

House Activities Rationale

Background:

Houses were set up in September 2014 to improve pupil relationships, particularly between year groups. There had been some issues with older pupils not appreciating the needs of younger pupils at break and lunch times in the previous year.

The three houses linked to the churches and parishes in our catchment area: St Peter's churches in Diddlebury and Stanton Lacy, St Michael's church in Munslow and All Saints in Culmington. The house colours of Purple, Green and White were chosen to reflect the liturgical colours of the church calendar.

Children were divided into each house to give a mix of ages and gender in each. To foster a sense of community, the reward system of marbles not only earned a treat for the class each half-term but were also totalled for each house. The house with the most marble points were awarded the house cup each half-term with an overall winning house at the end of the year.

The opportunity to work together as a house was introduced through house activities. The first set of activity sessions saw each house prepare for the Christmas Nativity, creating props, learning songs and performing some scenes in house groups as well as scenes and songs for the whole school. Further house days / afternoons followed, including the opportunity to work in house teams as part of sports day.

This positive trial led to further developments from September 2015. A weekly House Activities session was established with a half-termly theme linked to the values in collective worship: e.g. creation, resilience, humility, etc. The sessions gave the opportunity for children to work creatively and also to work outdoors. Children rotated around activities during the half-term with sessions of forest school, art, music and drama. Each session had a strong PSHE focus to help the children understand and express the Christian values that are so important in our school.

Impact:

Pupil relationships improved and the school now has a strong family feel. Older pupils enjoy the opportunity to mentor younger pupils. All staff work with all pupils and pupils move around the school for different sessions. This helps new pupils to settle in quickly and to become known by everyone. Pupils chosen to be House Captain or House Rep feel proud to represent their house on the School Council. Staff have noticed that some children displayed more positive attitudes to learning when working in house groups, e.g. willing to take risks, showing greater independence, being more resilient than would normally be seen in their class group. Children enjoy the opportunity to work in house groups. They do not perceive these sessions to be work but fun.