

September 2025

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome back! I hope you all had an enjoyable summer break and are looking forward to the year ahead. It has been a really busy start to the new academic year. Our new cohort of Year 7 students have joined our Trafalgar School community, and we are really pleased with how quickly they have settled in. They have made an excellent first impression in their lessons and are already proving to be an asset to our school.

We have started the year with much to celebrate. This year we achieved our **best ever GCSE results**, including more Grade 9s than we ever have before. The progress our students made from their starting points was excellent and we are all very proud of them and wish them the best of luck in the next steps of the educational journey.

The importance of excellent attendance has been evidenced in our results very clearly: those students who attended 100% of the time achieved, on average, two grades higher than those who attended 90-94% of the school year.

Attendance continues to be a top priority for us this year. Mr Furnell has been appointed as Assistant Headteacher for Engagement and Attendance and will be working closely with students and families to ensure every child has excellent attendance. To support this, if we haven't seen your child(ren) for at least two days and no reason has been provided, we will be conducting home visits. These have already begun and are proving successful in ensuring students and their families have the right support to be in school every day.

We invested a significant amount of money improving the school site over the summer holidays. Our biggest project has been the complete redevelopment of the quad in the middle of the school to provide a quiet and calm area for students during unstructured times, with the addition of a new food service point and covered seating areas. With the school the largest it has ever been, this provides the much needed capacity for all students to quickly and efficiently access food at break and lunchtimes. This work will be completed by the end of September. We have also revamped our main reception area to provide more space for our growing administration team, as well as installing a new initial greeting area that further strengthens the safety of our site by controlling access to the main body of the building. I am aware of misinformation on some social media groups that we have employed security guards to patrol the school which I can assure you is not true. Please contact the school directly if you have any questions or concerns.

In July I made you aware that PCC informed me of their decision to cancel the build of our new Performing Arts block. Rising building costs and a recalculation of their predicted Year 7 numbers for September 2026 means they no longer need the 250 places we had agreed to. This came as a huge shock and I am disappointed that these facilities will no longer be available for our community. However, we are working hard with PCC on an alternative, smaller project to create a new dance studio, second food technology room and improve the existing gyms and changing areas to make better use of these spaces. This project will mean Trafalgar is able to provide additional secondary places for the cohorts starting secondary school in September 2026 and September 2027, which is when the demand for places will be greatest. This work will be carried out during this academic year and will affect the central area of the school.

Finally, I want to take this opportunity to make you aware that Miss Pearce will be absent from school from 1st October for three weeks because of planned surgery. I will be reducing my work across the Trust during this period to increase my presence at Trafalgar to ensure consistency during this time.

Our school calendar, containing all key dates, is available on our school website to view. However, some key dates for the first half of the autumn term are as follows:

- Thursday 18th September: Preparing for Year 11 Curriculum Evening
- Thursday 25th September: Year 7 Curriculum and Meet the Tutor Evening
- Thursday 2nd October: Activities Week 2026 Launch event (virtual)
- Thursday 2nd October: SEND Review and Live Well Event
- Thursday 9th October: Open Evening

We look forward to working together with you this year. As ever, if you have any questions or concerns please don't hesitate to contact your child's tutor.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Copeland". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'C'.

Claire Copeland
Executive Headteacher