

# YEAR 7

# Parents Welcome Booklet

# 2023



The Portsmouth  
Academy

Aspire - Achieve - Respect

#WeAreTSAT



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# Welcome



Dear Parents and Carers,

It is my great pleasure to welcome 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 choose the right school for your child, and I am of course delighted that you feel we can provide them with a great education.

We are a Microsoft Showcase School and connect with schools all over the world. Recently, at the Global EdTech Awards 23, we were given the award for '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.

This year the school will welcome 1,250 students through our 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. I look forward to meeting and working with you all.

Yours sincerely,

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

Natalie Sheppard  
Principal

## Term Dates 2023/2024

Event	Dates
Autumn Term Begins for Year 7	Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> September
Inset Day (no school for students)	Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> October
Half-Term	Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> October – Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> October
Autumn Term Ends	Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> December
Christmas Holidays	Monday 18 <sup>th</sup> December – Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> January
Spring Term Begins	Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> January
Half-Term	Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> February – Friday 16 <sup>th</sup> February
Spring Term Ends	Thursday 28 <sup>th</sup> March
Easter Holidays	Friday 29 <sup>th</sup> March - Friday 12 <sup>th</sup> April
Summer Term Begins	Monday 15 <sup>th</sup> April
Bank Holiday	Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> May
Half-Term	Monday 27 <sup>th</sup> May – Friday 31 <sup>st</sup> May
Summer Term Ends	Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> July

Please note that if you think your child would benefit from attending breakfast club, please contact Miss Howard on the following email [emilie.howard@tpa.tsat.uk](mailto:emilie.howard@tpa.tsat.uk)



Making Learning Last

The Portsmouth Academy operates a hybrid model of learning and uses technology to facilitate and accelerate learning. We are delighted to have successfully launched our one:one device scheme two years ago, meaning each student has access to a device.

We are incredibly proud that 96% of our students said they have confidence when using the device and that 92% of our students believe the devices have improved their learning. In addition to aforementioned levels of engagement and satisfaction with our one:one Device Programme, 92% of our students recognise 'that using the devices at school will prepare them for life beyond secondary school'

It is now time to ensure our new Year 7s are fully equipped for their KS3 journey. During your child's first week at school they will receive their device and will receive digital training so they can make the best use of their device.

**We are currently reviewing the device our students use and reviewing our one:one model. More information will be shared with parents on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> July at our Parents Information Evening. We will also be happy to answer your questions, and show you the device.**

In the meantime, please visit our webpage to hear key people talking about why we have gone One:One and to find more answers to questions you may have.

[www.theportsmouthacademy.org.uk/learn-with-us/one-one-device-scheme/](http://www.theportsmouthacademy.org.uk/learn-with-us/one-one-device-scheme/)



“We have software that can help during lessons”

Tawhid (Year 8)

96%

of students have confidence using their device

84%

of students prefer using the device over traditional methods of teaching

2

year groups

502

One:One Devices

+13 months

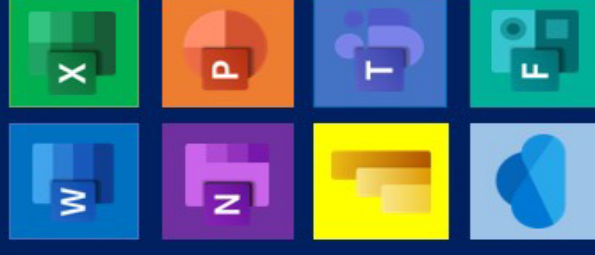
average reading progress score in Year 7

+10 months

average reading progress score in Year 8

92%

of students believe the devices have improved their learning



“

This will open you to more opportunities in life because life beyond secondary is based around technology

”

Sabriha (Year 7)

The Portsmouth Academy

# One:One Device Programme 2023

# Attendance and Behaviour Expectations

## Our Expectations of Your Child

We consider that secondary education should prepare young people to become learners for life. Since learning is the one capacity that will never go out of date, equipping our students to be excellent learners will set them up for success in both further and higher education, and the world of work.

The Portsmouth Academy is committed to ensuring all children achieve their full academic potential and believe that good attendance means good learning. Research has evidenced the positive impact that regular attendance has on a child reaching their academic potential and the benefits this brings to emotional and social well-being. The school and Local Authority's attendance target for children of statutory school age is 96%.

We have very high expectations in relation to behaviour, learning and progress. Our Academy is a place of learning and so we make sure that it is safe, comfortable and inspiring and we expect our students to respect it and to put in the effort and hard work necessary for success.

## Reporting Your Child's Absence

If your child is absent, you must:

- Contact The Portsmouth Academy before 8.30am on every day of absence
- Via the ClassCharts App or
- Telephone 0333 3602200 and choose the option to go through to the attendance team
- Please be aware that we will contact you if your child is absent and no reason has been given.





## KS3 and KS4 Breaktimes

Breaktimes at The Portsmouth Academy are split into Key Stages. Key Stage 3 students (Years 7 – 9) have their morning break, and lunch break, separately from KS4 (Years 10 – 11). This ensures that all students receive two break times of 30 minutes each and allows them enough time eat/purchase food.

KS3 (Year 7, 8 & 9)	
8:30 - 9:00	<b>Tutor Time</b>
9:00-10:00	<b>Period 1</b>
10:00-10:30	Break 1A
10:30-11:30	<b>Period 2</b>
11:30-12:30	<b>Period 3</b>
12:30-13:00	Break 2A
13:00-14:00	<b>Period 4</b>
14:00-15:00	<b>Period 5</b>

KS4 (Year 10 & 11)	
8:30- 9:00	<b>Tutor Time</b>
9:00-10:00	<b>Period 1</b>
10:00-11:00	<b>Period 2</b>
11:00-11:30	Break 1B
11:30-12:30	<b>Period 3</b>
12:30-13:30	<b>Period 4</b>
13:30-14:00	Break 2B
14:00-15:00	<b>Period 5</b>

# Uniform Expectations

At The Portsmouth Academy, we use two uniform providers. Locally, we work with Penelope Ann Schoolwear on Tangier Road in Baffins, as well as Simmonds which is an online only school uniform supplier.

**[www.simmonds-ltd.com/the-portsmouth-academy](http://www.simmonds-ltd.com/the-portsmouth-academy)**  
**[www.pa-schoolwear.co.uk](http://www.pa-schoolwear.co.uk)**

## Blazer

This is compulsory, and available to purchase from Penelope Ann and Simmonds.

## Tie

The tie is compulsory and will come with a logo in the correct house colour that your child will become a member of. Your child will discover their house and house colour during their transition days.

## Shirt

This should be a white long or short sleeved shirt.

## Jumper

We do not have a school branded jumper so please purchase a charcoal grey V necked jumper. It must not have a logo on it.

## Trousers

These must be plain black straight leg trousers.

## Skirt

This must be a plain black box pleated skirt, which is no shorter than knee length.

## Socks and Tights

These must be plain white or black socks, and plain tan or black tights for girls. Sports logos, frills or additional patterns is not permitted.

## Headbands and Scarves

These should be plain black.

## Shoes

These must be black enclosed shoes with low heels. We allow full black leather trainers, with no coloured logos and must have black soles. For health and safety reasons students must wear shoes which cover the whole foot. Please see examples below:

### Boys School Shoes



### Girls School Shoes



The following examples are **not** appropriate. These include, but are not exclusive to; boots, canvas shoes, pumps, or trainers which are not fully blacked out leather trainers.



## PE Kit Expectations

### Black PE polo shirt

This is compulsory, and available to purchase from Penelope Ann and Simmonds.

### Black PE shorts

This is compulsory, and available to purchase from Penelope Ann and Simmonds.

### Unisex long sleeve sports top

This is compulsory, and available to purchase from Penelope Ann and Simmonds.

### Additional Items

Plain black tracksuit trousers

Shin pads

Black rugby socks

Studded boots for rugby

Trainers

Gum shield

Plain black leggings (for PE only) must be of good quality and still cover the body when stretched.

A black  $\frac{3}{4}$  zip midlayer (for PE only) must be able to fit over PE tops and have minimal logos.

## Daily Equipment Requirement

Students should have the following items every day.

- one:one device (fully charged)
- Wired Headphones (not wireless headphones) with an Aux connection
- Black or blue pens (at least 2)
- Red pen
- Pencil
- Ruler
- Eraser
- Pencil sharpener
- Scientific calculator
- Reading book

# Mobile Phone & Accessories Policy

The purpose of this policy is to prevent unacceptable use of mobile devices\*. The policy applies to all students whilst they are on the school site, which includes:

- Before and after school
- The whole school day
- Break and lunchtime
- Transition between lessons
- Lessons
- Detentions

Mobile telephones / mobile wristwatch / electronic equipment The Academy recommends that students do not bring mobile telephones, smart watches, or electronic equipment to the Academy. If such items are brought to the Academy, students do this at their own risk. The Academy will not waste valuable time and resources investigating lost or stolen equipment. Mobile telephones or other electronic devices, including headphones and speakers should be switched off and placed in a secure bag.

## The Rules:

1. Parents / carers and students should understand that bringing mobile devices\* on site is entirely at their own risk as we accept no responsibility for loss, theft, or damage of any mobile devices / electronic equipment.
2. Mobile devices / electronic equipment that are brought in should be stored, turned off (not on silent) and out of sight in a secure bag.
3. Any student using their device (except where outlined in point 6) will have their mobile / electronic device (smart watch included) confiscated.
4. A refusal to hand over mobile phone device / electronic equipment (smart watch included) when requested will be treated as a disciplinary matter.
5. As part of the Internet Acceptable usage policy and E – Safety Policy, we reserve the right to confiscate and search devices where there is a reasonable suspicion that it may contain undesirable materials including those that promote pornography, violence or bullying. Any searches will be conducted by authorised staff only. Any use of the practice of screening, searching or confiscation will be done in line with the Department for Education guidance for Screening, searching and confiscation 2022. Searching, Screening and Confiscation ([publishing.service.gov.uk](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)).
6. Students may be permitted, by the explicit instruction of their teacher, to use their mobile device as a “learning tool” for example to take photographs of their work for a portfolio, during a lesson or tutor time.
7. Communication between parents and pupils during the learning day should only occur through the official communication channels. (Please do not contact your child directly or encourage them to contact you from their devices).
8. Under no circumstances should mobile phones / electronic devices (smart watch included) should be taken into any external examinations.

## Mobile Phone Sanction:

**If we see it, students will lose it.**

Mobile phones will be confiscated, locked in the school office, and returned to the student at the end of the school day in the main hall. A member of staff will place the phone in an envelope with the child’s name and tutor group labelled. As for repeat offenders, they will be required to hand their mobile phone to reception on arrival and collected by child at the end of the day.







# Communicating with Parents or Carers

The Portsmouth Academy actively seeks your support as parents or carers in the firm belief that the education of your child is a three-way process involving the staff, students, parents or carers. We encourage all parents and carers to participate in this process and to communicate directly and promptly with staff on matters which concern them.

## Rewards

The effective functioning of the Academy can only be achieved by developing a culture of co-operation and consideration. The 'Aspire, Achieve and Respect' ethos is created through an approach of combining high expectations with encouragement, praise and motivation; this combination is essential in order that students and staff can work together in a happy, successful and positive environment.

Every opportunity is therefore taken to reward both students' achievement, participation and their good behaviour. One of the ways you will be able to see this as a parent is through your child's accumulation of habit points. If you register to ClassCharts, you will be able to track the number of habit points they gain. Students receive negative habit points for behaviour that doesn't meet our expectations.

## Clubs/Homework Help

Learning does not stop at 3pm at The Portsmouth Academy. Your child will be given the opportunity to attend a range of activities beyond the school day across a range of subject areas. Details of these clubs and activities will be published at the start of the term. The library is also open after school until 4pm where staff are available to help your child with their homework. We would encourage you to take advantage of this and use ClassCharts to communicate with their tutor, if they are struggling with their home learning at all.

## Thinking Skills

As a member of the Thinking Schools Academy Trust, here at The Portsmouth Academy we encourage students to develop their own thinking and achieve their full potential. We aim to develop their skills of enquiry, become independent learners and aspire to improve their own academic performance. To do this, we believe it is important to enable students to learn HOW to think.

We nurture Habits of Excellence such as striving for accuracy; and listening with empathy and understanding. The rest are listed below. We use Thinking Tools such as De Bono's 6 Hat Thinking which enables students to learn the facts; examine the advantages and disadvantages of a given idea; understand emotions; develop creativity; and understand the whole process of thinking.

Across the curriculum, we use a variety of Thinking Maps to develop metacognition and enable students to progress and develop as individual thinkers. During the induction process, we will assess your child's thinking skills so that we can then offer them a workshop to either introduce the thinking tools or stretch and challenge those children who may already have experience of being in a Thinking School.

# Keeping in Touch

## Information Letters

The majority of letters are emailed to the first priority contact parent of students. Please ensure that the school has your most up to date email address on file. If you wish to receive letters from the school but you are not listed as your child's first priority contact, please contact the school. Other letters may be either given to students via their tutor or, in the case of more important letters, posted home. Copies of whole school letters are posted on the school website.

## Social Media

Stay connected with The Portsmouth Academy on social media. The Academy is active on Facebook and regular updates about what is happening in school are posted on Facebook during term time. The Facebook page is public and can be viewed without creating an account.

Visit: [www.facebook.com/ThePortsmouthAcademyTSAT](https://www.facebook.com/ThePortsmouthAcademyTSAT)

You can also connect with us on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/tpaPortsmouth>

## Email

Should you need to contact a member of staff their email address can be found on our website: [www.theportsmouthacademy.org.uk/our-school/our-staff/](http://www.theportsmouthacademy.org.uk/our-school/our-staff/). You are also able to contact members of staff through ClassCharts.

If you are unsure of an email address, or would like some support using ClassCharts, please phone reception or email [info@theportsmouthacademy.org.uk](mailto:info@theportsmouthacademy.org.uk)

Parents can contact staff at any time, but please remember that most staff have a teaching commitment and may not be available to speak with you during teaching hours. It is strongly advised that you telephone reception in advance to make an appointment if you wish to speak with a particular member of staff, on **03333 602200**.

### School Website

You will find lots of information about the Academy on our website, including the school calendar and information about forthcoming events. The section for parents contains key information you will need to know.

[www.theportsmouthacademy.org.uk/our-school/support-and-guidance/](http://www.theportsmouthacademy.org.uk/our-school/support-and-guidance/)



### Text

We use text messages to contact our parents for a variety of reasons, including notification of student absence and to communicate important messages. It is imperative that we have your correct mobile phone number so please ensure you inform the school of any changes.

### Family Learning

We firmly believe that parental support in a student's learning is fundamental to success. Therefore, we aim to provide opportunities for parents and children to work and learn together throughout the year, including holding Parents' Evenings and sending home Progress Reports. Parents will be notified of forthcoming events.

### My Ed Parent App

We use the My Ed app to communicate with parents about attendance and to allow easy access to the Plus Pay payment system. The app is free to download and allows parents to message the school for free. Once your child is on roll with us, you will be able to see your child's attendance, be kept up to date with their achievements, key dates, information, and latest news from The Portsmouth Academy. This is only available to parents/carers registered as first contact based on your mobile phone number. It will not work if the details we have on our system are not up to date. Please allow 24 hours after downloading the app for it to sync with the school's systems. After this period, you can add your child to the app. If you would like support in using this app, please contact the main school switchboard and select the option around 'support with plus pay and My Ed'

### Class Charts Parent App

Class Charts is an online system which teachers use to track achievement and behaviour throughout the school day. One of the key benefits of using Class Charts is that we are able to securely share your child(s) achievements with you and to keep you up to date in real-time. This is incredibly powerful as this will allow us to work more closely together to both celebrate successes and to also intervene quickly to support your child.

The platform has an online version and an app that once you have logged in you will be able to download onto your mobile device. Class Charts will then update you with;

- Achievement point awarded
- Behaviour points awarded
- When a detention has been issued

ClassCharts also has the capacity to allow teachers to contact you directly through the platform and for you to respond directly to that specific teacher. To access Class charts, you will need a parent code which will be given to you once your child has started with us.





# Lunchtime Arrangements

All students are expected to stay on site at lunchtimes. A cafeteria system operates daily during term time at morning break and lunchtimes. There is a choice on the menu, with daily specials, and students are encouraged to follow a balanced diet. Salads are always available as well as sandwiches and light snacks.

Students can bring a packed lunch if they prefer.

## School Canteen and Lunch Payments

The school canteen uses a cashless payment system and meals are paid for by students using their fingerprint or their ID card. This system allows for an efficient meal service and for purchases to be accurately linked to students.

Payments for school meals can be made through PlusPay. You will be sent an email to register your account in September. Payments can be made with debit card, major credit cards or PayPal. Payments can also be made with PayPoint, but these payments can take over 48 hours to process before your child's credit comes through.

For some students who choose to have school lunches, it may be the first time they have had the responsibility of making their own meal choices. Some common issues which arise are students spending too much money or making unbalanced meal choices. To prevent these issues, please:

- Discuss with your child what a balanced meal is.
- Agree with your child when they can make purchases from the canteen, for example at lunchtime only.
- Agree on a set amount of money that your child should spend each day.
- Provide your child with a drink and/or small snack for break time while they adjust to later lunch times.
- Encourage them to ask for the price of items from canteen staff to track their spending.



## Free School Meals

Free school meals are available for those who are entitled to them. An application form can be obtained from the Civic Offices, Guildhall Square, Portsmouth and should be returned to the Entitlement Officer at the Civic Offices.

If your child attended school in Portsmouth in Year 6, their free school meal entitlement should continue without interruption for Year 7, unless your circumstances have changed. If your child attended school outside Portsmouth and you have only recently applied for FSM, this may take several weeks for the Council to process your application. Please ensure that your child's lunch account is topped up with credit if they use the canteen or that they bring a packed lunch to school until their entitlement comes through.

Students entitled to Free School Meals have £2.80 paid into their accounts each day. Any unspent FSM allowance is removed from the student's account at the end of the day.

This money may be spent at any point during the Canteen's operating times. Students on FSM have 2 concurrent balances on their accounts, a free school meal balance and a cash balance. If a student spends more than their FSM allowance per day, they will accrue a negative cash balance. Parents may choose to top up a student's cash balance through PlusPay to cover any daily overspend of the £2.80 allowance. If a student accrues a large debt, the Canteen staff have the discretion to limit their daily purchases to £2.80.

# Class of 2028



Dear New Year 7 Parents,

## Welcome to The Portsmouth Academy!

I am delighted to let you know that I will be your child's Head of Year in September and I cannot wait for them to officially join us.

I am an experienced Head of Year and am currently in the process of saying goodbye to our Year 11s, who I started with in 2018. I feel privileged to have witnessed the journey that this group of students have made from their Year 6 transition day all the way through to their Prom. In that time, I have developed some extremely strong relationships with both students and their parents / carers. I believe these relationships have enabled the children to be as successful at school as possible and this is an aspect of the role that I am extremely passionate about. Furthermore, I have high expectations of all of the young people in my care and believe that this is fundamental in supporting their progress both at TPA, and in the wider world when they leave us.

To help support us in your child's education, you will find a lot of very helpful information already on our website, please take the time to look at the school policies.

[www.theportsmouthacademy.org.uk/policies/](http://www.theportsmouthacademy.org.uk/policies/)

When your child begins the continuation of their educational journey with us in September, I am keen that they embrace the whole culture of the school and try to get involved with as many activities as possible. This will begin on their transition days with us, where they will be placed in their tutor groups and houses. They will spend a lot of time in their tutor groups ensuring they can build those positive and respectful relationships which will help support them through secondary school. The house system will allow your child to feel part of a team and will add that competitive nature to school competitions. The house they are placed in will determine what coloured tie they will wear, and your child will be told this on the transition days.

I appreciate that the transition to secondary school can be an anxious time, but we have a wonderful team at TPA who can't wait to work with you and your child and help prepare them for life after school. There will be an opportunity for you to meet your child's tutor in September and their e-mail address will be shared with you; as you can appreciate, the tutor will play an instrumental role in your child's life at TPA so this will be the main point of contact between us and you.

I hope that you have found this booklet useful but if there are any other questions you have, please do not hesitate to contact either myself or Miss Meale (transition coordinator) and we will endeavour to help you.

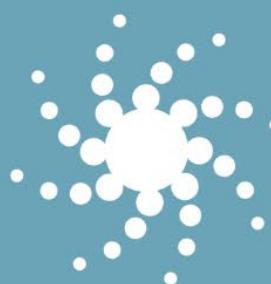
I know that this is a busy time for you, so here is an easy checklist of the things to do and key dates to know ahead of starting at The Portsmouth Academy:

- Order branded uniform from Simmonds or Penelope Ann, ensuring you know the house colour for the tie.
- Purchase school equipment ready for the student's first day.
- Friday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2023 – School closes for the Summer.
- Monday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2023 – First day of school for Year 7.

I look forward to meeting and working with you to support your child in achieving their very best.

Kind regards,

Mr Parnell  
Head of Year



The Portsmouth Academy

Aspire - Achieve - Respect