

Portsmouth Primary School and Early Years
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Headteacher: Mr A Vaghela

17th June 2026

Important Update: Keeping Our Children Safe Online

Dear Parents and Carers,

At Portsmouth Primary and Nursery, we love celebrating your children's achievements, activities, and milestones. Sharing these moments is a wonderful part of our school community. However, keeping your children safe—both in the classroom and online—is always our absolute priority.

Why are we making a change?

Nationwide, schools are being directed to update how pupil images are shared online. Following recent safeguarding guidance from the **UK Safer Internet Centre** and the **Online Harms Early Warning Working Group**, Portsmouth City Council has directed local schools to review and update their practices.

You will also have seen the news about how the Government wants to ban children from social media and introduce online and AI safety lessons. Here at Portsmouth, these lessons are already in place.

We are adopting this approach to align with official guidance and our fellow Portsmouth Local Authority schools—a step we completely agree is the right one. With AI image-generation tools evolving so quickly, the digital world is changing fast. By being proactive now, we can better protect our children from these new online risks. We still want to celebrate school life, but we must do so in a way that prioritises safety and privacy.

What is changing?

Please note that all current photos on Tapestry, our website and social media channels will remain as they are. We will continue to use Tapestry with our youngest children as this is a 'closed' system only accessed by parents logging in. However, moving forward, we are implementing the following protective changes to keep your child safe online:

- **No Face Photographs:** We will no longer publish clear, front-facing photos of children's faces on public platforms.
- **Creative Photography:** We will still share the joy of school life! Future photos for our website, newsletter, and social media will use safer angles—such as over-the-shoulder shots, photos from a distance, or showing the backs of heads.
- **Anonymity:** We will never publish a child's name alongside their photograph.
- **Hidden Data Removal:** We will automatically strip hidden location and time data (metadata) from all digital photos before they are uploaded.
- **Enhanced Security:** We have tightened the privacy settings on our official Facebook and social media accounts to ensure they are as secure as possible.

Photography at School Events

We know how much parents value capturing memories at school plays, sports days, and assemblies. To keep all children safe, we are tightening our guidelines for these events:

- **Capturing Your Own Child:** Where possible, we will build in dedicated time during or after an event for you to take photos of your own child.
- **Avoiding Other Children:** Please ensure that your photos **only** feature your child. You must avoid capturing images of other children.
- **Monitoring This Policy:** We will be monitoring this closely. If we find that photos containing other children are being taken or posted online, we will unfortunately have to review whether parent photography can continue at future school events.

How you can help

We kindly ask for your support in keeping our community safe. You can help by:

- Talking to your children about online safety.
- Being cautious when sharing school-related photos on your personal social media accounts.
- Ensuring that no other children are visible in photos you post, and avoiding tags, full names, or highly identifiable uniform details.

Thank you for your continued partnership in keeping our school community safe, secure, and digitally responsible. If you have any questions or concerns regarding these updates, please do not hesitate to contact the school office.

Kind regards,

Mr Ash Vaghela, Headteacher

HIVE Portsmouth is a small charity making a big difference.

Every day, HIVE works alongside local people, voluntary groups, and partner organisations to improve lives across the city.

Community helpdesk

HIVE has a dedicated community helpdesk, located on the ground floor of Portsmouth Central Library which is open Monday to Friday from 9.30am to 4pm. Advisors are able to offer guidance about financial support for utility bills, information about where to access free food provision, and help with signposting people with specific enquiries who don't know where to turn. Pop in and see how they can support you. The helpline is available 9.30am to 4pm on 023 9400 7124 from Monday to Friday. Or you can email info@hiveportsmouth.org.uk

Hive Paulsgrove Hub

HIVE also have hub in Paulsgrove located in Paulsgrove Housing Office, 195 Allaway Ave, Portsmouth PO6 4HQ.

