



Castle Connect

Friday 24th April 2026

Dear Families,

It is hard to believe we are only at the end of week two! Honestly, I already feel firmly part of the furniture here.

This week, I have truly valued the opportunity to hold several face-to-face meetings with both our pupils and many of you. There is simply no substitute for sitting down and talking. Listening to your perspectives, your hopes, and your experiences has only strengthened my mission and sharpened my dedication to this school.

I am a firm believer that strong communication is the heartbeat of a successful school. When we communicate well, we do more than just share information, we build a sense of safety, trust, and shared purpose. My goal is to ensure that all stakeholders are perfectly aligned, ensuring that every child feels supported by a united team of educators and family members.

With that focus on communication in mind, I would very much appreciate as many of you as possible completing our new **Views - Voice - Valued survey**.

You will see this link appearing regularly in the *Castle Connect*. To ensure we don't overwhelm you, each survey will be short and succinct, thematic and action orientated. This week's survey is specifically focused on our communication to you. We want to know what is working and where we can sharpen our delivery to keep you better informed.

The forecast tells us the sun is due to be shining this weekend! I hope you and your families have a wonderful, restful time enjoying the weather together.

Warm regards,

Donna Neely-Hayes
Principal





VIEWS



VOICE



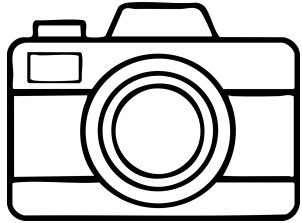
VALUED

Parents & Carers: Views - Voice Valued - Google Form





Year 5 to Year 11 Class Photos



Reminder that North Site Class Photos are taking place on Tuesday 28th April, please ensure pupils are dressed in the correct school uniform.

[Please check the school website for clarification.](#)

Pupils in **6EB** and **6RT** to attend school in school uniform and will change into PE kit for their PE lesson - please bring PE kit in a bag. **6JC** should come into school in school uniform as normal, and bring their swimming kit
Year 10 GCSE Dance pupils to bring their school uniform to change into at the end of their lesson.

Year 8 Academic Consultation Evening

On Monday, Year 8 families were invited in for the Year 8 Academic Consultation Evening. Families were able to book times to speak to the English, Maths and Science teachers and then drop in to speak to the Humanities, Languages, Performing Arts, P.E and Design Technology teachers.

It was lovely to see so many families in attendance and is always a pleasure to be able to share our pupils successes with their families!

Year 8 Theatre Trip

In a busy week for our Year 8 pupils, we took 120 Year 8 pupils to London to watch Wicked - the untold story of Oz. Wicked tells the story of an unlikely but profound friendship between two young women: the very blonde and very popular Glinda and a misunderstood green girl named Elphaba. Following an encounter with the Wonderful Wizard, their friendship reaches a crossroads and their lives take very different paths. Pupils loved it and left the theatre very inspired.





Uniform Pop Up

Looking for a cost-effective way to refresh your child's uniform for the upcoming term? We are delighted to announce that the PTA will be hosting a pop-up second-hand uniform shop! This is a wonderful opportunity to browse a variety of quality, pre-loved items at great prices, all while supporting our school's commitment to sustainability. We would love to see you there, so please join us on South Site on Thursday 30th April 3.15pm-3.45pm and Friday 1st May 8.30am-9.00am.

Donating uniform items also reduces waste and is a fantastic way to contribute to a more sustainable environment.

If you are able to donate, please ensure all donated items are clean and in good condition. You can drop off your uniform items at the school office any time.

Sublime Science Workshop

On Tuesday, pupils on the South site took part in a Sublime Science workshop all about the "Magic" of sound and science. They saw a selection of different experiments showing how sound can be made in unusual ways. Some of the experiments included:

- The Magic Cup: Pupils learned about man-made materials designed to "trap" and absorb water instantly.
- Straw Flutes: We discovered that sound is just a vibration. When we blow into the straw, it sends waves to our ears, which our brains then turn into sound.
- Whirly Tubes: By spinning a tube, we forced air to rush through it. As the air hit the bumps inside, it vibrated to create a loud humming noise.
- Thunder Drums: We used springs to turn stored energy into "kinetic" energy, creating a booming sound amplified through a tube.
- Screaming Rods: Using friction, we made the molecules in a metal bar bounce against each other. This created a high-pitched sound.





Well done Mrs Collacott!

Last weekend Bronwen Collacott, Year 5 teacher, took on the enormous challenge of running (and walking) 50 miles around the Surrey Hills. Despite the ridiculous distance, she had a brilliant day and claims to have loved every minute, completing the event in 13 hours.



Thank you from Castle Newnham PE



The PE department would like to say a huge thank you to Mat Dunkley from Riverside Tennis Club for his generous donation of tennis balls, it is greatly appreciated.



Year 11 GCSE Art Exam

A big well done to our Year 11 GCSE Art pupils who completed their formal practical exam, over two days pupils spent 10 hours working on a piece based on a self-selected brief from the exam paper- exploring concepts such as: Magnificent, Nature, Lost and Found, Time, Isolation and Movement. Before the exam, pupils spent time researching and experimenting to create a plan for their final exam. We are genuinely impressed by the level of creative talent on display. In their lessons, pupils will now focus on refining their first portfolio of work from earlier in their GCSE course.

Unfortunately we are unable to share any pictures of the pupils work until it has been graded, but keep an eye out for information on our Year 11 Art Exhibition at the end of June 2026!

Year 11 GCSE 3D Design Exam

Our Year 11 pupils have been busy crafting their Component 2 final pieces, showcasing their skills across a diverse range of materials including timber, metal, polymers, clay, and resin. Over the two weeks, the pupils dedicated 10 hours to producing creative outcomes such as jewellery, sculpture, clocks, mirrors, and furniture, all inspired by themes like costume, time, and movement. With the practical work complete, they are now spending the coming weeks refining their portfolios and finalizing the supporting documentation for their submissions.

Much like our GCSE Art projects, we are currently unable to share photos of these final pieces, but we are incredibly excited to reveal them to you as soon as the assessment process is complete!

Year 10 Design Technology Mock Exams

The year 10 Graphics pupils had their exam today and have been given the topic's shops and landmarks, our 12 graphics pupils will have 5 hours to put together their outcomes having been creating explorative work since January.

Year 10 3D design pupils have already sat their mock exam before Easter on the context of flora and fauna creating outdoor sculpture and lighting using a variety of metals, they are now working on their sustained project which will run up until December.

Primary PTA Fundraising



CASTLE NEWNHAM PRIMARY PTA INVITES YOU TO

2KM FUN RUN

10AM

Celebrate the London marathon by joining us for a fun run!

MAY 10TH

- ★ North Site, Polhill Avenue
- ★ £3 one child £5 two children (payment on MCAS by 5th May)
- ★ Kids and adults can run together
- ★ Refreshments available for purchase

Every child gets a medal

Castle Newnham Primary PTA

★★ **TEA TOWELS** ★★

- Each one features your child's drawing and name — a lovely keepsake from Reception through to Year 6.
- To purchase, please visit the Store section on MCAS and follow the link.

£5 PER TEA TOWEL

NO LIMIT ON HOW MANY YOU CAN PURCHASE.

DEADLINE to purchase Tuesday, May 5th!!!

Upcoming Dates



DATE	EVENT
Monday 27th April	GCSE French Speaking Exams Year 11 Ark Art Exam
Tuesday 28th April	Year 5 Assembly at Christ Church Class Photos for pupils in Year 5 to Year 10 GCSE French Speaking Exams Year 11 Ark Art Exam
Wednesday 29th April	Reception Vision Checks Year 4 Caythorpe Residential Trip Starts Key Stage 3 Junior Maths Challenge GCSE French Speaking Exams Year 11 Ark Art Exam
Thursday 30th April	DofE Bronze Practice expedition 1 GCSE French Speaking Exams
Friday 1st May	Year 4 Caythorpe Residential Trip Ends DofE Bronze Practice expedition 1
Monday 4th May	Bank Holiday (School Closed)
Tuesday 5th May	5BC River Trip Year 11 3D Exam (Group 1) Year 1 Assembly at Christ Church 2AB & RP Consultation Evening
Wednesday 6th May	5EK River Trip Year 11 3D Exam (Group 1) 2AB & RP Consultation Evening
Thursday 7th May	Start of GCSE Exams Year 3 & 4 Multisports day (hosted on North Site) 5HQ River Trip Year 2 Assembly at Christ Church Year 11 3D Exam (Group 2)

Friday 8th May	Year 3&4 Reading Morning Dance Showcase at University of Bedfordshire Theatre Year 7 Rounders Tournament
Monday 11th May	Year 6 SATs Week Starts Year 11 3D Exam (In Lesson)
Tuesday 12th May	Class Photos for Pupils in Reception to Year 4
Thursday 14th May	Year 6 SATs Week Ends DofE Bronze Practice Expedition 2
Friday 15th May	Year 4 Reading Cafe DofE Bronze Practice Expedition 2 Key Stage 3 District Athletics Championships
Monday 18th May	Year 10 GCSE Art Mock Exam
Wednesday 20th May	Sports Day for pupils in Years 5 and 6 Year 9 to Year 11 District Athletics Championships
Thursday 21st May	Census Day
Friday 22nd May	Sports Day for Pupils in Reception End of Summer 1
Monday 25th - Friday 29th May	May half term (School Closed)

Please check that your contact details are correct, this can be checked on the Bromcom app or by speaking to the school office



For pupils on a 2-week timetable, next week is:

WEEK

A

DANCE SHOWCASE 2026



LIMITED
TICKETS
AVAILABLE!


BEST
BEDFORDSHIRE
SCHOOLS TRUST

FRIDAY 8TH MAY, 7PM
UNIVERSITY OF BEDFORDSHIRE THEATRE
TICKETS £6



Senior Leadership Team



Donna Neely-Hayes
Principal



Hannah Harwood
Senior Vice Principal



Hayley Grady
Vice Principal



Matt Herridge
Vice Principal



Paul Dawson
Assistant Principal



Hannah Baxter
Assistant Principal



Luke Skeel
Assistant Principal



Jon Mills
Assistant Principal



Shaun Stevens
Assistant Principal



Matt Cleaver
DSL - Primary



Beverly McWilliams
DSL - Secondary



Lauren Crowley
Business Manager



Safeguarding Team



Mr M Cleaver
DSL Primary



Mrs H Harwood
Senior Vice Principal



Mrs H Grady
Vice Principal



Mr M Herridge
Vice Principal



Miss H Baxter
Assistant Principal



Mrs B McWilliams
DSL Secondary



Miss S Cain
Pupil & Family Support Lead
DDSL



Mr D Chapman
Pastoral Intervention Lead
DDSL



Mrs H Clements
Head of Year
DDSL



SAFEGUARDING CONCERN?

If you are concerned about a child's welfare and safety, contact the safeguarding team via

CN-Safegaurding@bestacademies.org.uk



CORE Values

CN CORE School Values

Community

Treating everyone kindly
Supporting and caring for people who need help
Following the school rules
Being good friends and neighbours

CN CORE School Values

Opportunity

Taking part in school life
Considering our own strengths
Setting goals and trying hard
Growing as a person

CN CORE School Values

Respect

Valuing everyone around us
Listening to others ideas and opinions
Using good manners
Looking after our school

CN CORE School Values

Excellence

Being proud of our achievements
Working our hardest all the time
Overcoming challenges
Making best use of our talents, time and resources

OUR VISION

Our vision is for a highly successful educational journey through which each of our pupils can flourish in a safe, happy and stimulating school community from age 4-16. We set and ensure high expectations of ourselves and of others as we strive to teach knowledge and inspire curiosity about the world. We encourage positive attitudes, contribution to community, resilience, creativity, integrity and kindness.



Social Media

School social media accounts are another useful tool for timely communication, community building, showcasing achievements and advertising upcoming events.



@CastleNewnham.Official



/CastleNewnhamSchool

My Child at School App

MY CHILD AT SCHOOL is the school's platform for families to receive information and communication about their child.



The app can be downloaded from Apple or Google stores onto your phone.
Payments for dinner money and any trips will be via this app.

