address any queries or questions you have. To book onto the session and submit your questions please follow this link: <https://forms.gle/6B6pZyqq21TEh9459>

Every student at Baysgarth deserves to be recognised and celebrated as an individual and the House system allows this to happen, so it is so important we get this right for each and every one of our students.

If you have any specific queries or questions that you would like to discuss with us confidentially, then please contact us directly.

Yours faithfully,



Mr B McNaught  
Head of House