



E-Newsletter

Monday 7th November 2016

Issue 17

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE HEADTEACHER

ATTITUDE DETERMINES ALTITUDE

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s),

I am very pleased to be able to report to you that we continue in the belief that every child can succeed and that we have an unshakeable belief in every pupil.

Our teachers and support staff continue to work within the framework of the Business Plan of the Trust:

- We have trained all pupils about the new levels leading to a much reformed GCSE programme at the end of Year 11.
- Many parents/carers attended the training sessions we organised to ensure your understanding of the reformed GCSE programme.
- We are now checking the progress of every child in the school, especially those in Years 7, 8 and 9. This should result in each pupil knowing precisely where they stand in relation to the new levels.
- Every pupil should know about their strengths and what they need to do in order to improve, especially in English, Maths and Science.
- Once a pupil knows about their current progress and what to do next, we believe that they have a much better understanding of their learning. This enables each pupil to work at her or his level in a clear and systematic manner.
- We have linked **CHABOP** to the progress of each pupil. This is very important and helps pupils to work at a rapid pace, towards their targets.

OUTSTANDING BEHAVIOUR EACH AND EVERY DAY

This as you know is a very important part of our school. I do not accept that pupils from the “inner city” are boisterous and therefore unable to display an acceptable standard at all times.

There is a bottom line. Last year, we failed to discipline a small minority of our pupils.

This year, we have returned to basics. This means that we have started the process of tracking pupils throughout each day.

Disciplinary measures take place immediately. For example, there are now more lunchtime detentions and after school detentions. We have elevated Saturday Detentions to the status of “Pre-Exclusions”.

It is our intention to re-introduce the Behaviour Courts as well as the active meetings with Governors and small groups of parents/carers and a small number of pupils who need final warnings about their behaviour and attitude.

At the same time, we have put more supportive projects in place to support pupils’ welfare. This area is ever-changing because each year pupils present different needs. We continue to retain counselling for individual and groups of pupils, Restorative Justice as a model for resolving disputes and we will invest in additional projects such Pupils Learning to Learn and Family Counselling.

I have directed our Pastoral Managers to exercise disciplinary procedures each and every day.

I must stress that our systems are robust and we are very pleased with the behaviour of the overwhelming majority of pupils. As always, a small number of pupils, if left unchecked can create difficulties for the majority of hard-working and ambitious pupils.



We know as an “inner-city” school that we have to regularly re-visit the rules and expectations with all the school community, especially with a minority of pupils.

FIREWORKS

I am pleased to report that there were no incidents involving fireworks this year. Possession of fireworks is illegal for pupils in our school. I do not hesitate to involve the police where pupils are found with fireworks.

We also permanently exclude pupils who are found with fireworks.

OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LOCAL BUSINESS COMMUNITY

We recently wrote to all members of the local community.

We reiterated the fact that we are very proud of the overwhelming majority of our pupils. Recently, a small minority of pupils started to disrupt local businesses. Clearly, this is unacceptable.

As a result, we wrote to members of our local business community, inviting them to take photographic/video images of any pupil(s) found disrupting their business. We have also given them a dedicated phone number to report concerns. Naturally, we will involve the local police in all incidents.

Most of our local business community are extremely supportive of the school. Long may this continue!

Attitude Determines Altitude.

I know that God is with us, especially with our wonderful pupils. Always.

Best wishes,

J. Tapper CBE FRSA MA NPQH

Chief Executive Officer

Executive Headteacher

The Platanos Trust

KEY DATES

DATE	EVENT
Monday 14th November 2016	Anti-Bullying Week
Wednesday 16th November 2016	Foundation Awards Ceremony (3.30 – 6.00 pm)
Thursday 24th November 2016	Parents' Awareness Evening on Child Sexual Exploitation (5.00 – 6.00 pm)
Thursday 8th December 2016	Trips to Enhance Learning
Friday 9th December 2016	Academic Review Day
Wednesday 14th December 2016	Drama theatre production (4 pm – 5.30 pm)
Thursday 15th December 2016	School concert – School ends at 2.00 pm
Friday 16th December 2016	CHABOP DAY LAST DAY OF TERM – School ends at 12.00 pm

THE CURRICULUM

Delivering the curriculum

The new autumn term has delivered a wealth of enrichment activities as well as revised curriculum content, exams and assessments. At Platanos College we take pride in our belief that offering an 'outstanding' quality of teaching is a key component to the success of our pupils.

This year we have worked hard to plan and deliver a range of staff development programmes to ensure that we were prepared and ahead with delivering the curriculum to our pupils. Over the summer holidays teachers worked tirelessly to plan new, innovative and engaging lessons which meet the needs of every pupil.

At Key Stage 3 we want our pupils to foster a love of learning and an eagerness to acquire knowledge. We also ensure that pupils make sustained progress throughout their secondary education. To enable this, our Key Stage 3 curriculum was revised extensively to reflect the many changes at Key Stage 4. Our focus is to develop independent learners who are resilient and robust to the challenges of learning.

Expanding the curriculum and interventions

We continue to ensure that we offer a broad and balanced curriculum. The study of Latin is now well established at Platanos College. This year we have expanded our Key Stage 3 Latin provision and we will see the GCSE Latin exam taken by both Year 10 and 11 pupils. In addition, Music and French have also been expanded in Key Stage 3.

Entering the final year of secondary school is both daunting and exciting; every pupil knows that the dedication required is fundamental to their success. We have taken steps to ensure that support is already in place.

Our Year 11 intervention begins swiftly this half term. This is a timetabled, bespoke programme of innovative and additional curriculum content in both core and foundation subjects. It is provided by departments in addition to the school day. It ensures that both additional support and extension is targeted to accelerate pupils' learning and progress and designed to meet the needs of all pupils.

We will continue our drive to ensure that our curriculum prepares pupils for the challenges ahead regardless of their starting points.

LITERACY AT PLATANOS COLLEGE

Literacy and reading continues to be a core focus at Platanos College. We currently have over 30 literacy intervention classes being delivered, which are helping pupils across Years 7 to 9. Pupils attending these classes focus on spelling, grammar and punctuation, through popular children's literature. These sessions are attended by the children twice per week and run alongside and compliment their daily English lessons. Skills developed and practised are then transferable to their work in other subjects to help consolidate learning.

Other initiatives include our continuous whole school focus on daily reading (Drop Everything and Read) for 15 minutes for the final part of the day on



Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays.

A new initiative this year is our *'Tutor Classic Reads'*. Class sets of over 100 classic reads were purchased for tutor groups to select, borrow and read as a whole group. These sessions are led by tutors and/or Year 10 Tutor Buddies and are quickly becoming a popular part of the school day. This programme is to be rolled out to Years 10 and 11 shortly.



We also look forward to restarting our very popular Parent and Child Literacy Workshops soon after Christmas, which were first launched last year.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

At Platanos College we consistently review our classroom management systems. We want to make the classroom environment a positive experience to enable pupils to maximise their learning. We have therefore refined some of the systems we have in place.

We have clear expectations on behaviour in the classroom. We will continue to reinforce the school's Discipline and Behaviour Policy, which includes our Classroom Code of Conduct. The increase in pupils' responsibility towards behaviour means that we expect to see increasingly high standards of behaviour in the classroom.



Our senior and middle leaders continue to monitor learning in the classrooms and have increased patrols around the school, including classrooms and corridors, to ensure that pupils have a consistent learning framework and receive the best learning experience.

PROMOTING BRITISH VALUES

Key British Values

We recognise the multi-cultural, multi-faith and ever-changing nature of the United Kingdom. This diversity is reflected in our school and we see this as an advantage in bringing cohesion to our school community.

As part of this, key 'British Values' are taught within and outside the classroom. These values include:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect
- Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs

Teaching democracy, mutual respect and tolerance

The principles of democracy, respect and tolerance are consistently reinforced at Platanos College. These are demonstrated through our lessons, debates, mock elections, community projects, leadership programmes, amongst others. These play a key role in the decision making within our school.



Head Boys: Jason Akbulut and Wajid Ahmed (L to R)

Head Girls: Precious Oladipo and Kawtar Haouache (L to R)

Our Head Boy and Head Girl elections were held early last term. The school appointed the following pupils following a programme of campaigning and voting by pupils.

Jason Akbulut and **Wajid Ahmed** were voted the new Head Boys.

Precious Oladipo and **Kawtar Haouache** were voted the new Head Girls.

We congratulate them all on their new positions and wish them every success in their leadership roles.

Celebrating our history and diversity

Our celebration of History Month last term was also an opportunity for pupils to appreciate their place in a culturally diverse society and the people and events that shaped our modern society. This year's theme of the '*History of London*' formed a basis for cross-curricular lessons and activities and proved to be an engaging exercise for pupils.

Mutual respect and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs lies at the heart of everything we do. We will continue to ensure that our pupils are equipped to build a successful life in modern Britain.



DATA TRAINING FOR PARENTS/CARERS

The use of performance data and assessment has become an increasingly important tool to ensure that our pupils learn and make progress at a rapid rate. At the same time, these have undergone various changes nationally.



Our data training workshops for parents and carers were introduced at the start of term in order to help parents understand the changes to our new assessment and grading system. The main focus of the evenings was to provide parents with information about our method of assessment in Key Stage 3, where pupils are graded using success criteria instead of levels.

Our targets for each subject are individualised. Pupils' progress will be tracked and monitored internally using the new 9-1 grading system, in line with the current government's outline for GCSE grades. The new system allows pupils to focus on specific targets within skill sets, as well as enabling clear monitoring of progress from Key Stage 3 to 4.

PUPILS OF THE MONTH

Platanos College celebrated its Pupil of the Month Awards for October in our last whole school assembly earlier this term. Pupil of the Month is awarded to pupils who consistently have an excellent attitude to learning in their lessons.

We congratulate the following pupils of the month. We have high expectations and are confident that they will be able to sustain the high level of commitment towards their learning throughout the year.

Subject	Pupil Name	Tutor Group
English	Petra Pestana	7F
English	Rafael Lopes	7E
Maths	Vickie Tiew	7C
Maths	Labiba Miah	7W
Science	Sumayah Adulrahim	7A
Science	Boris Spasovski	7B
English	Reanna Jordon	8B
English	Andave Ramdhun	8B
Maths	Alexandra Obiosa	8W
Maths	Michael Osemene	8H
Science	Beatriz Pires Pinto	8D
Science	Dahir Nur	8B
English	Nabil Mohamed	9A
English	Darnell Gordon	9B
Maths	Hayat Matovu	9W

Subject	Pupil Name	Tutor Group
Maths	Faith Gomes	9D
Science	Aneya Lewis	9D
Science	Sabir Mahudin	9A
English	Maria Fernanda Baidal Narvaez	10A4
English	Joel Oliveira	10A1
Maths	Mariam Omar	10A3
Maths	Yasin Osoble	10A3
Science	Eugenia Adubofour	10A2
Science	Uzer Mughal	10A1
English	Krishmary Ramdhun	11A4
English	James Lau	11A3
Maths	Helena Silva Freitas	11C2
Maths	Ziyi Yao	11C2
Science	Jason Akbulut	11A1
Science	Mary Da Silva	11A2

YEAR 7 PUPILS SETTLING IN

Our very successful Year 7 Settling-In Evening was held earlier this autumn, which proved just how well our new intake had settled in. We are extremely proud of our new Year 7 pupils.

Attendance at the event was impressive as parents, carers and pupils used the opportunity to meet with tutors and consolidate their start to the new year.

Information sessions were held for 'Show My Homework', as well as for our provision for SEND, Literacy, Uniformed Services, EAL (English as an Additional Language) and other subject areas.

The feedback from parents and carers was particularly positive.

- 100% agreed that the evening was informative and useful.
- 100% agreed that induction activities for new pupils aided their child's learning.
- 100% agreed that their child had adapted well to school life at Platanos Collage.
- 97% agreed that their child was well informed of the school rules, routines and activities.



Our Year 7 pupils have made an exceptional start to life at Platanos College, showing impressive signs of independence, maturity and becoming much-valued members of the community. They have fully engaged our challenging curriculum whilst also participating in the wide range of extracurricular activities, such as Debate Mate, Girl Guides, Army Cadets, homework and sports, amongst others.

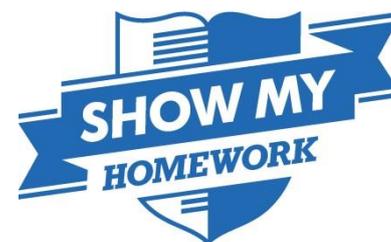


The school also continued its tradition this year of presenting a new reading book to all new Year 7 pupils as part of our long term promotion of reading and literacy. Our Year 7s were very pleased to receive the reading book gifts, which they carry with them in school for reading sessions during tutor time, literacy lessons, English classes and our Drop Everything and Read sessions.

SHOW MY HOMEWORK

What is 'Show My Homework'?

Show My Homework is an online tool to record and monitor pupils' homework. The school has introduced this online system in order to continue to maximise pupils' learning.



This tool allows staff, pupils, parents and carers to see the homework that has been set for pupils on a regular basis.

Parents and carers will be able to access the online system on a computer, mobile phone app or tablet device and receive automated notifications before homework deadlines if they wish.

This allows parents/carers to gain an up-to-date insight into their children's homework so that they can better support the pupils.

Parents and carers can log in to the online system via the following link:

<https://www.showmyhomework.co.uk/>

Login details (linked to your child's homework calendar) were previously sent to all parents and carers. If parents/carers have any further questions regarding the new online tool, please contact the main office via email or telephone.

HEALTH AND SAFETY STANDARDS AWARD FOR PLATANOS COLLEGE

Health and Safety audits

Maintaining high standards of health and safety remains a key priority at Platanos College. This serves to safeguard our pupils, staff and visitors at the school. It is of course a legal requirement under the Health and Safety Executive.

Our current health and safety checks are fulfilled externally using a specialist, accredited provider. Our whole school health and safety audits and fire risk assessments are currently up to date. Our last annual audit was completed in **October 2016**.

The audit determined that we have continued to maintain good health and safety standards and good management practices. Areas of good practice in health and safety included the following:

- Communication, health and safety training and first aid provision are good and well above minimum recommended levels.
- Regular monitoring and reporting systems are robust.
- Risk assessments and internal audit records are accurate.
- Regular inspections and security checks have ensured a high level of safety and security.

Judicium School Safety Standards Award 2016-2017

As a result of the recent audits, the college was awarded the **Judicium School Safety Standards Award 2016-2017** for attaining high standards for safety in the workplace and learning environment.

HEALTH AND SAFETY NOTICES

Severe weather conditions

The weather is likely to deteriorate as we approach winter. This is a reminder that, in severe weather conditions, we may close the school as a (very) last resort if it is deemed that pupils and staff face a significant risk of injury or non-attendance.

If the school is to be closed, we will post a notice on the school website (www.platanoscollege.com) and send a standard text message to all parents/carers before pupils arrive at the start of the school day.

If the weather conditions deteriorate during the school day, we will inform all parents/carers of the situation by text message and via our website.

SAFEGUARDING AT PLATANOS COLLEGE

At Platanos College, we are committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of our pupils. Our **Designated Senior Person for Child Protection** is **Ms T. Williams**.

The dedicated Safeguarding contact email for pupils and parents/carers to raise any safeguarding concerns is safeguarding@platanoscollege.com.

There are also pupils in each tutor group who are fully trained as **Anti-Bullying Champions** and they meet regularly to discuss any issues that may arise.

The dedicated anti-bullying email address for pupils and parents/carers to raise any issues about bullying is abc@platanoscollege.com.