

# Key Stage 4 Newsletter

# Autumn Term – December 2020

## Attitude Determines Altitude

Key Dates / Events Calendar	
Return to school – Spring Term	Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> January 2021 at 9.40am
Year 10 Formal Examinations	Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> January 2021 to Friday 8 <sup>th</sup> January 2021
Year 11 Formal Examinations	Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> January 2021 to Friday 8 <sup>th</sup> January 2021
Year 11 A band Parent-Teacher Evening (TBC)	Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> February 2021
Year 11 B and C band Parent-Teacher Evening (TBC)	Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> February 2021

#### Welcome

Despite the challenges we have faced this term it has been a very successful Autumn Term.

Never before in the history of this or any other school has having the right attitude been so important in facing the obstacles that have beseeched us. This Autumn Term has been tough for so many of us – pupils and staff alike – however, we must celebrate how successful this term has been. Staff and pupils alike have been amenable to the changes that have been imposed upon us and so many have worked so hard in order to help bridge the gap of the loss of education caused by the pandemic.

The effort and attitude from so many pupils has been outstanding. Whether it has been using Seneca Learning or IXL at home to consolidate their learning, focusing in their lessons or completing their homework to a high standard – so many of our Key Stage Four pupils have impressed us this term.

We have been so happy to have our pupils back in school. We have relished returning in helping to shape our pupils into successful young people.

We would like to extend a thank you to all our parents, carers and our pupils who have supported us in maintaining a semblance of normality throughout the term. Your resilience and patience is much appreciated.

In this newsletter, form tutors of years 10 and year 11 have reflected on the term for their respective form groups.

We also meet our Senior Prefect Team and have important messages for both years 10 and 11.

Congratulations to our pupils for this term.

Mr Edwards

#### Head Boy, Head Girl and Prefect Team

After a very challenging and thorough selection process, we are delighted to appoint Mohamed Khiar as this year's Head Boy and Sumayah Abdulrahim as Head Girl.

Both were appointed following a rigorous selection process which involved an application form, a pre-recorded speech, a pupil vote and a final interview with the senior management team.



Head Boy Mohamed Khiar

Head Girl Sumayah Abdulrahim

Mohamed and Sumayah will be assisted by Deputy Head Boys Tassnim Abdessalem and Haysam Osman and Deputy Head Girls Rebecca Obadina and Laura Dogbey.



Deputy Head Girl Rebecca Obadina

Deputy Head Girl Laura Dogbey



Deputy Head Boy Tassnim Abdessalem

Deputy Head Boy Haysam Osman

The competition for this prestigious role is always strong, and this year the calibre of the candidates was truly exceptional.

Congratulations to the Prefect Leadership Team of 2020.

The following pupils were successful in their application for Senior Prefect.

Adonell Mensah
Shantara Williams
Ashia Wright
Umaymah Yassin
Emma Bui
Inaya Jahan
Hiba El Housmi Mouate
Chelsea Albuquerque
Brandon Oposa
Annie Le
Mikal Weldemariam
Jahzara Pottinger
Illia Stepina
Aryan Miah
Malachi Grant

The following pupils were successful in their application for Prefect.

Maryam Abdullah Fareeda Adanijo Creshia Lindo Asha Ali Shakirah Miah Marion Acheampong Zainab Animashaun Huda Hassan Hasna Gutin Tasneem Adam Camilla Dos Santos Nadira Mohamed Shian Jordan Saron Yared Chelsea Brock Bille Ahmed

Congratulations to all our Key Stage 4 pupil leaders. We are all incredibly proud of your accomplishment and wish you all the best in your new role.

## 10A1 Ms McAteer

What an excellent start to Key Stage 4 10A1!

You have overcome the challenges of getting back into school life after such a long stretch of learning from home.

There are many achievements from this term, I would like to highlight just a few.

Firstly, I, along with so many others, was impressed with involvement in writing, researching and creating the newsletter in your English lessons. You have written some thought-provoking interesting, and articles. Working powerful deadline, independently researching, crafting and editing your own articles is not an easy job, and these skills are invaluable and will help you in later life. I hope to read some of your articles on a website or newspaper one day!

You also took on the challenge of creating our 'Culture Podcast' exceptionally well. Your questions, ideas and interviewing skills were fantastic and Kamil did an excellent job of putting all of the recordings into a podcast ready to share with the school and our wider community. It was amazing to hear the stories, opinions and viewpoints of your friends and family.

You have constantly been achieving well in your lessons, but a special mention needs to go to our top achievers with our Scientist Jessica, Reuben in English, Sihan in RE, our historian Benjamin, our linguist Dennis, our Artist Kaelee, our photographers mentioned below and finally, Ebuka and Levaan in computing! Well done! You have achieved excellent grades so far; now let's reach those grade nines!

Well done to everyone for completing your leadership applications, we are looking forward to seeing who has been appointed as pupil leader. 10A1, I look forward to seeing you continue to grow and progress as young people next term.

Keep up the excellent work. Remember, Attitude Determines Altitude!

## 10A2 Ms Akingbule

After being away for six months because of the coronavirus pandemic, returning to school has improved most 10A2 pupils' mental, social and physical development. The pupils have improved:

- Mentally as they are now exposed to various knowledge.
- Socially as they are exposed to their friends, being able to work as a team, taking up responsibilities etc. They are in the right position to continue to develop the social skills they will need in future.
- Physically being able to come to school, even though they are in their bubble for most of the day, they are still able to move about during lunchtime.

Pupils in 10A2 have had to develop a new daily routine. School for them begins at 9:40 am and ends at 4pm with lunch at 1:00 pm. They are part of the Year 10 bubble. They also have had to adapt to being in the same classroom for a long period of time. Pupils are well aware of when and where face coverings must be worn except if they are exempt.

Pupils in 10A2 are working hard as they are aware of the need to catch up and we have seen examples of outstanding work in each of the subjects they study and also preparing for their examinations.

As more time is spent online, the school has purchased online

platforms, which pupils can access both at home and in school. Pupils in 10A2 have received training on how to access and use the following packages: Google Classroom, Seneca, IXL, and Show My Homework (SMHW). The school has also checked that all pupils have access to a laptop in order to consolidate their learning.

10A2 have amassed a grand total of 20,990 CHABOP points since September. We strive to do even better and hopefully this goal will be achieved in the new school term.

A number of pupils have applied for the role of training leaders. We wish them the best of luck!

## 10A3 Mr Paton

The pupils of 10A3 have enjoyed a very consistent and focused start to year 10. The pupils have met the challenges of COVID-19 with resilience and character. They have approached their GCSE subjects with enthusiasm and a thirst for learning which has been evident in both their teachers' feedback and general pupil voice.

The class have had a range of successes this term. Individuals and the class as a whole have been continually recognised for their CHABOP achievements culminating in some pupils consistently being in the top five pupils in the year group for merits.

Pupils have also developed in their character and maturity this term. This has been shown when pupils have been challenged to collaborate together in relation to difficult and challenging aspects of school and society.

Lastly, the pupils have also shown a keen interest in a range of leadership opportunities. These leadership platforms will look to harness a range of emerging leadership skills that are clearly evident within the form group. I would like to congratulate the pupils of 10A3 for their hard work and desire this term particularly with the obvious challenges they have faced.

'So far in year ten I have gotten awards for CHABOP and have gotten good grades in maths. However, I could improve my grades in English and in history. A challenge I have come across in year 10 is revising for the subjects that I am weaker in'

'Year ten has been ok so far, I have earned a lot of achievements e.g, letters getting sent home about my good behaviour and that I earned good CHABOP points. My attendance is very good as well and I just need to focus on my weaker subjects such as Spanish'

'I am pleased to have been top 5 merits multiple times, receiving rewards and achieving a grade 9. Moving forward I need to be better at longer written questions but overall I am pleased especially with adapting to the new school rules because of COVID-19'

10A4 Ms Fletcher-Thomas

10A4 returned to school excited for the new academic year and eager to start their new option subjects. Upon returning to school Yoela said 'During lockdown I was concerned but as time passed I became more relaxed. I do feel like I've missed out on quite a bit of learning.'

10A4's keenness to return to school is reflected in their progress and achievements thus far, both individually and as a class. Through outstanding effort and consistent focus the following three pupils are 10A4's top 3 CHABOP achievers, Joshua Z. with 1,425 merits, Leshontaywith with 1,275 merits and Sofia Pires with 1,255.

Thalia has been awarded for her progress and achievement in her GCSE Photography lessons. She has been engaged in every lesson and persistently makes an effort to complete work to a high standard. Additionally, Amira has settled into GCSE Graphic Communication, showing creativity and flair in all lessons.

Chukwunwike, Joshua Z., Keyana and Abdihakim have been awarded and celebrated for their effort in history lessons.

The class as whole have settled back into school and have a positive attitude to learning. Well done 10A4!





## 10B1 Ms Cleasby

10B1 have made a great deal of progress this year so far, in particular in their CHABOP points. In previous weeks, 10B1 climbed into third position in the year group, an achievement which the form group as a whole is extremely proud of. While this is a whole class achievement, there are particular individuals within the form group who have excelled in gaining merits. These pupils are consistently working hard and behaving well and have achieved over a thousand merits since the beginning Therefore, special mention goes to: Ammar, Beatriz and Zoe.

In individual subjects, pupils in 10B1 have been highlighted in the weekly school Praise Newsletter for all of the following subjects: History, English, Mathematics, Religious Studies, Spanish, Drama, Art and Science.

Individual teachers would like to offer 10B1 the following praise for their work in each of their subjects:

#### Ms Graham:

'Well done on beginning your History GCSE in such a positive manner. We still have work to do but your enthusiasm and work ethic are going to make us all great historians ©.'

#### Ms Amenedo:

'Thanks for making my Fridays afternoon very entertaining. It takes a lot of courage and determination to learn a new language and I am incredibly pleased to see that all of you are trying your best to improve your Spanish language skills.'

#### Ms Reid:

'10B1 have been very engaged in the study of Macbeth and have really worked hard to improve the quality of their extended writing.'

#### Ms O'Connell:

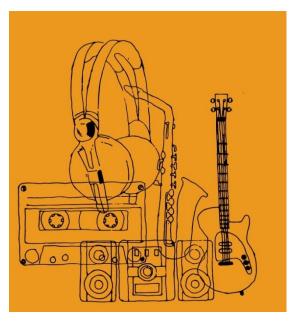
'10B1 have been working very well in English and I am happy to see progress being made. I am becoming more proud of their books. I believe they can achieve good grades in their GCSEs.

#### Ms Yin:

'10B1 have been trying very hard to understand some rather challenging and abstract ideas in Chemistry. Their attitude towards learning has also improved. Quite a few of them are also always very helpful and some are keen to try more challenging questions.'

Many pupils in 10B1 have excelled in their art work. Here are some examples of the creative masterpieces they have produced:











## 10B2 Ms Bartley

There have been some significant changes to 10B2 from the start of the academic year. We have seen those who were great contributors leave and make a fresh start in new tutor groups. We have gained new members who have settled in well and have added to the wealth and depth of the tutor group.

A particular highlight this term, is that 10B2 has been the number one tutor group in Year 10 for achieving the most CHABOP points six times this term! What an achievement!

Additionally, each week many 10B2 members of have either dominated the top 5 places of pupils achieving the highest number of merits in the entire year group or the top 10 places. On one occasion 10B2 pupils conquered the top 20 places. This demonstrates that pupils of 10B2 have started to adapt to the rigors of Key and are beginning Stage 4 understand what is needed of them to fulfil their potential at GCSE.

However, it has been clear that a number of 10B2 have found Year 10 "challenging" and "different". It has been difficult also "staying in one classroom for the whole day", "catching up" and "baseline testing".

Nevertheless, 10B2 are hopeful and inspired as they look forward "to going back to normal", "playing basketball again" and the prospect of "employment opportunities".

I have every confidence that 10B2 will ensure that this level of maturity and achievement continues throughout and beyond this academic year, as they all destined for great things.

#### 10B3 Mr Olaniran

There have been significant changes to the form class. Pupils are now able to access more GCSE subjects and this is testament to the hard work of pupils who have remained in the class. We have had many successes this term to celebrate, pupils have been acknowledged for their CHABOP achievements and some have even formed the top ten pupils within the year group.

On a weekly basis pupils within the form have also been acknowledged for their hard work across subjects, which has been very encouraging.

It has been challenging on occasions, especially with the COVID-19 restrictions, however pupils are determined to rise to the challenge to succeed.

Below are some comments from pupils of 10B3:

"Ever since we came back in the new school year things have been a lot different due to the coronavirus changes. My achievements have been very good with hardly any demerits. Challenges I have faced this year is the new GCSE curriculum which was meant to be introduced to us earlier in mid-year 9. I am looking forward to what the future holds as in the new topics, teachers and friendship groups".

"Year 10 has been a bit hard and annoying because we have to stay in a classroom for two hours every day and that's just hard. Overall, I like all my lessons and all my new teachers. So far I have achieved four certificates from Ms Taybi for CHABOP. The challenges I have faced is moving

classes however I am happy now so that's all that matters. I am looking forward to achieving my goals to go to college".

## 11A1 Mr Rigby

This term has been a challenging but eye-opening term with 11A1. You have approached the term with a high level of maturity and positivity. Your consistently highly level of engagement with your classwork in the various subject areas must be congratulated.

Congratulations to Sumayah for taking the Head Girl position, Tassnim (Deputy Head Boy) and the following pupils who gained Senior Prefect positions: Adonell, Shantara, Ashia, Umaymah, Emma, Inaya, and Hiba. I'm delighted to also report that Maryam was successful in becoming a prefect.

In terms of CHABOP, 11A1 has achieved 21,760 merits since September which is a wonderful achievement. Hannah has achieved the most merits so far with 1,055 merits, Umaymah in second place with 1,050 merits and Emma, third place, with 1,030 merits. Congratulations girls!

A special mention goes out to Shantara who has tirelessly monitored and maintained the tutor notice board in 1A14.

Sumayah, you have made excellent progress this term with a grade 9 in chemistry and grade 8.6 in Maths. Emma, congratulations on your grade 9 in chemistry. We are all very proud of you!

It's a delight to share pupil voice about the term:

"being in our form rooms for all our lessons has been far from normal. Not being with my other peers and teachers has been an adjustment. However, from one negative another positive has come. Being with my tutor group has been a blessing in disguise. We've become a team and have got to know each other even more than we would have if we weren't in our forms."

Continue to strive for excellence no matter the challenges that come your way. I, therefore leave this though with you:

"The beautiful thing about learning is that no one can take it away from you." — B.B. King

## 11A2 Mr Tromba

On the whole, pupils have been working really hard this school year.

They are motivated and aspire to achieve high grades. As a class, they have achieved almost 30,000 merits since the beginning of the school year.

Their aspiration and high motivation are evident through the fact that eight people from the class have been selected to the pupil leadership team. Well done to Mohamed (Head Boy), Rebecca and Laura (Deputy Head Girls), Chelsea (Senior prefect), and Asha, Shakirah, Marion and Zainab (Prefects).

The following comments from 11A2's teachers are great testament to hard work and effort that pupils are putting in:

"I would like to say that 11A2 have worked hard this term. They have been a delight to teach, and have been a real credit to the school." Mr. Garry

"The class have been practising their creative writing in the last week and lots of pupils have really developed even since the last assessment. Jamie Mohamed used engagina and imagery. Laura and Jamal had used a ambitious range of vocabulary, Rebecca is developing her use of structural features. I have also been very impressed with the continued classwork effort of Zainab, Emily, Nazifa, Asha, Amran and Adora who consistently produce high quality work in lessons." Ms. Cooke

"Well done on working consistently well in R.S. and being such a positive start to my Monday morning. ©." Ms Graham

## 11A4 Ms Valmarana

11A4 have made an outstanding start to the academic year! They have achieved the most merits collectively compared to the other forms in their year group. This is testament to their hard work and focus!

Ms Taybi and Mr Bourke have commented on how focused and driven the vast majority of the class are in English and History respectively; the other teachers of 11A4 concur. This augurs well for the future.

11A4 will need to maintain their drive in what will be a fast paced Spring Term.

## 11B1 Mr Garry

11B1 have made a bright start to their first term as the most senior pupils in the school. The class achieved a total of over 13,000 merits this term, with Tamiyah and Aissatou making the joint highest contributions to the form.

Malachi was successful in his application to become a prefect and has been an overall credit to the form and year group.

The teachers of 11B1 have also commented on their positive attitude towards obtaining the highest possible grades in their GCSE examinations.

Their science teacher Mr Scott said that he had "been impressed" with a number of pupils this year. He has described the tutor group as "hardworking and enthusiastic".

Pupils were also asked to reflect on a challenging term in light of the global pandemic. They have made some insightful comments. One pupil said that "I feel good about this term because I am not at home just doing nothing, I'm in school learning".

Another pupil said that they were "glad to be back in school this year because I get to learn more and see my friends again".

In light of the many challenges that the 11B1 have encountered due to Covid-19, I believe that they have risen to the occasion and have been a pleasure to teach. Next term the work continues so I urge them to get some rest over the Christmas holidays and revise in order to do their very best for the January exams.

#### 11B2 Mr Carroll

It is safe to say that it has been one of the most unusual and challenging terms that we have ever faced here at Platanos College but as always, the pupils of 11B2 have risen to the challenge.

We have had ups and downs, laughter and tears but my form group have never failed to put a smile on my face each morning.

Their endless energy and enthusiasm always manages to cheer me up and they continue to make me proud every week.

Year 11 is not an easy year, especially given the current situation, but pupils have continued to strive to learn and improve every day, motivating each other to be the best they can be.

A major highlight of the term was Haysam being appointed Deputy Head Boy, a well-deserved and inspirational achievement for Haysam and the form.

Our tutor board in 1A10 is also something that 11B2 are very proud of as it is a celebration of who we are and where we come from. It showcases the broad range of different cultures, backgrounds and ethnicities that we have here and proudly symbolises the amazing diversity in our school and broader society.

I look forward to a big year in 2021. I am sure there will be challenges ahead but I know that 11B2 will face each and every one with dedication, focus and resilience. I wish you all a restful break and look forward to seeing you back again in the new year.

This has been a strange term and in fact a strange year. We returned to full-time learning in September after a special timetable at the end of the Summer Term. New rules were established, which we all had to get used to, including a new start time to the school day. This did take some time to get used to, but we appear to have got used to a new routine.

There have been some great academic successes so far. Shannay has produced some very creditable work, particularly in RE, in which she has shown some interest and has been rewarded with inclusion in the weekly Praise Newsletter. Outside of school, some of our members attend college, with Rowan getting positive reports over his participation.

As we come to the end of this term, it is important that we take some time to rest and be with our families. However, we must not forget the reason we attend school and remember to focus and prepare for our learning. The next round of school based examinations will be on the first week back. These should provide data to monitor progress towards achieving successful GCSE grades.

I wish you all a peaceful and restful holiday and look forward to see you in the new year.

## **Equipment**

As we continue to work hard to keep our school community safe as possible from Covid-19, please ensure that your child continues to attend school with their face covering.

It is vitally important that pupils wear face masks in communal areas around school, unless medically exempt. By doing so, they are protecting themselves, other pupils, members of staff and their families.

We will continue to record behaviour points for any pupil found not wearing a mask.

Pupils must also remember to bring all their school equipment to school. We will not be lending out equipment, as per public health guidelines.

The following items are absolutely essential for all pupils and will be needed at all times:

- A sensible school bag
- A blue/ black pen (with spares)
- A ruler
- A pencil and pencil sharpener
- An eraser
- A Maths scientific calculator
- A dictionary

Many thanks in advance for your support with this.

#### **Punctuality to school**

Disappointedly, we still have a minority of pupils who arrives to school late.

This will significantly impact on Year 11 pupils as punctuality records form part of references passed onto colleges and sixth-forms.

For our Year 10 pupils, this is equally important as they get prepared for their induction into the world of work and work experience.

Please support us in maintaining good punctuality by:-

- Ensuring your child gets enough sleep and gets up promptly for school.
- Ensuring your child has organised their school bag and equipment the night before so that this does not delay departure in the morning.
- Addressing punctuality concerns raised by the school (via punctuality letters) and discussing the importance of punctuality in the workplace and life beyond Platanos College.

We thank you in anticipation of your support.

#### **Careers Programme Update**



CEIAG (Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance) at Platanos College serves to prepare our pupils for their future education, training and employment. The quality of our careers provision is recognised by the school receiving the 'Quality in Careers Standard' which is a national quality award for careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance programmes. This

reflects the school's commitment to providing high quality careers provision for all of our pupils.

#### Careers Interviews

The landscape of career choices is complex and constantly changing. Therefore, it is vital that all our Year 11 pupils have the knowledge and skills they need to make informed choices regarding their career's pathway.

To date, the majority of Year 11 pupils have met with the careers advisor for their one-to-one interviews.

They were given impartial information and guidance to help identify a range of post-16 options, careers advice and useful support networks to help them plan and negotiate their career pathways.

All pupils were also given a copy of their careers action plan and parents and carers were sent a copy by post. We are keen to involve parents and carers in this process and we suggest that you look carefully at the action plan and discuss it with your child.

We will also continue to provide our year 11 pupils with lists of virtual open days for all local Colleges and Sixth Forms.

#### **Employable Me - Year 10 Course**

Employable Me provides pupils with an opportunity to learn about the skills and personal attributes that are required to be successful in the workplace.

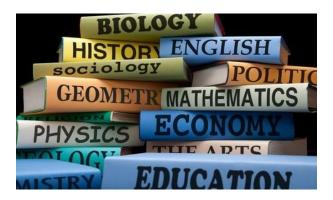
During the month of November and December over 120 year 10 pupils participated in the online virtual classes which consist of over five units:

- Showcasing your personal attributes, skills and strengths to employers
- CV writing and cover letters
- Digital footprints and social media
- interview skills
- Different approaches to job hunting
- Setting SMART goals and action plans
- Finding more information and support

On completion pupils will be awarded a certificate of participation.

like BTEC's Apprenticeships, Traineeships etc.), whilst others are more exam based.

#### **College References & Applications**



As our Year 11 pupils continue to apply to colleges and sixth-forms, please note that references must be directed to ks4pastoral@platanoscollege.com.

While some colleges and sixth-forms schools still offer the option of a paper application, the majority of applications submitted now are completed online. As such, it is imperative that you encourage your child to proofread their online application and check it thoroughly for any mistakes before hitting the submit button. Equally, parents and carers are also encouraged to actively get involved in their child's college application process as this could be particularly daunting for some pupils.

It is worth noting that the level of course your child can apply for will vary depending on your child's predicted grades (which are readily available on your child's most recent academic report.)

If you are you are your child is unsure of their predicted grades, please do not hesitate to contact Mr Edwards at ks4pastoral@platanoscollege.com

Post 16 pathways courses will vary significantly in depth and breadth, with options available to meet the needs of all pupils. Some courses are very practical and skillset based (i.e. vocational courses

#### **E-Learning expectations**

As we make increasing use of e-learning resources (i.e. Zoom lessons, Google Classroom, Show My Homework, Seneca Learning, ixl.com etc.) to support our pupils' learning at school and home, we would like to encourage parent and carers to take a proactive role in monitoring their child's online activities.

Please ensure that your child behaves appropriately when accessing any of our Zoom and Goggle Classroom lessons and encourage them to actively access and participate with all scheduled online lessons or interventions.

This is particularly important for our Year 11 pupils as they work towards their GCSE examinations.

#### Uniform

Please ensure that your child has the correct uniform for their return to school. This includes hair cuts which should be of a straight forward style – natural colour without lines or patterns. Lines cut into eyebrows are not allowed.

- Boys are not permitted to wear earrings. Girls are permitted to wear a small stud in the lobe of each ear. <u>No other piercings are</u> permitted.
- Uniform includes: school blazer, school tie in house colours, formal white collar shirt, grey or black trousers (not denim), black or grey skirt for girls, black or grey socks, school shoes (not boots/ canvas shoes/ trainer style shoes).

- Hair colour must be natural
- For girls who wear a hijab this must be only plain dark blue, plain black, plain white or plain grey.

Pupils who return to school in November with breaches of school uniform will be sent home until this is corrected.

## **Update to Contact Details**

Please ensure the school office has all your current contact details, especially your current mobile phone number and email address and advise us immediately if any of these change.

If there are any changes, please let us know by informing the main office as soon as possible or email <a href="mailto:info@platanoscollege.com">info@platanoscollege.com</a>.

#### **Twitter**

We are on Twitter! If you want to see our latest successes as they happen follow us @platanoscollege.

#attitudedeterminesaltitude