



# Castle Connect

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2026

Dear Families,

As we head into the coming week, we are entering a significant period for many of our pupils. We have our Year 6 pupils preparing for their SATs, Year 10 diving into their mock exams, and our Year 11 cohort entering the thick of their final GCSEs.

We fully recognise the weight of these milestones. We know how much work has gone into preparing for these assessments and how important the outcomes are for our pupils' next steps. However, I want to be incredibly clear on one point: While grades are important, nothing will ever be more important than your child's wellbeing.

The pressure of exam season can be daunting, but no student should feel they are facing it alone. Over the next few weeks, our school team will be providing as much support as possible. Staff will be on hand throughout the day for any student needing a quiet word or a moment of reassurance. We will be greeting students with plenty of positive reinforcement as they arrive for their exams to help settle those inevitable nerves.

In my first four weeks here, I have been blown away by the personalities and brilliance of our pupils. Their character shines far brighter than any test score ever could, and we will be reminding them of that daily. Please join us in encouraging them to do their best, while reminding them that they are valued for exactly who they are.

**"Education is the passport to the future, but a healthy mind is the engine that gets you there."**

For the next two weeks, our **Views - Voice - Valued** survey will take a broader focus. We want to hear your honest perspective on our All-Through School as a whole. What are we doing well? And where can we improve?

Your feedback is vital to our growth. At the end of this half-term, we will share the specific actions we plan to take based directly on your input. Please do take a few minutes to complete the survey; we truly value your partnership.

Wishing you and your families a restful, positive weekend.

Warm regards,  
Donna Neely-Hayes  
Principal





**V**IEWS



**V**OICE



**V**ALUED

Parents & Carers: Views - Voice Valued - Google Form





## Head of Year Appointment



Congratulations to Mr. Karl Dean on his appointment as the new Head of Year for the current Year 8 cohort. Mr Dean will begin this role on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> June.

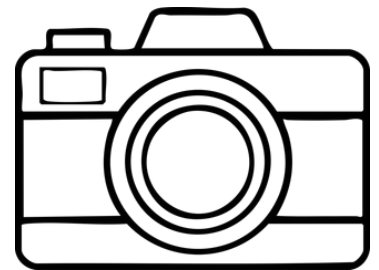
Mr Dean is really looking forward to getting to know the year group even better and be in a position to support pupils and families moving forward.

Mrs Hannah Clements will be the new Head of Year 7 (the current Year 6 cohort) and will work closely with Mr Dean over the summer term to transition to take on the Year group fully in September. 9KD's new CORE tutor will be Mr Ollie Hope.

## Reception to Year 4 Class Photos

Reminder that South Site Class Photos are taking place on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May, please ensure pupils are dressed in the correct school uniform.

**Please check the school website for clarification.**



## SATS



Good luck to our wonderful Year 6 pupils: as you begin your SATs next week, remember how incredibly proud we are of your hard work and resilience. While these assessments measure your academic progress, they can't capture your unique talents, kindness, or character. Just take a deep breath and do your absolute best. Good luck—you've got this!



## 2AB & RP Consultation Evenings



It was lovely to see so many families joining us for our recent Parent Consultations. These meetings are such a vital point of contact, providing a wonderful opportunity for us to sit down together and discuss the overall support and progress of your child.

Thank you for your continued partnership and for supporting your child's education so passionately; it is clear how much your involvement motivates their growth. We truly value the open dialogue between home and school, and we look forward to continuing this journey together throughout the rest of the term.

## A Celebration of Learning: KS1 Assemblies

It was a joy to welcome so many of you to our local church this week for our Key Stage 1 assemblies. Our Year 1 and Year 2 pupils showcased their learning beautifully, filling the space with projected voices, lovely smiles, and a truly wonderful atmosphere.

Year 1 impressed us all with their incredible focus, delivering detailed lines that highlighted a vast array of learning, ranging from their discoveries in Science to their creative projects in DT.

Year 2 brought the heat with a "fiery" quiz centred on the Great Fire of London, complemented by upbeat songs that had the whole audience ready to join in! It was heartwarming to see so many families beaming in the audience with pride. We would like to extend a massive "well done" to all our pupils, and a final thank you to our teachers who worked tirelessly to support and deliver these performances. Lastly, thank you to our families for your ongoing support with the children's learning and for joining us to celebrate their success





## Dance Showcase

It's been a whirlwind of a day at the University of Bedfordshire as our dancers moved from the studio to the stage for a rehearsal ahead of this evening's performance. Following a tour of the University of Bedfordshire theatre and a health and safety briefing, our performers spent the morning getting to grips with their tech and spacing in the theatre. After a dress rehearsal this afternoon, the energy hit a new high as our Year 11, Year 5 and Year 6 pupils join for the final run-throughs. Now, all that is left to do is a final group warm up to get our dancers primed for the performance. If you haven't secured your seat yet, there is still time to grab tickets for this evening's performance—we can't wait to see you there!

**GET YOUR TICKETS HERE!**



## Year 5 River Trips

This week, the Year 5s had their Geography Field Trip to the river. They were trying to answer the question, "How have humans changed the River Great Ouse in Bedford?". They learned about water mills, weirs, sluices, and locks. They also learned that the New Cut near Priory is manmade and that when it was built it changed the direction part of the river flowed in! The children did some great walking and learning and enjoyed having Geography brought to life.





## Year 3&4 multisports day

On Thursday, some of our secondary sports leaders ran the Year 3 & 4 Multisports event for a range of local primary schools. 3RG and 4CE were lucky enough to attend this well run and organised event.

The School Sports Partnership values of honesty, determination, passion, self-belief, respect and teamwork were shown by all of those involved. Our own CORE values were shown by the children as they participated in rounders, cricket, and tri-golf activities.



## Don't forget...

We are excited for all the upcoming trips and activities on offer for our pupils- make sure to check the MCAS payment deadlines to avoid missing out!

### Year 8 - Trip to Legoland

Midnight, Tonight  
(Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May)



### Year 9 - Trip to Whipsnade Zoo

Midnight, Tonight  
(Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May)



### Year 10 - Trip to Box End

#### Water Park

Midnight, Tonight  
(Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May)



### Year 11 - Prom

Midnight, Tonight  
(Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May)





# Primary Musicians Evening

We are delighted to inform you that we are hosting another **Primary Musicians Evening** next half term on Tuesday 16th June, 6-7pm, Studio One Performance Theatre, North Site.

This evening is to give our primary groups and pupils the opportunity to showcase their musical abilities in an introductory, intimate setting. We are looking for pupils who already learn an instrument (in school or at home) that have a piece of music that they would like to perform to a small audience. Pupils are welcome to perform on more than one instrument if they learn more than one.



We welcome performers from Reception to Year 6 as long as they are able to play through a whole piece of music. If your child has a peripatetic music teacher, please feel free to involve them in the process of helping them prepare for the performance.

**This event is open to pupils in Reception to Year 6 only. Please could you fill out the attached form by 9:00am 5th June to register your child's interest in performing and on what instrument.**

## [Primary Musicians Evening- Sign Up Form](#)

After half term, we will make tickets available on our Box Office, [www.castlennwham.school/box-office](http://www.castlennwham.school/box-office), so that we can gauge numbers and formalise the entry of families to the performance but they will be free of charge.



If you have any questions, please feel free to get in touch via email on [cnperformingarts@bestacademies.org.uk](mailto:cnperformingarts@bestacademies.org.uk)



# SIX: Teen Edition

4SIXTEEN Theatre Company, Castle Newnham's award-winning in-house theatre company, is proud to announce that our next production will be SIX: Teen Edition.

To celebrate 10 years of 4SIXTEEN Theatre Company, we are thrilled to be reproducing this sensational show, which previously made history by selling out two full performance weeks back in 2022 and 2023. We invite pupils in **Year 7 to Year 11** to join us for this special anniversary revival.

To express your interest, you are required to fill in an audition form by Wednesday, 17th June. You will need to rank four of the six Queens in the order of the role you would prefer to play. Additionally, please ensure you include any holiday dates you are unavailable for over the summer break. We will be using this information to schedule the most suitable rehearsal days over the summer break.

Auditions will be open to any Castle Newnham pupil in the current years 7, 8, 9, 10 or 11. The auditions will take place on Friday 19th June, 3:30 PM to 5:00 PM. For the audition pupils are asked to prepare a song of their choice by one of the music artists that inspired each Queen.

Please note that the roles of Catherine of Aragon and Jane Seymour have already been cast, as the pupils who performed in the original 4SIXTEEN productions of SIX are still studying at Castle Newnham and will be returning to these roles.

For further information and to sign up for the auditions, please visit the link below

## [SIX Audition Form](#)

If you have any further questions please contact us by emailing [cnperformingarts@bestacademies.org.uk](mailto:cnperformingarts@bestacademies.org.uk)



Photographs from the 2022 and 2023 productions



# Year 7&8 Athletics

Over the past 3 weeks we have taken our team down to Bedford International Athletics Stadium for the District league event. 1 more week to go before the District Championships in June.



# Project 500 Bedford Blues Trip



On Saturday we took 15 girls from Y7-9 to watch Bedford Blues take on Chinor. They received a coaching session before the game then got the opportunity to create a guard of honour for the players as they arrived onto the pitch. They enjoyed the game and we thank Bedford Blues Foundation for inviting us.



# Year 7 Cricket



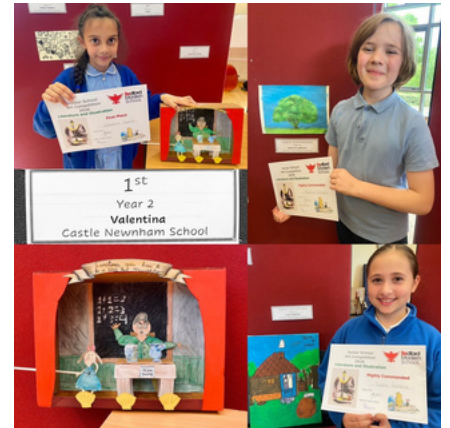
On Friday we took 19 boys to Cricket East's cricket festival for schools. It was a fantastic atmosphere throughout the day, and I look forward to their development in cricket



# Bedford Modern Junior School Art Competition 2026 Winners.

On Tuesday, May 5th three of our talented Artists attended a prize giving ceremony at Bedford Modern Junior School. The theme for the annual competition was 'Literature and Illustration'

Pupils from Primary Schools all over Bedford were invited to create a piece of art, based on a favourite book or story and interpret the language to create characters or a particular scene or landscape.



Congratulations to Valentina in 2SS who won 1<sup>st</sup> place in the Year 2 category!

Also, to Luna in 4CE and Adeline in 6EB who were awarded 'Highly commended' Well done to all our other pupils who took the opportunity to enter.

## South Site Art Workshops



On Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> May Year 3 took part in the first of two Art workshops with our Primary Specialist Art Teacher Miss Haddon.

Every year Primary year groups on our South site take part in ceramic workshops, this year however has needed adapting as our lovely new Kiln is not fully operational yet but will be by the end of June.

Pupils have been looking at the Shang Dynasty and made the base for a Dragon Eye by shaping an unfired clay eyeball and constructing with paper and card.

On the 20th May in Workshop 2 these will be colourfully decorated and finished, we can't wait to show you the pupils creations!



## CN Alumni - Calum Davenport

Calum studied at Castle Newnham School from 2014 to 2021, achieving nine GCSEs. He then studied at The Bedford Sixth Form, completing A Levels in French, law and maths as well as an Extended Project Qualification on capital punishment. In September 2023, Calum enrolled on the Law and French LLB programme at Cardiff University. In September 2025, he began studying an accelerated degree in French Law and English (double licence en Anglais-Droit) at Université de Picardie Jules Verne in France. Calum will return to Cardiff University in September 2026 to complete his LLB. Following his undergraduate studies, he hopes to be accepted onto the Bar Training Course in order to qualify as a barrister. He later intends to secure pupillage at a barristers' chambers in the United Kingdom before potentially exploring opportunities to work internationally.



A word about Castle Newnham School from Callum:  
“I have many fond memories of my time at Castle Newnham School, particularly its strong sense of community and support. It is a school where students and teachers work closely together, fostering a genuinely collaborative environment. Every teacher endeavoured to understand the needs of each student and their support helped me to discover my passion for language learning. This in turn led me to study the laws of two different jurisdictions. From my first day, I felt consistently supported throughout my time at the school. In Year 11, teachers took the time to explain the options available after GCSEs and organised individual meetings to discuss our next steps. In my case, this guidance was instrumental in confirming my A Level choices. I am very grateful to have spent such happy and formative years at Castle Newnham School”.



Castle Newnham and  
the PTA presents...

# CNS FEST

£3 Adult | Children Free

All proceeds shared between the PTA and school  
departments for school development

**LIVE MUSIC | FOOD | BAR**  
FACE PAINTING | BOUNCY CASTLE AND LOTS MORE!

SATURDAY  
27 June  
12-4PM

Castle Newnham, North Site  
Polhill Avenue



**BEST**  
BEDFORDSHIRE  
SCHOOLS TRUST

# CNS FEST

## GET INVOLVED!

### PERFORMERS

IF YOU WOULD LIKE THE CHANCE TO HAVE A PERFORMANCE SLOT ON THE STAGE (THIS COULD BE MUSIC, DANCE, DRAMA OR ANYTHING THAT YOU ARE ABLE TO DO OUTSIDE/ON A SMALL STAGE) PLEASE TALK TO MISS GREEN

### HELPERS

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO COME ALONG AND SUPPORT THE RUNNING OF THE DAY, BEING ABLE TO GIVE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC HELPFUL INFORMATION AND SUPPORTING TEACHERS, PLEASE TALK TO MR SERINO TO SIGN UP

### PUPIL ENTERPRISE

IF YOU HAVE AN IDEA FOR A STALL THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO RUN (WITH THE HELP OF AN ADULT FAMILY MEMBER) THERE IS A SMALL CHARGE TO BE ABLE TO HAVE THE STALL BUT PLEASE COME AND SEE MISS GREEN FOR MORE INFORMATION.

**BEST**  
BEDFORDSHIRE  
SCHOOLS TRUST



# **BEDFORD TOWN BAND**

in concert

Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> 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](http://bedfordtownband.org)

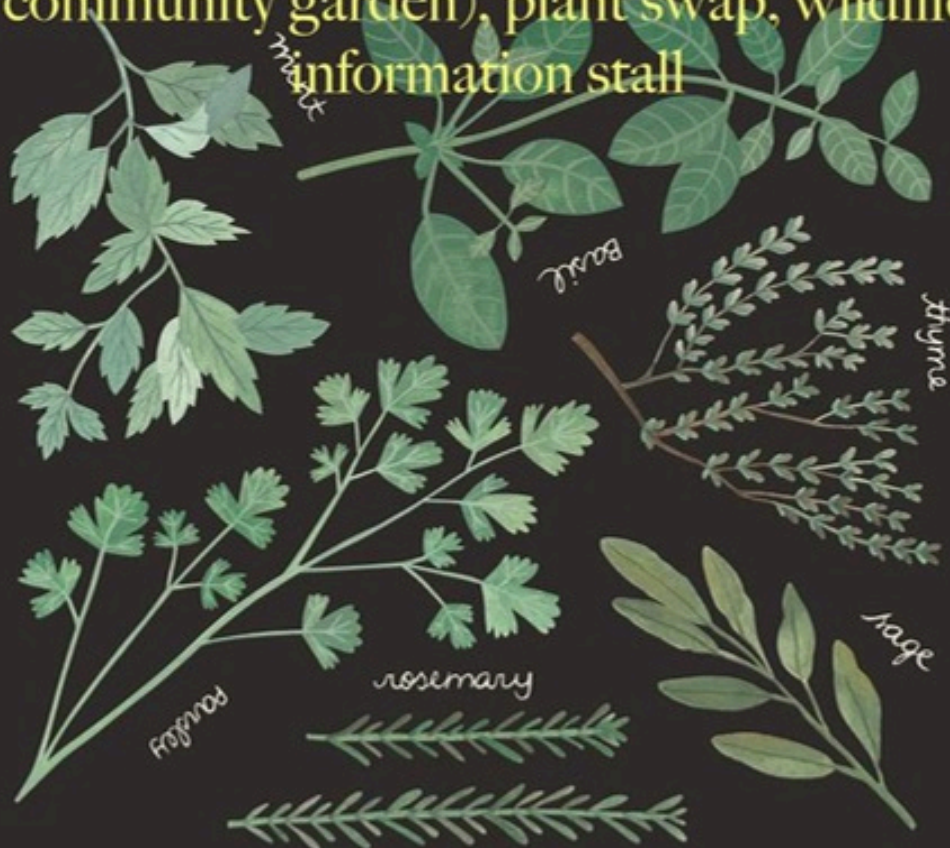
📷 [bedfordtownband\\_](https://www.instagram.com/bedfordtownband_)



# 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

# Upcoming Dates



**Monday 11<sup>th</sup> May**

Year 6 SATs Week Starts  
Year 11 3D Exam (In Lesson)

**Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May**

Class Photos for Pupils in Reception to Year 4

**Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> May**

Year 6 SATs Week Ends  
DofE Bronze Practice Expedition 2

**Friday 15<sup>th</sup> May**

Year 4 Reading Cafe  
Key Stage 3 District Athletics Championships  
DofE Bronze Practice Expedition 2

**Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May**

Year 10 GCSE Art Mock Exam

**Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> May**

Sports Day for Pupils in Years 5 and 6  
Year 9 to Year 11 District Athletics Championships

**Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> May**

Census Day

**Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May**

Sports Day for Pupils in Reception  
End of Summer 1

**Monday 25<sup>th</sup> - Friday  
29<sup>th</sup> May**

**May half term (School Closed)**

**Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June**

Year 7 & 8 Girls Cricket Match

**Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June**

Year 9 & 10 Girls Cricket Match

<b>Friday 5<sup>th</sup> June</b>	World Environment Day Reception & Year 1 Reading Morning
<b>Monday 8<sup>th</sup> June</b>	Key Stage 3 District Athletics Championships Year 9 & 10 Girls Tennis
<b>Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> June</b>	Key stage 3 Junior Maths Challenge
<b>Friday 12<sup>th</sup> June</b>	Reception & Year 1 Reading Morning Year 9 & 10 Boys Tennis Year 10 Reports go home
<b>Monday 15<sup>th</sup> June</b>	Reception Meet the Team Event Year 5 & 6 Dynasty Art Workshop Year 7 & 8 Girls Tennis
<b>Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> June</b>	Primary Musicians Evening
<b>Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> June</b>	Year 10 GCSE Geography Local Fieldwork
<b>Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> June</b>	Year 10 GCSE Geography Local Fieldwork Year 11 Prom
<b>Friday 19<sup>th</sup> June</b>	Reception - Year 8 Father Figure Friday Year 10 Geography Local Fieldwork Secondary Art Exhibition GCSE Exams End
<b>Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> June</b>	Year 4 to Year 5 Meet the Team
<b>Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June</b>	Reception - Year 10 Culture Day Year 6 to Year 7 Meet the tutor Event
<b>Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June</b>	Year 10 Next Steps Day

Friday 25<sup>th</sup> June

Year 10 Geography Local Fieldwork

Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> June

CNS Fest

Monday 29<sup>th</sup> June

Academic Excellence Awards Evening

Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> June

Transition Day 1

Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> July

Transition Day 2



CASTLE NEWNHAM PRIMARY PTA INVITES YOU TO

# 2KM FUN RUN

**MAY 10TH**

**10AM**

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 5<sup>th</sup> May)
- ★ Kids and adults can run together
- ★ Refreshments available for purchase

 **Every child gets a medal** 



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

**WEEK**

**A**



# 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



**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-Safeguarding@bestacademies.org.uk](mailto: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.

