

Platanos College News

Thursday 28th September 2017

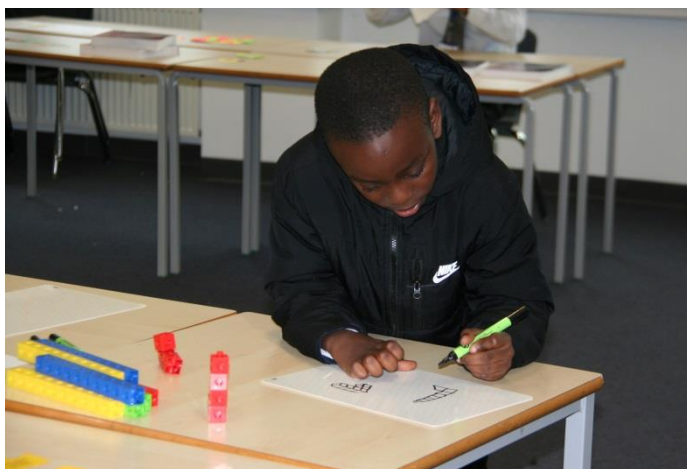
Year 6 Open Evening

A warm welcome was extended to both parents/carers and pupils who attended the Platanos College Year 6 Open Evening on Wednesday 20th September. Parents/carers and their children were invited to the school to take a tour of the facilities, discover the variety of subjects on offer and meet current pupils and staff. Tours were led by our outstanding pupil leaders from years 9 to 11 who guided the visitors around the school, answered questions and gave information. Parents/carers and pupils had the opportunity to visit subject departments, find out about the KS3 curriculum and take part in some activities offered by subject teachers.



Presentation to Parents

Parents were addressed by the Heads of School, Ms Taybi and Ms Williams. Ms Taybi spoke about how at Platanos College we pride ourselves on providing our pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum which not only fulfils the academic needs of our pupils, but also provides them with opportunities for personal growth. We believe that a supportive and nurturing learning environment is central to our ethos. We aim to ensure that pupils' well-being and personal development is at the heart of our teaching.



Ms Williams spoke about trips to enhance learning and work related learning which prepare pupils for higher and further education. We want to inspire our pupils and help them set goals by realising their full potential; pupils have access to a range of activities including study days, workshops, seminars and taster days with different universities in order to learn about university life.

We encourage our pupils to take ownership of their school and to take greater responsibility for their actions. Our pupil leaders take pride in

representing their peers to act as a voice in making decisions that affect them as a student body. Pupil voice is important to our school and we encourage all our pupils to participate in one of our leadership programmes.

We celebrate success and encourage pupils to take part in and enjoy learning and life. This is captured in our wide range of enrichment programmes such as girl guides, scouts, army cadets, police cadets, St John's ambulance service and many more. We value and respect our pupils, therefore praise is vital and so are rewards.

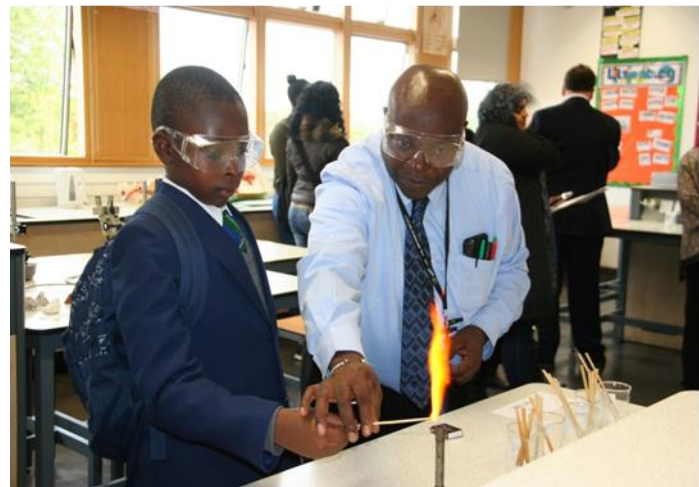


Exploring the curriculum in departments

The English department spoke to parents/carers about the wide range of skills taught in line with the National Curriculum; these skills are embedded in year 7 and the pupils work towards mastery in year 11. A range of texts were displayed which are used both in lessons and to challenge most able pupils. Parents/carers were invited to look through pupils' exercise books to see some of the outstanding work completed in English. Meanwhile, Year 6 pupils took part in a shared story exercise and an ambitious adjective challenge. Our range of extra-curricular activities were also showcased such as our Debating Society, Creative Writing Club and trips to the theatre.

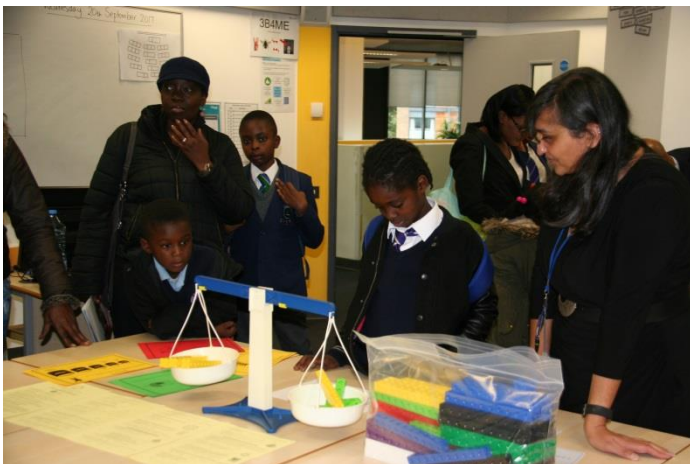


The Science department engaged both parents/carers and potential pupils with the marking policy by displaying exemplar books and explaining how it worked. Staff explained the curriculum at both KS3 and KS4 as it relates to the skills, content and demand of the New GCSE curriculum for both Triple and Double Science, and the implications for Science at KS3. Pupils had the opportunity to actively participate in some engaging experiments that the KS3 pupils carry out during their learning of the concepts in Biology (food tests), Physics (charging up: using the Van de Graaff generator) and Chemistry (flame test, observing rocks using microscopes).



The Modern Foreign Languages department provided information about the curriculum, stretch and challenge provision and community languages. There was a focus on the efforts to bring languages to life through extra-curricular activities, interventions, language exchange projects and trips to enhance learning. For example, MFL staff are taking pupils to Barcelona in the Spring Term. Parents/carers were engaged with explanations and were keen to ask further questions as well as flick through materials on display. Year 6 pupils visiting with parents/carers were given worksheets with basic vocabulary, such as numbers or colours, to complete so that they could get a taste for MFL.

During the open evening, visitors were able to have a tour of the facilities within the PE department and have a taster session of some of the activities in the fitness suite. Parents/carers and pupils observed our basketball and Year 9 football extra-curricular clubs which they were very impressed with. The variety of after-school clubs on offer appealed to everyone who came.



Our Music department gave a presentation alongside the Drama department and displayed a range of instruments available to the pupils. The presentation, given to groups of parents/carers and pupils, explained the vision for Music for year 7 and 8 emphasising that all abilities are catered for in line with the ethos of the school. Staff outlined the range of extra-curricular music activities such as the band and choir and the regular end of term performances throughout the year which allow pupils to display their talents. Parents/carers were also told about educational music field trips that pupils take to the theatre to broaden their musical experiences.

The Drama department welcomed parents/carers and pupils with a display of the drama resources used at Key Stages 3 and 4. These included samples of scripts, poems, songs, prose, letters and newspaper articles. Staff discussed the benefits of studying Drama and explained the concept of 'personal and social transferrable skills' learnt throughout the drama process. These skills include communicating effectively, working as part of a team and listening purposefully.



The Humanities department met many parents/carers who seemed very enthusiastic about Platanos College and the opportunities that their child could gain from attending our school. Many of the parents/carers and pupils had interesting questions regarding Humanities including suggestions for future topics for the curriculum and insightful points regarding the new GCSE specifications inspired by classroom displays. Their keen interest in the books of several pupils chosen for their outstanding work elicited many discussions around the impact of pupil-teacher dialogue within marking.



The highlight of the evening for staff in Humanities was the contributions of pupils who participated in the activity: 'Who is your favourite person in History and why?'. The answers ranged from Mary Seacole, for her contribution to nursing, to Henry VIII, for his interesting take on religion and divorce.

In the Art department, pupils led the discussion and activities. Year 11 pupils worked on their projects, demonstrating their abilities and answering questions from parents/carers. Meanwhile, Year 9 pupils were teaching the Year 6s how to mono print which they thoroughly enjoyed. Exemplar KS3 and 4 books were on display and staff took the opportunity to speak to the parents/carers about the curriculum, opportunities for most able pupils, enrichment and support through targeted interventions.



Similarly, in Technology there were tables set up with examples of pupils' work from across the year groups including practical work, drawings, designs and research. This gave the parents/carers an overview of the project work completed in each year. Year 6 pupils had the opportunity to try out some of the products

that had been created in lessons and they were excited at the prospect of taking part in Technology next year.

Parental Feedback

"I'm really impressed with the facilities here at Platanos College. There are a wide range of extra-curricular activities on offer to complement the curriculum as well as support the pupils in their learning. It's important that the pupils have activities that they can enjoy both in and out of lessons."

"Your pupils are a credit to the school. I can tell from what they say that they really enjoy studying here."



"The Platanos College open evening was the best I've ever been to. The pupils who escorted us around were very powerful in terms of how they sold the school; they have a strong sense of pride and engagement with the school which is wonderful to see."

The Open Evening followed the Year 6 Open Morning on Tuesday 19th September where parents/carers and their year 6 children were invited to visit the school between 9.30am and 10.30am to get a taste for what a normal school day is like at Platanos College. Again, our wonderful pupil leaders, together with staff, directed parents around the school building and gave them an opportunity to see some lessons in action. Following these successful open events, we hope to see many of our visitors enrolled at Platanos College next year!

