

Parent Bulletin

24th April 2026

It has been a positive and busy week across the school, with students engaging enthusiastically in a range of activities and opportunities. We were particularly pleased to see a group of our Year 10 students visit Cambridge University last Friday. Despite an early start, students thoroughly enjoyed exploring Trinity College and hearing more about university life and future learning pathways. The visit was both inspiring and informative, and we are proud of the way our students represented the school.

A reminder that next Friday is an INSET Day for Years 7–10, and students in these year groups will not be required to attend school. Year 11 students will attend as normal for their Aim Higher Conference Day, designed to support them as they prepare for the start of their GCSE examinations. Further details about this day will be shared with families in the run-up next week.

With GCSE exams officially beginning in a week's time, we would also like to congratulate students who have already completed assessments. Many Art students have finished their exams, alongside Modern Foreign Languages speaking exams taking place this week. We have received lots of positive feedback about students' attitude, preparation, and approach — well done to all involved.

As the weather begins to improve, we would like to remind families that school uniform expectations remain in place, and students are still required to bring their blazers to school each day. Parents will be informed directly should the school activate its hot weather protocol. We would also like to thank parents and carers for their continued support with our no mobile phone use during the school day policy, which has been going very well and is helping to maintain a calm and focused learning environment.

Until next week,

Team Trafalgar



Key Dates

Friday 1st May - INSET Day & Year 11 Aim Higher Conference

Friday 1st May - GCSE Exam Season begins

Monday 4th May - May Bank Holiday (School closed)

Uniform & Equipment

Please ensure your children have the correct uniform & equipment with them each day. If you require any support, contact your child's form tutor. Please ensure students have a bag. You can find full details of what they need [here](https://www.trafalgarschool.org.uk).



@TrafalgarSch

trafalgarschool.org.uk

Year 10 Visit to Cambridge University

Last Friday, a group of our Year 10 students set off bright and early for an exciting visit to Cambridge University. Despite the early start and long coach journey, students were buzzing with anticipation at the opportunity to explore one of the world's most prestigious universities.

The group enjoyed an exclusive tour of Trinity College, taking in the breathtaking chapel and the remarkable library. Students were fascinated by the history surrounding them, with particular highlights including seeing Sir Isaac Newton's original handwriting and walking stick, an early Winnie the Pooh manuscript, and the impressive central courtyard.

In addition to the tour, students attended informative talks that offered insight into daily life at Cambridge, and explored future learning pathways leading to university degrees. The visit was both inspiring and informative, helping students to broaden their aspirations and gain a deeper understanding of higher education opportunities.



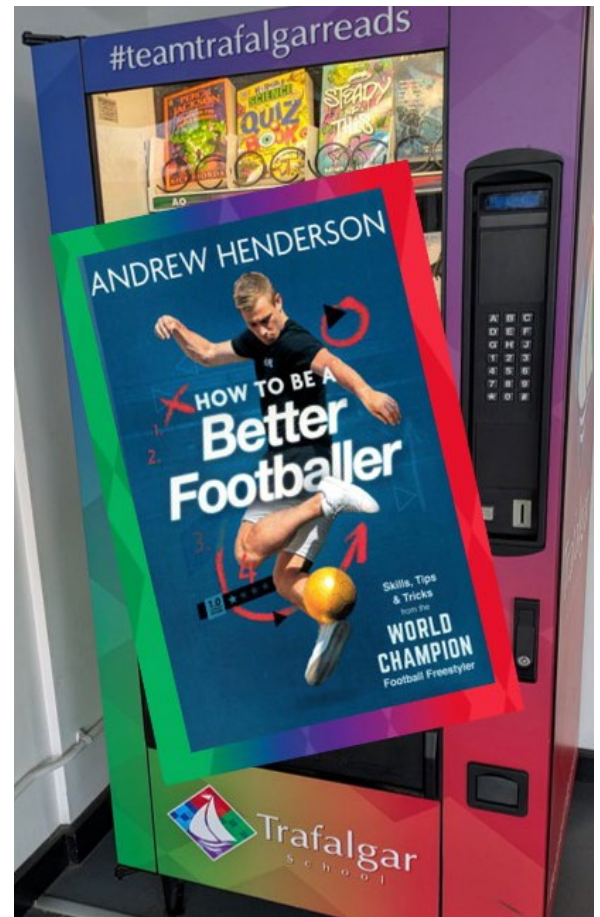
Reading Plus Winner

Congratulations Saicharan in Year 8 - our Reading Plus winner of the week!



Saicharan chose 'How to be a better footballer' by world champion football freestyler Andrew Henderson. We eagerly await your world cup debut!

By keeping up with your Reading Plus, you stand the chance to win one of our new books from the book vending machine! Which book would you choose?

Also, well done 7G3 for topping our reading leaderboard! Don't forget to help your class climb the table by keeping up with your English home learning.



Leaderboard	
Top Classes - Total Avg. Reading Lessons (SR)	
1. 7G3/En 25/26	80.5
2. 7G1/En 25/26	60.7
3. 8R1 25/26	58.5
4. 7R2/En 25/26	57.2
5. 7R1/En 25/26	51.1

BILLS FOOD DEBT

COST OF LIVING
SUPPORT & ADVICE

FOR ADVICE AND SUPPORT IF THINGS ARE TOUGH

We know times are still tough for people in Portsmouth, and many are impacted by high costs. There is lots of assistance to:

Check what financial support you're entitled to

Find out how you can keep your costs down

Get advice to help you get out of debt

Visit our online cost of living hub, a one-stop source of local advice and support, at portsmouth.gov.uk/costofliving or call **023 9284 1047**. The helpline is available from 9am-5pm on weekdays (closes 4:30pm Fridays).

NEED MONEY HELP?

A new crisis and resilience fund will launch April 2026, replacing the government's household support fund. It will provide preventative support to individuals and communities, as well as helping low-income households facing a financial crisis. Find information on our dedicated webpage: www.portsmouth.gov.uk/crf

MORE HELP ONLINE

Visit our online cost of living hub for information on how you can get support with food, bills, and essentials, saving money and dealing with debt, housing, health and wellbeing, and jobs and skills.

You can also find support for families, help for local businesses, and ways you can help your community.

portsmouth.gov.uk/costofliving

YOUR LOCAL HOUSING OFFICE

If you're a council tenant, your housing officer has access to specialist money advice to help make sure you're getting all the money you're entitled to:

portsmouth.gov.uk/contact/#housing

ADVICE PORTSMOUTH

You can get help with a range of money matters, including debt advice, benefit entitlements and applications, household bills and budgeting, consumer issues and employment rights:

adviceportsmouth.org.uk ☎ **023 9279 4340**

SWITCHED ON PORTSMOUTH

As a Portsmouth resident, you can access a number of ways to save energy, money and carbon:

switchedonportsmouth.co.uk ☎ **freephone 0800 260 5907**








@TrafalgarSch

trafalgarschool.org.uk

Writing Competition

The Portsmouth Multilingual Writing Competition, proudly run and sponsored by HSDC, celebrates linguistic diversity and creativity among young writers across the city.

The competition invites students to express their ideas and stories in more than one language, recognising the richness of multilingual identities and voices.

Full details on how to enter, deadlines, and eligibility can be found on the accompanying posters.



2026

PORTSMOUTH MULTILINGUAL WRITING COMPETITION

THOUGHTS OF FAMILY, THOUGHTS OF HOME

SPEAK TO YOUR TEACHER/SCHOOL TO TAKE PART
SUBMISSION DEADLINE:
22nd May 2026

CELEBRATING SHARING, BELONGING & THE LANGUAGES OF OUR CITY

RUN AND SPONSORED BY:

2026

PORTSMOUTH MULTILINGUAL WRITING COMPETITION

THOUGHTS OF FAMILY, THOUGHTS OF HOME

SPEAK TO YOUR TEACHER/SCHOOL TO TAKE PART
SUBMISSION DEADLINE:
22nd May 2026

YOU MAY SUBMIT:

- A poem (any form)
- A short story (maximum recommended length: 250 words in the original language - but can be far shorter)

YOUR ENTRY MUST INCLUDE:

- Original text written in a language other than English.
- English translation (can be supported by a teacher, family member, or bilingual assistant).
- Title in both languages (optional but encouraged).
- Author name, school, and year group.

YOUR WORK WILL BE JUDGED ON:

- Creativity and imagination
- Effective expression of the theme
- Quality of writing (in either/both languages)
- Cultural richness and authenticity

PRIZES

HSDC proudly sponsors the following prize book tokens:

- 1st Prize - **£50**
- 2nd Prizes x2 - **£25**
- 3rd Prizes x3 - **£15**
- Highly commended

CELEBRATING SHARING, BELONGING & THE LANGUAGES OF OUR CITY



@TrafalgarSch

trafalgarschool.org.uk



Waterstones are offering an opportunity for learners aged 16-18 to participate in a paid internship programme, working in one of our bookshops this summer. This forms part of our desire to develop stronger partnerships with local communities, regenerate high streets and create more opportunities for those from ethnically diverse or socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

About our internship

- Paid at our Bookseller rate of pay
- Flexible working pattern based on 135 hours/ 22.5 hours per week, over six-weeks
 - Limited spaces, with a maximum of two interns per shop
- Tailored six-week induction programme, supported by experienced booksellers
 - Publisher & Head Office team talks
 - Organised area trips to local bookshops

We are looking for someone who is open to learning in a fast-paced environment, comfortable in a customer-facing role and shares the same love for books as we do. Interns will have an opportunity to become acquainted with a breadth of responsibilities, including an introduction to what we love, bookselling!



Learn more about what it's like to be a bookseller by scanning the QR code.

How to apply

We don't have an application form although we do ask that each application is endorsed by the school/ college. Applications can be submitted to the email below and we encourage them to be as creative as you wish. Successful applications will be invited for an interview before a decision is made.

Your Waterstones contact is

Emma Prince, Bookshop Manager in Portsmouth

Emma.Prince@waterstones.com

Waterstones Internship Project Leads
Mary Kennedy – Learning & Development
Tanpreet Singh Bhachu – HR Business Partner



@TrafalgarSch

trafalgarschool.org.uk

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about VPNs

VPN use among UK teens is on the rise – with a noticeable uptick following the introduction of the Online Safety Act’s age-verification rules. A VPN – or virtual private network – can boost online privacy by hiding internet activity and masking the user’s location. But while this technology has legitimate uses, it can also allow children to bypass safety filters and access inappropriate content. This guide covers what parents and educators need to know about VPNs and how to keep young people safe.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

BYPASSING RESTRICTIONS

VPNs are commonly used by young people to get around blocks on school networks or parental controls. This could include accessing social media, gaming sites or adult content that would otherwise be filtered out.

ACCESSING INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

When a VPN is active, content filters can no longer see which sites a child is visiting. This means they could access inappropriate content without detection. This also makes it harder to intervene when a child is engaging in risky behaviour, as it may be difficult to detect it’s happening.

REDUCED TRANSPARENCY

VPNs may make parental monitoring software ineffective, stopping parents from monitoring their child’s activities, including their ability to identify potentially harmful or inappropriate content or online contact. This in turn may prevent parents from protecting their children from attempted sextortion or other online threats.

FALSE SENSE OF ANONYMITY

Children believing that VPNs make them ‘invisible’ online may seek to explore unsuitable internet content, including content which might otherwise be blocked. This may result in them seeking and accessing increasingly inappropriate – or even harmful – content.

INCREASED EXPOSURE TO MALWARE

Many free VPN apps are poorly regulated and may carry hidden malware. Young people installing unverified software could unknowingly open up their device (and home network) to spying, data theft, computer viruses, or even remote access by criminals.

RISK OF MALICIOUS VPN PROVIDERS

Although VPNs may increase privacy from network or service provider filtering and monitoring, this results in providing user and usage data to VPN providers. Some VPN providers may track user activity and sell that data to advertisers – or worse, malicious third parties. Not all VPNs are trustworthy.

Advice for Parents & Educators

EXPLAIN THE POSSIBLE BENEFITS OF VPNs

Explain how VPNs can help protect user data and therefore may be appropriate when using public or other unsecured Wi-Fi, or while dealing with sensitive corporate or personal data.

EXPLAIN THE RISKS OF VPNs

Discuss online risks, including harmful, disturbing, and criminal content. Inform children about criminal contact, such as sextortion, and how VPNs may restrict adults from monitoring children’s internet use and helping them avoid these risks.

FREE ISN’T FREE

Discuss the risk of ‘free’ VPNs and how they may sell or use people’s data, which adds privacy risks. Additionally, discuss the potential for added malware in VPN downloads, and how these compromise devices and apps, leading to potential fraud or theft.

CHECK DEVICES FOR VPNs

VPNs can be installed as both apps and browser extensions, so regularly check these on the devices used by the young people in your care. If they have been using VPNs, discuss it, listen to their reasoning, and inform them of the associated risks. In some cases, it may be appropriate to block VPN use via parental controls and other settings.

DISCUSS ONLINE BOUNDARIES

Reinforce the importance of keeping safe online and how filtering and monitoring helps keep young people safe – explain this to them rather than just ‘being strict’. Encourage an open conversation around what they’re accessing and why.

Meet Our Expert

This guide has been created in collaboration with Gary Henderson, director of IT at a large independent school in the UK, an ambassador for the Association of Network Managers in Education and the Vice Chair of the Independent Schools Council Digital Advisory Group.

