



Castle Connect

Friday 1st May 2026

Dear Families,

It has been a truly wonderful week at school, the kind of week that perfectly captures the spirit of our community. What has stood out most is the incredible breadth of enrichment experiences and opportunities our students have embraced. Seeing our young people thrive outside the traditional classroom setting is always a highlight, and this week provided those moments in abundance.

I started my week with the absolute joy of attending the Year 5 assembly. The children were a real credit to both their families and the school; their confidence and hard work were clear for all to see. It was a pleasure to wave off our Year 4 pupils as they headed out on their residential trip. I am thrilled to report they have had the most wonderful time, building independence and making memories that will last a lifetime. A huge congratulations to our Year 9 DofE students who completed their expedition this week! I had the privilege of meeting them at the finish line to celebrate their achievement with a well-deserved ice lolly. Their resilience and teamwork were inspiring. Beyond these major events, the school has been a hive of activity with various sports fixtures, rehearsals, clubs, and extracurricular tasks.

I would like to extend a huge thank you to all the parents who have shared such valuable feedback with us recently. We are listening closely to your input.

To ensure everyone has a chance to contribute, I will be keeping the [Views - Voice - Valued](#) survey open for one more week before we transition to a new theme of questions. Your perspective helps us shape the best possible environment for your children.

Finally, I wish you all a very happy Bank Holiday weekend. In true British fashion, it wouldn't be a proper Bank Holiday without the threat of a little rain, but I hope the weather stays kind enough for you all to enjoy the three-day break.

Thank you for your continued support.

Donna Neely-Hayes
Principal





VIEWS



VOICE



VALUED

Parents & Carers: Views - Voice Valued - Google Form





Phase Leads & Heads of Year



Jo Kearney Collins
Early Years Phase Lead



Sofia Aden
Key Stage 1 Phase Lead



Ruth Grassi
Lower Key Stage 2 Phase Lead



Rob Tuffrey
Upper Key Stage 2 Phase Lead



Leonie Molloy-Cook
Head of Year 7



Hannah Clements
Head of Year 8



Ambia Waheed
Head of Year 9



Jamie Saunders
Head of Year 10



Samantha Cash
Head of Year 11



New Head of Drama & Dance

We are delighted to welcome Mr. Ollie Hope to Castle Newnham as our new Head of Drama and Dance.



Ollie joins us following nearly a decade of experience at a local secondary school. He was specifically drawn to our school's dedicated focus on the arts and our unique "all-through" provision, which allows for a seamless creative journey from start to finish.

In his new role, Ollie will work closely with Emily Green (Head of Music), Sophie Kelk (4SIXTEEN Theatre Company Coordinator), and the wider Performing Arts Team.

Together, they are committed to ensuring our performance standards remain world-class and continue to provide an exceptional experience for all our pupils.

Celebrating 10 Years of BEST

Happy 10th Anniversary, BEST! To celebrate a decade of Bedfordshire Schools Trust, we planted a silver birch tree at both our sites this week. Even though we only joined the Trust in September 2024, we already feel right at home. These trees represent our 'roots' in this fantastic community and our growing commitment to nurturing every child who walks through our doors.





Year 11 Ark Art Exam

A big well done to our five Year 11 Arc pupils who completed their OCR Entry Level Art & Design formal practical exam.

This is our first year running this qualification and pupils have spent 2 hours per day for 6 days working on a final piece of work.

A Nature theme was selected from the exam paper in the new year and since then pupils have spent time researching, experimenting and creating a plan for their final exam. Pupils have worked incredibly hard and we are genuinely impressed by the level of creative work.

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 French Speaking Exams



Félicitations to our Year 11 GCSE French pupils for completing their speaking exams this week! Following a 12-minute preparation window, each student tackled a functional role-play, a picture-based discussion, and a two-part conversation.

The MFL team is incredibly proud of your dedication, from lunchtime and after-school revision to holiday sessions. With the oral component behind you, all that remains are the listening and reading papers—bonne chance for the final stretch!

Good Luck Year 11!

Good luck to all our year 11's for their GCSE exams that begin next week. We are so proud of the effort they have been putting into revision sessions before, during and after school and know they are going to smash them! Mrs Cash and Mrs Carroll are so excited to see your hard work pay off and can't wait to celebrate your achievements with you on results day!

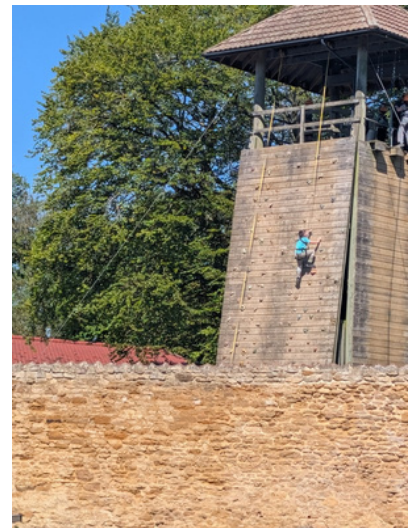




Year 4 Caythorpe Residential

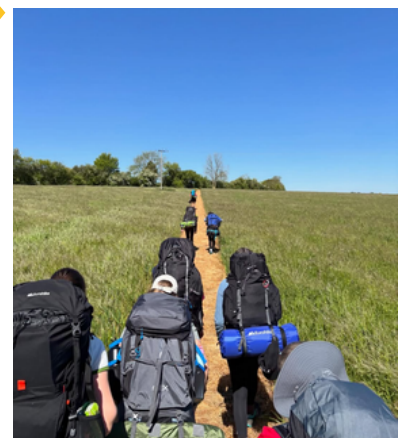
After a smooth journey to Caythorpe Court on Wednesday, our Year 4 pupils had lunch and had a tour of the site. Over the trip they got to experience activities which include climbing, abseiling, orienteering, and buggy building, canoeing, orienteering, Eco explorer, sensory Trails and a silent disco.

On their final night pupils headed to the campfire for some singing and marshmallow toasting/ eating and then had some time in their rooms before bedtime.



DofE Practice Expedition

Adventure, navigation, and a healthy dose of teamwork were on full display this weekend as the first group of Year 9 Bronze DofE participants successfully completed their practice expedition. Setting off with heavy packs directly from the school gates, the teams navigated their way through the local countryside to reach the Leslie Sells Campsite in Bromham. After a busy afternoon of pitching tents and cooking over camping stoves, the atmosphere stayed bright as several staff members dropped by in the evening to say hello and share in the stories of the day's journey. Pupils started day 2 drying out tents before leaving the campsite and beginning their walk back to Mowsbury park.





Year 7 & 8 Netball Triumph!



Congratulations to our Year 7 netball team who have been crowned District League Champions. The squad remained unbeaten with the highlight being a convincing victory against Bedford Girls School. Our Year 8 netball team finished runners up only losing to Bedford Girls who were the eventual winners. Mr Dean and Miss Crawford-Smith said "The girls brought the energy to every training session and gave a 100% on the court during all matches, fully deserved girls well done!"



Year 9 & 10 Rounders

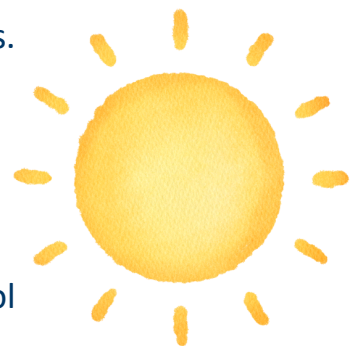
Another big congratulations to our Year 9 & 10 rounders teams have won their opening league games after beating Biddenham international School and Wixams Academy! The Year 9 and 10 teams will play a match every other Thursday with Year 10's playing next week, stay tuned for updates on how our teams are getting on!

Rounders clubs for pupils in Years 7-10 have begun, with Year 9&10's taking place on Tuesdays and Year 7 & 8's on Wednesdays.

Uniform in the Hot Weather

We have had a few sunny days where the temperature has nudged into the low twenties and some families have asked us to clarify the uniform expectations. In a change from last year's process where a Met Office forecast of a temperature above 25 degrees meant pupils could attend school in their PE kit, pupils should attend school in their normal uniform unless a communication home notifies you otherwise.

Thank you for your continued support with ensuring that pupils attend school wearing the correct uniform.



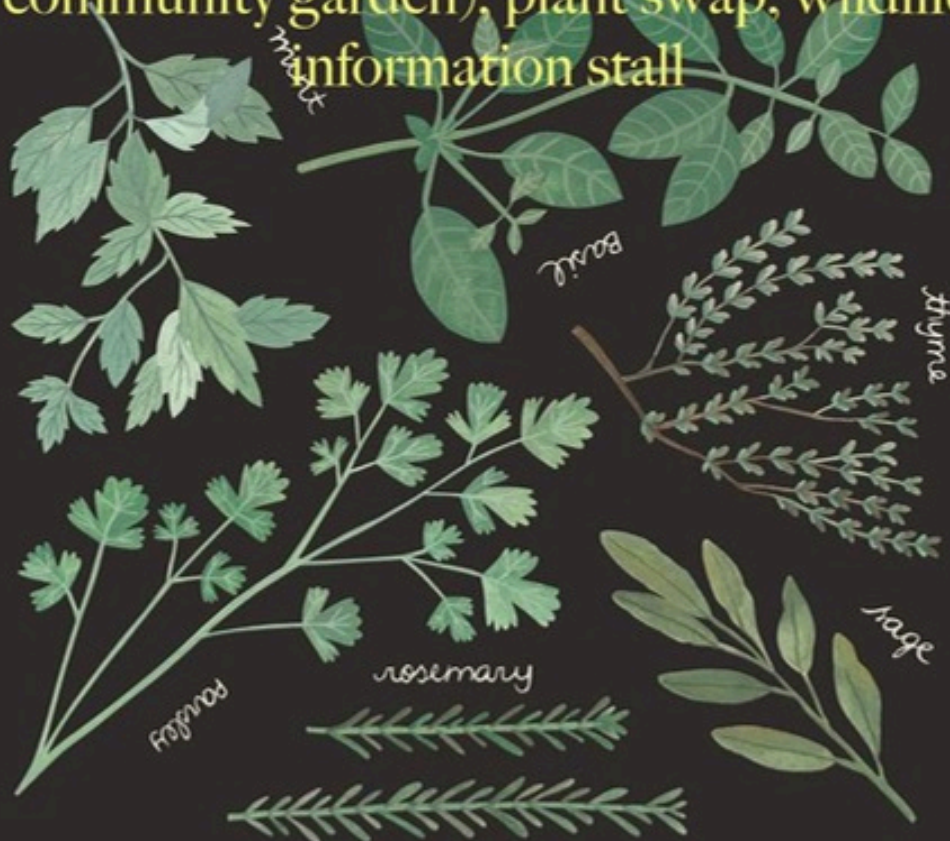
For clarification on uniform, please check the [school website](#).



Community Herb Garden Open Day

Sunday 17th May 11 am - 3 pm

Plant sale & cake sale (all proceeds to the
community garden), plant swap, wildlife
information stall



Castle/Rothsay Roundabout



BEDFORD TOWN BAND

in concert

Saturday 9th May, 15:30



TOWN BAND



CONCERT BRASS



PROGRESS BRASS

ACADEMY BRASS

📍 Castle Newnham School, Polhill Avenue

🎫 Tickets £10 (free under 18)

📘 Bedford Town Band

🌐 bedfordtownband.org

📷 [bedfordtownband_](https://www.instagram.com/bedfordtownband_)

Primary PTA Fundraising



CASTLE NEWNHAM PRIMARY PTA INVITES YOU TO

2KM FUN RUN

10AM

MAY 10TH

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

- ★ 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



Monday 4th May	Bank Holiday (School Closed)
Tuesday 5th May	2AB & RP Consultation Evening 5BC River Trip Year 11 3D Exam (Group 1)
Wednesday 6th May	Year 1 Assembly at Christ Church Start of GCSE Exams Year 11 3D Exam (Group 1)
Thursday 7th May	Year 2 Assembly at Christ Church Year 3 & 4 Multisports day (hosted on North Site) 5EK River Trip Year 11 3D Exam (Group 2)
Friday 8th May	Year 3&4 Reading Morning 5HQ River Trip 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 Key Stage 3 District Athletics Championships DofE Bronze Practice Expedition 2
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)

Tuesday 2nd June

Year 7 & 8 Girls Cricket Match

Thursday 4th June

Year 9 & 10 Girls Cricket Match

Friday 5th June

World Environment Day
Reception & Year 1 Reading Morning

Monday 8th June

Key Stage 3 District Athletics Championships
Year 9 & 10 Girls Tennis

Tuesday 9th June

Key stage 3 Junior Maths Challenge

Friday 12th June

Reception & Year 1 Reading Morning
Year 9 & 10 Boys Tennis
Year 10 Reports go home

Monday 15th June

Reception Meet the Team Event
Year 5 & 6 Dynasty Art Workshop
Year 7 & 8 Girls Tennis

Tuesday 16th June

Primary Musicians Evening

Wednesday 17th June

Year 10 GCSE Geography Local Fieldwork

Thursday 18th June

Year 10 GCSE Geography Local Fieldwork
Year 11 Prom

Friday 19th June

Reception - Year 8 Father Figure Friday
Year 10 Geography Local Fieldwork
Secondary Art Exhibition
GCSE Exams End

Monday 22nd June

Year 4 to Year 5 Meeth the Team

Tuesday 23rd June

Reception - Year 10 Culture Day
Year 6 to Year 7 Meet the tutor Event

Wednesday 24th June

Year 10 Next Steps Day

Friday 25th June

Year 10 Geography Local Fieldwork

Saturday 27th June

CNS Fest

Monday 29th June

Academic Excellence Awards Evening

Tuesday 30th June

Transition Day 1

Wednesday 1st July

Transition Day 2



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

WEEK

B

DANCE SHOWCASE 2026



LIMITED
TICKETS
AVAILABLE!


BEST
BEDFORDSHIRE
SCHOOLS TRUST

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



Senior Leadership Team



Donna Newell-Royes
Principal



Hannah Harwood
Senior Vice Principal



Hayley Grady
Vice Principal



Matt Hemidge
Vice Principal



Paul Dawson
Assistant Principal



Hannah Baxter
Assistant Principal



Luke Steel
Assistant Principal



Jon Mills
Assistant Principal



Shaun Stevens
Assistant Principal



Matt Cleaver
DSL - Primary



Beverly McWilliams
DSL - Secondary



Lauren Crowley
Business Manager



Safeguarding Team



SAFEGUARDING CONCERN?

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

CN-Safeguarding@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.

