



Castle Newnham

Monthly Matters



June & July 2025

CNS Fest 2025



BEST
BEDFORDSHIRE
SCHOOLS TRUST



Message from the Headteachers

Dear Families,

What an incredible year it's been, brimming with events, trips, and performances that truly showcased the phenomenal spirit and talent across our school community!

A Year of Giving and Celebrating

This past year, our commitment to important causes shone brightly. We came together for the Macmillan Coffee Morning, NSPCC Number Day, wore green for Mental Health Awareness, contributed generously to Children in Need, and sported red for Red Nose Day. Our World Book Day celebrations were a huge success, igniting and nurturing a love of reading throughout the school.

The Magic of Live Performances

Our pupils were captivated by the magic of live theatre, thanks to a variety of trips to The Place, Royal and Derngate, Milton Keynes, and London's West End. They immersed themselves in diverse and spectacular productions, including 'Cinderella', '& Juliet', 'Guys and Dolls', 'Back to the Future the Musical', and 'Mrs Doubtfire'.

The 4SIXTEEN Theatre Company continued to be a vibrant cornerstone at Castle Newnham. Their successful productions of 'Guys and Dolls' and 'Peter Pan' welcomed over 1,000 audience members and saw around 200 pupils from Year 3, 4, and Year 8 to 11 participate. We then rounded off our theatrical season with a fantastic summer production of 'Mary Poppins', featuring Year 5 to 7 pupils. Our performing arts department also hosted wonderful musicians' evenings, a Christmas Concert, a Dance Showcase at the University of Bedfordshire, and a 'Songs from the Stage' evening. We're already buzzing with excitement for next year's line-up: 'Hadestown: Teen Edition', 'The Wizard of Oz', and 'The Lion King'!

Leadership and Community Spirit

The Junior Leadership Team (JLT) was expertly guided by our Head Pupils (Year 11) and Deputy Head Pupils (Year 6). These new roles successfully refocused the JLT, building a wider school profile and significantly supporting school improvement. We'll be recruiting the next Head Pupils and Deputy Head Pupils in the Autumn Term.

Our deeply embedded community links were instrumental in supporting our Academic Excellence Evening, held at The Place Theatre. The Place Theatre generously provided their venue free of charge, and No Limits, a company run by a former pupil of the school, kindly supplied us with a brand-new set of trophies for the whole school and subject awards. Our Year 11 prom was a memorable night, held at the Bedford Blues Rugby Club.

Primary Adventures and Celebrations

In the primary phase, our strong community links with Christ Church allowed our younger pupils to enjoy a more traditional Christmas performance. Year 5 and 6 also spread festive cheer with their Songs on the Playground. We were delighted to welcome families for our 'Mothers and Others' and 'Father Figure Friday' events, and our Reception pupils enchanted everyone with their delightful Easter performances. Our older primary pupils embarked on exciting residential visits, with Year 4 adventuring to Caythorpe Court and Year 6 exploring Grafham Water.



Secondary Successes and Explorations

Our secondary pupils had an equally busy and rewarding year! It kicked off with a vibrant FLIP to Spanish Day, and the Duke of Edinburgh programme continued its incredible popularity, with pupils achieving both Silver and Bronze awards. They broadened their artistic horizons with trips to various art galleries and sharpened their mathematical skills in the Junior Maths Challenges. As the year concluded, exciting end-of-year trips saw Year 7 heading to Go Ape, Year 8 to Legoland, Year 9 to Whipsnade Zoo, and Year 10 to Box End Water Park.

Our Careers programme welcomed numerous visitors to the school, and pupils actively engaged in a diverse range of careers visits and talks throughout the academic year, covering areas such as STEM, Arts, and Sport. Year 10 had their successful Next Steps Fair in the Sports Hall, connecting with Post 16 providers, and also gained valuable insights during their Experience of Work Day.

Sporting Achievements and Inclusion

Our PE and Sports provision celebrated another truly exceptional year, proudly earning both the School Games Gold Award and the Equal Access School 2024 Award for Girls' Football School Partnership, a testament to our unwavering commitment to physical activity and inclusion. Highlights included the Year 6 Boys' undefeated season, the Year 10 Boys' successful defence of their District Plate Championship, strong performances from our Year 7 footballers and Year 4 Girls Futsal team, and impressive results in netball, athletics, and table tennis. We also saw significant progress in rugby and fantastic engagement with the Bedford Ready to Row Project, alongside continued excellence in cross country. Beyond competition, our wide array of popular clubs and enhanced playtime initiatives fostered a vibrant sports culture, supported by ongoing staff development, ensuring high-quality provision and participation for all pupils. The Secondary Sports Awards evening was a wonderful celebration of these achievements.

Wrapping Up the Academic Year

The academic year drew to a fantastic close with a flurry of exciting events! We celebrated Culture Day, enjoyed the vibrant CNS Fest, and rounded off the year with our highly anticipated Sports Days across the school, showcasing athletic prowess and teamwork from every year group. Finally, the Transition Days ensured a smooth and welcoming experience for pupils moving up to their next year groups.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our dedicated staff for all their hard work over the academic year. Thank you to our families for their continued support and to our pupils for their enthusiasm and commitment to school life.

We wish you all a wonderful and safe summer break.
We look forward to seeing everyone upon our return in September.

Best wishes

Kat Edwards Sara Levesley
Headteacher - Primary Headteacher - Secondary





GOODBYE AND THANK YOU

As the academic year draws to a close, we bid farewell to some valued members of our staff. We extend our sincerest thanks and best wishes for the future to:

A profound thank you and happy retirement to **Debbie Taylor**, our Exam & Data Manager. For over two decades, Debbie has been a cornerstone of Castle Newnham, meticulously managing our GCSE examinations in recent years and contributing across numerous administrative and data roles. Her dedication has been immense, and we wish her a long, joyous, and restful retirement.

We extend our deepest gratitude and best wishes for a wonderful retirement to **Lynn Dickens**, Primary SEND Teaching Assistant who has tirelessly supported our pupils for 36 years. Lynn retired last month and we want to take this opportunity to thank her for incredible service to the young people of Castle Newnham and wish her all the very best.

Gareth Thomas, Primary Teacher and Upper Key Stage 2 Lead, will continue his valuable work within the BEST Family, moving to Robert Bloomfield Academy. Gareth has worked at Castle Newnham for 16 years and has been a dedicated member of the school community.

Secondary MFL Teacher, **Nicole Millard**, and School Head of Dance and Drama, **Daniella Reynolds**, are both moving onto new local schools. We thank them for their dedication to our pupils' development and learning.

Vikky Adams and **Leah Relton**, Secondary Geography Teachers, are moving on from Castle Newnham this summer. Vikky to a school closer to her home and Leah to explore the world. Both colleagues trained to teach with us and we thank them for all their enthusiasm and commitment during their time with us.

Alison Carter, Secondary Science Teacher, started her journey with us as the Science Technician before we were fortunate enough to have her train as a teacher. She's now also off to travel, and we wish her safe and exciting adventures.

Lisa McCarthy, Primary Teacher who has enriched our primary phase, is moving to a new role in a nursery setting.

Farhana Akhonji, **Jade Rushton** and **Sarah-Louise Marshall**, Primary SEND Teaching Assistants, are moving to other schools, and we wish them well in their new environments.

Finally, **Georgia Capener**, Admin Apprentice, has now completed her apprenticeship with us, and we wish her every success in her future career.



WELCOMES AND RETURNS

We are also excited to welcome the following new staff members to our team:

- **Francesca Ferguson Aleman** - Head of KS3 Science & STEM Lead
- **Ginette Squires** - Secondary Science Teacher
- **George Lacey** - Drama Teacher
- **Erin Prunty** - Secondary Classics Teacher
- **Loretta Della Ripa** - Secondary MFL Teacher
- **Joanne Rowland** - Secondary Geography Teacher
- **Gareth Pettengell** - Secondary Geography Teacher
- **Sarah McAdam** - Lead Administrator
- **Monika Skrzypacz** - Lead Administrator
- **Rachael Woods** - Primary SEND Teaching Assistant
- **Olivia Kirkham** - Primary SEND Teaching Assistant
- **Icram Buhia** - Primary SEND Teaching Assistant
- **Freddie Skeel** - Primary SEND Teaching Assistant

Finally, we congratulate the following staff members on their new roles and responsibilities within the school as well as welcoming back some staff returning from maternity leave:

- **Hayley Grady** - Deputy Headteacher - Primary and **Bayley Longmuir** - Secondary MFL Teacher have returned this half term following maternity leave
- **Jules Marland** has moved into the role of Business Support Officer
- **Molly McCarthy** will take on SEND administration in addition to her work in the Performing Arts department
- **Matthew Herridge** becomes the permanent Deputy Headteacher - Secondary
- **Luke Skeel** will take on the role of School Head of Drama & Dance, within his Assistant Headteacher role
- **Ruth Grassi** will take on the role of Lower Key Stage 2 Phase Leader, and **Rob Tuffrey** becomes the Upper Key Stage 2 Phase Leader
- **Jamie Saunders** will be the Head of Year 10 and **Maria Newbury** becomes the Head of Year 7
- **Charlotte Carroll** will become the Year 11 Pastoral Support Manager
- **Charlotte Jordan** will be the secondary phase's Examinations Manager
- **Hayley Manley** will be the secondary phase's Data Administrator

We would also like to wish **Hatti Maguinness**, Second in Department - Secondary English, all the very best as she begins her maternity leave.

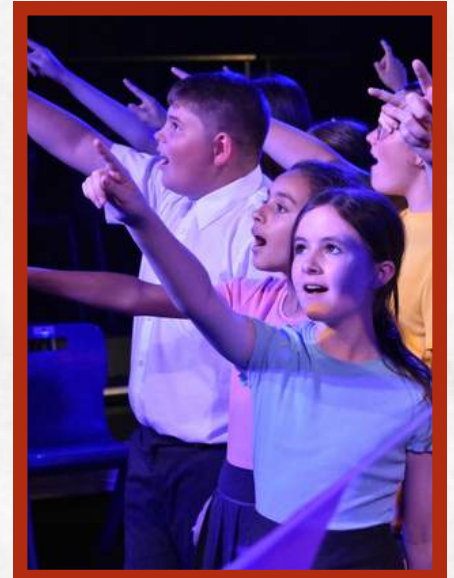


Monthly Matters

June & July 2025

MARY POPPINS

4SIXTEEN
THEATRE COMPANY





Monthly Matters

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CNS FEST





Primary phase celebrates strong outcomes and excellent progress!

We are delighted to announce our statutory assessment results for the Primary cohort for the 2024-2025 academic year, showcasing significant achievements across all key stages.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS): A Foundation for Success

The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) data highlights exceptional progress from baseline to the end of Reception in all 17 areas of learning. This year's cohort has exceeded our Good Level of Development (GLD) target, aligning with national outcomes from last academic year, with 70% of children achieving GLD. This success underscores the effectiveness of our early years' curriculum, including the use of Drawing Club, Twinkl Phonics, Helicopter Stories, and Poetry Basket, which have helped to bring literacy and numeracy areas in-line with National outcomes.

Year 1 Phonics: Soaring Above Expectations

Our Year 1 Phonics Screening Check results are a testament to excellent phonics teaching, both in school and with support at home. With 87% of pupils achieving the pass mark of 32 out of 40, we have surpassed our own 2023-24 results and the national outcome.

Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check (MTC): A Leap in Numeracy

Our Year 4 MTC results reveal a remarkable 17% improvement on 2023-24, with 58% of pupils achieving a perfect score of 25/25. This outstanding performance from our Year 4 children places us in line with the highest-performing UK local authority in 2024 and way above national averages from previous years.

Key Stage 2: Exceeding National Averages

Our Year 6 children have achieved above national averages for Combined Reading, Writing, and Maths with 67% of pupils achieving at least the expected standard across all three subjects, as well as for Reading, Writing, and Maths individually at the Expected+ standard. Furthermore, the children's progress from the end of Year 2 (Key Stage 1) is excellent, with high proportions of pupils achieving accelerated progress across all three core subjects.

These outcomes across the Primary phase are a result of the fantastic community that surrounds our children, and sit alongside our continued commitment to a broad and balanced curriculum and a school environment that enables all children to thrive. Well done to all of our pupils on a brilliant year and thank you to all families for the support you give to our children and their learning.



Year 7 by 7HM

At the start of Year 7, we stood in the hall,
Lots of nerves, coming from us all.

Even though we thought we were cool, we were only Year 7s, young and small.
In our big blazers, looking like a fool, the start of our journey- secondary school.

Climbing up the steps, in our new crepes,
Ready to make friends, but we don't know anyone yet.

Unaware of the homework being set, all this pressure, making us sweat.

Achievement points to earn, more and more to learn.

On the field we eat our lunch, we are such a happy bunch.

With more and more memories to make, it's getting late...

It's nearly Year 8!!!!

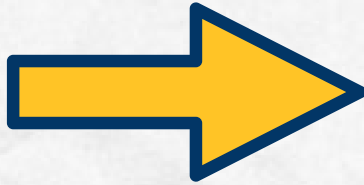


This half term saw the first
Castle Newnham 2025
Academic Excellence Awards.

Thank you to our friends at The
Place Theatre for hosting this
special event.



CASTLE NEWNHAM IN THE NEWS



Underpass art to
represent 'light and
positivity'



ANDY WILLISHER

Young children from Castle Newnham School helped to paint colourful designs

Alex Pope

BBC News, Bedfordshire

Year 6 Grafham Water Residential

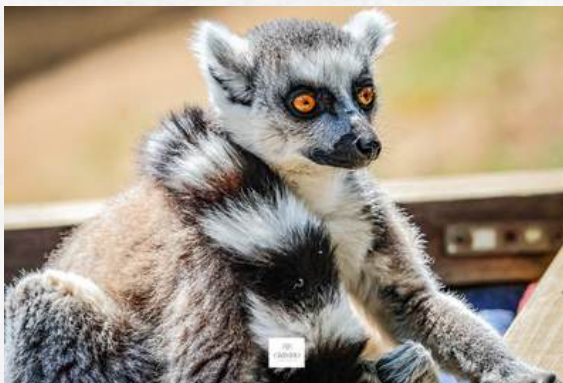




Year 4 PTA funded ceramic workshop



Year 9 Careers Workshop at Woburn Zoo





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Secondary Sports Awards



Year 5 and 6 Disco



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Year 7
Go Ape



Year 8
Legoland



Year 9
Whipsnade Zoo



Year 10
Box End Water Park

Year 11 Prom





Culture Day





Year 10 Next Steps Fair





The **Castle Newnham Connect** will be replacing the **Monthly Matters** in the new academic year. A half-termly newsletter highlighting the exciting events, news and opportunities across the school.

Mohammad Yasin MP for Bedford & Kempston visits Castle Newnham





PUPILS RETURN TO SCHOOL

WEDNESDAY 3RD SEPTEMBER 2025

RECEPTION TO YEAR 7, YEAR 11 & THE ARK RETURN

THURSDAY 4TH SEPTEMBER 2025

YEAR 8-10 RETURN



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