



Connaught
School for Girls

Dyers Hall Road
Leytonstone
London E11 4AE

Headteacher — Alexander Silk, MA

seize the day

Friday 13th September 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope this letter finds you well. A Friday update as always, as we come to the end of the first full week in school.

I am thrilled with how the first week back has gone; it has been a really impressive start for our school community. This week, I led assemblies reflecting on the positive response from our community following the summer where we saw positives in school and student performances and our Alumni achieving Olympic success, but also with the riots around the country. Exploring what it takes to become a top performer. Whether that is in school, or on the running track. With examples from students who have been exactly where the current students sit. Our school values of excellence and resilience and inclusion being perfectly demonstrated by the outstanding successes from the summer. We also talked extensively about the need to draw together as a school community to show the very best of ourselves with our commitment to bring people together and not be pulled apart. Our response to the riots will be events as a school that show we are united. The school is a microcosm of society and we can demonstrate that unity and inclusivity.

We are demanding excellence from ourselves as staff, as well as from our students, and that is exactly what I have witnessed this week. Year 7 got the week off to a great start with an impressive first day; smart, well-presented, displaying impeccable manners, and showing an excellent attitude toward learning. The other year groups have followed suit, looking exceptionally smart with a similarly strong attitude to learning. Year 10 and 11 have also set a high bar, as expected from our GCSE and eldest year groups.

Well done to everyone, long may it continue!

Attendance and Punctuality

We are pleased that we have had a very good start to the academic year in terms of attendance. We have launched an attendance strategy to help us ensure that all students achieve their very best potential; which starts with being in school, on time, every day. Our updated Attendance Policy can be found on the school website (Parents tab - Attendance and Punctuality)

If you have any concerns about your daughter's attendance or punctuality at school please contact your daughter's form tutor, in the first instance. We want to work in partnership with all our families to help achieve excellent attendance for every student.

Whole school attendance 95.02%

Year group with highest attendance is Year 9 (96.09%)

Tutor group with highest attendance is 10C (99.7%)

Congratulations 10C!

Form tutors are sharing attendance data every Friday pm registration in our Attendance Matters weekly session. Please check the Attendance Record Card in the back wallet of your daughter's diary where she will record her attendance to date.

Please note that new legislation has been introduced about attendance to schools:

- 10 absent sessions (5 days) that happen in 10 consecutive weeks can result in a Fixed Penalty Notice issued by Waltham Forest. This includes arrival at school after 9.10am (without an acceptable reason) which is recorded as an unauthorised absence for the morning session (U code)
- This does not need to be from an unauthorised holiday/term time travel, it can be for unauthorised illness, or for days absent for no acceptable reason
- 1st Penalty Notice is £160 (per pupil in a family), if paid within 28 days, reducing to £80 if paid within 21 days
- 2nd Penalty Notice is £160 if paid within 28 days
- If your family have already had two Penalty Notices then the third may mean escalation to court

School Open Evening - Thursday 26th September 2024

The school open evening is approaching. Students selected to be tour guides (Year 10) or subject helpers (any year) will be bringing home a letter with details. The event runs from 6pm to 9pm and headteacher talks will be held at 6pm and 7pm.

School visits already underway

Getting visits going early in the academic year and availing of the many sites and different places in our city is a priority for the school. As a school, we are reviewing schemes of work and visits and making sure we make the most of opportunities to take students out on visits that complement the curriculum. Today we saw some of year 9 students go to the London Zoo to look at how animals adapt to their environments and other students will attend next week. We are also going to Walton-on-the-Naze next week for geography fieldwork so look out for this next week!

Extra-curricular provision survey

Please find below a link to a survey for you to give your feedback about the extra-curricular provision at Connaught School for Girls and to help us improve our offer for your child. We have shared a similar survey with students this week as well but would love to hear from you too.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfQLXGm7i8vxGMmmoYs84ZE511U56OI4mBWKgibcKX_U4ck7g/viewform?usp=sf_link

Football starts back next week

We are pleased to announce the return of our highly **successful football club**, beginning on **Tuesday, September 17th**, and continuing every Tuesday from 15:30 to 16:30. Held at the playground with indoor facilities available in case of adverse weather conditions., this club will once again be led by an **experienced female football coach** from the **Leyton Orient Trust**. Following an overwhelmingly positive response from last year's participants, we are excited to offer this excellent opportunity for your child to enhance their football skills, improve their fitness, and enjoy the sport in a structured and supportive environment. We encourage you to motivate your child to sign up and take part. Additionally, stay tuned for information on more upcoming clubs and activities as we strive to provide a variety of enriching experiences for our students.

Urdu Lessons

We would like to offer Urdu lessons as part of our extracurricular language offer to students in **Year 9**. The Urdu lessons will sit outside of the normal academic day, on Mondays 3.30-4.30pm and on Fridays from 2.20pm-3.20pm. The lessons will be taught by a qualified Urdu teacher and there will be the option to undertake a GCSE in Urdu at the end of the course. There will be a cost to be part of the taught program as it is facilitated outside of school hours, but the school will subsidise some of the cost. If payment is an issue but you still wish your child to take part please let us know; however, as this is something that takes place outside of the main school curriculum we can only facilitate the sessions if enough students are paying to make it economically viable.

To gauge interest for a place on the program, if you would like your child to participate, please complete the Google form ([HERE](#)) to register your interest or for further information.

Uniform and equipment

A reminder that all students are required to have a scientific calculator for Maths, please contact the school if you require support with acquiring one for your daughter. Similarly, we have a supply of pre-loved uniform available, so please let us know if this would be useful for your family.

Smartphone usage

I would like to offer some advice for families on managing the difficult issue of smartphones with your children. I watched a Panorama programme on this topic ([LINK HERE](#)) with great interest and have had meaningful discussions with many families about it. There is increasing local interest in possibly banning smartphones for young people due to the harm they can cause, particularly in accessing harmful content online and on social media. Implementing such a policy at secondary school would be challenging. For now, parents should continue, as I have no doubt that you do, to closely monitor all their child's online activity. I have included ([HERE](#)) a link to the National Colleges free-to-download guide 'Using and reviewing parental controls' which you may find of use.

Kooth support

Kooth is a transformational digital mental health support service, which gives children and young people easy access to an online community of peers and a team of experienced counsellors. Using Kooth is safe, anonymous and free. Kooth also delivers virtual talks for parents and carers to help them navigate and support the mental health of their children. Please see below the links to two upcoming talks for parents.

Managing Anxiety - [Kooth Talk - Managing Anxiety](#)

Anxious Child School Avoidance - [Kooth Talk - Anxious Child School Avoidance](#)

Spotlight on.....Umavi, Yr11

Huge congratulations to Umavi who has embodied the Connaught value of excellence by recently participating in a Model United Nations conference representing UNESCO. Umavi is an accomplished public speaker and has received the award for best verbal communication delegate competing with 64 countries.

Yours faithfully,



Mr. Silk
Headteacher