



Assembly notices

Monday 17th May 2021

Reflection for the week

Our school's logo is unique and is made up of a symbol and words. The symbol is a caduceus, a powerful symbol in Roman and African mythology and the staff carried by Hermes in Greek mythology. The caduceus represents communication, healing, medicine, trade and business.

This symbol is also Biblical. It dates back to over 2000 BC in Mesopotamia and is mentioned in the Book of Numbers and the Book of Kings. More importantly, it represents the ability of the mind to develop in numerous and complex ways.

The caduceus in our branding represents the two halves of energy in the body; the stick is a spine, the two symbols are energy winding up the spine and the wings suggest exploration, including exploration of both the body and the mind.

The spinal column represents both male and female and the heart represents courage and determination, essential qualities for success.

Finally, the wings cover the globe – the mind – our minds, especially the minds of you, our pupils, which should cover the globe and indicates the high expectations and unlimited potential of our students.

The words 'Attitude Determines Altitude' are used throughout the school and are at the heart of all that we do. We firmly believe that one's attitude towards any given task or challenge is the most important factor in all of our successes.

Our school symbol has power. The meaning behind the symbol should be a driver for you to succeed. Your minds and bodies are powerful – they can achieve anything as long as you:

- Communicate in the right way
- Learn to heal when times become tough
- Look after your bodies and mind
- Share your knowledge and talents with others
- Think critically and analytically
- Have a positive energy
- Be inquisitive
- Be brave
- Have willpower
- Have high expectations of yourselves
- Believe in yourselves
- Remember that Attitude Determines Altitude.

This week's reflection is about your potential – and your ability to grow and develop in the face of the adversity that has befallen you – that has befallen all of us since early 2020.

We are slowly coming out of a time in our lives that many will wish to forget. There has been pain – heartache. There have been frustrations – our loss of freedom. There has been a detrimental effect on your education – many of you have fallen behind.

By the very fact that you are a pupil at Platanos College, know that you are in *our* collective. You are *our* pupils. You are *ours*.

We will help you through your adversities. We will help you to develop into well-rounded, well-mannered and well-educated young adults.

As we move forward to 'normality' – don't give up trying. Allow yourselves to make mistakes – but don't allow yourself to give up trying.

Please see the assembly notices for this week:

Social Distancing

Last week the Prime Minister made a set of announcements about the gradual easing of social restrictions, as the country looks at trying to return the country to normal life in a sensible and safe way.

Some of the changes include:

- Up to six people and two households may meet indoors.
- Up to 30 people may meet outdoors
- Pubs, bars and restaurants can open indoors
- Indoor entertainment (such as museums and cinemas) can resume
- Outdoor events allowed up to the lower of 4,000 attendees or 50 per cent capacity
- No limit to attendees at funerals
- Up to 30 people can attend weddings and other life events
- Care home residents are allowed up to five named visitors
- Hotels, sport and gym classes may reopen
- Overseas holidays permitted to "green list" countries
- In-person teaching permitted at universities

A direct change that affects schools is that as of today pupils do not need to wear a face covering in classrooms or communal areas.

However, if pupils feel more comfortable wearing a face covering in classrooms or corridors they may continue to do so.

Schools must continue to enforce social distancing, year group bubbles and other Covid-19 specific rules.

You are reminded that we all have a duty to abide by the additional school rules:

- You must keep two metres apart where possible from staff in the school
- You must keep at least one metre apart from other pupils in the corridors and stairwells
- Be aware of what you touch – avoid touching handrails or door handles. You should sanitize your hands after touching handrails or door handles – consider this especially when using public transport
- You must not lend nor borrow equipment
- Wash your hands regularly and properly – for at least twenty seconds – especially when arriving to school, before and after lunch and when leaving school

- Gloves are not effective ways of preventing the spread of germs and diseases
- You must stay in your year group bubble – you are not allowed to wander around the school unsupervised. You are not allowed to mix with any other pupil from another year group whilst you are in the school – including lunchtime. Entering an area of the school where there is a bubble which is different to yours will lead to cross contamination and further restrictions on your movement around the school. This includes crossing areas at lunchtimes.
- Only two pupils are permitted in a toilet block at any one time – and pupils should not go into any other toilet block other than those assigned to you.
- Please continue to be vigilant and reflect on the seating plan of the canteen and main hall at lunchtime. Tables are in rows facing forward. This is in place purposefully as when people face each other when they eat there is a greater chance of the spread of saliva spreading involuntarily when talking or eating and hitting someone's face. This means that germs are more likely to spread. Therefore, when eating lunch you must sit forward.
- Seating plans in lessons must also be kept to. Pupils are not allowed to move seats, as you need to be socially distant from as many people as possible. The less different people you are near the better for you. If pupils disregard this notice then they are putting others at potential risk. We cannot and will not accept this.

In addition, please be mindful of your noise levels when being escorted from your classroom for an option subject, lunch or at the end of the day. Excessive noise causes anxiety for many people and it disrupts lessons that are going on. Pupils who make excessive noise around the school will be sanctioned.

Year 9 Options

This week pupils in Year 9 will choose their Options subjects. Pupils will meet with a manager in the school to discuss options choices in our Guided Options meetings between Monday and Wednesday. Pupils should come on the day and time stated in their individual appointment letters sent in the post.

Punctuality to school

It is compulsory to attend school on time. This is for many reasons, but one of the main reasons is health and safety. At school we are in loco parentis – in other words we act on behalf of your parents/ carers – and as such, we need to know where you are and that you are safe.

In addition, being punctual is a quality that is important in having now and in the future:

- Punctuality shows that you are organised
- It shows that you are dependable
- It reflects professionalism and attention to detail
- It shows respect for your teachers and other pupils.

Again, you are reminded that:

- All pupils in Key Stage 3 should be in school no later than 8.40am.

- All pupils in Key Stage 4 should be in school no later than 9.40am.

If you are late to school, you will be issued a Late Detention, served at lunchtime.

Year 11 lunch time support

We will continue to provide lunchtime support for pupils who need to catch up on missed learning. Teachers will ask certain year 11 pupils to meet with them in 1A5 at lunchtimes to have one-to-one tuition sessions or for pupils to complete work.

Key Stage 3 reading

Every Friday Key Stage 3 classes will continue form time reading sessions.

Form time reading is designed ensure that all pupils in KS3 are taking part in regular reading for pleasure and to improve their reading for meaning. It will also ensure that pupils improve their reading age and reading comprehension, which will in turn support their progress across all subjects.

We look forward to hearing your reviews:

Year 7 – *Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* or *Private Peaceful*

Year 8 – *The Woman in Black* or *Frankenstein* or *Blood Brothers* or *Stone Cold*

Year 9 – *Lord of the Flies* or *Trash*

Extra-curricular clubs

We are delighted that extra-curricular clubs have returned this half term. More clubs have been added this week and are listed below.

Everyone should try to attend an extra-curricular club because by participating you will develop your communication skills, meet new friends and become more confident.

<u>Day</u>	<u>Club</u>	<u>Year Group</u>	<u>Staff member</u>
Mondays (AM)	Basketball Club	Year 11	Coach Fernando
Mondays (Lunch)	Basketball Club	Year 8	Coach Fernando
Mondays (Lunch)	MUGA	Year 7	Mr Paton
Mondays (Lunch)	MUGA	Year 9	Ms Daniels
Mondays (PM)	CCF	Year 10	Ms Webb

	Boxing fitness	Year 10	Mr Paton
Tuesdays (Lunch)	Basketball	Year 7	Coach Fernando
Tuesdays (Lunch)	MUGA	Year 8	Mr Paton
Tuesdays (Lunch)	Basketball	Year 9	Coach Fernando
Tuesdays (PM)	St John's Cadets	All year groups	Ms Webb
	Basketball Club	Year 8	Coach Fernando
	Boys football	Year 8	Mr Klassen
	Netball	Year 8	Ms Bartley
Wednesdays (Lunch)	MUGA	Year 9	Mr Paton
Wednesdays (PM)	Basketball Club	Year 9	Coach Fernando
	Boys football	Year 9	Mr Paton
	Girls football	Years 8 and 9	Mr Olaniran
	Netball	Year 9	Ms Bartley
Thursdays (Lunch)	MUGA	Year 10	Mr Klassen
Fridays (AM)	Basketball Club	Year 10	Coach Fernando
Fridays (Lunch)	MUGA	Year 10	Mr Olaniran
Fridays (PM)	Basketball Club	Year 7	Coach Fernando
	Boys football	Year 7	Mr Paton
	Girls football	Year 7	Mr Olaniran
	Netball	Year 7	Ms Bartley
	Boxing fitness	Year 11	Mr Paton

If you wish to attend an after school club in the Summer Term you must have parental consent. Please speak to Ms Webb or Mr Olaniran for a letter.

Taking pride in your environment

Please be mindful of the environment that you work in. Nobody wants to work in an untidy or messy classroom. Nor do they wish to use a toilet which has been used carelessly.

This is our school. Look after our school.

Additionally, as you have been told repeatedly, germs spread in toilets – when you use them properly and carefully, this reduces the amount of germs that can infect you.

Toilets

You are reminded that we adjusted our school rules on going to the toilet during lesson time in sympathy with your lack of routine during the lockdown.

Unfortunately, we will return to the rule of not going to the toilet during lesson time in the Summer Term if too many pupils are requesting to be excused from their lessons.

- You should use the toilet before school and at lunchtime
- Only two pupils are permitted in one toilet block at any one time
- You should only use the toilets that have been assigned to you.

Uniform notice

When you are in school you are expected to be in full school uniform and our expectations on appearance and professionalism has not faltered.

- Look after your school uniform
- Piercings: nose piercings, smiler piercings, eyebrow piercings or multiple piercings are not allowed – and boys are not allowed piercings at all
- Hair: no cuts, lines or high top. We do not permit afros and hair must be your natural hair colour.

Equipment

You are reminded of the basic equipment that you are expected to bring to school:

- Several blue or black pens
- Several HB pencils
- A ruler with cms and inches
- A pencil eraser
- A scientific calculator
- A reading book

You should also try to bring a glue stick, highlighters and a dictionary to school.

Keeping safe – stranger danger

We live in a community that is, generally, caring and supportive of each other. However, as in any part of the world there are people that we cannot trust and that we need to be wary of. Therefore, it is important that everyone – especially children and young people – is wary of strangers.

- When travelling to and from school, or even just socialising with your friends at the park or a playground:
- Be alert to what the things happening around – have the confidence to know when something is not right and be strong enough to seek help when needed
- Never approach or talk to strangers who are in cars or vans and never get into a car or van with a stranger
- Don't be afraid to say 'no' to a stranger. If a stranger makes you feel unsafe, always 'yell and tell'
- If someone makes you feel unsafe then run to a safe zone – a place where there is someone who you can trust and talk to – maybe a school, a shop, a police station or a friend's house
- Never give your name, phone number or address to a stranger – whether in person or online
- Never follow a stranger – keep your distance from them – and do not accept any gifts from them
- Look out for one another.

Staying safe online

- Never give out your real name to a stranger on the internet
- Never tell anyone you do not know where you go to school
- Never give out your address or telephone number to someone you do not know
- Tell an adult immediately if someone makes inappropriate suggestions, makes you feel uncomfortable online, or asks you to send something to them online, for example photographs
- If someone you do not know does any of the following – these are danger signs – you should tell your parent or carer immediately!
- If they insist on having your address or phone number
- If the person emails you pictures which make you feel uncomfortable and which you would not want to show to anyone else
- If the person wants to keep their chats with you secret
- If the person tells you that you will get in trouble if you tell an adult what has been going on
- If the person wants you to email or send pictures of yourself or use a webcam in a way which makes you feel uncomfortable
- If the person shares information with you and tells you not to tell anyone else about it
- If the person wants to meet you and tells you not to let anyone know

Social Media and Fake News

There has been a massive increase in the amount of fake news and clickbait on social media platforms over the past 5 years. You must be careful about trusting what you read:

- Consider the source of the information – click away from the story to investigate the site, its contact information and its mission
- Check the author – do a quick search on the author – are they credible? Are they real?

- Check the date – reposting old news stories doesn't mean they're relevant to current events
- Check for subjectivity – does the author seem biased? Consider if your own beliefs could affect your own judgement
- Read beyond the headlines – headlines are there to create sensation
- Check the sources where an article claims to have got their research
- Consider that a story might be an example of satire – and therefore has been exaggerated for comedic reasons
- Use fact checking sites.

Cyber-bullying advice

Social media sites, including messaging apps, claim to have a zero-tolerance approach to cyber-bullying, however in a recent survey, 91% of people say that they were not satisfied with how the reports were dealt with.

All apps/ sites allow you to:

- Report abuse
- Block users.

If cyber bullying affects you speak with your parents or carers and it can be reported to the police – cyber bullying is a criminal offence. If the police were to investigate they can find the culprit pretty easily – especially as every post, message, picture or video added to the internet leaves a digital footprint – even if the person who has added the post deletes it, the post still exists somewhere.

However, some things should be considered:

- It is easier for cowards to write something abusive behind a computer screen than to say it in person
- Any post that is uploaded can be shared or screenshotted and sent to anyone
- Cyber bullying is a criminal offence. A cyber bully could therefore get a criminal record
- Cyber bullies can have their accounts deleted.

Mental Health Awareness

Last week was Mental Health Awareness Week. It's important to continue to take care of yourself and get the most from life. Below are 10 practical ways to look after your mental health. Making simple changes to how you live doesn't need to cost a fortune or take up loads of time. Anyone can follow this advice. Why not start today?

1. Talk about your feelings
2. Keep active with at least 20 minutes of rigorous exercise per day
3. Eat well – a diet that is good for your physical health is also good for your mental health
4. Stay away from drinks with caffeine, such as energy drinks
5. Keep in touch with your friends and family
6. Take a break – 5 minutes to stop, reflect and breathe does more than you think
7. Remind yourself that you are talented and make time for the things that you are good at
8. Accept who you are – you are unique and that is amazing

9. Care for others – remember – you cannot always tell if someone is struggling
10. Lastly – ask for help if you need it. Speak to someone you trust, like a family member, a teacher or a doctor – and if you want to speak with someone who you don't know, you can call organisations like the Samaritans (phone 116 233) or Child Line (phone 0800 1111)

Stay safe.

Attitude Determines Altitude