

8th May 2026

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope this newsletter finds you and your families well. As we move further into the summer term, there is a growing sense across the school of purpose, ambition and momentum. This is always one of the most important periods of the academic year: examinations begin, students prepare for transition points in their education, and there is a renewed focus on ensuring that every young person finishes the year with pride in what they have achieved.

I would also like to thank parents and carers for your continued support during what remains a challenging period operationally for the school. Despite external pressures, the focus of staff remains firmly on providing consistency, stability and high-quality education for our students. I continue to be enormously proud of the professionalism and commitment shown by colleagues each day, and of the maturity, resilience and positivity demonstrated by our students.

I would also like to acknowledge the efforts of a growing number of students and parents who are engaging in community action and peaceful protest in response to the ongoing strike action affecting the school. Students and families are entitled to express their views, to articulate how these continued challenges have impacted them, and to ensure that their voices are heard. Many have spoken thoughtfully and passionately about the cumulative impact of repeated industrial action over so many years, and the disruption this has caused to their education and wider school experience as well as the way their school is talked about in the community. .

As a school, however, our overriding priority must always remain the safety, wellbeing and conduct of our students. Therefore, if your daughter, or your family, in planning to attend any demonstrations connected to the school, I would ask that this is done respectfully, responsibly and in a manner that reflects the values of our community. At all times, we should encourage our young people to conduct themselves with dignity, maturity and integrity. To be, as we often say at Connaught, the very best version of themselves. Together, as a community, we will come through this.

Year 11 study leave and GCSEs

I would like to wish all of our Year 11 students the very best of luck. This is an important milestone, we appreciate the hard work and commitment you have shown in getting to this point. We know it can be stressful at times, so please be kind to yourselves.

Students will have received their exam timetables, please ensure these are checked carefully so everyone is clear on dates and times and where to go. They also have timetables of where to go for support with each subject in school, and for quiet revision working spaces.

Please make full use of the revision and wellbeing resources available, including [BBC Bitesize](#) for subject support and exam guidance and [Kooth](#) for help with managing stress and anxiety. Kooth offers practical tools, including a student guide to coping with exam pressure and resources such as The [Ultimate Exam Stress Toolkit](#). As always, the staff in school are here to support, please do reach out if any guidance or reassurance is needed.

Year 10: Make Your Mark University Trip

This academic year, two selected groups of Year 10 students have been participating in the Make your Mark programme - learning curriculum material and proven study strategies in addition to their regular school studies in English and Maths. To celebrate their achievements on the programme, students attended an end-of-programme event at Arden University's Stratford campus on Wednesday 6th May 2026 where pupils had the opportunity to learn about university study and celebrate their achievements on the programme.



The visit provided valuable insight into university life, helping to build a clearer understanding of what higher education involves. A particular highlight was learning new study techniques, which will support future academic success. The sessions throughout the day were informative and thoughtfully designed, offering a deeper appreciation of the expectations and opportunities that come with university study. Overall, the trip was a highly worthwhile experience, leaving the students feeling more confident, motivated, and excited about their future educational journey after an experience which they found both engaging and inspiring.

Paris visit

Students recently returned from an exciting and memorable three-day trip to Paris, where they had the opportunity to experience the culture, history, and atmosphere of one of Europe's most iconic cities.

The trip began early on Monday morning as the group checked in at the Eurostar terminal before travelling to Paris via Paris Gare du Nord. After



arriving and settling into their accommodation in the Montmartre area, students headed out to begin exploring the city. The afternoon included a walk through the beautiful Champ de Mars towards the world-famous Eiffel Tower, where students enjoyed the impressive views and gardens surrounding the landmark. Later, the group visited the historic Arc de Triomphe before spending some free time shopping along the famous Champs-Élysées, including a visit to Galeries Lafayette Champs-Élysées. The evening finished with a meal together at a local Parisian restaurant before returning to the hotel.

Tuesday gave students the chance to explore some of the most vibrant and historic areas of Paris. The day began in Montmartre, where students explored the artistic district and enjoyed spectacular views from the Basilica of Sacré-Cœur. The next stop was the Musée de l'Illusion Paris, which proved to be a real highlight of the trip.



After lunch the group travelled to the magnificent Notre-Dame de Paris to admire the famous cathedral and its recent restoration work. In the evening, students enjoyed a relaxing cruise along the River Seine with Bateaux-Mouches, offering fantastic views of the city's landmarks. Dinner was then enjoyed in the heart of Montmartre at a traditional French restaurant overlooking Place du Tertre.

On the final day, students visited the world-renowned Louvre Museum, where they explored some of the most famous artworks in the world including seeing the famous Mona Lisa. The afternoon included free time in the gardens surrounding the Louvre and an opportunity for some last-minute shopping before returning to the hotel to collect luggage and travel back to Gare du Nord for the journey home

Throughout the trip, students were a credit to the school. Their excellent behaviour, enthusiasm, and positive attitude made the visit an enjoyable experience for everyone involved. The trip provided students with a fantastic opportunity to experience French culture first-hand while creating memories that will last for years to come.



Visit from Sufiya Ahmed, Author

On Friday 1st May 2026, year 8 students benefited from a historical fiction talk from Sufiya Ahmed - a former Connaught student and author. In the talk, students discover that Sufiya was born in India and arrived in the UK as a baby. She lived in Bolton in Lancashire before moving to London which is where she still lives. Sufiya has worked in advertising and in the House of Commons. In 2010, Sufiya set up the BIBI Foundation, a non-profit organisation, to arrange visits to the



Houses of Parliament for diverse and underprivileged school children. Sufiya is now a full time author and won the Best Crime Fiction Novel for Children 2025 Winner for Rosie Raja Undercover Codebreaker. Sufiya also writes for The Independent.

Students enjoyed listening to an extract from one of Sufiya's novels, hearing about her experiences and asking her questions about her work and life.

Whilst the school have a number of Sufiya's works in the library, you can also purchase her work using the following link:

<https://www.waterstones.com/author/sufiya-ahmed/1664530/page/1>