



Aspire, Achieve, Respect



The Portsmouth
Academy



*Empowering young people
to meet the world*

Welcome

Dear Parents and Carers,

It is my great pleasure to introduce you to our school, The Portsmouth Academy. Nestled in the heart of Portsmouth, our school prides itself on embedding core values in our students that will lead them to becoming respectable members of the wider community.

I am proud to have joined the school on its journey in 2013 as the Principal (formerly Portsmouth Academy for Girls) and went on to support the leadership of the school for 10 years as Director of Education for Portsmouth, alongside our primary schools in the city.

I appreciate the time you have taken to consider The Portsmouth Academy for your child, and we would be delighted to demonstrate how we can provide them with a great education.

We are a Microsoft Showcase School and connect with schools all over the world. We were recognised at the Global EdTech Awards 23 as the 'Best School for Digital Transformation' in the state school category – beating schools in Australia and Argentina to get this recognition of the strength of our digital strategy. Your child will have a fully managed laptop device to access our curriculum both in school and at home.

Our school welcomes 1,250 students through its doors. We host a specialist resource provision called 'The Bridge' on site, on behalf of the local authority, which provides a bespoke curriculum for young people with cognition and learning needs from across the city.

At The Portsmouth Academy, our core values are Aspire, Achieve and Respect. We believe that through embedding these values in our young people, they can achieve anything! We are ambitious for our students to be ready

to 'meet the world' and we base our curriculum, and our teaching of behaviour and conduct, on this vision.

We are proud that our school is an Advanced Thinking School (accredited by the University of Exeter) and that we develop metacognition in our students as means of helping them to become their best selves. Through our thinking tools, they learn to manage themselves as learners, to problem solve, and to be good at making decisions. These strategies, skills and habits, set them up for employability in the 21st century and to address the complexity and challenge of life.

During your child's time with us, they will be supported and encouraged to be ready to 'meet the world'. We look forward to working with you on this exciting next phase of their educational journey.



Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'N. Sheppard'.

Natalie Sheppard
Principal

“The school works hard to provide a safe environment in which pupils can learn.” Ofsted

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What is a Thinking School?

The Thinking Schools Academy Trust is a family of schools that work together to “transform the life chances” of all our children and young people. We share a common mission to nurture successful young people who are confident and can think and act independently.

As part of the Thinking Schools Academy Trust, The Portsmouth Academy takes pride in the unique approach we take to education: we provide our students with the skills and tools they need to think in a variety of ways and become lifelong learners. We believe that the best way to transform the life chances of our young people and help them achieve their aspirations is by shaping their minds, attitudes and habits through a framework of cognitive education that enables them to become the masters of their own destiny.

Our pupils are equipped with a bank of Thinking Tools designed to prepare them for a range of scenarios, dilemmas and circumstances that they may face in life as part of modern society. The use of these Tools in our curriculum is supported by scientific and metacognitive research, and pupils are encouraged to apply their tools independently and use them to unlock new ideas. Our Thinking Tools include Thinking Maps, De Bono’s Thinking Hats and Art Costa’s Habits of Mind. These tools are used consistently across all areas of our curriculum and support our pupils tremendously in their learning and personal growth.

The concept of ‘Being your Best Self’ is also at the heart of our approach to learning at The Portsmouth Academy as part of our Thinking School ethos. Children are encouraged to strive to be and achieve their best and are given multiple opportunities to reflect on their learning and work on their personal development.





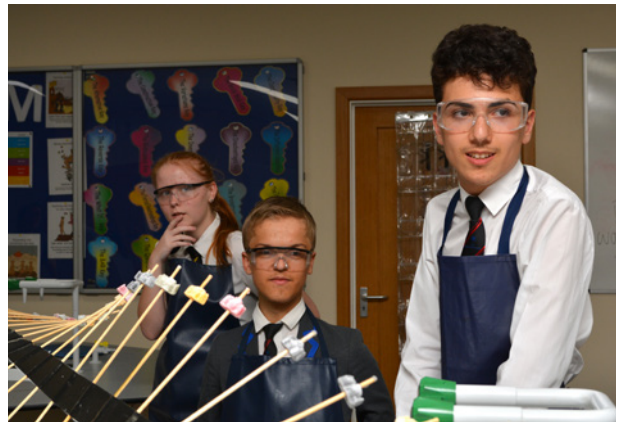


Our Values

- Aspire

- Achieve

- Respect



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Being Our Best Selves

It is important to our school culture that students aspire to be their best self in everything that they do. Our rewards system is built around students developing 'Habits of Excellence'. Derived from the work of Art Costa, these 16 habits empower our children to be creative and critical thinkers who are resilient and able to problem solve effectively – all key attributes which are required beyond the school gates.

Our school is organised into a year group structure which we believe best supports students in their personal development and allows us to provide timely interventions at critical points throughout a child's school journey. We place great value and importance on our students feeling a sense of belonging and therefore run a House System alongside our year group structure. The four houses allow our Year 7 students to join a 'family' of older students, with strong role models from the upper school leading each house.

Students are rewarded with 'Habit Points' which feed into the house competitions. Rewards for the winning house are given at the end of each term and have included ice skating trips and bowling. We have found this strategy effective in building a sense of pride, community and healthy competition.





APPEARANCE

FLAVOUR

- Colour Coded Chart
- Raw
 - Raw
 - Cook
 - Salt
 - Veg
 - Boil
 - Do



Shaping Our Success

The personal development of our students is vital for them to be able to reach their full potential. We know that successful people can both reflect on their strengths and know the areas which they wish to develop in order to be successful in the next stage of their journey.

Our Personal Development programme is planned to incorporate extensive careers education, healthy lifestyles and relationships, internet safety, and mental health and well-being. All students will have access to excellent careers advice and guidance, at least one visit to a university within their time at The Portsmouth Academy, the chance to meet with a range of employers and an invaluable period of work experience.

At The Portsmouth Academy, we also believe that students should be the drivers for change within the school. With this in mind, we have developed a strong culture of student leadership which all year groups have the opportunity to be involved with. The school's Student Council meet regularly with the Student Executive Team to discuss improvements they would like to see within the academy. They also run a half-termly 'Question Time' where a panel takes questions from the floor to debate.



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One:One

We believe that learning is not just something that happens within the classroom – it is something that transcends the uniform and the textbook and stays with students once they have left school.

From day one of Year 7, students at The Portsmouth Academy will all receive a one:one device so that they can benefit from a curriculum that has been developed with digital learning at its core.

Learning with a one:one device is about investing in the right equipment, using modern learning techniques, offering a blended approach, teaching vital skills and trusting students to work and learn as adults.

As a Thinking School, we are proud of our cognitive education, and we put an understanding of how the brain learns at the heart of all that we do. We know that the brain, and in particular memory, can make mistakes; our one:one device will reinforce your child's ability to develop their memory.

All of our one:one devices are state-of-the-art, come pre-installed with the Microsoft Office suite, internet security and are updated regularly to keep your child safe online. They can be used as a laptop or tablet with a stylus pen for drawing and writing notes, to use in class and at home. A device they can call their own, to do their work on, store and refer back to when revising and generally get a feel for, and understanding of, using digital platforms to learn and grow.

Plus, we will be using software designed to encourage instant feedback between students, parents and teachers. Taking the classic handwritten 'note' further, with feedback that can be an audio or video message.

Investing the time both in school and at home into the correct use of these devices is about future-proofing your child for careers that may not even exist yet, it is ensuring that they leave secondary education with the right level of digital skills, and it is preparing and empowering them with the tools, and the knowledge, to meet the modern needs of further education and employers.

We know, without a doubt, that a one:one device will have a transformative effect on your child's personal and academic success.

[#makinglearninglast](#)







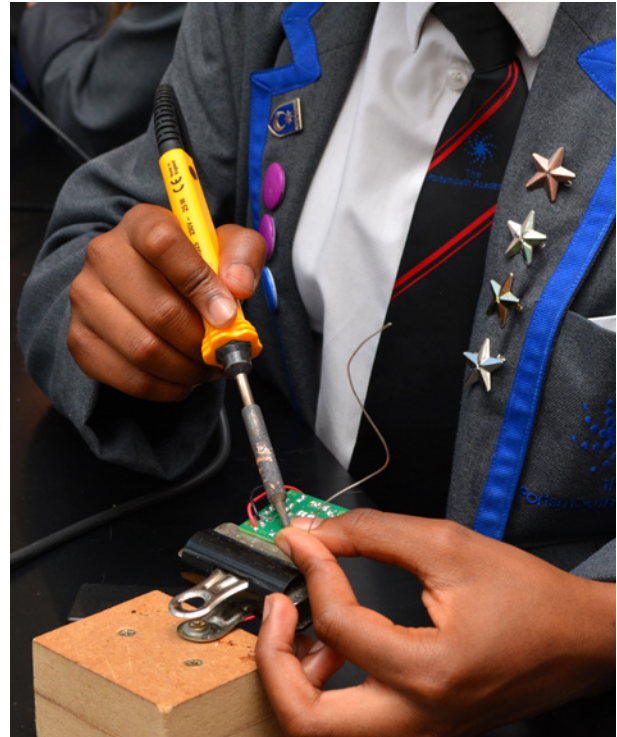
A Firm Foundation

At The Portsmouth Academy, students follow a broad and balanced curriculum, supporting them to develop long-term knowledge and skills which can be effectively deployed in new circumstances.

Our excellent teaching staff are deeply passionate about their subjects, and have created an engaging curriculum, developing a cultural understanding of the modern world, Britain, and Portsmouth at its heart. We place significant importance on the arts as we know that these subjects; support students' mental health and well-being, allow a creative outlet, and build vital knowledge and transferable skills for them.

The new building and facilities, which opened in September 2020, house a state-of-the-art music recording studio, a new Drama studio, humanities rooms, and an art department with panoramic views over the city to inspire our students. The development of our Design and Technology suite of rooms, which are well equipped with innovative technology, will lead to an exciting opportunity for our students to learn technical skills which will support them in the modern workplace.

It is our goal that students leave The Portsmouth Academy having had a full and rich experience of education and the opportunity to find their talents and excel in areas they enjoy.



“Teachers’ strong subject knowledge, effective planning, probing questioning and use of thinking time, in line with school policy, are identifying misconceptions and deepening students’ knowledge and understanding.”

Ofsted

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Enriching Experiences

We offer a vast array of trips and visits each year to destinations ranging from the Historic Dockyard – where students get to experience Portsmouth past and present - to further afield excursions such as; Wales, Germany, Belgium and France. The focus of these visits are vast and include kayaking and mountain climbing, practising a foreign language or to reflect on conflicts such as WW1.

In school, students benefit from a diverse range of events such as engineering workshops, author visits and first aid training. Students are offered free music lessons in a variety of instruments or singing, taught by qualified teachers in either individual or paired lessons. They are encouraged to take grading exams and are given many chances to perform in concerts, including our annual Carol Service in St Mary's Church and our Summer Showcase.

Alongside this, we are always proud to present our annual production, which brings our performing arts teams together to showcase the creative talents within the academy.

Our Physical Education department also offer a range of clubs which support students' health and well-being, whilst also developing their sense of competition and pride in representing the school and feeling part of a team.









The Portsmouth
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ACADEMY TRUST