



## Pastoral Support and Chew Valley School



### Your Child's Tutor

At Chew Valley School, as part of our House system, each student belongs to a “vertical” tutor group. The vertical tutor groups are slightly smaller than a traditional “year tutor group”. They have between 4-6 students from each year group (Years 7-11). The Sixth Form are not included but are associated to the Houses and will come in to tutor sessions from time to time.

You may wonder, why is this a good thing?

There are numerous schools that do this and the benefits that come from mixing and learning with other year groups are vast. We want students at Chew Valley School to have these opportunities.

Our own experience, plus research from other schools recognises the following benefits...

- It creates a more cohesive and friendlier school community where students know and work with students from other years, "like a family".
- There are increased opportunities for students to develop their social skills through working with students of different ages, in preparation for adult life.
- It emphasises students as individuals, not just members of a large group.
- There are more opportunities for student leadership within the tutor group and House.
- There are easily accessible, positive role models for younger students.
- There is a sharper focus on individual ambition and progress.
- There is a huge range of opportunities made available for the more able and their peers.
- Tutors develop a "whole school" experience that makes them a stronger tutor.
- Tutors can attend to small numbers of students at once, at critical times for them e.g. new intake, option choices, work experience.
- It creates a greater sense of House identity and more opportunities for competition.
- It creates an even safer school where younger students feel a greater connection to older students and benefit from a wider care and guidance framework.
- Students support one another and understand the stages that they will go through as they move through the school, potentially increasing aspiration and motivation.
- Bullying is actually reduced, as older students see younger ones as members of their tutor group with whom they associate on a daily basis.

### Head of House

All students at Chew Valley School not only have a Tutor who supports them pastorally but they also have access to one of our experienced Heads of House. The Head of House is responsible for ensuring your child makes progress and reaches their personal goals whilst at Chew Valley School. The difference between a Head of House and a Year Head is the students they focus upon. Heads of House will be interested in the progress of every student within a House rather than year group. This will mean they focus on approximately 60-70 students in a year group rather than approximately 210. This therefore means they will really get to know you and your child and they can focus on your child at crucial times, for example in Years 9 and 11 during GCSE and Post-16 option times, in Year 10 when they move into GCSE or in Year 7 when they are settling in.

NB: At Chew Valley School we will always aim to put siblings into the same House (unless parents do not want this) meaning that as a parent/carer you will deal with the same Head of House and House co-ordinator for all of your children.

## **The Wider Pastoral Support Team**

The wider student support team consists of a number of non-teaching staff who all support the Heads of House and are available for students and parents/carers to contact throughout the school day if needed. They are accessible through our “Student Reception”.

The main role of these staff is to support the students so that they are able to attend lessons and succeed to the very best of their ability. Their role is incredibly wide ranging and you may come into contact with them for a variety of reasons; they will deal with attendance issues, provide lead small group work, 1:1 support, contact external agencies, write support plans, lead student voice, promote House identity and competition and a whole lot more.

## **Assemblies**

At Chew Valley School your child will mainly attend “House assemblies”, once a week, except when we have important information that needs to be shared with them as a year group. The assemblies will be mainly delivered by your child's Head of House and the Senior Team, supported by the wider pastoral team which includes the tutors. The assemblies will focus around the School's core values so that students can learn, grow and achieve. When they have year group assemblies, they will be delivered or co-ordinated by the most appropriate member of staff e.g. GCSE options will be delivered by the Curriculum Deputy Head.

## **RSHE Lessons**

At Chew Valley School each child has RSHE lessons throughout the year. They are delivered through “drop down days” in year 7 and 8 and through lesson time (once a fortnight) in year 9. These lessons aim to complement their other subjects and provide a curriculum that has a very positive impact on all students' behaviour and safety which contributes very well to students' academic achievement, their physical wellbeing, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

We have a specialist team of teachers who deliver this curriculum who are led by Mrs Pope. They are taught in their year group and your child's teacher will deliver a curriculum that is year specific. However, the teacher will also look to compliment what they do in tutor time and what is delivered to them during assemblies.

## **Individual Mentoring and Counselling**

Mentoring at Chew Valley School can come in many forms, academic, behaviour, peer, 6<sup>th</sup> Form mentoring and external business mentoring. The offer of mentoring is based on need, identified by the Heads of House following monitoring points and/or through tutor/staff interactions. Students identified as likely to benefit from mentoring will be spoken to individually, parents are informed and are involved in the process of mentoring and a suitable programme of regular sessions will be set up. These sessions are likely to run once a week for a period of time (6-10 weeks).

We have a limited counselling service from Off the Record and the BANES mental health sub team (MHST) therefore once again we offer this based on need. However, students can also self-refer through their Head of House or Tutor. These sessions run once a week for a period of time (6 weeks) and parents/carers are invited to be involved in the process if the student wishes but often students prefer this to be a private process.

## **First Aid and Other Medical Services**

We have a “First Aid” room but we do not have a medical room. The First Aid room is a place where students can access First Aid provision and a First Aider is always made available to make an assessment of the severity of any injury or illness but our staff cannot provide medication for illness.

A BANES school nurse is available for student drop-ins once a week, students can also self-refer to use this service. Students can do this via Student Reception.

Students also have access to a BANES-run, sexual health clinic on Tuesday lunchtimes. This is another drop-in service that runs on our school site.



# How to access support at Chew Valley School

