



Assembly notices

Monday 30th March 2020

Reflection for the week

Yes, there is fear. Yes, there is isolation. Yes, there is panic buying. Yes, there is sickness. Yes, there is even death.

But in Wuhan after a week of quiet, they could hear the birds again. The sky was no longer thick with fumes – but blue and grey and clear.

In the streets of Assisi people are singing to each other across empty squares, keeping windows open so that those who are alone may hear the sounds of family around them.

In the west of Ireland there is a hotel that is offering free meals and delivery to the housebound.

Neighbours up and down the country are putting leaflets through doors so that the elderly have someone to call on.

This week, churches, mosques, synagogues and temples have been opening their doors to the homeless, sick and weary.

All over the world, people are slowing down and reflecting.

All over the world, people are looking at their neighbours in a new way.

All over the world people are waking up to a new reality – to how big we really are.

And to how little control we really have.

To what really matters.

To love.

We pray, and we remember that, yes, there is fear – but there does not need to be hate.

Yes, there is isolation, but there does not have to be loneliness.

There is panic buying, but there does not have to be meanness.

There is sickness, but there does not need to be a disease of the soul.

And there is death – but there can be a rebirth of love.

Wake to the choices you make as to how you live now. Today – breathe. Listen. The birds are singing again. The sky is clearing. Spring is coming, and we are always encompassed by love.

Open the windows of your soul and though you may not be able to touch across the empty square – sing.

Please see the assembly notices for this week:

Show My Homework

Well done to all of our pupils who have been using *Show My Homework* (SMHW) to complete lessons and work set by your teachers. As you would have seen in the pupil newsletter from Ms Taybi on Thursday – we miss you all – and we are all working tirelessly from home to ensure that your education can continue during these unprecedented and unusual times.

Work should be uploaded onto SMHW and your teachers will check this for you.

If you have a problem with uploading to SMHW you can add your work as an attachment to the pastoral email addresses (reminder below). Your Pastoral Manager will forward any work to the relevant departments.

In the coming weeks we will be developing rewards those of you who regularly use SMHW and upload outstanding work.

Health and safety

We hope that you are well, safe and healthy. We have unfortunately had reports of pupils and their family members showing signs of coronavirus. Additionally, several members of teaching staff are suspected to have coronavirus also. Sadly, members of our school community have family who have died linked to coronavirus. We continue to pray for our school community and individuals who are unwell at the moment. Please follow the advice set out by the UK government:

1. Stay at home
2. Only go outside for food, health reasons or work (but only if you cannot work from home)
3. If you go out, stay 2 metres (6ft) away from other people at all times
4. Wash your hands as soon as you get home
5. Do not meet others, even friends or family (unless you live with them).

You can spread the virus even if you don't have symptoms.

Mental Wellbeing

Many of you will be feeling anxious because of the dramatic change to our lives. This is normal. It is okay to feel this way. Please remember: **YOU ARE NOT ALONE!** Many of us are feeling the same way. We must bide our time and sooner rather than later things will return to normal. Try to help your mental wellbeing in the meantime:

- Limit the amount of news you watch and read. The constant reminder will only add to your anxiety.
- Read a novel or listen to an audio book. This will act as escapism and take your imagination to new and exciting places.
- Limit the amount of social media you access – fake news thrives on social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Snapchat. Fake news will only worsen your anxieties.
- Exercise – you are allowed out of your homes for a walk or another form of exercise. However, try out PE with Joe Wicks' – your teachers have been. Exercise releases chemicals called endorphins which trigger a positive feeling in your body.
- Keep to a routine – set an alarm in the morning, make your bed, brush your teeth, set aside time for school work, set aside time for downtime and exercise, and do not go to bed too late.

Uniform notice

We do not know when school will reopen. We are seeking and following advice from the government on a daily basis. However, when school does reopen – things will be as close to normal as possible. Therefore:

- Look after your school uniform
- Please do not get piercings – nose piercings, smiler piercings, eyebrow piercings or multiple piercings are not allowed – and boys are not allowed piercings at all
- Please do not get any outrageous hairstyles – no cuts or lines, no high top or big afros and hair must be your natural hair colour.

This will ensure your return to school will not be delayed even further.

Year 11 - Keep working. Keep going.

The Department of Education has released some initial information to schools about how grades will be calculated for year 11 pupils now that the GCSE exams have been cancelled for this year.

We know that some of you have been asking your teachers about this via email, so Ms Taybi wants to share what we know at the moment.

Questions you have asked:

WILL MY PREDICTED GRADE BE USED? - Predicted grades will form part of what is being called a 'calculated grade'. This 'calculated grade' is what you will be awarded and will be on your certificates. The Department for Education states: We are not awarding students their predicted grades.

HOW WILL THE 'CALCULATED GRADE' BE ARRIVED AT? - Calculated grades will consider a range of evidence including, for example, coursework/ practical exam grades where these are relevant. The government have mentioned using mock results within this range of evidence, but results will not be based solely on mock results.

A final decision about the evidence that will be used to form these calculated grades **has not been made yet** – the government is still working on this.

As soon as we know, we will let you know.

We will continue to set work on SMHW until the exams would have begun. Given that we do not yet know definitely what will contribute to your calculated grades for each subject, you should complete and submit work.

ART AND GRAPHICS GCSE PUPILS: Please continue to complete your books and submit the images to Art@platanoscollege.com

Other tasks that are being set should be completed so that your teachers have as much evidence as possible.

Please keep your exercise books safe and continue to use these to complete practise examination style questions.

We will continue to keep you updated.

We wish all of our pupils a safe and productive week.

Attitude Determines Altitude.