



Assembly notices

Monday 25th January 2021

Reflection for the week

Our theme for our reflection this week is the conscience.

Your conscience is a very powerful part of you and many people use their conscience to help them make decisions. How then can it be that a human being is capable of the best and of the worst?

A quick look back at our history reveals that: day after day, year after year, century after century human beings are faced with very difficult decisions to make. These decisions can impact themselves and others.

Our society and our culture offer a range of opportunity — good, beautiful, right, and true. Our eternal happiness can depend on the life decisions that we make.

It is our duty to teach you how to make the best decisions for you; you are the men and women of tomorrow. Our future.

We do this by looking at the idea of morality, what is right and what is wrong.

We teach you this through your portfolio for life lessons and through Religious Studies, but we also do this by holding you to account for your actions. When you are faced with challenges, we help you, when you go against the behaviour policy of the school, we sanction you. When you make the right decisions, we praise you, we reward you. We enable you to see that good decision-making results in a positive outcome.

It is our belief that you will become responsible, kind, considerate and successful adults, who are able to use their conscience to make the right decisions in the most difficult of situations.

Some people describe their conscience as an aching feeling in the pit of their stomach, you feel this when you know that something is not right, or you feel this when you know that you have made the right decision.

But, in the heat of any moment, how do we sit and listen to our conscience? When making decisions it is important to slow down and to reflect.

Your reflection for this week, therefore, is to consider the following:

When you are faced with a difficult decision, do you listen to your conscience?

Do you consider whether you are being true to yourself?

Do you consider what is morally right?

Mahatma Gandhi said: *“There is a higher court than courts of justice and that is the court of conscience”*.

Please see the assembly notices for this week:

Online Learning

Years 7, 8 and 9 should now be following their timetable for English, Mathematics, Science, Spanish and History for their live lessons via Google Classroom and G Meet.

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 have been 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

year8pastoral@platanoscollege.com

year9pastoral@platanoscollege.com

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.

Year 11 Careers Interviews

This term we will continue with the one-to-one careers advice via our virtual system.

Christina Okoro will remain as the school advisor and will be conducting the virtual meetings week beginning 18th January 2021.

Careers interviews take place on a Tuesday.

A letter will be sent home inviting you to attend a Zoom meeting (parents/ carers are welcome to join).

A reminder text message will be sent on a Monday one day before the careers interview.

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 – our pupils and their families, staff, 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

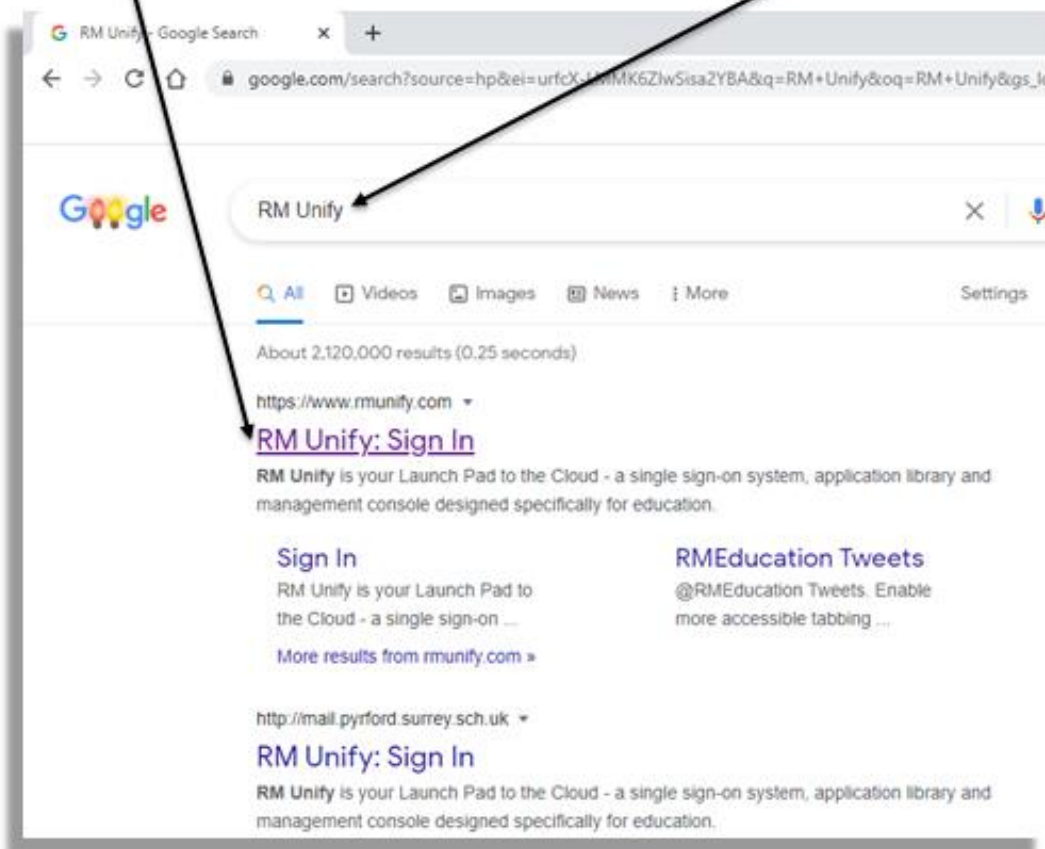
Below is a reminder of how you should log into Google Classroom:

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:

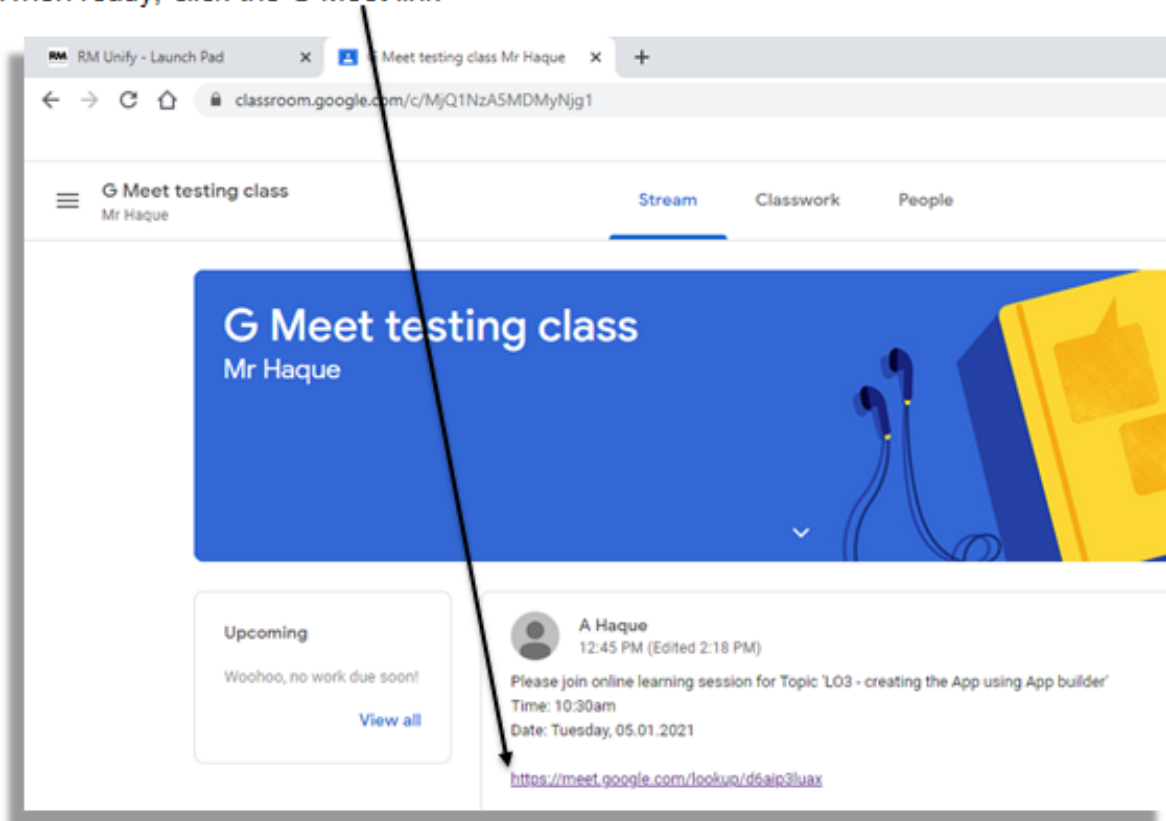
Currently, in order to access a Google Meet (G Meet) session, you must open and use Google **Chrome**.

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.

Attitude Determines Altitude