

Headteacher's Newsletter – March 2023

Quote of the month:

'High performers are very clear on core purpose and seeking consistency and coherence in its pursuit... strive to balance academic achievement with 21st century learning skills...actively engage students in being relentlessly optimistic about possibilities and their capacity to learn...relentlessly focus on what's best for their students...celebrate successes and build a strong coherent team ethos with internal collaborative competition...'

Alistair Smith

[High Performers: The Secrets of Successful Schools (2011)]

Strategy and long-term planning are fundamental tools in driving change in an education setting. The aims and vision of our recent work in leading the school through the next stages of its development centre on a range of areas. The major points we are actively working on include:

- improving further the quality of the teaching and learning provision in our school,
- overall student wellbeing, reflected in a robust system of pastoral care that also supports personal development,
- a community culture that nurtures a growing collaboration with alumni and parents' associations
- the development of school infrastructure that meets growing student needs
- exploring innovations that will drive our school in new directions such as the possible provision of the IB Diploma as an optional alternative to the A level route and a Junior and Senior School Institute that meets local community needs along with further opportunities for our own students.

We have, as you may be aware, been carrying out a Curriculum Review that is predicated on an academically sound philosophy that best prepares our students for higher education and future career choices. This encompasses not only a broad spectrum of subjects and skills for KS3 but also a relevant and reasonable balance of choices in KS4 and KS5 that are, as far as possible, compatible with similar independent schools both internationally and in the UK and which permit access to and meet the entry requirements for the expected spectrum of careers. We are also very much minded to ensure appropriate provision is made for European university destinations and encourage the pursuit of a modern foreign language. The Review has also aimed to embed PSHE (Personal, Social and Health and Economic education) throughout the school in a structured and well-planned way that provides essential life skills and elements of resilience, wellbeing and adaptability for current and future success.

French Language success for our students

Our Year 8 students have been hugely successful in the Kangaroo French Competition, which took place last month with the participants from all over Cyprus. Our students participated in the Level 8 examination for Year 8 students.

Gold Award: Zhasmin Akhmetova: Zhasmin achieved the highest results of all and was the only student who was awarded the Gold Award in the competition.

Silver Award: Maria Petrescu

Bronze Award: Isabelle Kalochoritis

Congratulations to our prize winners and to their teacher, Ms Jocelyn Kazzi.

EYP Achievement

The Junior and Senior School's *European Youth Parliament* delegation has been selected to participate in the 17th National Session of EYP Cyprus in August 2023.

Congratulations to Charis Chrisanthou, Danae Kartoude, Rebecca Petrou and Pavlos Bismal from Year 11 as well as Mohaned Alghol and Rami El Hage from Year 12. Special thanks to Mohaned and Rami for stepping in at the last minute. We are very proud of our hard-working students who eloquently represented the school. Meanwhile, we look forward very much to how they perform in August at the National session.



Well done to our team of parliamentarians!

We would also like to acknowledge Eva Sofroniou and Carolina Prodromou from Year 13 who are experienced delegates and EYP alumni. Eva and Carolina are now responsible for organising the EYP national events and international events respectively. This is a huge undertaking for both girls, who have so many other responsibilities in Year 13, but they have nevertheless risen to the challenge. Eva's and Carolina's roles in EYP at such prestigious events are a great honour for our school and a testament to their commitment and leadership skills.

A special mention should also be made of George Lamprianou, also in Year 13, who attended EYP sessions every Tuesday to support our delegation. And much gratitude to their teacher, Ms Eithne O'Riordan, who has guided and supported every step of the way!

Harriet in Norway at the EYP International session

Harriet Economidou (Year 11) participated in the 98th session of the European Youth Parliament in Norway this month. Her report below underlines the benefits of encouraging our students to explore and reach out to the myriad of opportunities available:

'Explore, exchange, experience: the three main aims of the 98th International Session of the European Youth Parliament. Being chosen to represent Cyprus and our school (along with 5 other Cypriots) in the Arctic city of Norway, Tromsø, was truly an honour and an experience I will cherish forever.

It was absolutely incredible being able to formulate ideas based on the city in which we resided. For my chosen topic - the emergence of lost infections due to the thawing of permafrost - we were given the chance to meet and learn from the indigenous people, who shared their views with us. We also had the opportunity to speak to various experts, including doctors of microbiology, and this aided our research when writing up our resolutions.

What stood out the most to me, however, was the beauty of multiculturalism and how with each new person I met, I was able to gain a small yet significant insight to their beliefs and culture. To be surrounded by delegates from many other countries all around Europe, and to be able to work together to form a resolution for our chosen topic was incredibly constructive and gratifying. I realised just how interconnected we all are and the importance of togetherness and collaboration in our efforts in solving pressing issues which plague Europe today.

It was an unforgettable 9 days where I not only developed my skills academically but also made long-lasting friendships. We spent time completing cultural activities such as exploring the city in -16 degrees, visiting the Arctic cathedral and learning about traditional Sami culture. However, mostly, we focused on our resolutions and awaited the general assembly where I was given the chance to deliver the summation speech for my committee.

I can say with certainty that this experience has shaped my views and offered me a multitude of different perspectives which I will carry with me forever.'

Well done, Harriet!

2023 Euromath/Euroscience Student Conference/Competition in Krakow-Poland

Our school recently participated in the Euromath/EuroScience event in Poland. We are happy to report that Stephanos from Year 9 won 1st prize in the Euromath Presentation Competition and Roman, also from Year 9, won 3rd prize in the Euroscience Presentation Competition. What an achievement!



Magnificent achievements!

Our team consisted of two Mathematics Teachers and ten students from Years 7 to 10, all of whom exhibited commitment and hard work and who have all returned with valuable experiences and newly acquired skills.

The School's participation in the Euromath/Euroscience Student Competition was organized by the Mathematics Department and was also supported by the Science Department.



Well done, Team Euromath!! Congrats, Raphael, Marian, Stephanie, Nicolina, Michali, Stephane, Roman, Simona, Lolly and Alexander! And many thanks to their teachers for support and prep.

American Dream comes true

Penelope Artemis, from Year 12, has succeeded in being awarded the *2023 Benjamin Franklin Transatlantic Summer fellowship*. Official confirmation has been received from the US State Department that Penelope will be traveling in June to Purdue University in Indiana where, during the four-week programme, she will explore U.S. foreign policy priorities such as youth engagement, support for democracy and civil society and economic prosperity through a series of lectures, seminar discussions and presentations, along with practical, mentor-led workshops. Penelope will also live with an American family for part of her stay to gain a deeper understanding of American society. Congratulations, Penelope! We look forward to learning all about your participation in the programme on your return.

Stelios Ioannou – Taekwondo Accomplishment

Well done to Stelios for his recent success at the 2023 Bulgaria Taekwondo Open G2 in Sofia, Bulgaria.

Stelios performed extremely well and won two fights allowing him to clinch 5th place in the tournament from twenty plus athletes in his category!



Stelios (red headgear) dominates the opposition

Fun with Science

Year 11 Biology students have had the opportunity to use STEM activities to learn about the structure of DNA by building a model of the molecule using STEM kits, which were generously purchased by the **Senior School PGA**. Through this fun and hands-on activity, students were able to understand difficult concepts such as transcription and translation by recreating these processes using the kits. This lesson was followed by a practical task, where students isolated DNA from strawberries.



Who said playing in the park is just for small kids?

Our Year 13 students have had the opportunity to apply the physics principles they have been learning about in real world contexts! As part of the A2 IAL Physics course, students and Ms Monou visited the park to investigate oscillations and resonance using, for example, the swings, and circular motion using the merry-go-round. Fun and learning was had by all!

Our elite footballers represent their country!

In early March, two IGCSE PE Year 10 students, Maximos Petoussis and Marios Stavriniades, were selected for the Cyprus National Football team for the U16s in a tournament which took place in Cyprus. What a great honour for our School to have two such students who were able to showcase their sporting skills and performance at such a high level. Well done, boys, and keep up the good work!

Incidentally, the Sports School is proud to announce that we are now offering our first team sport, football, as of September 2023. Best of luck to Ms Parpotta and her team!

Nicosia Schools District Track & Field Competition victories!

Penelope and Antranik each performed amazingly well and have managed to gain first place in their respective events. Both students will now represent our school at the *Pancyprrian Schools Track & Field competition*.



*Antranik Ashdjian - Triple Jump: 1st Place
(Personal Best: 14.79m)*



Penelope Artemis -Shot put: 1st Place

Maths Week

Maths week was a hive of activity! During break times, students were challenged to games of chess against teachers of the Mathematics Department and against each other. There were also hands-on 3D puzzles, such as Galileo's globe puzzle and Kepler's planetary puzzle to challenge students' problem-solving skills and to test their perseverance! Mathematical brainteasers each day were offered to students to solve. In addition, a mathematics themed Bake Sale was held with great success on Wednesday 15th March with all proceeds being donated to the Sophia Foundation for Children. During lesson time, Year 7 students were given the opportunity to have a fun lesson exploring the mathematical constant π and Year 8 and Year 9 students had to use their mathematical knowledge to solve problems in order to escape an online Mathematical themed escape room! Many thanks to Ms Savva, Head of Maths and her department!



A battle of wits!

Science Week

Science Week was a myriad of activity, with the involvement of a range of activity and interest. Each day of the week was devoted to one of the sciences that fall under the umbrella of the faculty (Psychology, Biology, Physics, Chemistry, and then general science). Events and activities included: Stroop Effect and emotions match (Psychology games), Gardening in the Science Park and making cells (Biology activities), Eratosthenes Experiment & Rocket Launching (Physics and Chemistry challenges), a presentation from Dr. Vyrides (TEPAK professor of Chemical Engineering) along with a whole-school Minecraft Challenge. A bake sale on the last day raised €300 for a local charity "Μοναδικά Χαμόγελα". Well done to Ms Iordanou and her faculty for putting this together for the benefit of all students, staff and visitors to the school.

The Senior School hosts for the first time in Cyprus the History Bee and Bowl!

On March 18th, we were honoured and proud to host for the very first time in Cyprus the History Bowl and Bee competition with the participation of our own teams (and a JS team!) and those from other schools. The event comprised a number of rounds in which teams of 4 would compete against each other and respond to a range of questions on historical content.



Mr David Madden of US TV show, Jeopardy, fame gives guidance and a wealth of information to all competitors at the start of the day.

The SS teams were very successful and have qualified to participate in the Pan European tournament to take place in Barcelona this summer and the opportunity to travel to Rome in July for the International History Olympiad! Well done to our own students, and many thanks to our History department teachers and Naomi and Stella from the JS who remained throughout a long day to help ensure the tournament ran smoothly as well as their roles as readers of questions in each of the rounds.

Tiganokinisi event at the SS



The Geography Department recently hosted the *Tiganokinisi Caravan* on our school campus. The AKTI Project and Research Centre conducted experiments with Geography students from Year 9, showcasing how cooking oil can be used to produce biodiesel. Students were encouraged to bring their oil waste from home and recycle it through the school's *Tiganokinisi* collection bin. Students also learned about the importance of recycling and composting as well as how to ensure less waste is created at home. It was a great opportunity to learn about sustainable practices and how we can do our part to protect the environment! Well done to the Geography Department for this initiative!

Eco Committee joins Science Faculty in creating our new School Garden!

The Senior School Eco Committee students and the Science Faculty have officially inaugurated our new school garden by planting a variety of seasonal herbal and edible plants. Not only will this garden provide fresh produce for our school community, but it will also serve as an educational tool for our students to learn about sustainable agriculture and the importance of caring for our environment. The vegetables produced will be used in science experiments to support student learning.



We can't wait to see these seeds grow and flourish!

A novel way to appreciate poetry!

Year 9 English students used their creative talents to present their analysis of the poem. One group decided to do their presentation in the form of a talk show! They had been given the task of critically analysing a poem and later deciding on how to present it to their fellow classmates. They wrote an original script based on their findings of the poem and poet and performed to the rest for the class. This performance not only met the criteria of the task but was also an enjoyable learning experience for all!



Poetry analysis via a talk show...Who would have imagined! Well, Year 9 students did!

Careers event

Over a three-day period, we were fortunate to hear from a number of our parents who each presented to parent and student attendees on their own profession and career. The aim of the events was to offer insight into what each career involves and the key requirements and skills. The presentations ranged from working in the EU institutions, being a lawyer, diplomacy and journalism, political sciences and related careers to the key elements in start-up ventures, the CFA qualification and its widely recognised currency in the world of finance, export businesses, human resources, the value of studying classics and, of course, the sciences with talks on AI, electrical and mechanical engineering, computing and software engineering, psychology, marine biology, medicine and in particular robotic surgery, and architecture. The wealth of presentations was truly extraordinary and highly informative. The school thanks Ms Stella Petrou for organising the evenings and all parents who were generous in offering their time and expertise.



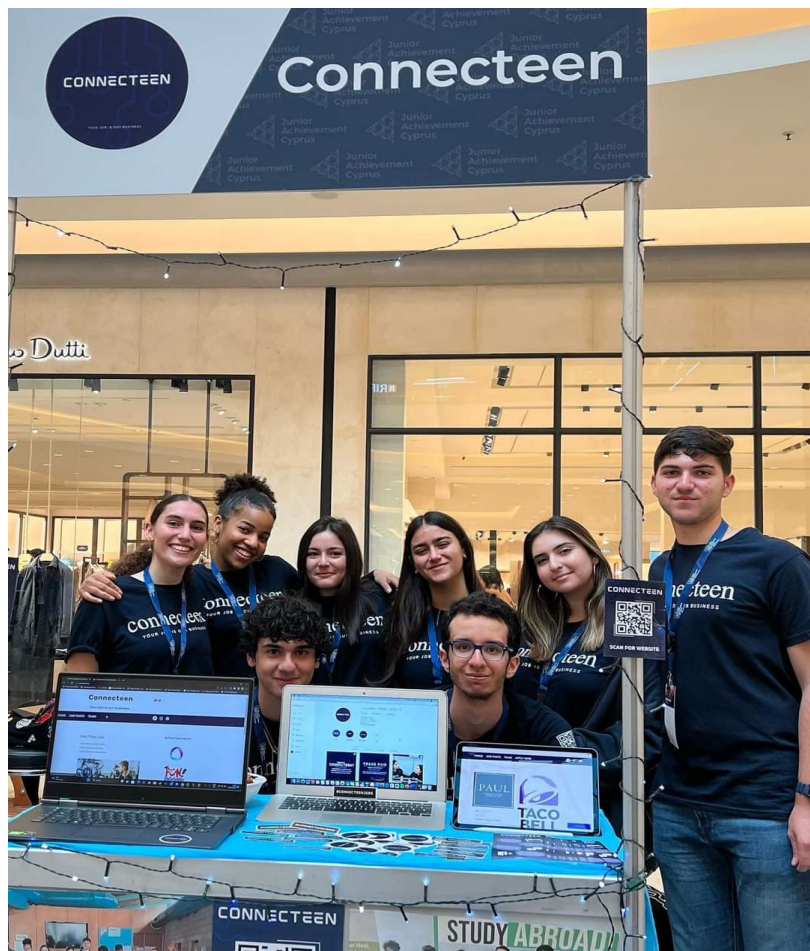
Well done to our 25th March Parade team. We are very proud of you!



Smart work!

Junior Achievement Finalist!

On March 18th and 19th, 2023, more than 300 students aged 15-18 participated in the 10th Trade Fair of Junior Achievement Cyprus, which took place at the Mall of Cyprus. We are proud to announce that the Senior School company **CONNECTEEN** was selected as one of the top 10 finalists from 53 other companies (and 29 schools from across Cyprus). The company will now move on to pitch their ideas at the Company of the Year Competition Finale and Award Ceremony on 28th April 2023 at The Royal Hall in Nicosia. The winning team will represent Cyprus at the European Competition that will be held in Istanbul in July 2023. Well done, and best of luck to the team!



Good luck to our team in the Finals!

Thanks:

No newsletter can include every event and activity, and many of these have been referred to in this issue, but I should mention that despite it being another very busy month, teachers have also been committed to their teaching and mock examinations marking along with report writing and ARDs with parents, with a number of other demands on their time. The school very much appreciates everything our staff offer to students both in class and beyond. The activities mentioned above are valued and valuable, but so much time and planning goes into these that this is sometimes lost in the outcomes that we all have enjoyed.

In addition, the school would like to express its appreciation to our PGA. The SS Parents and Guardians Association have been magnificent in organising, along with the valiant support of Ms Stalo Spanoudi, the annual school photographs over a four-day period. It was a massive undertaking but, like a well-oiled machine, was efficiently completed.

The PGA also hosted at our school the first of many lectures for parents on a number of topics: On Wednesday 29th, Dr Marios Constantinou generously gave of his time to present to parents on the topic of exam-related stress and coping strategies and how parents can support their children.

Breaking News



The Junior and Senior School has been successful in gaining the Carnegie School Mental Health Bronze award – The first school in Cyprus! Well done to all staff involved, led by Ms Naomi Theocharides, HT of the Junior School. Now we are going for Silver and Gold!

Yiannis Georgiou

Senior School Headteacher