



EMMANUEL COLLEGE
Emmanuel Schools Foundation

4 December 2020

Dear Parent

At the end of another successful week during which we have had no additional confirmed COVID-19 cases, I would like to share some new and exciting information about the house system and student leadership.

A new house system for Emmanuel College

Any successful organisation will consider, at key points in its growth, whether all that it does is essential to meeting its core aims. Time and resource are finite and the importance of ensuring exceptional quality education cannot be underestimated. We don't *need* a house system; however, a house system *could* be effective in strengthening community, creating a culture of belonging, providing a space for intentional character development and celebrating achievement. As such, we are keen to 'relaunch' the house system at Emmanuel College, built around a desire to see our students **belong, grow, and celebrate**.

Four houses - new names

As the school has grown over the last five years, we have moved from seven tutor groups to eight. Moving from three houses to four means that two tutor groups in each year group will belong to each of the new houses. In the sixth form, the tutor groups will also be evenly divided. This step also increases the number of student leadership roles available and increases opportunities for participation.

A significant number of 'house moves' will be unavoidable if we increase the number of houses from three to four. As such, we think it is best to take this opportunity to *re-set* rather than *modify* house names and identity. A fresh start in respect of names, colours, traditions and symbols will also provide an exciting opportunity to involve students in a way that will ensure we create something with a strong sense of ownership. Further details on how we will do this will follow in the coming days.

Student-led

Currently, we appoint House Captains from Year 12 and Year 13. The term 'captain' resonates with the sports element of the current house system and is well-liked. The term Head of House has thus far been used to designate a member of senior staff responsible for a house. We have, therefore, appointed **Student Heads of House** (and Assistant Heads of House). In doing so, we are emphasising the broader leadership focus of this role. This move supports our intention to increase the profile and impact of senior student leadership. Heads of House will be responsible for convening house team meetings where representatives from each tutor group will gather and work together to support the three core aims of 'belong, grow, celebrate'.

Inclusive, enjoyable and a space for student leadership

A refresh of house events and competitions is long overdue, but there are many events that are well-liked and will fit well into the new system. Our aim will be for every student to participate in at least one house event each year, with many students participating in more than one event. As such, the range of events and types of events will need to be chosen carefully and well-planned into the school

year. The ethos of each event should be *inclusive and enjoyable* and have an element of healthy but warm competition. Student leadership of each individual event and leadership opportunities within each house at each event will enable young people to practise the skills of leadership and to develop habits that lead to the development of good character.

A new look!

A refresh of the system, as described above, provides an exciting opportunity to improve the visual culture and symbols associated with each house. A move away from red, green and blue to something with greater uniqueness (such as a two or three tone colour identity) will serve to strengthen the house system and its popularity amongst students and staff. Symbols and traditions may follow over time, further adding to a meaningful sense of house identity. It may be that house elements of the College uniform such as scarves, ties or sports shirts could be introduced, but we would have to do this carefully and with an awareness of the financial considerations. It may be that house items such as these could be earned or awarded.

Celebrating success

It is such a shame that many student achievements inside and outside of College get lost in the busyness of College life and as a result of the size of the institution. It is intended that this new house system goes some way to addressing this. Our intention is for student leaders within each house to be instrumental in facilitating the celebration of success across the house and across the school.

Student leaders

Over the last few weeks we have been involved in the process of recruiting student leaders in Year 12 to take on key roles within the new house system, in the media team and of course our Head Boy and Head Girl. I am delighted to announce the following appointments:

Head Boy: Harry Sanderson
Head Girl: Manesha Sundar

Heads of House: Natalie Ho and William Bourn
Emma Dawes and Sean Hobson
Sophie Rowland and Charlie Green
Rachel Anderson and John Gough

Media Director: Hannah Hindmarsh
Media Editor: Anna Cumming

Yours sincerely

Matthew Waterfield
Principal