

Vertical Tutoring to Horizontal Tutoring – Implementation July 2023

This document will address frequently asked questions and provide information to support the change.

What is Horizontal Tutoring?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is where all tutor groups will be made up of students from the same year group. • This is a move from the current structure where each tutor group consists of a number of students from each year group.
What are the benefits?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We feel that students will benefit from sharing experiences with children of their own age. We will also be creating a system and opportunities for students to continue their social mixing with other year groups and building on the experiences that the house system and Vertical Tutoring provided. • There will be more 'year' focused tutor time which is invaluable at key points during the year. Messages, activities and sessions will be directed to meet the needs of one year group and not five within one tutor group. We feel that this is a more effective use of time and will benefit all students. • There will be opportunities for clearer and more differentiated tutor programmes. For example, CV writing for Year 10 students. • Tutors will be able to focus their efforts towards one year group; this will aid communication across the school and supports the tutor's delivery of sessions. For example, Year 7 will not have to listen to Year 11 revision announcements and examinations. • Tutors will move through the years with their tutor group, watching them grow up and progress together. Strong relationships can be formed between students and tutors, but also parents and tutors. • We will be moving from 'Head of House' to 'Heads of Year'. This will support tracking, monitoring and evaluation as the Head of Year can apply their efforts to the whole year group. We will be able to improve consistency across the year group as the Head of Year will have the full overview of the year group, rather than having 4 Heads of House working with all year groups. • We will be moving from Deputy Heads House to 'Deputy Heads of Year'. Like the Heads of Year these are also teaching staff and will support the Head of Year with all aspects of pastoral care. • Also attached to each year group will be a Year Team Learning Mentor, this will be a non-teaching member of staff who will support students in that year group. • Similar to the monitoring of progress, Heads of Year and pastoral teams will be able to ensure greater consistency in the monitoring of rewards and sanctions. • There will be increased opportunities to create a year group identity and competition across tutor groups. There will be the further sense of belonging for students. • Should a Head of Department wish to share the successes of students within a class, or indeed concerns, they will only need to communicate with one Head of Year as opposed to four Heads of House.



<p>What about the students who like Vertical Tutoring?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to adopt the qualities and positives of the Vertical Tutoring system. For example, older mentors can be assigned to tutor groups to support with reading schemes and mentoring. • We will keep the Houses. We will be able to utilise this for House sporting competitions, celebrations, Eucharists and other key events.
<p>Will my child get to choose their tutor group?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. The Pastoral Team and Senior Leadership Team will give careful consideration to the placing of students in Horizontal Tutor groups, taking into account a wide variety of factors.
<p>My child's tutor knows them well and now that experience will be lost. What is the school doing to provide continuity?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective transition to the new system is crucial to its success and we will ensure that there is a system to share information about every student. • In some cases, where there are particularly strong tutor-student relationships, we will be able to strategically place students. • There will be a thorough induction for all tutor groups and we are confident it will not take long for students to settle into their new form just like in our current system when Year 7's transition in to main school houses. • Students, in many cases, will be with some peers from teaching groups, which will ensure that they can interact and quickly build upon existing friendships.
<p>How will tutor time be organised?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tutor time will remain at the start of the school day and will last for 30 minutes 8:30 to 09:00am. • Each year group will have a differentiated pastoral curriculum to meet their needs. • Tutors will keep a close track of the progress of each student, helping to ensure that all students achieve their very best. • Monitoring of attitudes to learning and other aspects of performance (including attendance) will take place during tutor time. • Opportunities for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development will be created. • Being a Church of England school, the delivering of worship activities will continue during tutor time.
<p>How will my child be supported?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your child will have a tutor who will join them on their journey through the school, rotating with the students. Tutors take pride in this role and should be the first contact for a child with a concern. • The Head of each year will have an overview of the year groups and will strategically lead their team. Student progress will be the centre of everything that they do. • The Deputy Heads of year will support the Head of Year but have a big focus around attendance and punctuality. • Each year group will have a Year Group Learning Mentor who is a non-teaching member of staff who will be based in the year group office. Whilst they will not be available all the time, they will be able to see and support students on a day to day basis.
<p>What about the House identity that you have created?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muller, Equiano, Johnson, Franklin and Liddell will remain and students will remain in their current house within the horizontal system. • House competitions will take place throughout the year and, in some cases, will allow for learning with other students across all year groups. • We will be developing our school council and students will be leading a range of House events.

Will this impact my child's friendship groups?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In some cases younger students have struggled to build strong friendships with the older students. The move to the new system will allow them to share experiences with students of the same age, whilst supporting and guiding each other. We feel this will encourage more positive interaction.
Will the same Head of Year follow my student through the school?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes. Each Head of Year and Deputy Head of year will stay with their year group throughout their time at SMRT. This will ensure that good relationships are developed and built upon throughout each child's education.
How many Tutor Groups will there be in each year group?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We currently have 8 Tutor groups in each House. This will be the same for each year group. In each year group there will be two tutor groups associated with each house.
I have more than one child, does this mean I have to speak to more than one Head of Year?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes, if you have children in different year groups they will have a different pastoral team (Tutor, Head of Year, Deputy Head of Year and Learning mentor). Whilst we appreciate this is different to the current system we envisage that this will not cause any issues with communication as we enter a horizontal year group system.
How will assemblies now work?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each year group will have a weekly assembly. These assemblies will have a specific focus around the Alive Values whilst also focussing on achievement and progress. There will also be opportunities to address current issues that may have arisen and need addressing. Eucharists will still happen in houses and therefore will have students from each year group in.
Why are you confident that it will succeed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have utilised the experiences and skills of our staff who have been involved in similar changes in other schools. A great deal of thought has gone into this decision, and we will be working hard to ensure it is a success. We will, of course, be reviewing and monitoring the new approach. There may well be some teething problems, but we will be working with all stakeholders to make this work and deliver the benefits to help us on our journey to achieving the highest possible standards.
My child is nervous about the change. How will you address their concerns?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assemblies will take place to ease the worries of students. Tutors will work through the key information and will address questions.
Where can I find more information?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please do not hesitate to contact Mr Hare at harej1@smrt.bristol.sch.uk



Key Summary:

- Students will be in a tutor group with students of their own age group.
- Heads of House to become Heads of Year.
- Deputy Heads of House to become Deputy Heads of Year
- There will be a Learning Mentor linked to each year group.
- Tutors will remain with the tutor group throughout students' time at the school.

