

Matthew Hagger, introduction on 1 July

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen and welcome to Oaklands School as we celebrate officially our 75th Anniversary year. I'm Matthew Hagger and I oversee the running of Oaklands, as well as its two sister schools Coopersale Hall in Epping and Normanhurst in North Chingford.

I've been coordinating the preparation for this event for around a year now and making sure that we trace and invite as many of our alumni as possible. It is lovely that after all of the background correspondence so many of you have come to help celebrate our Anniversary today despite the long journeys that many of you have travelled. Whether ex or current pupils, staff or friends of Oaklands School, thank you for taking the time to be here with us.

Now the idea today is to have a relaxed, informal afternoon with a trip down memory lane. The programme up until around 2.30pm allows for lunch prepared by our in-house catering team, guided tours by some of our pupils that will start in about ten minutes from the entrance to the field or simply wandering and re-familiarising yourself with the School. Do take in the two exhibitions that are packed with photographs and general memorabilia. These are in the Main Hall and the Studio, which is the new building just below the school.

We've labelled our ex-pupils and staff with names and dates so it should be a little easier to find previous acquaintances. Ex-pupils are green and ex-staff are yellow.

Do wander, tour, eat and enjoy the afternoon, and if we could meet back at the marquee at around 2.30pm then we would like to share some memories with you from across the decades before cutting, and hopefully eating, this wonderful cake.