

Dear Parents,

This week we have launched the House system with our pupils. Mr Jenkinson led a whole school assembly on Wednesday morning to introduce our four icons: Bear Grylls, Malala Yousafzai, Nick Vujicic and Emma Watson. I am sure this will raise an eyebrow or two! They were chosen by our pupils through the School Council. The House system allows us to continue to develop our culture at EMS through our core values of excellence, endeavour and enjoyment linked to our Christian distinctiveness. The four role models selected all epitomise these values, are contemporary and therefore our pupils are able to relate to them. As a school, we begin our journey of discovery about them as people and the values they show on a day-to-day basis.

I am sure you have also heard about the motivational quotes that have appeared in corridors, expertly hand painted by Steve Blackwell. Again, these were selected by the pupils. I hope you enjoy reading these below.

Below is an extract of information given to staff to share with the pupils and I would very much appreciate you spending time at home discussing the House your child is in and the role of our core values.

Inspirational Leaders alongside Emmanuel's Core Values:

All of our House Inspirational Characters have shown our core values in abundance. There is not one who cannot show that they have fully demonstrated the right to be an inspiration to us in all aspects. From Bear Grylls scaling mountains and recovering from injury whilst joking with Presidents; to Malala Yousafzai overcoming prejudice and violence to attend Oxford University whilst joking on youtube with her little brother; to Nick Vujicic who has let nothing limit his aspiration for living a full life of fun and adventure; to Emma Watson who has risen above the spotlight of early fame to inspire and hold to account leaders around the world. Learn more about them and our core values and let this be your inspiration at Emmanuel Middle.

Excellence: The Apostle Paul, writing to the Colossians (chapter 3 verse 22 The Message), says ‘...don't just do the minimum that will get you by. Do your best.’ To do our best is, in many senses the highest form of worship because we are literally honouring God by giving the best of ourselves.

In wider society, excellence is also a bench mark of commitment and expectation, that if nurtured in young people, can define how far they take their individual talents. As Ralph Marston put it, ‘Excellence is not a skill it's an attitude’ which we take to mean that anyone can learn to expect the best of themselves and others. At EMS we place a high tariff on effort and attitude - the harder our pupils work the more successful they become.

Endeavour: The word doesn't appear in most translations of the Bible but it is central to many passages in its meaning. Paul wrote some great advice about the quantities of determination, perseverance and bravery which make up endeavour. For example he said to the Corinthians (chapter 1 verse 26) ‘I don't know about you, but I'm running hard for the finish line. I'm giving it everything I've got’. James, who was Jesus' brother said to the church (Chapter 1 verse 3) ‘you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything’ because he knew first hand that though things get tough, by keeping going, you get stronger.

Vince Lombardi the famed American Football coach put it like this: ‘It's Not Whether You Get Knocked Down, It's Whether You Get Up.’!

Enjoyment: The Bible tells us that God wants us to have ‘life in all its fullness’ (John chapter 10 verse 10) and that the source of enjoyment is Heavenly Father (Timothy chapter 6 verse 16) ‘put [your] hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. It is very clear from all modern research, as well as common sense, that those who are happy in their work are generally able to be more productive and achieve work to a better standard.

As Oprah Winfrey puts it 'Passion is energy. Feel the power that comes from focusing on what excites you' or as Einstein says 'Creativity is intelligence having fun'.

Bear Grylls, Malala Yousafzai, Nick Vujicic and Emma Watson are all, in their very core, passionate about what they do. They also exude that sense of fun in life and work. I will finish with a favourite of mine - One life, Live it!

Have a great weekend

Rob Christopher

A WEEK IN PICTURES

