Castle Connect

Friday 23rd October 2026

Dear Families,

What a fantastic and inspiring first half term it has been!

This year began an exciting new chapter for Castle Newnham as one unified all-through school, supporting our pupils from Reception all the way through to Year 11. I want to say a massive thanks for your continued support, feedback, and partnership - the weeks have flown by but I have loved every minute.

Above all, I want to celebrate our incredible pupils. They have amazed me day in and day out; they are such a bright, engaging, and enthusiastic group of young people to be around. Walking around the school, there is a wonderfully warm and positive atmosphere. Beyond the classroom, our pupils have shone brightly in our sports fixtures, creative and performing arts, and across our wider co-curricular clubs and activities. Their energy, talent, and commitment bring our school community to life every single day.

Thank you all for the wonderful feedback following our Year 7 Open Evening, and to everyone who joined us for a tour. It is clear that more and more families are choosing Castle Newnham, and we could not be prouder of our growing community. The proudest part of this is seeing a huge increase in the number of pupils in Castle Newnham Year 6 pupils choosing to stay with us for Year 7 - I cannot wait to see your journey continue. I am also really looking forward to our Reception Open Mornings after the half term break, we are delighted to have over 100 families already signed up for this.

Some key focus points for next half term include;

1. Attendance matters - we will continue to work closely alongside families to ensure every pupil is supported to achieve great attendance.
2. Year 11 will have mock exams coming up, backed by extra mentoring support. Please encourage a good balance of rest and light revision over the break.
3. Following our successful Year 6 to 7 launchpad day, we are planning a dedicated day to help our Year 5 pupils start looking ahead with confidence to their secondary journey.
4. We are aiming to bring the whole school together for remembrance day when we return.
5. Our Reception Open Mornings run on 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, and 12 November at 9:30 am, please do share these dates with friends and neighbours!
6. We are delighted to share our **Big Tech Mission** booklet. It sets out how we plan to explore the best ways technology can support your children's learning, safety, and wellbeing. This is a very important and exciting development for our school.

As always, we thrive on your views, your voice, and your valued feedback. Our children are at the heart of everything we do, and we are constantly striving to give them the very best experience possible. To help us do that, we would love to hear from you. Please take a few moments to share what is working well and what we are doing right, but also feel comfortable letting us know where we might be falling short.

Views - Voice - Valued

Regardless of age or stage, every half term in school is intense and exhausting, even as it is endlessly rewarding and amazing. The energy, learning, and growth that happen inside our classrooms and across our school grounds take a tremendous amount of heart and effort from everyone involved.

Rest is so incredibly important for our young people to recharge their batteries, and it is equally vital for our hardworking staff. Crucially, it is just as essential for the key people who keep our children being the amazing people they are every day - you, our parents and carers. Please take this time to do whatever your family needs to rest, recover, and enjoy this well-deserved break together.

"Children remind us of the beauty in stopping to notice the little things. May this half term bring our young people a well-earned rest, gentle days, and warm time with family."

Wishing you a wonderful and happy half term break!
Mrs Donna Neely-Hayes
Principal

BEST
BEDFORDSHIRE
SCHOOLS TRUST

Castle Newnham

ALL THROUGH SCHOOL

RECEPTION OPEN MORNINGS

(SEPTEMBER 2027 ENTRY)

We would love to welcome you and your child to explore our engaging classrooms, meet our dedicated team, and experience firsthand what makes Castle Newnham all-through School such a joyful place to learn and grow.

TOUR DATES

(All tours begin at 09.30am)

- **3rd, 4th & 5th November**
- **10th, 11th & 12th November**

UNCOMPROMISING EXCELLENCE & AMBITION

A CULTURE OF BELONGING

CHANGEMAKERS FOR TOMORROW

CHARACTER, INCLUSION & HUMAN BRILLIANCE

Spaces on the school tours are limited- Scan the QR code or head to our website to complete the booking form.

VIEWS
VOICE
VALUED

SCAN ME

Parents & Carers: Views - Voice Valued - Google Form

Golden Learners of the Week

KS1		KS2		KS3		KS4	
1AI	Magnus P	3RG	Emmeline M	7ES	Nitasha B	10CS	Rares S
1BB	Luisa N	3SB	Ashhab F	7GLH	Teeyanah L	10EP	Yasar M
1SA	Elodie E	3TK	Eden DT	7IW	Shay B	10HB	Tyler B
2AA	*Zoe*	4CE	Elijah W	7LHO	Maia J-W	10QL	Itai S
2ED	Fia H	4HQ	Edith R	7RHA	Ephraim S	10YC	Reuben M
2SS	Ethan R	4MH	Pheobe F	8ADR	Olivia M	11CP	Lewis F
		5BC	Elise	8AJW	Ruby A	11DM	Sabrina H
		5EK	George L	8NCS	Isaac A	11FD	Annalise R
		5IA	Orson D-D	8PB	Isabelle V	11GS	Ella S
		6EB	Heidi	8SK	Leo H	11HL	Tyler C
		6JC	Louie C	9MW	Diego F		
		6RT	Fionn	9PMC	Robert D-E		
				9RJ	Noah S		
				9SB	Erin H		
				9WE	Katie S		

Rewards Programme

It has been fantastic celebrating our very first half term of Golden Learners, our new reward initiative for this year! As with any new launch, we are dedicated to reviewing how things are going, listening to feedback, and refining our approach along the way.

We have been working behind the scenes to refine and expand our current rewards structure, far beyond the Golden Learner and Positive Points being our only rewards initiatives. We are excited to announce that we will be launching these after half term!

Our aim is to build upon what is already working well, ensuring our recognition system remains meaningful, engaging and inspiring for everyone.



Our Big Tech Mission

We are thrilled to announce an ambitious new chapter in digital learning at Castle Newnham - you will be hearing lots more next half term.



As part of our **Great Big Mission**, we are teaming up with renowned education technology expert **Emma Darcy** to help shape a forward-thinking, thoughtful, and safe approach to technology and Artificial Intelligence (AI) across our all-through school.

💡 Preparing Our Pupils for the Future

Technology and AI are rapidly changing the world outside the classroom. We want to ensure our children aren't just using technology, but are growing up to be **confident, creative, critical, and safe digital citizens.**

Our goal isn't just about getting the newest gadgets or chasing tech trends—it's about asking the right questions and finding meaningful ways technology can:

- Enhance learning and teaching in the classroom
- Help every child thrive and feel supported
- Build essential digital skills for life beyond school

🤝 Working Together with Our Community

Emma Darcy brings a wealth of experience in helping schools use technology purposefully and safely. Together with her expertise, research, staff experience, pupil voice, and feedback from parents and carers, we will develop a long-term strategy that puts our children and their learning first.

Have a look at our guide for families to our schools digital journey. We look forward to bringing our whole school community along on this exciting journey and will keep you updated as our Great Big Mission unfolds!

Parking around School Site

OA friendly reminder to all families to please avoid driving onto the school premises or using the staff car parks during the busy morning and afternoon peaks. As the signage indicates, these areas are reserved for staff, and keeping them clear helps prevent gridlock and ensures a much safer environment for our pupils walking into school. Thank you so much for your understanding, cooperation, and help in keeping our school community safe and moving smoothly!



Can you help Horizons?

We are looking for any parents or carers who might be interested in supporting our Horizons department by discussing their career or industry with pupils either in small groups or larger groups or potentially hosting an industry day or supporting a work experience pupil. If you can support in any way please fill in the form below; signing the form does not mean you are committed to supporting it will just give us a chance to potentially understand any availability.
Parent/ Carer Availability Form

Reception - Year 6 Christmas Performances

Performances at Christchurch:

Tuesday 8th December at 9.30am - Y4 Christmas Performance
Thursday 10th December at 9.30am - Y3 Christmas Performance

Monday 14th December at 9.30am - Y2 Christmas Performance
Monday 14th December at 2.45pm - Y5 Christmas Performance

Tuesday 15th December at 9.30am - Y1 Christmas Performance
Tuesday 15th December at 2.45pm - Y6 Christmas Performance

Performances on South Site:

Tuesday 8th December at 2:45 - RP Christmas Performance
Wednesday 9th December at 2:45 - RH Christmas Performance
Thursday 10th December at 2:45 -RKC Christmas Performance

Further details about the performances and Christmas celebrations will be sent out after the half term break.

Reception Reading Afternoon

On Thursday, Reception pupils and their families gathered for an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the Twinkl Phonics reading books in preparation for the children to begin reading aloud at home. The event gave adults a firsthand look at the materials their children will be bringing home, while teachers were on hand throughout the session to answer any reading-related questions.







3TK and 4MH Multi Sport Trip

On Monday, pupils from 4MH and 3TK enjoyed a lovely afternoon of sports at Scott Primary. There were two activities on offer, goalball and orienteering, judging by the many huge smiles on faces the pupils had a great time and they all put a great deal of effort and energy in to their tasks. We would like to thank the great parent helpers for giving up their time to help, thank you!

Year 3 & 4 Orienteering Festival

On Thursdays pupils in Year 3 and 4 took part in an action-packed morning of inter-sports focused on orienteering and team-building games. The children developed their problem-solving, and collaboration skills in an energetic outdoor environment. The event was further enriched by a selected group of Year 9 pupils, who provided enthusiastic support and guidance to help the Year 3 and 4 pupils navigate the activities and succeed as a team.







Chess Sucess!

18 players from Castle Newnham took part in The Northamptonshire Schools Chess Association Congress at the South Site at the weekend. It was great to see them all grab this opportunity and they showed fantastic positivity and resilience. Congratulations to Daniella who was overall winner in the Under 12s and to Eleanor and Alex who were runners up in the Under 10s and Under 9s. Thank you to the PTA who supported the event and kept us all well fed!







Cold Weather and Coats

As the temperature drops and the sunlight hours reduce, please ensure your child has a warm coat to bring to school.
Please note that hoodies are not permitted and that coats are worn in addition to blazers, not instead of them.



Year 7 Pastoral Consultation

Thursday 19th November is a chance for Year 7 parents to meet with their child's CORE tutor to discuss how they have settled in to Year 7 at Castle Newnham.
Bookings for 5-minute, in person appointments between 4pm and 6:30pm will go live after half term - you will receive further communication on how to book these after half term.

Leon Barrett Football Academy

We were thrilled to welcome former Premier League footballer Leon Barnett—founder of his own football academy—to lead an exclusive enrichment and coaching session for select Key Stage 4 pupils. Organised by Mr Saunders, the event celebrated the outstanding dedication, effort, and high standards shown by students who have consistently represented our school football teams over the past few years. It was an unforgettable experience for our young athletes to learn directly from a professional, and we are incredibly proud of their continued commitment both on and off the pitch.







Castle Horizons

Future Pathways- a post 16 opportunities event at The University Bedfordshire (Bedford Campus)- Saturday 7th November

This week has seen assemblies for Year 11 from some of our local sixth form providers and we hope to have some more in the coming weeks. We would encourage parents to talk to their children about what they have found out about in these assemblies and attend the Open Days or contact providers for further information.

Institution	Upcoming Open Days / Evenings
Bedford Academy	Thursday 12th November
Bedford College	Saturday 14th November
Bedford Girls' Open Events	Thursday 5th November
Biddenham International School	Tuesday 3rd November
Central Bedfordshire College	Saturday 21st November
Kimberley College	Tuesday 10th November Thursday 12th November
Mark Rutherford	Thursday 12th November
Milton Keynes College	Saturday 14th November
Samuel Whitbread	Thursday 12th November
Sharnbrook Academy	Thursday 5 November
Tresham College Wellingborough	Tuesday 10th November

Castle Horizons

Business Spotlight – Wells & Co / Brewpoint HQ (Hospitality, Beverage Production & Venue Operations)

Feature Spotlight: Headquartered at their state-of-the-art facility at Fairhill in Bedford, Wells & Co is one of Bedfordshire's most iconic family-owned enterprises, with a history spanning over 140 years. While many know them for pub venues and brewing, running a modern hospitality and beverage business requires a multi-skilled workforce across production, retail, finance, and event management.

Local Bedfordshire Impact: The Brewpoint headquarters in Bedford houses a craft brewery, a 200-cover restaurant, taproom, drive-thru coffee shop, event spaces, and corporate offices managing over 180 pubs across the UK and France. Local teams handle beer production, eco-friendly packaging, menu development, pub estate management, digital marketing, and large-scale event coordination.

UK National Picture: Hospitality, food production, and venue management form the UK's 3rd largest employment sector, generating over £130 billion annually. The sector is rapidly modernizing, focusing heavily on local sourcing, sustainable operations, and high-end customer experiences.

Entry Requirements & Level 3 Subject Choices (Sixth Form & College):
To secure a Higher/Degree Apprenticeship in Hospitality Management, Brewing Science, or Business Retail, or to study related subjects at university, pupils should target the following Level 3 options:
A-Level Route: Recommended Subjects: Business Studies, Economics, Food Technology / Nutrition, Chemistry (essential for brewing science and food technology), Media Studies (for brand and event marketing), or Modern Foreign Languages (valuable for managing international pub estates in Europe).

Typical university/apprenticeship entry offers range from CCC to ABB.
T-Level Route (Technical / 80% Classroom + 20% Industry Placement): T-Level in Catering (Hospitality/Events specialization) OR T-Level in Management and Administration.Progression: Prepares students directly for Assistant Manager schemes, brewing technician roles, or Level 4/5 Higher Apprenticeships in venue and retail operations.

BTEC National Level 3 Route (Vocational / Continuous Assessment): BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in Hospitality Management OR BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in Business. Progression: Widely accepted by university hospitality and event management programs, as well as corporate graduate/trainee entry schemes (requiring Merit/Distinction grades).

Labour Market Information (LMI) & In-Demand Roles:
Average Regional Salaries: Hospitality and Production Apprentices start around £18,000–£22,000 (combining workplace qualification with earn-as-you-learn wages). Pub General Managers, Production Brewers, and Event Managers earn £32,000 to £48,000. Operations Directors and Head Brewers earn £55,000 to £85,000+ per year.
In-Demand Local Roles: Production Brewer, Hospitality General Manager, Venue & Events Coordinator, Food & Beverage Product Developer, Digital Marketing Specialist, and Pub Estate Surveyor.

Did You Know? Wells & Co's Brewpoint HQ in Bedford was built with sustainability at its heart—using solar power, rainwater harvesting systems, and send-zero-waste-to-landfill practices to brew up to 3 million pints of craft beer every year!

Family Conversation Starter: "What makes a local restaurant, venue, or event space feel welcoming and exciting? If you could design a new family café or venue in Bedford, what theme or special feature would you include?"

Castle Newnham

PTA News

October 2026

Where does your money go?

Your support to the PTA funded the south site busy boards. Thank you!



WANTED: Castle Newnham musicians to perform at Christmas Fair*

The Castle Newnham Christmas Fair will be held on the afternoon of 28 November and the PTA are inviting students from Primary and Secondary who are learning to play instruments to perform as part of the event. There will be a piano available for pianists to play. We can also provide a professional piano accompanist free of charge for other instrumentalists or students are welcome to perform unaccompanied. There is no limit on age / standard - any child can perform as long as they can play a piece with no/minimal assistance. Please contact the PTA Vice Chair to register interest if your child would like to perform - Lottie.green@cantab.net



Meet your new PTA secretary! Thank you for supporting the PTA, Hollie. What do you do?

I'm a listener in meetings right now, capturing and circulating notes and actions to the PTA. We're just at the beginning of our school journey, and I was curious to be involved and lend a hand where I can.

Thank you for your support to the school, Hollie!

PTA Activities

- Order your Christmas cards on MCAS
- Reception Party: 26th November
- Christmas Fair: Saturday 28 November
- Christmas Discos: Y1–4 on 15th Dec, Y5–8 on 16th Dec.

If you're a parent or carer at Castle Newnham, you're automatically a member of the PTA. Everyone is welcome at our meetings, and you can come along as often or as rarely as you like.

Upcoming Dates

Monday 19th October	Reception to Year 6 Pastoral Consultation Evening
Wednesday 21st October	Reception to Year 6 Pastoral Consultation Evening Reception Reading Afternoon Year 6 Height & Weight checks
Friday 23rd October	Year 3 Reading Cafe
Monday 26th- Friday 30th October	**October half term (School Closed)**
Monday 2nd November	Year 11 in Class Mock Exams Begin
Tuesday 3rd November	Reception Open Mornings
Wednesday 4th November	Reception Open Mornings 10HC2 Young Chef Event
Thursday 5th November	Reception Open Mornings 10HC1 Young Chef Event
Friday 6th November	Year 2 Reading Morning
Monday 9th November	Year 1 Mock Phonics Screeners Begin
Tuesday 10th November	Reception Open Morning 2ED 2SS Multi sports Event
Wednesday 11th November	Reception Open Morning Remeberance Day

Thursday 12th November	Reception Open Morning
Friday 13th November	Year 2 Reading Morning Mock Y4 Multiplication Tables Checks End KS3 Reports Go Home Year 11 in Class Mock Exams Begin
Monday 16th November	Flu Vaccinations Odd Socks Day KS3 Drama Club ACT!-26 Theatre Performance at BMS
Thursday 19th November	SEND Coffee Morning Year 7 Consultation Evening
Friday 20th November	Children In Need Year 2 Reading Morning
Monday 23rd November	Reception - Year 5 Assessment Fortnight Year 6 Writing Moderation
Tuesday 24th November	Year 9 DTP/Men & ACWY Vaccinations
Friday 27th November	Year 2 Reading Morning Year 10 Target Grade Reports Home
Saturday 28th November	PTA Christmas Fair
Monday 30th November	Year 11 3D Design Mock Exam

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

WEEK



Lunch Menu: Week One

Safeguarding Spotlight

NHS
East London
NHS Foundation Trust

CAMHS Drop-Ins

Are you a parent or carer of a child or young person aged 5 to 17 who would like advice around their mental health and wellbeing? Or are you aged 16 to 17 and looking for support with your own mental health and wellbeing?

Our CAMHS drop-in sessions offer a safe, welcoming space for children, young people, and their parents/carers to get advice around their emotional wellbeing and mental health.

If you would like to book onto a drop in session please scan the QR code or visit the following website: www.elft.nhs.uk/services/north-bedfordshire-community-access-service-cas

Drop-In sessions take place on a Thursday at one of the following locations that you can choose from:

- **Bedford and County Golf Club, MK45 6 ET**
- **The Higgins, Castle Lane, MK40 3XD**
- **Lakeview Village Hall, MK42 6AB**



Safeguarding Spotlight

Bedford's Early Help team are offering a number of free 1–2-hour information sessions and 6-week courses throughout the Autumn term, aimed at supporting parents and families navigate a number of challenges.

These free sessions and courses are bookable through the link below:

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/bedford-borough-council-early-help-83894498233?aff=ebdsshcopyurl

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

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 recieve 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.