

The House System

On admission to the School, all pupils are allocated to one of six Houses. The House system goes back to the School's earliest days. It enables senior pupils to show initiative and accept responsibility for the younger boys. Equally, it affords opportunity for all to be involved in a huge range of team activities.

Inter-House competitions are held at the junior, intermediate and senior level in rugby, cricket, cross-country and athletics. Each contest is recognised by the award of a silver trophy and with an allotted place in the School Hall. The House Drama festival is always an enjoyable event when students from all year groups have the opportunity to perform, direct or work behind the scenes. An independent adjudicator decides the winner. The flag of the winning House flies above the trophy and the achievement is recorded for posterity on the panel in gold leaf. House competitions are keenly contested and the award of the Cock House Cup, for the leading House at the end of each academic year, is an honoured occasion.

The House competition reserved for new pupils is the Road Relay, a cross-county event held in Beddington Park. It commemorates the years when the new boys were housed in Carew Manor. The winning House is presented with the Manor Trophy. This cross-country event historically takes place on the Friday before the October Half Term and parents are encouraged to come to Beddington Park to cheer on the new Year 7 students.

Bridges, Carew, Mandeville, Radcliffe and Ruskin Houses are named after the well-known local families and Woodcote after the district to the south of Wallington. The name Bridges belonged to a family who owned the manor of Beddington in the nineteenth century. Canon Bridges was responsible for the restoration of Beddington Church. The Carew family was the grandest and the longest established of local nobility. It bought the manor of Wallington in 1360 and retained it for over four hundred years. Sir Nicholas Carew was a friend of Henry VIII until he fell from favour and was executed. Sir Francis Carew, who built Carew House, entertained Elizabeth I at Beddington.

Three Houses are associated with Carshalton. Sir Geoffrey de Mandeville seized the manor after the Norman Conquest and held it until 1149. Dr. Radcliffe was doctor to William III and to Queen Anne. He built Carshalton House in 1690, but is better known for the observatory, the Radcliffe Camera. John Ruskin, the famous writer, often visited Carshalton when staying with his mother. In 1866 he renovated one of the ponds which has a memorial stone naming it 'Margaret's Well' after Ruskin's mother.

The district of Woodcote is today indicated only by the Green and the Post Office. There was a large settlement here in the Bronze Age, about 1000 BC and the site was later occupied by the Romans, but few traces now remain.