

News from Connaught school

February 2008

Dear Parents/Carers,

It has been a very mixed half term with many good things happening in school but also some very sad news

STAFFING

Ms J. Aullibux and Ms M. Petersen have been appointed as joint Acting Second in Maths until the end of the academic year

Congratulations to Ms M. Orcel who has been appointed as Gifted & Talented lead teacher.

Mrs D. Fitzpatrick has been appointed as our peer mentor co-ordinator. The Year 9 peer mentors will be working at lunchtime to prevent bullying and to encourage play activities.

In the English department, Ms N. Rauf has left Connaught. She has been unwell lately and has recently moved to Lancashire to start a new life. We wish her good luck in the future.

Head of ICT, Ms F. Odukoya has left Connaught. We shall be advertising for a head of department who will not only have oversight of ICT teaching in the school but will also have responsibility for the subject across the curriculum as more staff use ICT in their lessons.

Ms Pepper, Head of RE has resigned and will leave Connaught at Easter. During the past year, Ms Pepper has had knee operations which have caused her a great deal of pain and discomfort. She has decided to move out of London and to live nearer her daughter. We wish her all the best for the future.

In late November, we heard that an ex- member of staff Mrs P. Grocott was unwell. Mrs Grocott had been at Connaught School for nineteen years and had been a Head of Year to the present Year 10 pupils and a learning mentor. She was admitted to hospital for tests and she was diagnosed with cancer. Mrs Grocott had treatment but was too weak to have chemotherapy, very sadly she died in mid January. She was a very caring and supportive member of staff. Many staff and a group of Year 10 pupils attended her funeral and our thoughts and condolences go to her family.

Mrs K. Sweeney was a teacher from the Hearing Impaired service. She had supported pupils in lessons in Connaught for over ten years and helped many pupils. She became ill a few months ago and in late January, we were very sad to hear that she had died. Mrs Sweeney was always cheerful and dedicated to supporting her targeted pupils. Our thoughts are with her family. Staff and pupils whom she had supported attended the funeral last week.

ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY

Attendance is very good although some pupils are developing the habit of taking odd days off school this affects progress especially in Years 10 & 11.

Averages for the half term, Jan - Feb 2008

Wk 1 : 96.4% Wk 2 : 96.0% Wk 3 : 96.1% Wk 4 : 96.3% Wk 5 : 96.7%

Punctuality continues to be good . Year 10 pupils have made a great improvement in their punctuality, thanks to encouragement from their Head of Year and tutors.



BEHAVIOUR

Figures with comparison for similar times in the year :-

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

Jan - Feb 2006 : 18 incidents Jan - Feb 2007 : 13 incidents Jan - Feb 2008 : 4 incidents

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

Jan - Feb 2006 : 10 incidents : totalling 15 days exclusion

Jan - Feb 2007 : 5 incidents : totalling 8 days exclusion

Jan - Feb 2008 : 3 incidents : totalling 5 days exclusion

PROJECTS

ROWING

After the half term holiday, we shall be offering rowing clubs as we have obtained some rowing machines through our sports partnership. "Dry" rowing is a very popular national and international sport and there is every possibility that we could discover an Olympic medallist indoors!

GO GIRLS

Fifteen Year 10 pupils are participating in an exciting new project called "Go Girls". This project is designed to increase girls' fitness and well being. The project includes sessions on relaxation techniques, Pilates and kickboxing. The girls have been praised on their commitment to the scheme especially as many of them now regularly attend the gym. Keep going girls!!

LEYTON ORIENT : PLAYING FOR SUCCESS

12 Year 9 pupils are currently giving up their Monday evenings to raise their game in literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. The girls are being taught at Leyton Orient and this week's session involved producing a multi media presentation to advertise a club. The girls are working extremely hard and it is becoming increasingly difficult to award the "player of the match" weekly prize.

PEER MENTORS

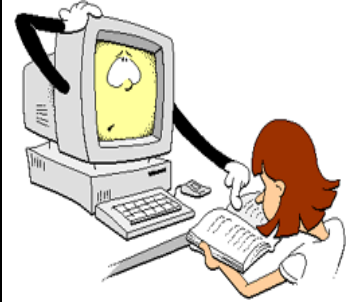
Year 9 Peer mentors attended a conference on Wednesday 6th February organised by Childline.

The peer mentors will be working at lunch time, talking to pupils and helping to eliminate bullying within the school. They will also be organising game activities during the lunch break to keep pupils busy.

Events

WORK EXPERIENCE

Currently, 117 Year 11 pupils are on work experience, in placements ranging from shops and primary schools to a prestigious hairdressing salon and a film company in central London. We have already heard that the reality of the "world of work" has proved a shock for some pupils. We wish all our pupils well and trust that they will return to school with glowing references that they can then use to help them get Saturday or holiday jobs.



STUDY SKILLS SEMINAR

On Tuesday 29th January, the whole of Year 11 participated in a study skills seminar aimed at providing the pupils with strategies for their forthcoming exams. Feedback from the pupils was very positive with many saying that they wished the seminar could have been for longer.

ENTERPRISE DAY

Ten Year 10 pupils participated in an Enterprise day on Monday 4th February at Beale school. The task was to devise a business plan and create a toy or game for the under 10 age group. Both teams worked well but unfortunately did not get through to the next level. It was an enjoyable day and it really made us appreciate Connaught's great lunches, good toilets & uniform
Tasnia Choudhury 10C



OUR DAY WITH DAME KELLY HOLMES

On Monday 21st January, 10 Year 9 pupils had the opportunity to participate in an all fun, all sports girls active day at the Score Centre with Dame Kelly Holmes. We took part in various activities such as Rowing, Dancing, Team Building and Kick Boxing.

After an exhausting day of fun and sports, Dame Kelly Holmes gave an inspiring speech to all the girls telling us what sport meant

to her and that we can all fulfil our dreams if we are determined, committed and willing to work extremely hard. Overall the day was excellent. We really enjoyed ourselves and we are hoping to bring a new range of sports into our school giving all the girls the opportunity to expand on their sporting abilities. **Maya Augustin 9C (far right in photo) Sachan Popo-Williams 9F (far left)**

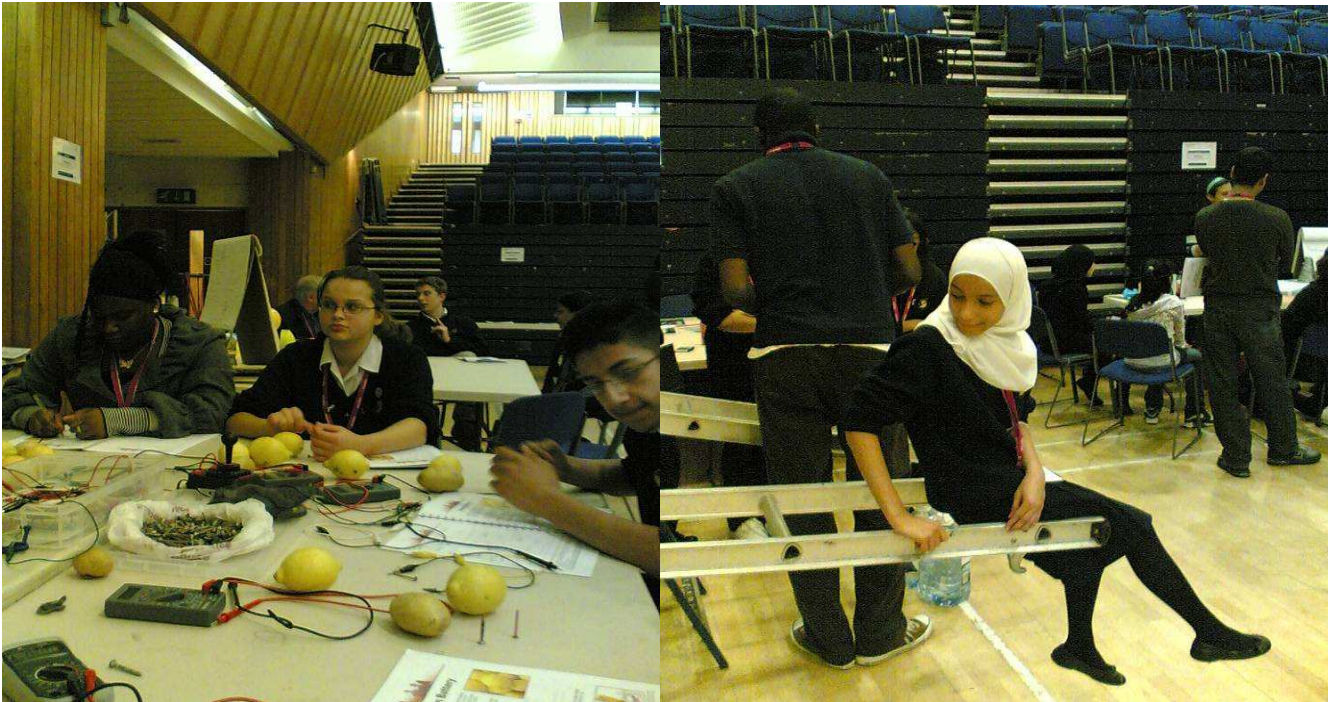


JUMP ROPE FOR HEART

On Thursday 14th February, Valentine's Day, over 200 pupils (plus some staff) will be skipping their way through the lunch break. Pupils have already started training for the British Heart Foundation "Jump Rope for Heart" sponsored skip and are set to raise a lot of money for research alongside improving their own personal fitness. Let's hope it doesn't rain!

SCIENCE COLLEGE

12 Year 9 pupils attended a trip to Imperial College. The aim of the day was to raise their aspirations in science. The day involved lots of practical work such as making a giant fruit battery, measuring smoke rings and separating complex mixtures



LANGUAGE COLLEGE : COMENIUS PROJECT

There is a weekly Comenius club as part of the project linking Connaught to schools in France, Spain, Portugal and Turkey. At the beginning of January we investigated the French tradition of "la fête des rois" and carefully ate a cake that had a hidden coin or "fève" inside. The girl who found one was duly crowned in accordance with the French tradition!

Girls also took part in a quiz about the other countries in the Comenius Partnership before sampling edible gifts sent by Turkey. Year 8 classes made bi-lingual posters about their New Year's Resolutions and the Comenius Club made up envelopes sending a collection of display work & gifts to each of the partner schools. We learnt about international Pancake Day, Mardi Gras, Faschingsdienstag, Martes de Carnaval, Terça Feira Gorda & Mrs Patterson kindly made pancakes or "crêpes". Yr 9 girls in their Food lessons also worked on international dishes, and their module culminated in the production of a meal from their chosen country.

In April there will be a Comenius visit to Turkey enabling staff to have an inside view of a Turkish primary school and enhance our European links.

Connaught has been working with other Languages departments to improve teaching and learning in Year 9. In January we were lucky enough to book the national speaker Martine Pillette who gave us lots of brilliant ideas for Listening activities. Connaught staff continue to teach Year 4 and 5 at Newport, Barclay and George Tomlinson while staff in those schools are now having a go at teaching Year 3 French themselves. We are working towards links between those schools and French primary schools in Paris, Reims and Guadeloupe.

Please email me any comments :- ann.betts@sch.lbwf.gov.uk

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