



Castle Connect

Friday 4th September 2026

Dear Families,

Welcome Back!

It was absolutely wonderful to welcome our pupils back to school today. A special, warm welcome goes out to our newest joiners in Reception, as well as the new pupils joining us across other year groups, you are all so welcome to our wonderful school community!

Despite the terribly wet start to the morning, the children have made a super impression for the academic year ahead. It was great to visit pupils during their lessons today, and we have all been incredibly impressed with each and every one of them.

As we continue to iron out our MCAS (MyChildAtSchool) system issues, I would like to extend a huge thank you for your kind words and patience toward our fabulous office team. They are working exceptionally hard behind the scenes to get everything operating smoothly. Please continue to email or pop into the office at any time if you continue to face any problems.

Hopefully, the pupils have thoroughly enjoyed their first day back. This year is going to be fantastic, and we cannot wait for the journey ahead!

Warmest wishes,
Donna Neely-Hayes
Principal



CASTLE NEWNHAM
— ALL-THROUGH SCHOOL —

◆ OUR VISION ◆

An exceptional 4 – 16 educational experience
rooted in uncompromising excellence, where everybody discovers
their **greatness**, masters the knowledge to **shape the future**,
and grows into a **courageous, compassionate citizen**
in an ever-changing world.

 UNCOMPROMISING EXCELLENCE & AMBITION	 CHARACTER, INCLUSION & HUMAN BRILLIANCE	 A CULTURE OF BELONGING	 CHANGEMAKERS FOR TOMORROW
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Update of SEND provision

As we begin the new academic year, we want to share an important update regarding our SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) provision at Castle Newnham.

At our school, inclusion is absolutely paramount to ensuring a safe, happy, and successful environment for every single child. Throughout the summer term, we have been thoroughly reviewing many of our systems, processes, and structures to ensure we are delivering the best possible support. Our SEND team has been an area of significant focus during this process.

To provide extra clarity for our families in September, please see below the leadership structure for SEND across our All-Through School:

SEND



Mrs H Harwood
Senior Vice Principal



Mrs H Lee
Assistant Principal (All-Through SENDCo)



Miss K Bloor
Deputy SENDCo (LINK)



Miss E Allen
South Site SENDCo (Year R-4)



Miss E Bain
Deputy SENDCo (Ark)



Miss S Garsellis
SEND Administrator

We are incredibly excited about these refined structures and the enhanced clarity and support they will bring to our entire school community. More detailed information about the provision and support moving forwards will be shared throughout the academic year.



Update to the Behaviour System

Parent, pupil and staff feedback has been utilised to update our behaviour systems. We now have a behaviour ladder which visually represents positive and negative behaviours along with the associated rewards and sanctions. These ladders were shown to pupils today and can be seen on our [website](#).



Detentions for pupils in Year 7 to 11

Based on valuable feedback from our school community, we are stepping away from Behaviour Hubs.

Moving forward, we will be utilising our new Behaviour Ladder, which outlines an updated threshold for sanctions.

Under this new framework, there may be occasions where a pupil receives a detention, either at lunchtime or after school. Crucially, after-school detentions will no longer automatically take place on the same day, instead they will take place the immediate next school day after being set. This shift allows us to communicate more effectively with parents and ensures pupils are not kept after school without prior notice.

Full details regarding how and why a pupil might receive a detention are outlined in the new Behaviour Ladder, which will be thoroughly explained to pupils next week.

To ensure MCAS is accurately recording behaviours and detentions, there will be no detentions issued until the week beginning 14th September. More information about the logistics and communication of detentions will be included in next week's Castle Connect.



Uniform Reminder

We expect our children to look smart and take pride in their appearance at all times and we ask that our families support the uniform requirements.

If families need help with purchasing uniform or would like to talk to us about acquiring second hand uniform, please contact the relevant school office.

<https://www.castlenewham.school/uniform>



North Site Primary Library

Whilst the merger/relocation of the Year 5 & 6 library is taking place this term, we are keen to value the importance of reading for pleasure for our UKS2 pupils. We would therefore like to offer these pupils the opportunity to 'borrow' a book from some donated stock that we have in school.

In order to facilitate this, we would be most grateful to receive any unwanted/previously read books as donations to supplement this stock of books as this will then ensure that there will be enough books for the inevitable demand. Please be mindful that as these books are being donated, your child is happy to relinquish ownership before they agree to bring any into school.



This new service will begin w/c 14th September and we ask that donated books are brought in and given to your child's class teacher, who will then pass them onto Mrs Litchfield who will be supervising the 'borrowing' during library sessions in the Autumn term.

In addition, and as a reminder, the North site primary classrooms have reading areas where books can be borrowed and signed out on loan from their class teacher.

Thank you for your support.





Young Voices 2027



Year 5 and 6, keep an eye out for information about Young Voices 2027!

You will receive a letter with details on the trip and how to sign up very soon.

4SIXTEEN presents Les Misérables: School Edition

Don't forget the auditions for 4SIXTEEN Theatre company's **Les Misérables: School Edition** take place next week!

Auditions will be open to any Castle Newnham pupil going in years 8, 9, 10 or 11. Below is everything you need to know about the audition process and how to get involved.

Ensemble Singing Workshop

Wednesday, 9th September | 3:30 PM – 5:00 PM

- During this workshop you will learn an ensemble song and work on harmonies with the music team. The workshop will conclude with small group performances to the audition panel.
- Anyone interested in being in the production must attend this workshop.

Main Part Auditions

Thursday, 10th September | 3:30 PM – 5:30 PM

- Pupils will sing a specific character song from the list provided below. This audition is only required for pupils who wish to be considered for a main role. All pupils auditioning for a main role must also attend the ensemble singing workshop to be considered for a main role.

Cast Announcement

Friday, 11th September | Break time

- The Production Team will officially announce the cast list.

(Note: We will also be looking for younger cast roles from years 3 to 6 following this phase).

Audition songs for main parts can be found here or on the Performing Arts Instagram @_performarts

All pupils in the cast will be expected to join us for rehearsals on a Tuesday and Thursday after school until 5:15pm. These rehearsals will begin from the week beginning 21st September and a rehearsal schedule will be sent out once the show has been cast.

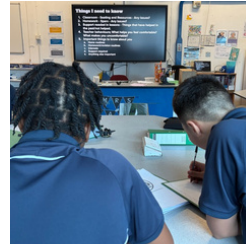
The production dates will be on the week beginning Monday 1st February with a dress rehearsal on Sunday 31st January. Successful auditionees will be sent a Cast Contract with all production week details.



Hush Pouches - Years 7 to 11



The government has now made it statutory that all schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default. We will therefore be continuing to use Hush pouches which were issued to pupils today. The pouches are leased for an annual fee of £6 which will appear on MCAS shortly.



Paracetamol Consent - Year 7 to 11

In order for secondary schools to administer paracetamol to pupils, the written consent of parents and carers is required.

The school will hold a supply of 500mg paracetamol. Following consent, paracetamol may be administered by members of staff who have received the required first aid training in the event of a headache, toothache, period pain or any type of mild to moderate pain.

We will contact you by phone before any paracetamol is given to obtain your verbal consent and to confirm whether your child has taken any medicines before attending school. **Please note that paracetamol will not be issued without written and verbal consent and is only for pupils in Years 7 to 11.**

To provide the school with written consent to administer paracetamol to your child, please log in to the MCAS app and select the 'Parental Consent' tab. Please then tick the relevant consent box to confirm your permission.



4SIXTEEN

THEATRE COMPANY

[Click here
for tickets](#)

SIX

SEPTEMBER 2026

WEDS 16TH

THURS 17TH

SAT 19TH

SAT 19TH

7PM

7PM

4PM

7PM

GOOD AVAILABILITY

LIMITED AVAILABILITY

SOLD OUT

Upcoming Dates



Tuesday 1st September

School Offices Open for Medication Drop Off

Wednesday 2nd September

INSET Day - school closed to pupils

Thursday 3rd September

INSET Day - school closed to pupils

Friday 4th September

Autumn Term Begins
PTA Reception Tea and Tissues Event

Wednesday 9th September

Year 8-11 Auditions for Les Misarables: School Edition

Thursday 10th September

Year 8-11 Auditions for Les Misarables: School Edition

Friday 11th September

Year 3 & 4 Reading Morning

Saturday 12th September

PTA Reception Picnic

Sunday 13th September

PTA Castle Quarter Jumble Trail

Wednesday 16th September

4SIXTEEN Presents: SIX: Teen Edition

Thursday 17th September

4SIXTEEN Presents: SIX: Teen Edition

Friday 18th September

Year 3 & 4 Reading Morning

Saturday 19th September

4SIXTEEN Presents: SIX: Teen Edition

Sunday 20th September

PTA Fun Run

Tuesday 22nd September

Year 6 SEND Information Evening (Transition)

Wednesday 23rd September

PTA AGM
Year 6 Ironbridge Residential Trip Starts

Thursday 24th September

PTA Uniform Sale

Friday 25th September

PTA Uniform Sale
Year 3 & 4 Reading Morning
Year 5 Greek Workshop
Year 6 Ironbridge Residential Trip Ends

Tuesday 29th September

Year 11 GCSE Drama Component 2 NEA



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

WEEK

B

Safeguarding Spotlight



power to the parents

07th Sept to 28th Sept '26

Every Monday from 5pm to 6pm via Teams (online)

A series of interactive online discussions allowing parents to share their views around young persons at risk of exploitation and the violence associated with it.

We will discuss:

- The current education system;
- Supporting our children at home;
- Online harms & online safety;
- Signs of grooming and coercion;
- Understanding the pressures of childhood in this day and age;
- The challenges of parenthood



Please email gemma.hoddle@beds.police.uk for the link

Safeguarding Team



Mr M Cleaver
DSL Primary



Mrs H Harwood
Senior Vice Principal



Mrs B McWilliams
DSL Secondary



Mrs H Grady
Vice Principal



Mr M Herridge
Vice Principal



Miss H Baxter
Assistant Principal



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



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.

