



Message from the Federation Principal

Dear Families,

This is the shortest and yet one of the most important half terms of the school year. Having fully settled into school routines, we begin to see great strides in our reception children reaching their early learning goals; primary pupils in many year groups are preparing for assessments of their progress so far in phonics, in their multiplication tables or in their reading, writing and mathematics; secondary pupils are thinking about options (Year 9) or making the final touches to their knowledge and understanding of the GCSE subjects and attending interviews for post-16 courses, apprenticeships and so on. In short, a walk around any part of our school shows pupils and teachers hard at work and enjoying learning at the same time. As the weather improves we also see outdoor activity begin to increase again along with opportunities for visits outside of school and this Monthly Matters gives a flavour of the wide range of activity happening or planned.

Our work in planning for September is also underway and we are in discussions with BEST around many aspects of our future as part of a trust (the final go-ahead from the Department for Education to be determined on March 28th) as well as discussions with Bedford Borough about plans to develop our school sites. Parents of children in reception will be pleased to see further additions to the toilet and washroom facilities for our youngest children and we hope to have news about secondary site developments in due course.

As ever we value our relationship with families and it's been great to meet so many via consultation evenings as well as at school shows and other events. We hope your child has made the most of every opportunity to learn and participate in school life so far this year and please do get in touch through the usual channels (and through our Quick Question surveys) if you would like further support with encouraging them to do their very best.

Finally, we send all our warmest wishes to Mrs Fensome who is leaving our nursery team later in March. Many of our families throughout the federation will know and remember the influence of Mrs Fensome on their children in their very earliest days in education and we are grateful to her for everything she has contributed over very many years of dedicated service.

With best wishes

Ruth Wilkes

Federation Principal





THANK YOU!

Year 7 and 8 Disco

We held a Valentines disco for Year 7 and 8. 175 pupils attended and had a lovely time dancing and singing the night away. Each year group made a substantial amount of money which will be used towards rewarding those pupils in those year groups at the end of term celebration. We are already planning something bigger for the summer term, so watch this space!

We would like to wish **Lucy Fensome** and **Jenny Yates** a fond farewell and good luck as they move onto new opportunities. Thank you to these colleagues for their commitment to Castle Newnham.

Pancakes

To celebrate Shrove Tuesday, our GCSE Hospitality & Catering pupils made and served pancakes at lunchtime to our secondary pupils. Pupils purchased them for 50p and enjoyed chocolate, syrup or lemon and sugar fillings. It was a very tasty afternoon that was enjoyed by hundreds of Secondary pupils!

In primary, pupils had great fun eating pancakes, we made at least 120!

MEAL PRICE INCREASE

The cost of a school main meal price will increase to £2.60 from Tuesday 16th April





Performing Arts UPDATE

Year 8 Theatre Trip

Year 8 pupils went to see Shrek the Musical at Milton Keynes Theatre



Follow us on Instagram and Twitter: @CN_PerformArts

Bedford Band Factory

Huge well done to our very own Blue Flame who performed at Redborne School as part of The Beds Band Factory. We're so proud of the band and the performance they put on, it's amazing seeing our pupils grow as musicians year on year. And this year they came back with t-shirts!



Beds Breakthrough

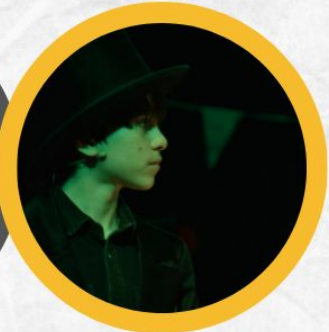
Congratulations to all the Castle Newnham pupils who performed at Esquires this month as part of Bedfordshire Music Hubs 'Beds Breakthrough'. It's a chance for pupils to perform to a live audience in an established grassroots music venue that's seen performers such as Muse, Coldplay, George Ezra, Tom Grennan and even international stars like Lizzo!

We are so proud of all the pupils that performed that night, some as solo acts, some DJ'ing and others as part of the Music Hub's Rock School. What a great night of music.



4SIXTEEN's Goldilocks and the Three Bears

Congratulations to all the Year 3 and 4 pupils involved in 4SIXTEEN's production of Goldilocks and the Three Bears. One reviewer stated 'an enlightening afternoon and a first glimpse into the talent that is going to come through 4SIXTEEN in the coming years. Definitely one or two stars in the making who I look forward to following in the years to come'





Ark Trip to Bedford College

As part of our Preparing for Adulthood and Next Steps, five of our Year 11 pupils had a tour of Bedford College and were given information about the Foundation Skills Programme that they offer, alongside other vocational courses.

Bedford Blues Day



BEDFORD
BLUES

Primary pupils enjoyed having Bedford Blues coaches visit the school to deliver rugby taster sessions to pupils from Year 1-3. They returned to meet our Year 4-6 pupils with the intention to promote sport and physical activity, and pathways into the Bedford Blues foundation.

Year 2 Ceramic Workshop

Year 2 took part in a ceramic workshop with our Primary Art Specialist Teacher Miss Haddon. Pupils had been learning about the Maasai and designed and made clay shields using various decorative techniques. They then painted them with colourful glazes before a final firing. Next month, Year 3's pupils will be using plants and flowers to make impressions in clay. Thank you to the PTA for funding materials for the activity



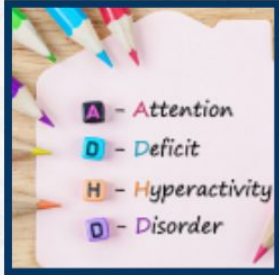
Year 6 Harpur Trust Visiting Artist Workshop

30 Year 6 pupils took part in a workshop led by Artist Anne Marie Abatte. Pupils designed and decorated Tote bags with the theme of giving to the community. The workshop was funded by the Harpur Trust and the bags will be entered into the Harpur Trust 2024 Schools Art competition. Winners and selected entries will be exhibited at The Higgins Museum over the summer. Let's hope we have a winner!





ADHD Workshop



We hosted an ADHD workshop for families from Year 5-11. The workshop was run by Lily Cragg, SEND advisor and Kelly Cowin, Naturopathic Nutritional Therapist. The sessions were jam-packed with vital information, tips and strategies on making tweaks at home to support regulation. We hope to run this again in the future. The next family workshop will be on Autism by our specialist team on Tuesday 19th March 6 - 7:30pm in the Secondary Main Hall on the North Site. Information for this has been sent out by Parentmail but you can also contact the secoffice@castlenewnham.school for more information.

PRIMARY JLC

SECONDARY JLC

YOU SAID, WE DID



WE WOULD LIKE MORE CLUBS AND A WIDER VARIETY

BOTH SITES HAVE OVER 20 DIFFERENT CLUBS ON OFFER ACROSS DIFFERENT SUBJECTS

WE WANT TO DO MORE TO PROTECT OUR GREEN SPACES

HALF TERMLY LITTLER PICKS. PURCHASED RECYCLING BAGS. DISCUSSIONS TAKING PLACE ABOUT A LITTER CLUB.

WE WOULD LIKE SOME TIME TO USE THE LIBRARY AT BREAKS

NORTH SITE LIBRARY IS OPEN TWO LUNCHTIMES A WEEK AND AFTER SCHOOL ON A MONDAY



Community Opportunity Respect Excellence

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WE WOULD LIKE WIDER SPORTS OPPORTUNITY ON THE SOUTH SITE

BOOKED BEDFORD BLUES TASTER SESSIONS AND WELCOMED MR CROWLEY AS OUR NEW SPORTS ASSISTANT



Community Opportunity Respect Excellence

YOU SAID, WE DID



IMPROVE THE ONE WAY SYSTEM TO ENABLE ALL TO ACCESS THE MAIN CORRIDOR MORE EASILY

WE INTRODUCED A NEW ONE-WAY SYSTEM IN THE MAIN BUILDING. THE BENEFITS OF THE NEW SYSTEM HAVE MEANT BETTER FLOW AND THE REMOVAL OF DIFFICULT 'PINCH POINTS'

CHANGE LUNCHTIMES SO THAT ALL PUPILS HAVE ACCESS TO A GOOD SELECTION OF FRESH FOOD AND SANDWICHES

LUNCHTIMES NOW SWAP EVERY WEEK

AN AFTER SCHOOL HOMEWORK HUB FOR PUPILS IN YEAR 7-9

HOMEWORK CLUB RUNS AFTER SCHOOL TO PROVIDE A SAFE, WARM SPACE FOR Y7-9 PUPILS TO COME AND COMPLETE THEIR HOMEWORK



Community Opportunity Respect Excellence

SAFEGUARDING SPOTLIGHT



With 97% of school children having access to the internet, technology permeates almost every aspect of their lives through their mobile phones, iPads and games consoles; the benefits can be to support children and young people's social skills and education, however there are potential safeguarding risks. We encourage parents/carers to continue to be vigilant and monitor children/young people's access to the internet and social media platforms.

For further advice and support on how to keep children and young people safe online, please see the childline website: <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/>



Reward Trip to Chicken George

Secondary pupils were selected for a reward trip to Chicken George for being **consistently excellent!**



Reading at CNS

Our secondary school library is small but mighty with a growing collection being curated to ensure our pupils have access to up-to-date, relevant resources with a diverse representation of perspectives and experiences. As well as including titles covering various personal development topics, we are also adding new material for less able, reluctant readers, and challenging texts for more able readers.

We want all of our pupils to benefit from our library and librarian. There is such a positive impact of reading for pleasure on mental health and well-being.

We are also investing time to train and oversee pupil library volunteers to become positive role models, and to develop a sense of pupil ownership of the library. Peer promotion is a powerful thing... We are committed to extending pupils' skills, building self-esteem and confidence, and as our library develops they will be fantastic advocates of the library and reading for pleasure.



Reading at CNS (cont.)

This term across Primary, we have been working hard to raise the profile of reading for pleasure across all year groups both at home, and in school. All teachers have been enhancing the reading areas in their classrooms and we would like to thank you for your donations to support this.

Furthermore, thank you for your support in reading with your children at home. Research demonstrates that regular reading has many positive benefits including: improved mental health, higher test results, exposure to a broad vocabulary, improved communication skills, reduced stress levels, wider general knowledge and better career prospects.

Our class reading bags, which were made by one of our parents and contain a book/magazine, biscuits & hot chocolate sachet, are funded by the PTA and are sent home weekly with a child who has achieved the reading challenge or shown an improved effort in this area.



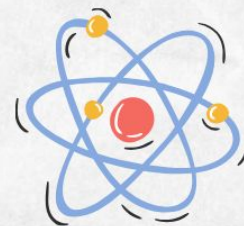
NSPCC Number Day



Across Primary, we celebrated the NSPCC Number Day. The children came to school all dressed up for a trip to Antarctica with Pipkin the penguin from our book for the day, How Big is a Million? Across the school we completed different activities relating to the numbers Pipkin comes across in the book. In year 1, the children were challenged to put together a 100 square using their knowledge of their tens and ones. They also as a year group made 100 '100' themed glasses! In year 4, pupils looked at the number 1000 and worked in groups to prove there were in fact 1000 snowflakes on the page - which there were!



SCIENCE



PRIMARY

In Primary, we have had a greater emphasis on embedding Working Scientifically skills (practical scientific skills) into lessons. 'Working Scientifically' involves the processes of science, including understanding the sorts of questions that are the province of science; the design of experiments; reasoning and arguing with scientific evidence; and analysing and interpreting data.

SECONDARY

Since returning from the Christmas break we have been busy in secondary science! Year 10 pupils completed their first GCSE mock exams and have started receiving their grades back. We want to congratulate them on the hard work they showed throughout this time and celebrate their successes! A special mention to Ben A, Arbri M, Richard G and Leo H for their outstanding achievement.

Year 11 have been working extremely hard and are now heading towards the finish line for completing their GCSE learning and starting more focused preparations for their exams.

Key Stage 3 have been learning more about plants, ecosystems, respiration and photosynthesis and have recently moved on to chemistry, where they have been observing the reactivity of metals during different reactions.

