





ASPIRE
& ACHIEVE

WELCOME

Welcome to The Portsmouth Academy prospectus. We hope that it will give you a flavour of the exciting education we offer and warmly invite you to come and see us in action, to truly gain a sense of our school.

All children deserve an excellent education. I am very proud to lead an academy full of wonderful staff who go 'above and beyond' to ensure that our students are actively engaged in school, happy and making progress.

At the heart of our work is a pursuit of excellence as we believe this is the best way to do well by our children. This encompasses both academic excellence and the cultivation of character. We want to give our students deep subject knowledge, but we also want to help them to become life-long learners who can thrive in the 21st century.

If you send your child to our school, they will leave us as an enthusiastic and confident young person, who is ready to persevere to achieve their goals.

We know that every child needs great teaching in order to thrive. We want our students to find learning exciting and so we are creative in how we teach. We plan activities that make our students think and that create 'awe and wonder' in the classroom. We create opportunities for our students to learn together, in pairs and in groups, and to discuss what they are learning because that is

what they enjoy. Overall, we aim to ensure that they receive a balanced diet of independent and collaborative learning activities which are carefully crafted to maximise participation and progress.

Children also need opportunities to thrive beyond the classroom. Therefore, we offer a huge variety of workshops and trips, including 'outward bound' adventures, to excite and enthuse our students.

We also aim to build competition into school life as we like our students to experience the joy of 'winning'. However, we recognise that real learning also comes from failure and so we define excellence as the ability to bounce back!

We very much look forward to welcoming you to The Portsmouth Academy.

Please contact the school reception to find out about our open events, to book a tour, or indeed to book a meeting with myself.

Best wishes,
Natalie Sheppard, Principal



“The Principal determinedly leads the academy with passion and a commitment to students’ good behaviour and to improving the quality of teaching and raising the standards of students’ achievement.”

Ofsted 2015

ASPIRE



*“We are what we repeatedly do.
Excellence, then, is not an act,
but a habit.”*

Aristotle

Our aim is to help students to develop habits of excellence, qualities that will enable them to achieve their full potential.

We encourage students to aspire to excellence, as we believe that excellence is an art won by training. We consciously build ‘Habits’ – derived from the work of Art de Costa – which are dispositions that empower creative and critical thinking.

We focus on six habits:

- Persisting – looking for ways to reach your goal and not giving up!
- Striving for accuracy – checking and constantly finding ways to improve.
- Communicating with clarity and precision – being clear in both written and oral forms.

- Applying past knowledge to new situations – using what you learn.
- Thinking about your thinking – being aware of your own thoughts, feelings and actions, and their effect on others.
- Creating, imagining and innovating – trying a different way and being original.

The critical attribute of intelligent beings is not simply having information, but knowing how to act on it – especially when confronted with uncertainty. We teach our students how to behave rationally when they don’t know the answer to a problem and, in this way, lead them to academic excellence.





“In lessons, students behave well and follow the instructions of their teachers. They work effectively together...and are keen to achieve their best.”

Ofsted

ACHIEVE

The Portsmouth Academy is fully accredited by the University of Exeter as a thinking school, specialising in equipping students with tools to help them think reflectively, critically and creatively.



We are part of The Thinking Schools Academy Trust, a family of schools in Portsmouth and Medway, which includes Newbridge and Isambard Brunel Junior Schools. These partnerships enable our teachers to share best practice, with the objective of transforming the life chances of our students.

We believe that every student is a unique individual who is capable of great things and it is our responsibility to teach them how to learn. Our interest in how the brain works infuses our teaching. We provide students with 'thinking toolkits' to help them map and organise their learning.

Our experience – along with international research – tells us that young people in thinking schools maintain their motivation and curiosity to learn, and thereby improve their academic performance. We are very proud of our students' examination results, which are above the national average in a variety of subjects.

All students have individual target grades set for each subject and we are committed to removing any barriers to learning that they may experience. This enables them to work independently in ways that will benefit them in higher education and in later life.



“Teachers’ subject knowledge is secure and this means that many are able to question students effectively to stimulate their interest and engage them in learning.”

Ofsted

A FIRM FOUNDATION

Whatever our students’ talents and passions, we strive to provide a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them every opportunity to succeed.

We dedicate a significant amount of time to the foundation subjects of Maths, English and Science. This ensures that students leave us as literate and numerate young people who can access A Level and university courses and aspire to meet skill shortages in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) industries.

We are a partner school for Mathematics Mastery, which aims to achieve a deep understanding of Maths and build confidence by spending more time on fewer topics. Our Science laboratories are first class and enable students to experience a wealth of practical experiments that fire their curiosity. Many study all three Sciences at GCSE and achieve outstanding results.

The habit of ‘creating, imagining and innovating’ runs throughout our curriculum. We teach Catering, Graphics and Art from Year 7, with many students taking these subjects for GCSE. Our student body speaks over 30 languages and we support pupils in studying for a GCSE in their home language, if they wish, as well as learning French. Students enjoy a diverse range of sports, which includes football, basketball and trampolining and can also study Dance at GCSE, making use of our fully equipped studio.







PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

“Students receive high-quality information and careers advice about the post-16 choices they make.”

Ofsted

We support the wellbeing of our students by easing the transition to secondary school, valuing each individual and working in partnership with families.

Your child will be looked after from the moment he or she secures a place here. We run a fun introductory programme which helps pupils to settle in quickly. Tutors get to know students really well as they move up through the school with them.

Believing that students perform best when they are encouraged by those around them, we recognise success and effort through habit points, assemblies, celebration evenings, reports and postcards sent home. We value the partnership with families very highly and provide a range of opportunities for parental involvement including online access to information on progress, conduct and attendance, as well as meetings with pastoral and academic staff.

Through a comprehensive programme of Personal Development – covering topics such as careers, healthy lifestyles, relationships and British values – we nurture a sense of identity and self-esteem in our young people. We provide a secure and stimulating environment in which students can enjoy their learning, make progress and develop high aspirations. For example, every student will visit at least one university during his or her time here.



ENRICHING EXPERIENCES

We provide a vast range of opportunities which enable students to enjoy competition, develop teamwork skills and build a wider knowledge of the world.

We offer over 50 trips each year to destinations ranging from the Historic Dockyard – where students get to experience Portsmouth past and present – to Wales and France, where they enjoy outdoor pursuits such as mountain climbing and kayaking. In school, they 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.

Each Spring, we stage a musical or dramatic production for local primary schools, parents and the wider community which raises funds for our key charities. Other opportunities to perform include the Rock Challenge, a Dance and Drama event that brings together schools from across Hampshire. In addition to a Breakfast Club and a myriad of after-school activities, students can also get involved in broadcasts from our radio station.



“There are good opportunities for students’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in all subjects and the range of extra-curricular activities helps to extend learning beyond the classroom.”

Ofsted

STUDENT VOICE

We encourage our young people to take responsibility within the life of the school in order to build their leadership abilities and social skills.

Elected by their peers each year, our student leadership team plays a key role in the development of The Portsmouth Academy. Working alongside 'Shaping the future of Portsmouth', they run the school radio station which exists to promote good news stories from within the academy and across the city. The school media team interview people of interest in order to help students know what is happening in the local community, and to build their own journalistic abilities. News is shared through broadcasting in the school but also through Express FM's multimedia channels, helping to build the reputation of the school and the city both locally, and internationally.

Each month, students are able to bring hot topics for discussion during 'Question Time' in assembly. As the outcomes of these debates can influence decision making by the Principal and senior leadership team, our young people are empowered to develop the school in everyone's best interest. They are given a budget for rewards and work with the student body to identify the best way to spend this money.





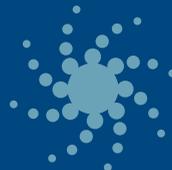
“Students have excellent manners and are polite and courteous towards each other and adults... The academy is a calm and orderly pace in which to work.”

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THINKING SCHOOLS ACADEMY TRUST

The Portsmouth Academy is part of the Thinking Schools Academy Trust (TSAT) which is a highly successful and respected Trust comprising both Primary and Secondary Schools. We believe we are ‘stronger together’ and our primary aim is to improve the life chances of all our children and young people.

Our Trust comprises a number of secondary and primary schools from Medway and Portsmouth that are all committed to an ethos of excellence and a whole school integrated approach to cognitive education. We are passionate about the difference this makes in nurturing adaptable and resilient thinkers. Indeed, through this approach to the teaching of thinking, we believe it “makes learning irresistible”.



The
Portsmouth Academy

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