



The House Reward System at ISB



**An Informative Guide
as to how the
House Reward
System Will Operate**





Welcome

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you all, Staff, Students and Parents, to the International School of Bremen's House Reward System.

This booklet aims to inform you how the House Reward System will operate and answer any questions you may have.

The role of the students and staff are explained later.

As parents we ask you to be supportive of the system, help your child play an active part in the House to which they belong and provide them with the right coloured tops with the right emblems.

We look forward to an exciting year ahead and hope you all enjoy supporting and competing for your Houses. If you have any additional questions please do not hesitate to contact us through the school office.

ISB House Reward System Coordination Team

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Introduction

A Very Brief History

The School House Reward System has been around in many schools in many countries for a lot of years (long before Harry Potter and Hogwarts were established) and stems from the older boarding schools. The schools were divided up into 'Houses' and students were allocated a 'House' for which they would compete in a range of subject areas throughout the year. This was ultimately to provide a focus of group loyalty and a sense of belonging and 'family' to the students who were more than likely away from theirs.

How does it work?

Students are allocated to one of four different 'Houses' and this remains their 'House' for their duration at the school. Throughout the year, the International School of Bremen will be running a range of activities and competitions in which students compete against each other for 'House Points'.

In competitions the top four ranking teams/individuals will be awarded a large amount of 'House Points' and each competitor will also receive a 'House Point' for their taking part.

House Points are not only awarded during competitions or events but can also be given out on a daily basis to students who perform exceptionally well in classes and to those who contribute a great deal to the school community/environment (*more on House Points on pages 14-17*).

The House Points are then documented and displayed for the school to see and at the end of the year, the house that has accrued the most points will win the 'House Trophy' and have their name engraved on it, to be displayed in the school for all to see, which the winning house can boast about for a year.

Why do this?

There are a number of reasons why this system is of benefit to a school:

- We believe that it is important to have a system in place that rewards students for their hard work and effort here at the International School of Bremen.
- The attachment to a house gives the students a real sense of belonging and community, with the support of their fellow 'Housemates'
- The system provides an opportunity for students to become heroes and shine in all areas of school life. As we are running cross-school/subject activities as well as awarding everyday points, each and every student has the opportunity to contribute to the success of their House, which also provides a sense of accomplishment.
- We aim to promote curiosity and creativity in the students, through a range of activities and also small roles within the Houses that they can all contribute towards.
- A spirit of adventure is a must! Hopefully with the chance of contributing to their House, students will try new things and compete in areas they may not have thought about before, thus promoting confidence also.
- We will be promoting leadership and responsibility, especially for the older students who will be taking on important roles within their House.
- Students can become role models for their peers by putting in the hard work and effort, especially the Secondary Students.

Most of all though, we want the students to have fun!

The Houses

All four of the houses are named after prominent people, places or historical figures that are connected in some way to the city of Bremen and each is assigned a colour that we ask the students to wear when competing for their house or generally in school.

Lloyd House

Logo:



The German shipping company North German Lloyd (NDL) was founded by the Bremen merchants Hermann Henrich Meier and Eduard Crüsemann on 20 February 1857, after the dissolution of the Ocean Steam Navigation Company, a joint German-American enterprise.

It developed into one of the most important German shipping companies of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and was instrumental in the economic development of Bremen and Bremerhaven

Many shipping routes were started out of Bremen and Bremerhaven to a variety of places, including North and South America, Asia and Australia

The Lloyd House colour will be **BLUE**, representing the company 's connection to the sea.



A commemorative stamp celebrating 'Lloyd'

Schnoor House

Logo:



The Schnoor is synonymous with Bremen and is a must for all tourists that visit this city. With its narrow streets and colourful buildings which host a myriad of interesting shops, cafés restaurants and bars, it is a must see for all.

The earliest records of the Schnoor date back to the 10th Century and developments in the area over that time have clearly left their mark for all to see. The oldest building standing today can be dated back to the 15th Century.

The area was predominantly occupied by fishermen and mariners/sailors in the beginning due to its location right next to the Weser, which offered ample opportunity for such people to ply their trade in the bustling ‚Hansestadt‘ of Bremen. The name ‚Schnoor‘ also comes from the German ‚Schnur‘ meaning ‚string‘ or ‚line‘ (as in rope), which was produced here for ships and the fishing trade also.

In 1973 the area became an ‚Historic District‘ under the Official Heritage Conservation through the State Monument Authority.

The Schnoor House colour will be **GREEN**, representing the association with the colour and its connections to Bremen.

The famous street sign pointing you to the Schnoor





Roland House

Logo:



The Roland is a statue erected in 1404. It stands in the market square (*Rathausplatz*) of Bremen, facing the cathedral, and shows Roland, Paladin (peer/warrior) of the first Holy Roman Emperor Charlemagne and hero of the Battle of Roncevaux Pass.

Roland is shown as the protector of the city: his legendary sword (known in chivalric legend as *Durendal*) is unsheathed, and his shield is emblazoned with the two-headed Imperial Eagle.

Statues of Roland appear in numerous cities of the former Holy Roman Empire, as emblems of city liberty. The statue in Bremen is the oldest surviving example.



It is believed Bremen will remain free and independent for as long as Roland stands watch over the city. For this reason, it is alleged that a second Roland statue is kept hidden in the Town Hall's underground vaults, which can be quickly installed as a substitute, should the original fall.

Since 1973, it is protected by the monument protection act. In July 2004, along with the Town Hall, the statue was added to the list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

The Roland House colour will be **YELLOW**, representing the golden shield which he carries proudly on his arm.

Hanse House

Logo:



The name 'Hanse' is another term for what was known as the 'Hanseatic League', which was established in Lübeck in 1159. The Hanseatic League, or Hanse, was set up to protect economic interests and diplomatic privileges in the cities and countries and along the trade routes that the merchants from Northern Germany visited.

This included many of the Hanseatic cities in Northern Germany including Bremen as from 1260. Through the work of the Hanse cities like Bremen were able to trade along the route of the Baltic and the North Sea, thus opening the gateway to other lands and goods.

The Hanseatic cities had their own legal system and furnished their own armies for mutual protection and aid, however only a small number of the cities truly had this autonomy and shared the luxuries that a Free Imperial City would have had.

The term Hanse/Hansa is still used today in some German city names and for other purposes, for example 'Hansestadt Bremen', 'F.C. Hansa Rostock', 'Lufthansa', etc.

The Hanse House colour will be **RED**, representing the colours of the Bremen Coat of Arms and the Flag of Bremen with its combination of white and red.

The 'Hansa/Hanse' Coat of Arms/Emblem of Bremen





House Organisation

How are the Staff and Students organised into Houses?

Now we have the houses in place, the question is posed; how do we go about allocating staff and students to each House?

Firstly it is important to remember that the House allocated to a student will be their House for the duration of their time here at ISB.

The Students

The students are allocated to a House using a number of different factors:

We start with a grading system, whereby students' academic achievements and effort grades are compared. From that they are given a specific number/grade highlighting their strengths. This is put together in one department and then passed on to the rest of the staff to look over, so they can have their input as to whether the mix is equal in terms of academic ability in the various subject areas.

Once all of the teachers have had a chance to give their input and help us re-think the organisation, the students are then allocated a House making sure that each House has a good mix of students who are strong in a wide variety of different subjects. This ensures that we do not have one House that is miles apart from the rest (although this can and does still happen from time to time). We should end up with a good mixture of strong Science students, PE students, Maths students, etc. in each House to ensure fair competition throughout the year.

At the International School of Bremen, we have also adopted the approach of allocating siblings to the same House. This is an age-old practice that has proven to help develop a strong sense of belonging to a particular House and also the opportunity for siblings to support one another and compete with one another in events.

This also reduces the strain on parents by making sure that if we are, for example, running a charity event, parents will not have to try to support more than one House, which can of course cause quite a strain physically, mentally and financially.

New students that come will be allocated to a House depending on prior academic knowledge and can replace those that leave, where necessary.

**Whilst students are allocated one House for their time at the International School, it is of course possible for students to be moved into a different House during the year, but only in extenuating circumstances. A student cannot just come and ask to be moved because they are not with their best friend.*

*Only if it is a serious matter will this be considered.**

The Staff

The staff have been allocated a House based entirely on their subject specialism. Where possible, staff from the same departments have been separated and spread out to ensure each House can benefit from their expertise and offer a good level of healthy competition.

Staff with children in the school have been offered the chance to be in the same House as their child/children, so that siblings/family can be in the same House to allow for parents to support their child/children during events, but this is not a must as some staff may prefer the idea of actually being separate from their child/children to allow them to be a little more independent and to avoid any accusations of favouritism.

As with the students, staff will remain in their allocated House for the duration of their time here at the International School, unless any extenuating circumstances mean a move is necessary.



Roles & Responsibilities

House Captain (one male, one female)

The House Captains (from Grades 10 or 11 & 5) are to be voted for by the students each year and will be responsible for a lot in their short time 'in office'.

Ultimately the House Captains are responsible for the leadership and organisation of their Houses over the academic year. The House Captains are responsible for ensuring they have teams/competitors for events. They must be ready to represent their Houses at relevant meetings throughout the year and be answerable to when students have questions.

The House Captains from Secondary and Elementary will work closely together, with the House Coordinators, Deputy house Captains and the House Heads to ensure they know what is going on and can pass on information to their Houses.

The idea of one Captain from Grade 11 and one from Grade 5 is to ensure that both Secondary and Elementary students are well represented and that information going out to all students can be delivered easier and more efficiently through the Captains.

Both Captains will be a central figure for the Secondary and Elementary students in their Houses.

Specifically for Grade 11 students (although it will certainly benefit Grade 5 students in the future too), this position looks fantastic on a CV and also for University applications.

Deputy House Captain (one male, one female)

The Deputy Captains will be operating in a similar way to the House Captains and will, of course, take on the full House Captain role in their absence.

The Deputy Captains will meet on a regular basis with the House Captains to keep up-to-date with the latest news and developments and will take on jobs delegated by the House Captains. They, too, will be encouraged to attend meetings.

The Deputy Captains will be responsible for ensuring that the events have the necessary referees, equipment, etc. and will work closely with the member of staff running the event to offer support and help where needed.

As with the role of the House Captain, this position also looks fantastic on a CV and a University application.

House Heads

House Heads are made up of staff in the Houses. One member of staff will be voted for by their fellow colleagues and will be the main figurehead of that House. That person will be responsible for organising House Meetings, liaising with House Captains, Vice Captains and other staff necessary.

The House Head also provides anything needed that the students cannot take care of themselves, where an adult or official staff member would be necessary.

The House Head should be in contact with the people running the House Reward System to keep up to date with the latest news and events, so that they can pass on the information during House Meetings (fortnightly with Captains & Deputies, monthly with whole House).

It is important to note however, that House Coordinators cannot take on the role of a House Head. This could cause a conflict of interests, which we wish to avoid.



Overall Running/House Coordinators

The House Coordinators will be responsible for the overall running of the House Reward System and should be contacted with any queries you or anyone may have throughout the year.

They will be responsible for the weekly House Point collection and also (with the help of the House Captains) will be responsible for the upkeep and updating of the notice board displays, scoreboards, tracking House Points awarded, etc.

They will also be responsible for a number of specific events and will, again with the help of house captains, be overseeing these competitions throughout the year.

As mentioned previously, House Coordinators cannot take on the role of a House Head, as we wish to avoid any conflict of interest that could come about due to the sharing of these roles.

Staff and students

Staff will be expected to award House Points, carry out any events they wish to and ultimately, instil the principles of this system in their students. Encourage the idea of community, teamwork and healthy competition.

Students actually have the main role and that is, they are the heart and soul of the system. The students will be responsible for helping make this a success year after year, competing with one another within the boundaries of 'Fair Play' and contributing what they can to

help their Houses to success. Each and every student has the opportunity to offer something to the success of their house in a range of ways, whether it be in competition, in the classroom or in and around the school. Regardless of where their talents lie, no student need feel they cannot contribute and they will ALL be encouraged to do just that.

Roles of the Parents

Parents have a big role to play in the House Reward System as the support of parents is paramount to the success of the Houses year on year. The emotional, physical and financial support they give to the students is a major contributing factor to their success.

Parents are asked to attend the various events that we will be running throughout the year and have their voices heard, cheering on the Houses in all subject areas. The presence of parents at these events, showing support to the children in their efforts to compete, is something that could be of great benefit. This can also help develop relations and communication between the school and parents as well as between parents themselves, all sharing a common goal and will for the children to do as well as they can.

Parents are asked to purchase the necessary ,House T-Shirts‘ for their children, which they can wear in and around the school, but *must* wear during ,House Competitions‘. T-shirts and other items will be available to purchase throughout the year, with new items coming as the year goes on. The students are encouraged to wear their House colour with pride and parents supporting this, will be a huge boost for the House Reward System.



House Points

How, why and when they are awarded

The ultimate goal of any House Reward System is the collection of House Points, leading to a winner at the end of the year.

House Points are awarded by staff and can be given out for a number of reasons.

Competitions/Events: House Points are awarded to any competitors of competitions and events throughout the year, in all subject areas.

Any event that ends with the students being ranked, such as sports competitions, will be judged as follows, unless otherwise stated:

1st Place 100 House Points

2nd Place 75 House Points

3rd Place 50 House Points

4th Place: 25 House Points

All Competitors (non-sport events): 5 Points

If students/teams in 1st & 2nd place, for example, are in the same House, then House Points are still awarded as above.

Single House Points are awarded on a daily basis and can be given to any student who delivers exceptional work and/or effort and contributes a great deal to the school community.

The term 'exceptional' is important here as House Points should only be awarded to someone who has gone above and beyond what was expected of them.

Staff should use their own judgement and experience to judge whether students have given enough to warrant a House Point.

How are they recorded and displayed?

The recording system will be looked after on a daily basis by the House Coordinators, who will be monitoring it throughout the academic year.

House Points will be recorded weekly and will be displayed on the relevant House Board in the PE corridor. Each house will have their own display board, where they can find the information. There will also be an electronic and paper copy of the weekly collection by student and House as there will be a 'House Point Collector of the Fortnight', along with the weekly updating of the boards.

Individual House Points Slips that are given to students must be taken to the House Coordinators at the end of the day to be counted up and noted.

It is the student's responsibility to make sure the slip makes it, if it gets lost on the way, it will not be counted.

After events/competitions, House Captains will be expected to take the necessary Results Sheet/Team Sheets to the Coordinators who can then document the results and House Points and change the display boards where appropriate.

In the event that a member of staff has decided to award House Points for a competition/event that is not on the schedule due to last minute organisation (which can happen) then it is up to them to document the results and also hand them in or try to get the House Captains/Vice Captains involved and give them the task of documenting.

There will be a collection box at the Front Office where you can post your House Point Slips should a Coordinator not be around. This will be emptied every day at the end of the school day.

All Staff and students are asked to be fair and honest about results and the recording of these results.



The Individual House Point Slip

The 'Individual House Point Slip' is equal to one House Point and can be awarded on a daily basis by staff to students as often as staff see fit. As mentioned previously, this should only be awarded for exceptional work and/or contribution to the school community, where a student has gone above and beyond the expected.

Each member of staff will receive a small booklet of slips at the beginning of the year and can always get more when needed (just ask a Coordinator). This can also be made available to staff electronically, if staff wish to be able to print out any slips should they need replacements.

All the staff have to do is complete the slip, tear it out and give it to the student. From this point on the student is responsible for ensuring that the slip makes it to a Coordinator or at least into the House Point Collection Box.

If a student claims they received a slip, but has lost it, staff will not be expected to back this claim up or provide new slips - the House Point is simply not counted. This takes the hassle away from the staff who may not remember all of the students they have awarded House Points to on that day/week, but it also puts the onus on the student and ultimately helps them develop a sense of responsibility.

Records of House Points awarded will be kept by the House Coordination Team to monitor overall House achievement, individual achievement and also to monitor the amount of house Points given by different members of staff.

Points are then counted up and each fortnight we will display the name of the student with the most Individual House Points in each House as the 'House Point Collector of the Fortnight'

How it looks:

Here is a basic overview of how the slip looks and what needs to go where.

	House	Point	Slip
Name:			
House:			
			
Signed:			
Date:			

Student Name (points to the Name field)

Student House (points to the House field)

Tear Off Point (points to a circle on the left side of the slip)

Staff Signature (points to the Signed field)

Date Awarded (points to the Date field)



Events

Throughout the academic year, there are a number of events that will be taking place across all subjects, wherein the students can compete for House Points. The Schedule will be displayed at the beginning of the year, to give all competitors plenty of notice.

Staff will also be given the opportunity to compete in a range of events, to help their House. Staff Bowling, Chess, Cornhole, Quizzes, Cook-Off, etc. will be arranged throughout the year for all staff to be able to contribute to the success of their House and to promote a bit more staff togetherness.

All staff have been encouraged to come up with events and lead them, awarding House Points in the process. These can be:

- * Sports Day
- * Monthly Sports Competitions
- * Talent Night
- * The Bremen Bake Off
- * The Brain of Bremen Quiz Night
- * University Challenge
- * Drama Festival
- * Science Fair
- * Battle of the Bands
- * Fundraisers
- * Masterchef
- * Various Charity Events

...and many more

With the help of the House Captains and Vice Captains, staff can run such events and document the results, which are then passed on to a House Coordinator.

The recommended House Points that should be awarded (page 14) may differ for certain events where this would not work, but this will be discussed and agreed beforehand and the House Points on offer will be announced well before the event takes place.

Any specifics that surround each event will also be communicated well before the event takes place, such as

the number of competitors allowed, the specific rules, venues, etc. and will be displayed on the relevant notice boards.

All staff have been asked to submit their dates for next year, so that we can give the students plenty of notice before an event takes place. This will make the House Captain's job a lot easier by giving them time to prepare teams, etc.

However, because we have asked staff for their dates so far in advance, there is a chance that they could change at short notice. We will, however, endeavour to keep them as fixed as possible.

There will also be regulations as to how often students can take part in specific types of event. For example in sports events, students can only take part in a maximum of 2 sports per academic year (not including Sports Day). This is to allow everybody the chance to participate in a sport at some point, without certain groups of students dominating the teams.

Clothing for all events

A general rule for all events that involve House Competition is that the students should be wearing their House Colour, by way of their 'House T-Shirt', which they will be asked to order at the beginning of the year.

These can be ordered through the school via Frau Janssen at 'Smart Stuff'. Each student will be required to order a T-Shirt specific to their House, in the respective colour and with the House Logo on it. Order Forms will be made available at the beginning of the next academic year.

House Captains and Vice Captains will also have Pin Badges that they will be required to wear when applicable.

Other clothing issues, specific to the event taking place, will be announced prior to the event, where needed.

House Captains and Vice Captains will be responsible for checking that all participants in their House are appropriately organised and dressed.



Additional Information



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