

News from Connaught school

October 2010

Dear Parents/ Carers,

We started the school year with wonderful GCSE results. The summer results were the highest the school has ever achieved for the sixth consecutive year. The pupils did work hard and deserved their success. The staff also worked very hard organising many extra revision sessions either after school or at the weekend. We are very proud of these results and we wish all our past Year 11 pupils the best for their future plans.

We are having problems at the end of the day with parents collecting their daughters. Please ensure that you do not park on the marked section of Connaught Rd outside the school gate and that you turn around only at the end of the road.

As you have probably heard from the press, Waltham Forest is one of the authorities that has lost the funding from the Building Schools for the Future programme. At Connaught, we were hoping to rebuild our science labs on the main site and develop the annexe as a PE centre for school and community use. As a high achieving school we were 14th in a line of 17 BSF schools to have work completed. We were always concerned that the budget may have run out before our plans came to fruition.



Results : Results

GCSE results : 5 A* - C grades

74% of the Year 11 cohort achieved 5 A* - C grades this is 87 pupils

Past figures - 2009: 74%,
2008: 72%,
2007: 67%,
2006: 59%

GCSE results : 5 A* - C grades including English & Maths

65% of the Year 11 cohort, 76 pupils : this is the passport to college

GCSE results in languages in Year 10 were excellent

21 Year 10 students took the exam after a one year course.

100% of the group achieved A* - C grades. This included 2 A* and 11 A grades

Some individual results included

Khadeejah Undre : 11 A* & 1 A grade

Muneerah Patel : 10 A* & 2 A grades

Leyla Noury : 8 A*, 3 A & 1 C grades

Classics : 22 Year 9 students studied Classics after school. Twelve pupils achieved a grade between A* - C with 5 A grades.

Recent Events :

Thursday 16th September

Year 11 pupils and staff enjoyed an Eid celebration evening. The caterers provided a wonderful meal and a good time was had by all.

Tuesday 21st September

An informal Year 7 parents' and carers' evening. A number of parents came to hear a presentation about keeping their daughters safe on the internet and when using face book. It was also an opportunity to chat about issues that have arisen since the beginning of term.

Thursday 16th September

An evening about exam preparation for parents' and carers of Years 10 & 11 pupils. The different types of exam, controlled coursework and how we can all support the pupils during exam times were discussed.

ATTENDANCE levels are very good and over the past weeks we have reached our target of 96.2%

Averages for the half term

Week1 : 95% Wk 2 : 95% Wk 3 : 96% Wk 4 : 95% Wk 5 : 96% Wk 6: 97%

PUNCTUALITY

Although our attendance figures are good, punctuality is a concern.

Some pupils in Years 10 & 11 have very poor punctuality and this needs improving

Please support the school by encouraging your daughter to be on time for school.

The total numbers of late sessions for the whole school, per week are as follows:-

Week1 : only 3 days Wk 2 : 75 Wk 3 : 91 Wk 4 : 108 Wk 5 : 89 Wk 6: 108

BEHAVIOUR has been very good over the half term.

"On call" incidents : these are serious incidents of poor behaviour

Sept - Oct 2008 13 incidents

Sept - Oct 2009 5 incidents

Sept - Oct 2010 2 incidents

Exclusions : used for very serious incidents such as fighting or extreme rudeness

Sept - Oct 2008 6 incidents involving 6 pupils : totalling 12 days exclusion

Sept - Oct 2009 7 incidents involving 8 pupils : totalling 22 days exclusion

Sept - Oct 2010 3 incidents involving 5 pupils : totalling 7 days exclusion

Clubs at Connaught

The role of clubs provides pupils with many great opportunities. By attending one or more of the clubs, pupils will develop self-confidence; learn new skills and knowledge make new friends, be part of the wider community, gain new experiences and develop leadership skills amongst many more.

This term there are 79 clubs running which include, film, karate, choir, sports, steel pans, ICT, languages plus different projects run by outside providers such as "Girls and Gangs" and Makeda Weaver.

This is fantastic as it gives pupils a great variety of choice and enables them to take an active and full role in school life. There are also rewards/prizes for pupils attending the most, but they must remember to get their club card signed.

Ms S. Diamond

Year 8 Aim Higher

On Friday 1st October, 36 pupils from Year 8 took part in a Science and Maths visit to Imperial College. This visit was a fully funded collaborative event organized by the borough. The pupils in Year 8 behaved exceptionally well and took part in the planned activities with maturity and enthusiasm, impressing the organizers of the event and the students at the university who led the events. The following day, on Saturday 2nd October, pupils were joined by their parents and carers who were given a tour of the university and a talk about accessing further education, an event that is worth planning for well in advance even though the pupils that took part are currently in Year 8.

Ms S. Gooden

The Year 8 perspective

I enjoyed my experience at Imperial College, although the trip was two consecutive days, it was great fun but challenging as well. On Friday 1st October there were two activities. My group did Robotics and Chemistry.

In Robotics we learnt how to control and power a robot and in chemistry we looked at different types of acids and alkalis.

On Saturday 2nd October the second day of the trip my group focused on maths and engineering. Our challenge was to build a dome; 5 metres wide by 2.5 metres in height. We beat the group record by about 7 minutes!!

In the afternoon our parents came and we presented all that we had learnt during the two days. At the end we were each given a certificate. Lastly I would like to say a big thank you to all who were involved in organizing the trip.

Muadia Obiwevbi 8F

When we arrived on the Friday we were very excited but also shy.

We were split into three groups and my group went to Robotics. It was loads of fun. We worked in pairs to create some instructions for the robot to go through a maze. After that we had an enjoyable lunch which gave us a little taste of university life.

In the afternoon, we had chemistry in which we learnt more about acids and bases, a more scientific name for Alkalis. We tested products for their pH values and used red cabbage as an indicator.

The next day we did our final activity, Domes in Maths and Engineering. To put the dome together we needed a lot of teamwork and patience. We loved our dome so much we named it 'Domey' but sadly it had to be demolished. On our way to lunch, we had a surprise, Mrs Donovan arrived! All the groups met together for lunch and prepared presentations for the parents. Overall, we learnt a lot about robotics, technology, mathematics and engineering and we would love to go again."

Lauryn Sobers 8W

VISIT TO PARIS

Early in the morning of 30th September, 48 girls set off bleary eyed to catch the first Eurostar of the day from St Pancras International to Paris. A little over 2 hours later we arrived at the Gare du Nord where our partner school had arranged a coach to meet us.

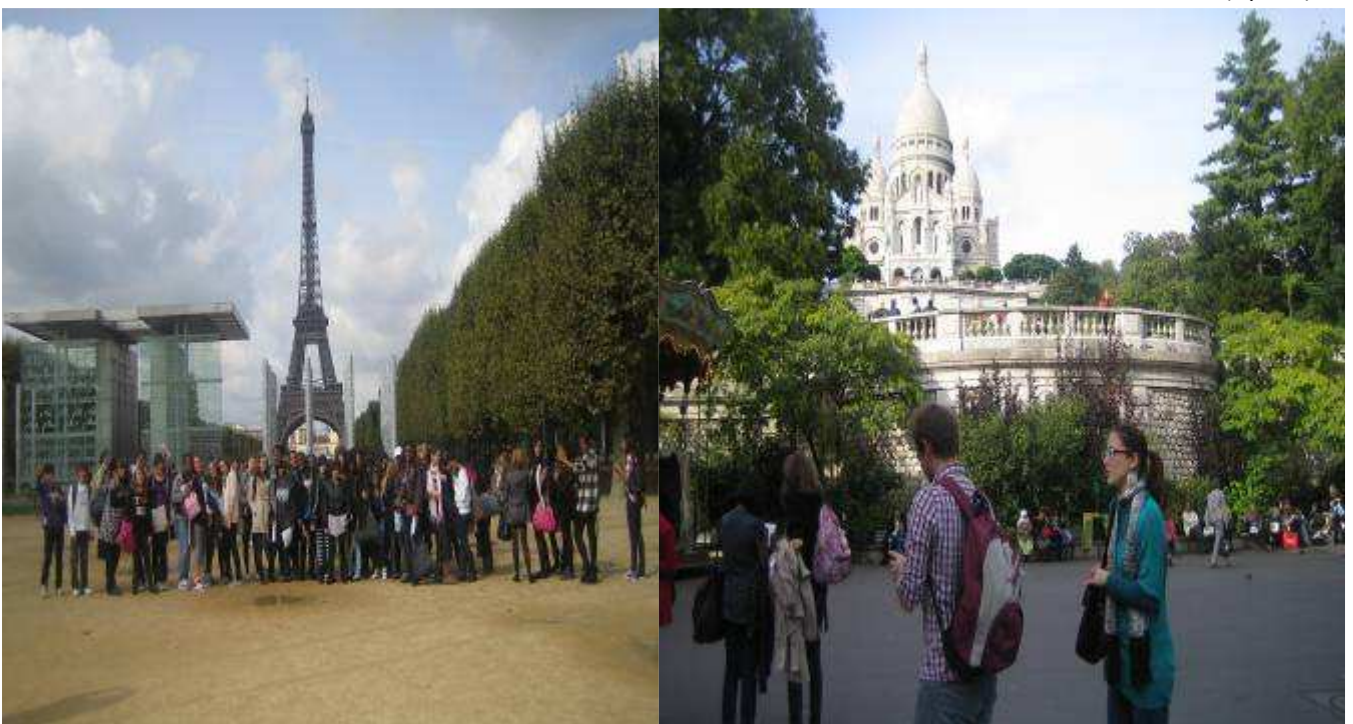
From there it was only a few minutes to our first stop of Notre Dame, where we met up with 48 French pupils and paired off with them to tackle some tasks on each of the Paris monuments. After a good look round the cathedral home of Quasimodo, it was on to the coach again to Paris's most famous landmark, the Eiffel Tower.

On the lawns below the Eiffel Tower we had our picnic lunch, and many girls bought (and bartered for!) souvenirs and we had our group photos taken.

Next stop was the Arc de Triomphe, the triumphal arch at the head of the Champs Elysées and home to the eternal flame of the Unknown Soldier. We had arranged a visit to the top, and as the lift was out of action this meant a long, long climb up a seemingly never ending staircase, but it was worth it for the magnificent view that greeted us when we reached the top.

By this time, we were running out of time and it was a whistle stop tour of Montmartre and Sacré Cœur where we were delighted to meet Marion, last year's French assistante. Fortunately there were some good shopping opportunities here and so the girls were not short of souvenirs. We said goodbye to Paris and prepared for the train journey back to London.

Ms A.Ball



Black History Month

During October 2010, students in their citizenship lessons have been working hard to learn and understand many significant aspects of Black African and Caribbean history, including learning about many prominent Black leaders and role models. We are celebrating this important month with some special events in the last week of the October half term including:

- Professional 'Black Heroes of Our Time' drama productions about Mary Seacole and Barack Obama with follow-up workshops for lower school students
- 'Fight Against Racism' assembly for upper school students
- A talk in the school library from a famous author about slavery
- Cross-year teams of six students each to enter the Waltham Forest Black History Quiz.

There is also an African and Caribbean Food Night' on Thursday 4th November

Mr G. Cross

OPEN EVENING

About 400 people from many primary schools attended our Open Evening on Thursday 7th October. The prospective parents were very positive about the evening and said that the tour guides and the pupils in the rooms were confident and knowledgeable about the school.

There were many different activities all around the school.

All the pupils who helped at the Open Evening were a great credit to the school



CONNAUGHT SCHOOL GOVERNORS

Who are your school governors?

Parents and carers were recently invited to fill two parent governor vacancies on the schools governing body. There was a great deal of interest expressed and congratulations are due to Mrs M Bland and Mr I Khan who were elected to join the existing parent governors; Dr. Mumtaz Zafar, Mr. Alistair Jones, Mr John Buniak (Chair), Mrs Florence Ayinde and Mrs Pauline Joseph.

Connaught has 20 school governors including the head teacher, teaching and non teaching staff, governors appointed by the local education authority (LBWF councillors) community governors and an associate governor. The details of all governors will be included on the school internet site where you will be able to read the minutes of our meetings. Minutes can also be viewed at the school office where you may contact your parent governors to make us aware of your views and concerns. Governors are not personally involved with individual cases or the management of the school which is the responsibility of our head teacher.

What do your school governors do?

We are unpaid volunteers responsible for ensuring the school complies with its statutory requirements laid down in law. Governors have a regulatory role and duties include;

- agreeing the annual budget to spend the funds allocated to the school (in excess of £3million per year!) and achieving best value for money.
- appointing the head teacher
- ensuring the school premises meet all health and safety requirements
- ensuring the national curriculum is being taught and adequate staff are appointed
- setting targets for exam results, reviewing results achieved and seeking ways to improve the standards of teaching and learning
- reviewing disciplinary decisions of the head where a right to appeal to the governors has been exercised
- agreeing and reviewing various policy documents (there are many!) that ensure the smooth running of our school including behaviour and discipline policy, equal opportunities policy, staff pay policy, attendance policy, healthy eating policy and many more. School policies are available from the school and many are on the school web site.

Governors are elected or appointed from a variety of stakeholders with an interest in the school and full training is provided. We have an overriding duty to act at all times in the best interests of the girls at Connaught. This includes ensuring the highest standards of teaching and learning are available in a safe and sound environment. We want our girls to achieve their full potential and go into their chosen career or on to higher education with confidence in themselves and a caring attitude to others.

John Buniak, Chair of Governors



As part of our specialist status in Languages, we are pleased that we have been able to purchase individual 'Rosetta Stone' languages learning accounts for all students and staff. 'Rosetta Stone' is an online subscription service that we are encouraging our students to use in addition to their languages lessons by using a computer in ICT / library club time, or at home.

Rosetta Stone online learning is an intuitive method of learning a new language that anyone can use. Learners use voice recognition technology to help practise and perfect their pronunciation against native speakers. In addition, if learners find difficulty they are helped as key words are reintroduced at optimal intervals during the course. This helps learners understand and retain the language for use in the real world. For more information please visit <http://www.rosettastone.co.uk/>.

By the end of October 2010, all students will have received details of their individual log-in details and an instruction sheet to enable them to access the service from home. We also have a limited number of subscription places for parents/ carers. We will be sending letters and application forms home to all parents / carers in November 2010 so that they may apply for a 'community learner' subscription.

We are hoping that students, staff and parents / carers will make the most of the languages learning opportunities that Rosetta Stone has to offer. We will be issuing certificates and prizes to the students that use the service best. On an individual basis Rosetta Stone Subscriptions cost hundreds of pounds as it is recognised at the world's best online language learning package.

Mr G. Cross

Charities

After a very successful charity walk around London in July, we have been able to send a cheque to Great Ormond Street Hospital for £1000. Thanks to all the Year 8 pupils and staff who took part and to all the parents and family members that sponsored them.

We had a bucket appeal for the Pakistan flood relief fund and raised £200 and we are organising a no uniform day in November for this charity.

As October is Breast Cancer awareness month, we have a number of fundraising events such as the sale of pink ribbon badges, a poem competition and a wear pink day on Friday 22nd October.

Please email me any comments about this newsletter

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