

# News from Connaught school

## May 2008

Another hectic half term! In early May, Year 9 pupils took their KS3 exams and Year 11 pupils have already started their GCSE exams.

This term we have been reviewing our school timetable and the timings of the school day. We would like to extend the school timetable from the present 24 lessons per week to 25 lessons per week. This additional lesson would allow us to add :

Year 7:- An extra geography / history lesson on a rota basis. This would increase the pupils' humanities knowledge in the early years.

Years 8 & 9:- An extra PE lesson. This would double our present PE provision and bring us in line with government requirements

Year 10 :- An extra maths lesson to boost achievement at GCSE

Year 11 :- An extra English lesson to boost achievement at GCSE

To provide this 25 lesson timetable we have had to change the timings of the school day. These are minor changes and in future, we shall only have two end times instead of the present three finish times.

The timings of the school day from September 2008 will be

Monday, Tuesday & Thursday : 8.30 - 3.30 pm

Wednesday & Friday : 8.30 - 3.20 pm

These changes in the school day have meant that we can have a standard 1 hour and 10 minutes for lunch. This has been requested by staff and pupils as it is sufficient time to have lunch without rushing and also for staff to hold lunch time clubs. If you have any comments or queries about these changes please contact me by phone or at [ann.betts@sch.walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:ann.betts@sch.walthamforest.gov.uk)

### STAFFING

Mr L.Ali has been appointed teacher with responsibility for ICT. Mr Ali has been working at the school since January and has already made many positive changes within the department.

Mr Hillier, D & T teacher has left the school and we wish him well for the future,

Ms T. Caroto has been appointed second in the English cluster, she is at present teaching in Tottenham and Mr A. Silk who is at present in an Essex school has been appointed as Head of RE. Both these teachers will be joining the school in September 2008.

# ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY

There are still concerns about parents asking for extended holidays. We are aware that air fares are more expensive during school holidays as the staff suffer from this as well!! We are working closely with the borough regarding pupils who have occasional days' absences.

## Attendance averages for the half term, April- May 2008

Wk 1 : 95.3%    Wk 2 : 95.6%    Wk 3 : 97.5%    Wk 4 : 96.6%

In week 3, Year 9 pupils sat their KS3 exams the attendance level for the year group for the entire week was 100%. Punctuality continues to be very good.

# BEHAVIOUR continues to be very good

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

April - May 06 : 18 incidents,    April - May 07 : 11 incidents,    April - May 08 : 11 incidents

Exclusions: used for very serious incidents. Good news as the figures are still declining:-

April - May 2006 : 13 incidents : totalling 56 days exclusion

April - May 2007 : 8 incidents : totalling 17 days exclusion

April - May 2008 : 5 incidents : totalling 11 days exclusion

# LONDON MARATHON

After nine months of training I took part in the Flora London Marathon on 13<sup>th</sup> April. It was an incredible experience!

The crowd support, music, banners waving, whistles and noise makers all combined to make this an experience I will never forget.

I completed the course in 4 hours and 36 minutes. My proudest moment was having my photograph taken wearing my finisher's medal.

I am grateful for all the support and encouragement from Mrs Betts, the staff and pupils. The girls raised £609 from a non-uniform day, combined with generous sponsorship from the staff. I hope to be able to send a cheque for over £1,000 to MacMillan Cancer Care.

**ROLL ON 26<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2009 - my application is already online!!**

**Mrs Clover Slack**

# BICYCLING PROFICIENCY



At the end of March ten girls in Yrs 7 and 8 completed National Standard Cycle Training with a company called Cycle Experience. The training tested basic control skills & being able to ride on the road including looking behind and signalling without wobbling. In small groups the girls then went on-road, starting off with quiet junctions and roads but progressively moving to busier junctions and roads as their skills, understanding and confidence develops. Amani Khan achieved a merit and most of the other pupils achieved a level 2. Twenty more budding cyclists needed at the end of September 2008.  
**Please see Mr Cross if interested**

## LONDON CHARITY WALK



As the school was closed for the local elections on May 1<sup>st</sup>, I organised a walk around central London in aid of Great Ormond Street hospital. One hundred and thirty pupils from Years 7 & 8 and twenty six members of staff took part in the walk. The walk was in the form of a treasure hunt finding the answers to fourteen clues.

We started at Tower Hill and walked across Tower Bridge and along the south bank, After seeing the Globe theatre, we crossed the Millennium bridge to St Paul's Cathedral, Fleet Street and Covent Garden. We also visited Leicester Square, Piccadilly Circus and Trafalgar Square and finished in Westminster. Everyone enjoyed the day and the pupils are now busy collecting their sponsor money.

**Mrs Ann Betts**

## Visit with Youth Workers

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 2008 I accompanied two Year 8 and four Year 9 pupils to an activity day in Chigwell. Various schools in the Borough took part in the day which was organized by the youth workers. I am pleased to say my group won and Sarah Woodman (9C) and Danielle Beech (9C) both received medals. The girls were very well behaved and a credit to the school.

**Ms Debbie Fitzpatrick**

## TRIP TO BERLIN

At the end of the Spring Term, a group of Year 11 and Year 12 (ex-Connaught historians) went to Berlin for 4 days to prepare themselves for both their History and German GCSEs. This was a pilot trip with the two departments looking at providing an extra impetus before their final exams.

The focus of the visit was 20<sup>th</sup> Century German democracy and spoken German and most of the programme was directed towards this. We visited the Reichstag, Sachsenhausen concentration camp, Checkpoint Charlie and many other sights of historical significance. We ALL practised speaking German, whether or not anyone had studied it before!

The girls were exemplary and not only did the school credit, but also the reputation of English teenagers abroad. We were very proud of them and all had so much fun. We hope to offer this trip again in the future.

**Ms Pearl Williams**

## DUKE OF EDINBURGH EXPEDITION

A group of Year 10 pupils participated in an expedition during the Spring holiday. We visited the Lake District and it was a wonderful experience. We learnt a range of things for example about working in a team, map reading, leadership skills, first aid and putting up tents. Although the four days were very challenging and stressful it was also great fun. I would recommend it to any pupil as you learn a lot from such an expedition. .

**Maryann Osei 10W**

# TRIP TO TURKEY : Comenius project

On 21st April, I flew to Istanbul with Ms Phillips. After an overnight stopover, an internal flight took us to the provincial capital of Denizli where we were met by our Turkish hosts for the final leg of our journey to the village of Acipayam.

April 23rd was National Children's Day in Turkey and the Comenius representatives from England, France and Spain enjoyed front row seats for an impressive display of marching, flag waving, folk dancing and cheer leading by pupils from all the local schools in their large sports stadium. This was clearly a performance for which all the pupils and teachers had worked hard and it all came together very well.

The remainder of our time in Acipayam was spent meeting pupils in the local school who were all extremely keen to meet their European visitors and try out their English. After we had all exchanged examples of our pupils' work in the form of letters, posters and DVD recordings, all on the Comenius Project of Healthy Living, the Turkish pupils performed a lively play on the front steps of their school to hammer home their Healthy Living message. It was good to see the same theme enthusing pupils in each of our five Comenius countries. The next Comenius visit will be when teachers and pupils visit Connaught in the Autumn Term.

Ms A Ball,

## MET TRACK SPORTS EVENT

On Thursday 3rd April, ten Key Stage 3 pupils had the opportunity to participate in a day of athletics at the Waltham Forest Pool and Track. This was hosted by the Metropolitan Police and its focal point was to get more teenagers into sport and away from gun/knife and street crime. The day started with many speeches from the police emphasising the dangers and outcome of crime. This was followed by an actual gang member speaking about his life, how he got into gang culture and faced the consequences, but what actually saved him and gave him freedom and enabled him to break away from crime and start again was **SPORT**.

All the secondary schools in the south of the borough participated in a range of activities such as sprinting, shot-put, dance, long jump and football. The schools all worked together, which enabled us to work with people that we had never met before. We were very fortunate to be coached by British professional athletes who had represented England in a variety of events. Overall the day was exhausting but fun and it gave us the opportunity to expand on our sporting abilities. Waltham Forest Pool and Track are offering FREE athletics coaching every Monday evening from 4.30 - 6.00pm. All you have to do is turn up to take part.

Ms S.Diamond, Head of Year 9

**Year 11**

Our Year 11 pupils began their study leave on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> May. Last Friday we enjoyed a leavers' celebration of a superb lunch at the Prince Regent Hotel, Woodford Bridge. Year 11 had been raising money to subsidise this leaving event for over a year and it was well organised with 114 pupils and over thirty staff enjoying a three course meal in the hotel's ballroom. The girls looked wonderful, many of them in long elegant ball gowns. As they start the four weeks of GCSE written exams we wish them the best of luck and a happy, successful future. The GCSE results are out on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> August.

Please email me any comments :- [ann.betts@sch.walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:ann.betts@sch.walthamforest.gov.uk) Ann Betts Head teacher