

# Transforming Life Chances



**Prospectus**  
**2024 - 2025**



The Portsmouth  
Academy



# Welcome to The Portsmouth Academy

**Dear Parents and Carers,**

I am delighted to introduce The Portsmouth Academy. We are a school at the heart of Portsmouth, and we take pride in our core values of Aspire, Achieve and Respect. Our values support our students to become respected members of the wider community.

The Portsmouth Academy is a Microsoft Showcase School, which provides us with exceptional opportunities to connect with schools all over the world. This has huge benefits for every pupil's learning experience; we have access to thought-provoking resources and a network of educators who collaborate to provide the best possible education, driven by our digital One:One laptop device scheme. If your child attends this school, they will have a fully managed laptop device to access our curriculum, both in school and at home.

Each year, the school welcomes 1,250 students across five-year groups through its doors. Additionally, on behalf of the local authority, we host a thriving specialist resource provision called 'The Bridge' on site, which provides a bespoke curriculum for young people with specific cognition and learning needs.

The Portsmouth Academy is proud to work alongside the University of Exeter to implement a cognitive approach to education. This provides our students with the Thinking Tools they need to develop their learning, to problem-solve, and to support effective decision making. These strategies, skills and habits prepare them for employability in the 21st century and ensure they can deal with the complexities and challenges of life.

Our commitment is to support and encourage your child to be ready to thrive beyond The Portsmouth Academy. I look forward to welcoming you to our school.

Yours sincerely,

**Michelle Smith**  
**Executive Principal**  
**& Regional Director (South)**





## Learning & Development

**Everyone at The Portsmouth Academy places great emphasis on our values of Aspire, Achieve and Respect. These core values are well embedded across our curriculum to support children in their steps to success.**

**Aspire** - Our intention is that our curriculum ignites curiosity in our students, so that they engage with life-long learning and see themselves as both local and global citizens. We have high aspirations for our students, and through a broad range of cultural enrichment opportunities, our one-to-one digital curriculum and strong careers provision, we nurture ambition in our students. Our curriculum provides our students with the clearly sequenced steps they need to take to achieve their aspirational goals and understand the potential they have to implement change.

**Achieve** - The curriculum we offer to all students is broad, balanced and inclusive. It is coherently sequenced to support all learners, regardless of their starting points. Building knowledge is key to our curriculum planning, and the mastery of skills enables students to experience success through learning. Our metacognitive approach, use of Thinking Tools, and self-reflection allows us to challenge our students with ambitious and varied content. All subject areas contribute to the development of literacy, oracy and numeracy, to emphasise the value of these skills in preparing students to meet the world.

**Respect** - Our curriculum supports students to reflect on, and develop, their best selves, learning to recognise and appreciate the importance of respect, tolerance and community. Students will have a strong sense of how their actions contribute to the wellbeing of others and the important role they play in building our school culture, and our wider community. Throughout their learning journey, we teach students core values, routines and resilient habits of mind so that they are best prepared for the demands of adult life.

### Living our value of Respect:

The Portsmouth Academy is proud to be a Rights Respecting (Silver) School.

The Portsmouth Academy has a national accreditation to acknowledge its commitment to embedding children's rights in its policy, practice and ethos.

The school received the Rights Respecting School Silver accolade in 2024, which is presented by UNICEF UK when a school demonstrates an awareness for putting children's rights at the heart of school life.

In order to achieve the 'Silver: Rights Aware' status, the academy was assessed by one of UNICEF's advisors who looks at the whole school's rights respecting work. We are now working towards the Gold award.



# Supporting success with high expectations

**At The Portsmouth Academy, our whole school community follows eight expectations to ensure everyone has a positive experience. We call this The TPA Way:**

- I come to school with the correct equipment I need so that learning time is not wasted.
- I wear the school uniform correctly because I am proud to be part of TPA.
- I follow the one-way system so that corridors are safe for everyone.
- I am always in the right place, at the right time, doing the right thing.
- I listen to my teachers so that the culture of the classroom is good for everyone.
- I go to break with the rest of the key stage and keep the school clean and tidy.
- If I disagree, I do it in the right place, at the right time, in the right tone of voice.
- I always try to be my best self when it comes to learning and getting on with everyone.

By following The TPA Way, our whole school community works together to ensure our learning environment is welcoming, calm, and a comfortable space to develop.

We expect our students to attend school every day and to arrive at 8.20 for a prompt start at 8.30. Students will be welcomed into school by members of the Senior Team, Head of Year and their form tutor.

By choosing to come to our school, students must follow the TPA Way. These rules apply at all times, including to and from school, on all visits and on all occasions where the school is being represented.



**I come to school with the correct equipment** I need so that learning time is not wasted.



**I wear the school uniform correctly** because I am proud to be part of TPA.



**I follow the one-way system** so that corridors are safe for everyone.



**I am always in the right place, at the right time, doing the right thing.**



**I listen to my teachers** so that the culture of the classroom is good for everyone.



**I go to break with the rest of key stage and keep the school clean and tidy.**



**If I disagree, I do it in the right place, at the right time, in the right tone of voice.**



**I always try to be my best self** when it comes to learning and getting on with everyone.





## Making learning last

**At The Portsmouth Academy we are committed to empowering young people and preparing them for their future.**

Our digital strategy, hybrid learning model and our One:One Device Scheme enable our students to access curricula, accelerate learning and develop future-ready skills.

As a Microsoft Showcase School since 2023 the school have been recognised for its progressive use of Microsoft's educational software and tools for learning. Whilst we are proud of this accolade, it is even more pleasing to see students habitually using their device to access, support and extend their own learning.

The Portsmouth Academy support staff and students with training upon induction into the schools, and through ongoing professional development or our various curricula. 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 (student survey, 2023).

Our hybrid model of learning encourages staff and students to use the device purposefully and not just as a direct substitute for traditional means of learning.

Our One:One Device Scheme is an investment in the future of education, and the future of our learners. We believe this scheme to be incredibly important for our learners, not only supporting equality and equity of opportunity but also future-proofing our young people 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.

The One:One device comes pre-installed with the Microsoft Office suite, internet security and is updated regularly to keep our learners safe online. This is a device for learning and is of upmost importance that our students are safe online, therefore, students are unable to download applications and software and unable to access various websites/searches due to our filtering and monitoring systems.

Students are loaned a device upon joining the school. Students are expected to be respectful towards, and responsible for the device at all times. Students are required to bring their device to school fully-charged each day and to be prepared and ready to learn.



# A school where everyone is welcome

**We believe in empowering young minds to meet the world head-on.**

At the heart of our mission lies the commitment to nurturing not only academic excellence but igniting curiosity in our students so that they become both local and global citizens.

We support our students to learn new skills, be kind and respectful, and to be their best self. It's a journey where our pupils can discover how amazing and successful they can be.

We achieve this through a varied schedule of extra-curricular activities, our one-to-one digital curriculum, student voice, engagement with trust-wide We Are One events, careers and aspirations opportunities.

Our belief is that academic success alone is not enough to thrive in today's ever-changing world. That's why we place a strong emphasis on personal development alongside academic opportunities. We believe that nurturing well-rounded individuals equipped with essential life skills is paramount to young people to meet the world.

We are proud to have a specialist centre for children with complex Cognition and Learning difficulties at The Portsmouth Academy, which is called The Bridge.

This purpose-built part of school opened in September 2022 and has gone from strength to strength as a support to families with children who require extra specialist support.

The Inclusion Centre is a resourced provision for students who have an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) or are currently undergoing assessment and are awarded placement by the Inclusion Support Panel (ISP), which is run by Portsmouth City Council's Special Education Needs (SEN) Team.

The students will work towards being able to integrate into mainstream education for some learning, with support from the team to meet their specific needs.

We have our own alternative provision called the ARCH which supports students who are finding the transition to secondary school overwhelming. This is a much smaller provision operating a 12-week programme with the aim of integrating students back into mainstream education. We will contact parents/carers if we feel this would be an appropriate provision for your child.



# Our use of Thinking Tools as a Thinking School

**The Thinking Schools Academy Trust, of which The Portsmouth Academy is a proud member, is a family of schools that work together to “Transform Life Chances” of all its pupils.**

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 these 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 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 taught to strive to be and achieve their best and are always encouraged to reflect on their learning both in and out of the classroom.





## Being our best selves

**Our school culture ensures 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 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.

We place great value and importance on our students feeling a sense of belonging, 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. Each student belongs to a tutor group where we continue to foster the sense of 'family'.

Students are rewarded with 'Habit Points' which feed into Competitions and leaderboards. Rewards for the winning groups are given at the end of each term. We have found this strategy effective in building a sense of pride, community and healthy competition.

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 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, whilst allowing a creative outlet and building vital knowledge and transferable skills.

The Aspire building, which opened in September 2020, houses a state-of-the-art music recording studio, a drama studio, humanities rooms, and an art department with panoramic views over the city.

The development of our Design and Technology suite of rooms, which are well equipped with innovative technology, has led 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.





## Enriching Experiences

Each year, we offer a wide range of exciting trips and visits for our students.

These range from local spots like the Historic Dockyard in Portsmouth, where students can explore the city's rich history, to international destinations such as Wales, Germany, Belgium, and France.

Our trips are designed to be both fun and educational. Some trips include outdoor activities such as kayaking and mountain climbing, which help students build confidence in their abilities.

Other trips focus on learning experiences, like practicing a new language in an immersive environment or studying significant historical events, such as World War I.

Each opportunity is carefully planned to ensure students have an enjoyable experience while gaining valuable knowledge.

Back at school, students can participate in a variety of activities and events that complement their learning. We offer engineering workshops, author visits, and first aid training, STEM workshops as well as many more.

Additionally, students have the opportunity to take free music lessons in different instruments or vocal training.

Our music teachers provide both individual and small group lessons. Students are encouraged to take music exams and have numerous chances to perform, including at our annual Carol Service held at St Mary's Church and our Summer Showcase.

We also showcase the talent of our students through performances and show. These events bring together our performing arts teams, providing a platform for students to showcase their creative abilities and celebrate their achievements.

Our Physical Education department plays an important role in supporting students' health and fitness. We offer a range of sports clubs that help students stay active and healthy.

These clubs also foster a sense of competition and teamwork, allowing students to feel proud of representing their school and building strong connections with their peers.



## Interested in joining our community?

**Interested in joining The Portsmouth Academy? We're excited to show you what makes our school an excellent choice for your child's education and development.**

If you have questions or want to learn more about our programmes, curriculum, or the admissions process, please contact our admissions team by emailing [info@theportsmouthacademy.org.uk](mailto:info@theportsmouthacademy.org.uk)

We're here to provide all the information you need and guide you through every step.

Stay connected and keep up with everything happening at The Portsmouth Academy by visiting our website at [theportsmouthacademy.org.uk](http://theportsmouthacademy.org.uk)

Our website is updated regularly with news, achievements, and information about school events.

For a closer look at our day-to-day activities, follow us on social media—Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

Our social media pages offer real-time updates and a look at the exciting and enriching experiences our students enjoy.

We look forward to welcoming prospective pupils and families to our school community.

If you have any questions or need more information, please do contact us. We look forward to supporting you in taking the next steps to make The Portsmouth Academy the right choice for you.

**Aspire. Achieve. Respect.**



The Portsmouth Academy  
St Mary's Road  
Portsmouth  
PO1 5PF

0333 360 2200  
[info@theportsmouthacademy.org.uk](mailto:info@theportsmouthacademy.org.uk)  
[theportsmouthacademy.org.uk](http://theportsmouthacademy.org.uk)

