



## Assembly notices

Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021

### Reflection for the week

It is hard to be independent. It is something that comes with a lot of practice. We know that many of you are finding it a challenge to organise yourself at home during this lockdown. Know that you are not alone.

A famous story that often helps people compartmentalise and try to make sense of a busy schedule is the story called *Jar of Life*:

It is a story of an experienced and wise teacher who wanted to change the lives of his young and eager class of students.

Putting a big glass jar on the table in front of him, he started placing large rocks in it until they had filled the top of the jar. He then asked the class, "Is this jar full?" Everyone in the class shouted, "Yes!"

The teacher replied, "Really?" He then grabbed from under the table some pebbles, smaller stones, and proceeded to dump it into the jar and then shaking it until all of the gravel had filled the spaces of the big rocks. He then asked again, "Is the jar full?"

Some nodded their head yes. But most didn't say a word.

"Okay... let's see." the teacher said. He reached under the table again, this time pulling out a bucket of sand. He took the bucket and dumped all of the sand in and once more asked the question "Is it full now?"

By this time the only response he got was from a mumble in the back that said, "Probably not."

He said, "Good." He then grabbed a jug of water nearby and dumped it into the jar until it was filled to the brim.

Then the wise teacher asked, "Would I have ever gotten these big rocks in if I had started with the water, then the sand and then the gravel?" The class all shook their head, "No."

He then taught something this youthful class would never forget. He asked, "What are the big rocks in your life that must come first? What is important?" The class was silent. He said, "They are things like the time you spend with those you love, your faith, your education, your service to others...they are the things that matter most." He then said, "Make sure to put the big rocks in first or you will never get them all in."

What are your big rocks? What are your priorities? The reality is that the only thing you will care about when it is all said and done are the big rocks. The little rocks won't matter much then.

This is a great story about prioritising the important things in life - the things that you should be concerning yourself with. We should all prioritise the things that have long term importance to us. The things such as your family, your faith, your education and how you treat others.

The smaller things in life, not that they shouldn't be there, are the things that long term will not be of much use to you – the computer game you enjoy playing, the material things such as your social media or your mobile phone.

Another way of looking at this is by thinking what would you really miss if it was gone? Let's compare your education with your mobile phone. If both were taken away from you for a year – what would you miss the most? Perhaps some of you will be thinking *mobile phone* right now. But what would have the biggest impact on your life *long term*? It's the big things that make a difference to your life. Not the small things.

Let's take another example. Ignoring and rejecting your family or not playing that computer game that everyone is playing? Some of the small things in life, we spend too much time on – because they give us quick wins. Completing a level on a computer game gives you instant gratification that releases endorphins and makes you happy.

But what longevity does this have on your life? Does it make you a better person long term? Does you completing a level on a computer game actually have any impact on your life in a day, a week, a month, or a year's time? Or does spending time with your loved ones?

The rocks in your life should come first. The pebbles and the sand - the small things - they should fit around the important things.

**Please see the assembly notices for this week:**

***Online Learning – Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021***

Lessons for years 10 and 11 will continue as they normally would.

For all other year groups, you will have Spanish and History added to your live lessons this week:

- Year 9 – from Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021
- Year 8 – from Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2021
- Year 7 – from Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021.

Your lessons follow your normal school timetable. So if you have History on a Friday period 4, your live lesson will start at 1pm.

Work that is completed in the lesson must be uploaded to Google Classroom as directed by your teacher. **Work for all other subjects must continue to be completed as it is added to Show My Homework and Google Classroom.**

All resources will be uploaded and it is expected that your work will be submitted to your teachers.

Submission reports will be created this week and these will be sent to your parents/ carers.

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

***Email addresses:***

[year7pastoral@platanoscollege.com](mailto:year7pastoral@platanoscollege.com)

[year8pastoral@platanoscollege.com](mailto:year8pastoral@platanoscollege.com)

[year9pastoral@platanoscollege.com](mailto:year9pastoral@platanoscollege.com)

[ks4pastoral@platanoscollege.com](mailto:ks4pastoral@platanoscollege.com)

**Please ensure the school is made aware if you do not have access to technology to complete your online work.**

### ***Online Learning – problem solving***

This week the whole school went live on G Meet. Attendance to these online and live lessons has been outstanding.

Some pupils have had issues joining their live lessons, with most having been resolved by last Friday. However, some key and common solutions have been:

- Ensuring that your web browser is Google Chrome. If you have not got Google Chrome on your computer or laptop it is free to download. Just enter Google Chrome into your search engine and follow the installation instructions.
- If clicking the link still does not work, copy and paste the link into the address bar in Google Chrome.
- If using a tablet or your smart phone, download the Google Classroom and G Meet apps and join using the apps.
- If you are late to your lesson, the code may be taken down by your teacher – this is so that the teacher can teach online without interruption to keep checking the identity of those who have entered late. So be on time! Your teacher will add the G Meet link to your Google Classroom 5 minutes before your lesson starts.
- For years 7, 8 and 9, you should follow your normal timetable for English, Mathematics and Science. So, if you normally have English period 1 on a Thursday, your lesson will begin at 9am.

### ***Online learning - expectations***

Unless there is a valid excuse that has been explained to the school, all pupils are expected to attend live lessons via Google Classroom and G Meet, and complete work that is set by their teachers.

We will contact home for pupils who do not attend or do not complete their work.

Please note that any form of disruption to online lessons is extremely selfish and will not be tolerated. If a pupil disrupts a live lesson their parents will be contacted in the first instance. In the second instance pupils will be banned from attending live lessons and will have to complete work set by their teachers on Show My Homework and Google Classroom.

**Please do not share the code that your teacher provides for their live lesson. You should treat this code like it is a pin for your bank card. This is for safeguarding reasons.**

### ***Online learning – advice for pupils attending live lessons***

- Create a timetable for your week: when are your live lessons?
- Like the school bell is a reminder to you when a lesson ends and when it begins, set an alarm so that you are punctual.

- If possible, take yourself to a quiet area in your home. If this is not possible, use headphones so that any noisy distractions are reduced.
- Make sure you are organised – the correct resources are open on your screen, you have a notepad, and plenty of pens.
- Do not play music in the background – this will distract you, other pupils and your teacher.
- Have some water and a snack with you so that you do not have to leave your live lesson.
- Make sure that you have used the toilet before your live lesson.
- Make sure that you are comfortable.
- Make sure that your camera is turned on when you enter a classroom. If your camera (or microphone) is not working then inform your teacher using the chat function. We need to make sure that it is really you!

### ***Year 11 - Keep working. Keep going.***

The Department for Education (DfE) and OfQual are yet to inform schools of exactly how your GCSE grades will be assessed. As soon as it is confirmed we will ensure that you are the first to know.

We know that, like year 11 pupils up and down the country, our year 11 pupils will be extremely upset and worried about what this means for their qualifications.

However, **you must keep working and studying** as you will be awarded your GCSE grades by your teachers. These grades will be externally moderated which means that they will have to be accurate.

We are certain that results from your formal examinations and the work in your exercise books and folders will be key evidence that will be used to validate the grades that you are awarded.

You are reminded that the week that you are able to return to school will be your formal examination week. The revision guidance that you received before the Christmas holidays is still relevant and if there are any changes to the topics or question type your teachers will inform you in good time.

**It goes without saying that these examinations will be crucial.**

### ***Health and safety***

We hope that you have been and continue to be well, safe and healthy. We continue to remember in our thoughts and prayers those who have been directly affected by coronavirus – staff, their families, our pupils and their families. If everyone works together this will come to an end. 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.

## Google Classroom

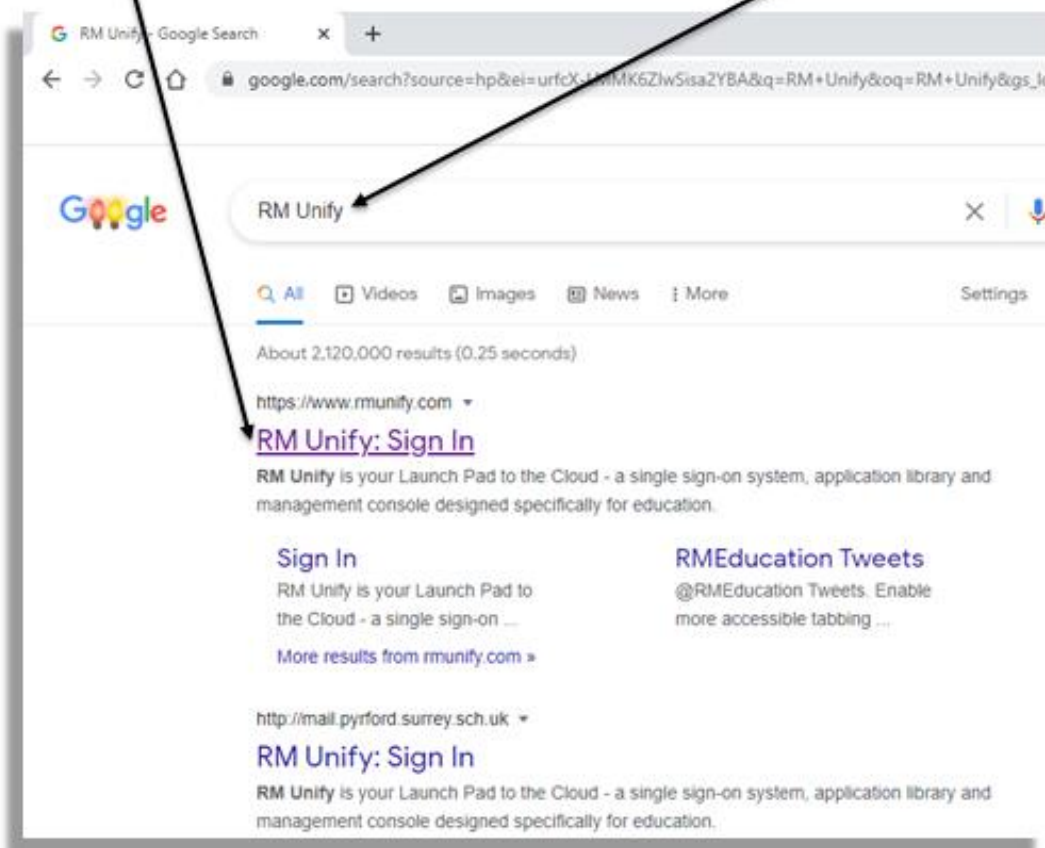
Below is a reminder of how you should log into Google Classroom:

1. Visit RUnify.com and enter your school log in username followed by @platanoscollege.com
2. You should then type in your school account password in the relevant box.
3. When you are logged into RM Unify you should click the Google Classroom tile.

Entering a live lesson is straight forward. This is how you do it:

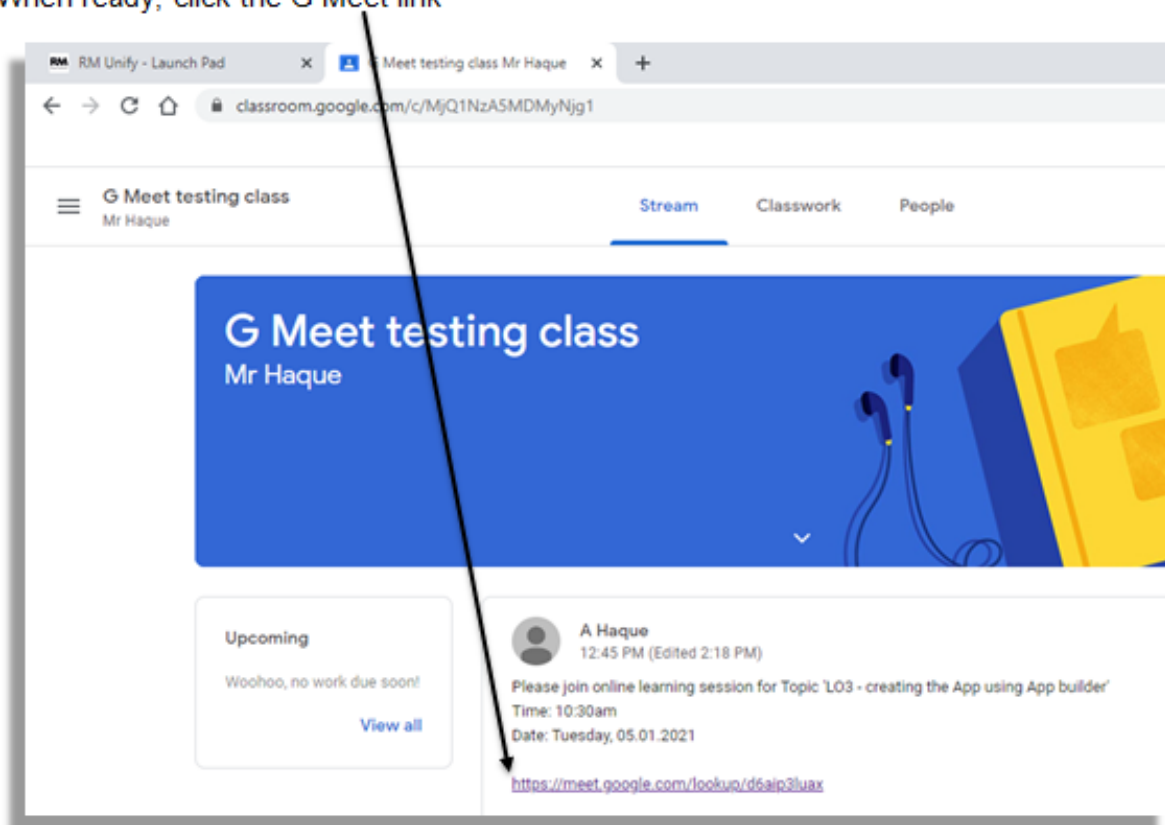
Currently, in order to access a Google Meet (G Meet) session, you must open and use Google **Chrome**.

In **Chrome** log into RM Unify. If RM Unify does not appear, you can Google search for 'RM Unify' then select the RM Unify link from results.



When in your Google Classrooms you will be able to join the live lessons:

You will find the G Meet link along with any teacher instructions; read the instructions carefully. When ready, click the G Meet link



A more detailed guide will be added to Google Classroom and Show My Homework.

Stay safe.

*Attitude Determines Altitude*