

News from Connaught school

May 2010

Dear Parents/Carers,

We started this half term, with ten members of staff and many pupils stranded in different areas of the world due to the volcanic ash cloud. Thanks to the remaining staff and pupils who worked hard to continue school as usual. Our ICT developments helped as cover work was set either by email or on Fronter, our ICT learning platform.

Over the past weeks, Year 11 pupils have been busy finishing coursework and doing their oral exams. Staff and Year 11 pupils enjoyed a wonderful Leavers' Tea last Friday and they have now started their written GCSE papers. We wish them luck for their exams.

Ms M.Orcel, language teacher, has decided not to return to school after her maternity leave as she wishes to stay at home with her new baby.

This week, we held a very successful Year 7 Parents' Carers' Evening with a record attendance of 95% of parents attending. Thank you for your support it is really good for your daughters to hear positive feedback from their teachers and to know that we are working closely together.

Please remember the following dates in the forthcoming half term from May-July 2010:-

Sports Day	Friday 18 th June
Staff training day	Friday 25 th June
Year 6 pupils visiting school : Common transfer day	Wednesday 6 th July
Celebration Evening	Thursday 15 th July
Last day of term	Thursday 22 nd July A.Betts

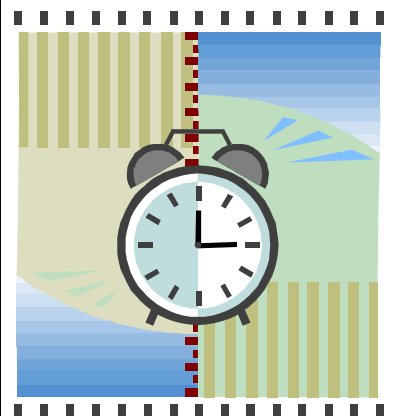
ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY

Attendance is good in most year groups. The first week's attendance figure is lower than normal due to a number of pupils who were unable to fly back to Britain after the Easter holiday.

Please remember if your daughter is absent she must bring a note to explain her absence on the day of her return to school. If she does not bring in a note, the absence is unauthorised.

Averages during the half term, April - May 2010

Wk 1 : 92.5 % Wk 2: 95.9 % Wk 3 :95.5 % Wk 4 : 95.6%



BEHAVIOUR

"On call" incidents : serious incidents of disruptive or rude behaviour

April - May 08 : 11 incidents, April-May 09 : 10 incidents, April - May 2010 : 5 incidents

Exclusions: used for very serious incidents. It is important to stress that exclusions are on a pupil's school record and may affect college entry.

April - May 2008	:	5	incidents	:	totalling	11	days exclusion
April - May 2009	:	4	incidents	:	totalling	22	days exclusion
April - May 2010	:	3	incidents	:	totalling	4.5	days exclusion

Aim Higher & Gift & Talented

In this term, there have been several collaborative opportunities for Aim Higher and G&T students with many more planned events. On 30th April, 6 Year 8 students visited Imperial College, to take part in a number of activities focussing on DNA.

Some students from Year 10 have also taken part in activities at Queen Mary and the University of East London. They have attended Master Classes in specific subjects to obtain a perspective of what studying that subject at degree level entails. These activities have involved traditional subjects such as English, Maths, Chemistry and Physics and also newer subjects such as Criminology, Psychology, Japanese, Computing and Engineering.

The Connaught students involved have shown commitment and tenacity to these events.

Recently I took part in a 4 week sports science master class. The experience was very enjoyable as I was able to meet new people who were also taking PE GCSE. The University campus was very modern and the university dorms looked over the river that was nearby. Taking part in sport science classes developed my understanding of the human body and has made me consider higher education in this subject.

Sue Agyei-Monte 10W

I attended the Drama course which I enjoyed as it allowed me to explore drama techniques with new people. The university is a large campus that is right on the river across from City airport. We had the chance to talk to some of the students studying there about university life and the individual courses they took.

Sarah Fox 10F

The sports science course involves a lot of group work and team support involving exercises and quizzes which helped expand our knowledge. Our final session is on Saturday 22nd May. So far I feel that doing these master classes has helped me a lot and expanded my own knowledge in physiotherapy & fitness within the body.

Dominique Buzzella 10S

I attended the Japanese course on Saturdays at Queen Mary University. The course was a fantastic opportunity to meet new people and have a taste of university life. The whole course was a brilliant experience as we learnt how to introduce ourselves and talk about hobbies etc. The master class has boosted my confidence as well as being great fun.

Hayley Fitzpatrick 10W

I participated in a 3 week master class in Japanese. . During this time I learnt how to introduce myself, talk about my hobbies, my family and how to order in a Japanese restaurant. It was a very enjoyable experience and I made new friends. I am definitely going to continue learning Japanese!

Florence Tsui 10W

There will be more opportunities for Year 10 students with a visit to Sussex University on the 25th June. On this trip, they will meet undergraduate students and will be given a guided tour of the university campus.

Ms S.Gooden

HEALTHY SCHOOL LUNCHES

Since new Government legislation was introduced in 2006, school catering has altered dramatically. This new legislation did not become compulsory for secondary schools until September 2009. However, Connaught school for Girls has strived to ensure that a healthy meal was served well before this compulsory date.

New menus, that are analysed nutritionally, were introduced in September 2009 for all Secondary Schools. This included many new recipes and dishes to fulfil the strict criteria laid down by the School Food Trust, the department set up by the government to oversee the changes. This included reducing salt, sugar and fat in recipes, increasing fresh meat, fresh vegetables, fresh fruit and ensuring fresh made bread is available daily.

Connaught School for Girls has always been pro-active in ensuring a healthy lunch is offered to the students attending the school and Mrs James, the cook makes great effort to provide freshly made dishes. A soup made from fresh vegetables is made daily and is served as an addition to the meal with a fresh made bread roll. The lunchtime selection includes 3 to 4 hot main courses including a vegetarian choice, a jacket potato, a potato or rice, fresh bread, one or two fresh vegetables, a hot fruit dessert with custard made from fresh milk, and fresh fruit. There are also salad choices available in addition to the vegetables.

I am very pleased to be associated with a school that sees the importance of providing a nutritious meal to its students and one that likes to get involved in the catering in school.

John Raine, Area Catering Manager

School Council

Congratulations to ...

our three new School Council representatives from Year 10 (in the photograph, right). They have been elected by all Connaught students to serve a 1-year term as:

- Chair of School Council (centre)
- Vice Chair (right) and
- Secretary (left). Well done!



SPELLING BEE COMPETITION

On Thursday, 22nd April, 4 Year 7 students went to Cineworld, in Ilford, to take part in The Times Spelling Bee. This is a national competition involving schools throughout the UK. The competition is sponsored by *The Times*, *Microsoft* and *Collins Dictionary* and aims to find the best spellers in the country.

The students had the challenging task of demonstrating their spelling skills by spelling words aloud, in both knockout rounds and a quick-fire round. The four students who represented Connaught - Iqra Hussain, Soha Atterad, Molly McCarthy and Aysha Badat - proved to be competitive, working well both individually and as a team to spell a range of very difficult words. The team, competing under the name *The Connaught Buzz*, performed brilliantly and although they did not progress to the next round, represented the school admirably. Congratulations

Ms Caroto

“Leaving Connaught “ : written by a Year 11 pupil

Friday 2nd September 2005, 120 girls walked through the playground uncertain of what to expect. Little did we know this would be the beginning of our metamorphosis. For the first year we fumbled into a new school, with new people and new things. Ms Diamond the orchestrator would lead us through our time here.

We were drowned in opportunities to participate in school life. Countless clubs for every interest made school life that much more motivating. New responsibilities were introduced like form captain and school council rep were welcomed. As the first year carelessly drifted by, we began to feel more comfortable, at home.

As the years rolled by, credits lost their power over us and the reality that we came to school to learn sank further in. Year eight came and went in a blink. One minute we were happily enjoying our year without exams and then we were faced with constant reminders of SATs and GCSEs. As the exam season approached faster and faster, revision became more frantic. Stress dominated classrooms as coursework came up. With everyone trying to push to get over the grade boundaries and into colleges, Year 11 has flown by.

Friday the 14th May 2010 marked the end. With orals over and done with all that was left to look forward to was our written GCSEs and Leaver's Tea. It was an emotional affair because we knew this was it. Many of us were well aware that in a few weeks we may never see each other again. College life is on the horizon and the final push to do as much revision as possible is our current state. Although the next phase of life is a more exciting independent one, feeling of fear and doubt linger in the majorities of year 11 minds. Life as we know it, is gone. New people, places, opportunities and face are on the verge of replacing those we have come to know so well.

"a bit shell shocked; my safety bubble is about to burst..."But isn't that what life is all about, - first days, last days, old friends, new friends, comfort zones, new experiences. We always knew this day would come; just not this soon.

So what legacies have the Diamonds of 2010 left in Connaught School for Girls? Our quirky style and unpredictable outbursts? One thing is certain; Connaught will never be the same without us. As the year group to see it change, we saw many teachers come and go, refurbishments around the school, a change in the lunch system, as well as changes in our year group. With a Head of Year like Ms Diamond (or Lady Diamante she was nick-named) we never strayed too far away. Quotes such as "I'll see you in isolation sunshine" became her trademark. It was as if she knew how to get us where we needed to be and would let nothing get in her way. Ms Diamond can be described as domineering but after five years it is certain her actions were only ever to make us the girls we are today: independent, self-assured, respectful and a team. Not one girl would be the person she is today without Ms Diamond.

Shani Osei

ANY COMMENTS?

On the school web site, there is a great deal of information about school polices and procedures. Please email me comments about any aspect of school life:

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Ann Betts, Head teacher