



Message from the Federation Principal

Dear Families,

I hope you were able to enjoy a good half-term break.

For my half-term break I really appreciated being able to accompany a group of **22 pupils in Years 9,10 and 11 on a language trip to Nice**. Apart from the obvious good weather right down in the South of France it was great to see our pupils in action at a prestigious language school where most other pupils attending were either slightly older and more experienced (many from countries such as Switzerland and Germany where language learning is a huge priority) and / or from independent schools in the UK. You can find out more about this trip later on in this edition.

This type of experience builds on **residential trips in primary** as well as the earlier years of secondary, whether the **annual Key Stage 2 visit to Caythorpe** or the **Duke of Edinburgh award scheme** and helps to grow confidence, independence and resilience in our children and young people as well as open-mindedness to opportunity and other ways of seeing things. **We are one of the very small number of state schools in Bedford and indeed in England where languages are taught so widely**. More than **80% of our pupils entered GCSE French last year** with a number also experiencing great success in **German** or in a home language such as **Italian** or **Polish**. Nationally, only 39% of pupils continue with a language to GCSE and locally it's only 36%. Again our commitment and excellence begins early on with access in primary from **Year 3 to French lessons taught by a specialist teacher, Mrs Kirsty Williams**, and then on to secondary where we have a **full complement of native or near-native speakers of French, German, Spanish and Russian**. One of our CORE values is **excellence** and **we do not compromise the content of the curriculum in favour of being able to move a notch or two up the league tables**. Instead we strive for **the best possible teaching and outcomes** in our carefully constructed curriculum with its strong focus on equal access to material and experiences which we consider will be valued throughout life.

We are looking forward to lots of exciting events this half term so do look out for, among other things, **Christmas festivities** and **performances** on both South and North Sites.

With best wishes

Ruth Wilkes
Federation Principal





Quick Questions

We are grateful to the numerous families who have actively participated in the **Quick Questions** throughout the past half term. We encourage all families to engage with these Quick Questions, as they provide us with invaluable data that helps us gain a comprehensive understanding of your views on school life. This, in turn, enables us to delve deeper into key areas.

The Quick Questions are specifically designed to drive improvement by highlighting our strengths and identifying areas where changes may be necessary. We have been truly heartened by the positive responses received so far. However, for those families who have expressed disagreement to a question, please anticipate some form of further communication from the school as we are keen to understand your concerns in more detail.

PRIMARY

My child has settled well into this new term

96%

agree or strongly agree

My child has formed positive relationships with staff at Castle Newnham

98%

agree or strongly agree

My child is happy attending Castle Newnham

97%

agree or strongly agree

SECONDARY

My child has settled well into this new term

93%

agree or strongly agree

My child has formed positive relationships with staff at Castle Newnham

94%

agree or strongly agree

My child is happy attending Castle Newnham

92%

agree or strongly agree



Junior Leadership Committee

We are committed to involving pupil views and want to encourage pupil participation across all areas of school life. The JLC (Junior Leadership Committee) will represent pupil voice across the school, conducting surveys and questionnaires with classes and groups, in order to make sure that pupil voice is supported by everyone across the school. Each year group has representation on the JLC and we look forward to our first 'JLC Conference' which is due to take place in November with members from primary and secondary coming together to share experiences and steps forward to improving aspects to school life.

SEND Coffee Morning

We have hosted the first Primary SEND Coffee Morning of the year! Bedford Borough Parent Carer Forum came in to explain their service and offer their advice to parents, as well as the PTA starting to launch their SEND sub-group. With this first Coffee Morning being a success (and with positive feedback), we will aim to hold one every half term going forward with a variety of different themes and guests! Thank you to all that came!



The House System

Total points across Primary and Secondary

Stirling

50,314

Conwy

47,777

Kenilworth

47,113



Secondary Open Evening

We had over 600 visitors to Castle Newnham for our Secondary Open Evening! The school buildings were fully packed & we were delighted with the overwhelming positive response from prospective families.

Reception Party

Reception pupils had an exciting party organised by our PTA. This delightful event served as a warm welcome to the school and provided a wonderful opportunity for the children to get to know each other better. The PTA, as always, did an outstanding job. We look forward to more PTA-funded events in the coming months.

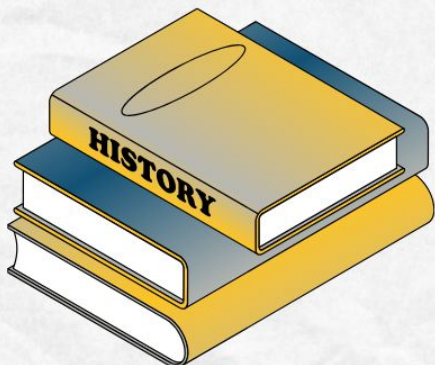


Harvest Collection

Once again we supported the local Food Bank during our harvest celebrations. Thank you to all the families who contributed. The Food Bank welcomes any contributions but are particularly in need of tinned vegetables, tinned fruit, tinned spaghetti hoops, 40/80 tea bags, Cup-a-Soup, tinned rice pudding, tinned tomatoes, tinned meat, bars of soap and toothpaste.

Black History Month

Black History Month is a celebration that provides us with an opportunity to acknowledge and appreciate the significant contributions made by people of African and Caribbean descent. It is a time to reflect on the rich history, achievements, and impact of these individuals, which are often overlooked or undervalued. Through our assemblies across primary school and lessons in secondary, we highlight the accomplishments of influential Black women in history.





Dance Company perform on a professional stage

After inviting Milton Keynes Dance Theatre to conduct a workshop for our GCSE and dance company pupils in the summer term, MKDT got in touch with us at the beginning of the year to invite some of our pupils to perform in their Season Opening Gala at The Venue MK. Castle Newnham's Commercial dance group had the opportunity to represent the school at a professional showcase and experience professional dance practice. The pupils thoroughly enjoyed the event and we are looking forward to working with MKDT in the future.



Year 11 Geography visit the coast

Our Year 11 GCSE Geography pupils conducted a successful coastal fieldwork at Hunstanton, collecting and analysing data on various coastal features. They demonstrated excellent teamwork, resilience, and application of their geographical knowledge, impressing both their peers and staff with their conduct and the conclusions they drew from their data.





Castle Newnham goes to Nice for a half-term language course



An enthusiastic group of 22 pupils from Year 9, Year 10 and Year 11 embarked on an educational journey to the picturesque city of Nice, located in the South of France. They were accompanied by Madame Young, Mrs Wilkes and Mr Saunders. We take immense pride in the resilience and adventurous spirit exhibited by our pupils, who were eager to embrace new experiences.

Their daily routine comprised morning sessions of French language lessons, followed by an exercise in independence as they purchased their own lunches in the bustling town. The afternoons were reserved for exploratory visits to a variety of locations, including the vibrant city of Nice, the hilltop village of Eze, and the glamorous Monaco. The views were breathtaking, the sea, the colourful houses, the many palm trees and the streets where the Grand Prix takes place were in great contrast with what we are used to at home!

In addition, our pupils enriched their knowledge by attending a range of museums and presentations. These included the Museum of Modern Art, a traditional confiserie, a perfumery, and the renowned aquarium of Monaco, providing a veritable sensory feast! Every evening, our pupils returned to their host families, sharing meals and exchanging cultures. The week flew by in a whirlwind of activity, and our students returned to England, albeit tired, but brimming with unforgettable memories and enriched by their new experiences.

A hearty well done to our Castle Newnham students for embracing such a thrilling adventure with open arms!





Sporting update at Castle Newnham

Year 3 & 4 Multi-Sports Event

3MM and 4EA had a great morning at Kempston Academy with the Schools Sports Partnership. They enjoyed OAA, tag rugby and goal ball, learning new skills and developing their teamwork skills. The children were excellent representatives of our school and we were very proud of how they demonstrated the CORE values throughout the morning.

Year 6 Football

Have played fixtures Vs Westfield, Scott, Camestone and Queens Park. We are pleased that everyone who attended the club got to play for the school.

Year 7 Festival

Through Autumn 1, pupils have been taking part in various sports against/with other secondary schools. On the 11th October, a group of girls signed themselves up to Cheerleading at St Thomas More.

Year 7 & 8 Girls football

Each week the girls participated in a 7 a-side tournament competing against various schools across the county. We are really pleased with the enthusiasm and commitment to football the girls have shown!

Year 7 Boys Football

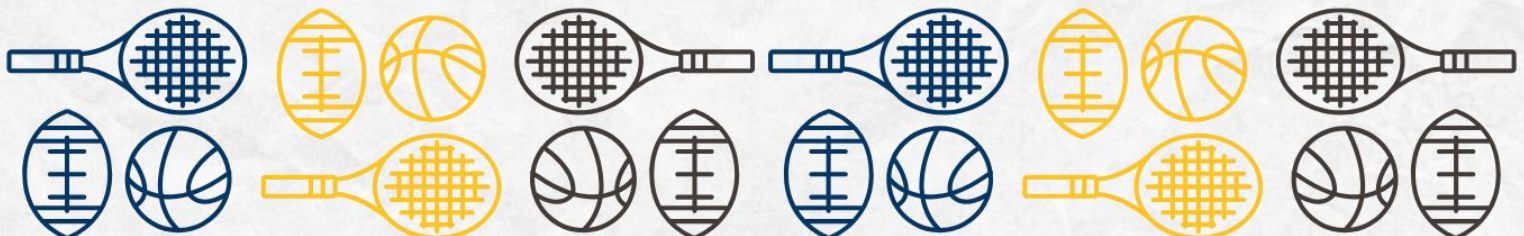
The Year 7 football league is coming to an end shortly with the boys having played a variety of schools across the half term. It has been great to see their passion for football and their attendance at training has been excellent. Over 30 boys have played in at least 1 fixture which is wonderful. Played 4 won 2 lost 2 (With 2 still to play at the time of writing)

Year 7 & 8 Rugby Fixture

The first rugby fixture in a while for CNS and the team showed their potential by putting up a hard game against much larger and more experienced rugby teams. We are really pleased with the work rate of the team, this is only the beginning of what's to come for rugby at CNS! Watch this space!

Year 10/11 Boys Basketball

A tough set of fixtures for the team but their attendance at Monday morning practice has been great. 2 losses for the boys but they remained in high spirits.





As part of their PE lessons, secondary pupils complete First Aid training through the St John's Ambulance programme of study. This is a valuable life skill which we hope they would never have to draw upon, however it is essential that our pupils are equipped with this knowledge in case of an emergency.

First Aid



We would like to thank Year 10 pupils, **Marley** and **Grant**, (and former pupil **Lily**) for thinking quickly in the community by looking after an elderly lady who needed medical assistance. Our values as a school are based on community and so very many of our pupils represent us so well in that regard. We feel really proud of the pupils response to a person in difficulty and the care they demonstrated, exemplifying the values of our school.

Safeguarding Spotlight

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs)



Mr M Cleaver
DSL Primary



Mrs B McWilliams
DSL Secondary



Mrs K Edwards
Head of School - Primary
DSL Primary



Mrs S Levesley
Head of School - Secondary
DSL Secondary

All members of the Senior Leadership Team have the appropriate DSL training and can support safeguarding questions or concerns

Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

If you have a safeguarding concern about a child in our school or need to inform us about a safeguarding incident relating to your own family that may impact your child then please get in touch by emailing safeguarding@castlenewnham.school. This email address is monitored daily by our DSLs in both Primary and Secondary.

If you need to report a safeguarding concern about a child outside of school then this can be done online through an Integrated Front Door (IFD) referral. Referrals made through IFD go directly to Bedford Borough Children's Services who will then inform us as a school if safeguarding concerns have been raised for a child who attends our school.

<https://localoffer.bedford.gov.uk/kb5/bedford/directory/service.page?id-KhuF2dS2z58>

If you think a child is in immediate danger and at risk of serious harm then call the police on 999.



Careers: Hospitality and Catering

Nick Levens, from Lifes Kitchen, visited our school to promote career opportunities in the Hospitality & Catering industry to our GCSE pupils.

He delivered an assembly to Years 9 and 10, discussed career progression, GCSE choices, and apprenticeships, and conducted an interactive workshop with pupils who have chosen Hospitality & Catering as their GCSE option.



Year 6 pupil wins Maths Challenge!

The winner of the Maths Challenge at the Secondary Open Evening received their prize of a Scientific Calculator and a box of Celebrations. They predicted the unique smallest positive whole number of the evening.

The winner was **Logan** - congratulations!



Peripatetic Teaching

We offer a **wide range of extra curricular Performing Arts activities for pupils across the federation**, this includes our peripatetic lessons in collaboration with **Bedfordshire Music Cooperative** and **Bedford Music Hub**.

We offer lessons in

- Piano
- Classical Guitar
- Electric Guitar
- Singing
- Violin/Strings
- Woodwind
- Brass
- Drums
- Speech and Drama



These 20-minute lessons can be during or after school. If your child is interested or wants to learn something not listed, please contact us at performingarts@castlenewham.school.